

MICHAEL REID

SYDNEY

BERLIN

BEYOND



Sid Pattni, *A Minor History of Major Misunderstandings (Part II)*, 2025, oil, acrylic and hand beaded appliqué on canvas, 152 x 122 cm, \$16,000

SID PATTNI

SMALL FIRES EVERYWHERE, ALL THE TIME

Sid Pattni is interested in how aesthetics shaped under empire can be reclaimed and reconfigured to tell new stories about migration, memory and identity. In *Small Fires Everywhere, All The Time*, faceless figures sit at the centre of sumptuous portraits edged by ornate decorative borders, each embellished with painted florals, gold leaf animals or hand-headed apparitions. Wrapped in opulent regalia and ensconced within their ornate frames, his subjects project the pomp and grandiosity of historical portraiture, but with only their eyes left floating amid a cosmic, void-like abyss. Stripped of what might be read as a portrait's defining feature, Pattni's eyes without a face upend the power dynamics of their historical precedents and send us looking for markers of identity and meaning within the structures and stylised flourishes that enclose them.

"This body of work explores the psychological afterlife of empire," says the 2025 Archibald Prize finalist. "The paintings depict women who historically operated as symbols of purity, civility and moral authority, helping construct a hierarchy that cast the West as ordered and the colonised world as unruly and inferior. Rather than depicting individuals, these paintings treat them as an ideological apparatus that enforced power through imagery."

Referencing Mughal miniatures, Indian textiles, British botanical drawings and 19th-century Company Painting – a genre that is itself a complex hybrid – Pattni weaves a dynamic tapestry from styles, symbols and compositional logics borrowed, remixed and remade. His work asks how selfhood might be similarly pieced together – cut from the cloth of cultural inheritances and how hierarchies can be unsettled by imagining their visual antecedents anew.

"Growing up within the Indian diaspora in Australia, I recognise how inherited visual hierarchies continue to organise my mind," says Pattni, whose series is less about reconstructing history than interrupting its psychological echoes. "Repainting these figures becomes an act of re-encounter."

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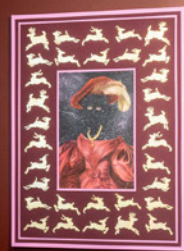
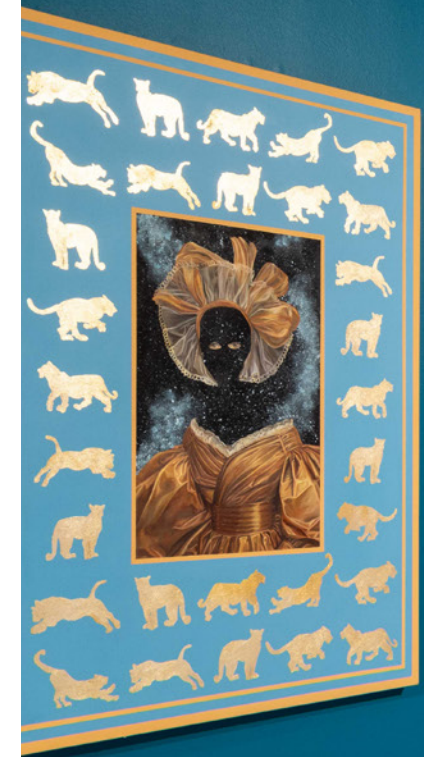




Sid Pattni, *A Minor History of Major Misunderstandings (Part I)*, 2025, oil, acrylic and hand beaded appliqué on canvas, 152 x 122 cm, \$16,000



Sid Pattni, *Occident (Part V)*, 2025, oil, acrylic and gold leaf on canvas, 121 x 91 cm, \$11,000







Sid Pattni, *Occident (Part II)*, 2025, oil, acrylic and gold leaf on canvas, 121 x 91 cm, \$11,000





Sid Pattni, *Occident (Part III)*, 2025, oil, acrylic and gold leaf on canvas, 121 x 91 cm, \$11,000



Sid Pattni, *Occident (Part IV)*, 2025, oil, acrylic and gold leaf on canvas, 121 x 91 cm, \$11,000



Sid Pattni, *Occident (Part VI)*, 2025, oil, acrylic and gold leaf on canvas, 121 x 91 cm, \$11,000

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Monday - Friday 11am - 5pm

Saturday 11am - 3pm

Michael Reid Sydney + Berlin acknowledge the Gadigal people as the traditional owners of the land on which our Eora / Sydney gallery stands. We pay our respects to Indigenous Elders past, present & emerging.