Abstract: Bohemia is a romantic response to the impact of the market economy on cultural production and consumption. As a performance of the self it is shaped by a love/hate relationship with the modern city, formed around uniquely urban sites of production, curation, accommodation and leisure – everything from lofts, to pubs to fashion houses. An early Australian proselytiser of bohemianism was journalist and writer Marcus Clarke. He claimed to have imbibed London and Parisian bohemia while a youth before emigrating to Victoria in 1863 where he spent the 1870s fashioning a bohemian way of life. This paper considers how over a century and a half Melbourne and Sydney spawned networks of bohemian Australian variants of bohemians and flâneurs – poets, painters, novelists, journalists, philosophers, actors, filmmakers, rock ‘n’ roll stars, comedians, tricksters, hackers who experimented with how to live in, and represent, urban modernity.

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