

AUSPICIUM

ALEXANDER BEBBINGTON

Michael Reid Northern Beaches is thrilled to announce *Auspicium* – the solo exhibition debut of 2025 National Emerging Art Prize winner Alexander Bebbington. Presented by Michael Reid Northern Beaches and available to preview by request ahead of its showing next month at The Garden Gallery in Sydney's Royal Botanic Garden, *Auspicium* is the culmination of a yearlong professional mentorship that formed part of Bebbington's suite of prizes when he claimed NEAP's ultimate accolade, the $20,000 Morgans Financial Prize for Emerging Painters, for his work Little Pied Cormorant. *"Alex really caught the attention of the judging panel last year, with his unique take on fusing painting and photography in a way that tricks the eye as to where the photography ends and the painting begins,"* says NEAP's curator and co-founder, Amber Creswell Bell. *"They are at once very fresh and contemporary, but also classically nuanced. Exciting to see this work develop!"* With *Auspicium* – subtitled by the artist Signs, omens and the natural world – Bebbington builds on the creative breakthrough of his NEAP-winning work with a series of still-life vignettes that invoke the conventions of museum classification, spectacle and display as he inscribes each wunderkammer-like scene with intricately painted critters – native birds, bats, possums and insects whose nested presence upends scientific detachment and brings the natural world into living painterly focus. *"This series builds on the visual language I established in Little Pied Cormorant, particularly the combination of photography, painting and constructed still-life environments,"* says Bebbington, who meticulously constructs his photographic tableaux before painting directly onto the printed surface. *"I have continued exploring the relationship between natural history, beauty and loss, using birds, insects and collected objects to create scenes that feel both familiar and slightly unsettling."* His work draws on the seductive theatricality of Baroque still-life painting and the rich symbolism of the classical vanitas tradition, recasting these historical influences through a distinctly contemporary lens attuned to ecological fragility and the consequences of human intervention.
For previews, please email sophienolan@michaelreid.com.au.

INTRODUCTION. 2

ARTWORKS. 4 - 12

Once We Were Gods
Midnight Keepers of Kosciusko
Large Eared Pied Bat
Swift Parrots
Ghosts of the South
Wrens pt. 2 - Featuring the Entomology Collections of Matthew Huan
Australian Masked Owl vs Rattus rattus
The Messenger

GALLERY CONTACT DETAILS. 14


The Insect Crisis
The Insect Crisis



Once We Were Gods, 2026
Acrylic on 310gsm Pigment Print
Raised Float White Box Frame
Ar70 art glass
130 x 90 cm
$6,200



Midnight Keepers of Kosciusko, 2026
Acrylic on 310gsm Pigment Print
Raised Float White Box Frame
Ar70 art glass
115 x 85 cm
$5,500



Large Eared Pied Bat, 2026
Acrylic on 310gsm Pigment Print
Raised Float White Box Frame
Ar70 art glass
118 x 77 cm
$5,500



Swift Parrots, 2026
Acrylic on 310gsm Pigment Print
Raised Float White Box Frame
Ar70 art glass
105 x 78 cm
$4,700


GREG "CRAOLA" SIMKINS
rtist of the New Zealand Bush
ZERO+
RF
R709
.931



Ghosts of the South, 2026
Acrylic on 310gsm Pigment Print
Raised Float White Box Frame
Ar70 art glass
94 x 73 cm
$3,900



Wrens pt. 2 - Featuring the Entomology Collections of Matthew Huan, 2026
Acrylic on 310gsm Pigment Print
Raised Float White Box Frame.
Ar70 art glass
85 x 95 cm
$3,900



Australian Masked Owl vs Rattus rattus, 2026
Acrylic on 310gsm Pigment Print
Raised Float White Box Frame.
Ar70 art glass
78 x 68 cm
$2,900



The Messenger, 2026
Acrylic on 310gsm Pigment Print
Raised Float White Box Frame
Ar70 art glass
82 x 71 cm
$2,900





MICHAEL REID
NORTHERN BEACHES

+61 (0)2 8353 3505
sophienolan@michaelreid.com.au
michaelreidnorthernbeaches.com.au