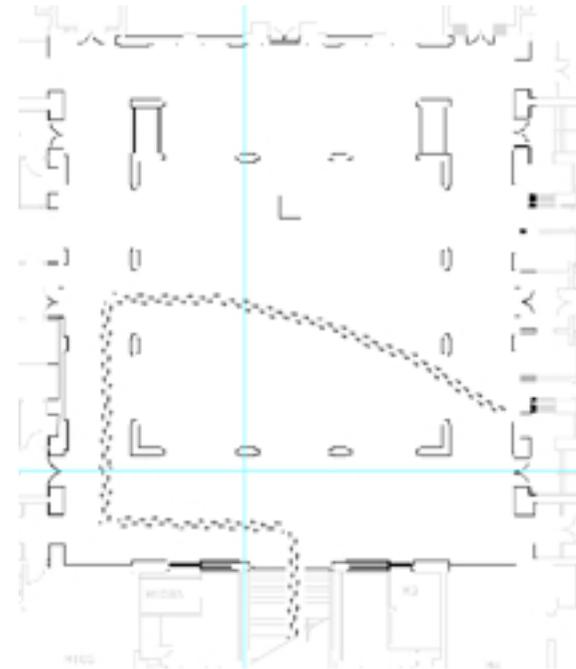## introduction

The artwork *Walls that Whisper* creates a space for quiet contemplation, surprise and thoughtful remembrance. It is a place for reflecting upon the complex history of a grand building, the people that once inhabited the spaces and the resultant history over the 60 years as the house of parliament.

It will be achieved through an appeal of the senses:

- Reflection of names

- Sounds echo in the hall

- Ambient experiences overlayed

- Calls from the chambers

- Footsteps brush past

- Light dances in the space

- Public made intimate

- Brackets of silence

After a warm greeting at the front door we walk up the stairs and immediately view King's Hall – a place of calm balance. Out of the corner of our eye we see a flicker of light which draws our attention to the column. Walking along the red-carpeted corridor we come to a name carved in light on the cream wall of the column. The name is familiar — *Gough Whitlam*—the light fades and the recedes back into the column. Many other names appear, some familiar others not but we are lured by the floating text.

Continuing along the red carpet we walk past the portraits of past Prime Ministers, unaware that a sensor has been activated and sound from the chambers emerges. The shouting from within the chambers fades and we can hear the voice of Governor General Sir Ninian Stephens on the day of his inauguration.

Stepping into the hall another sensor is activated and hurried footsteps pass behind us. We turn but there is no physical presence, only a bust on the wall. The footsteps continue. The space is filled with presence of "others".

A light glimmers past us. Is it sunlight? It rests for moment on a column and moves to the floor where it stops again. We can see the reflection take form – it is a person and then gone again. The ambiguous reflection and the footsteps echo in our memories and, as we leave the room the sound of a distant cocktail party begins and then fades away leaving the space calm again, awaiting the presence of others.