COMA

MASON KIMBER

Slanted Mansions

21 September, 2018 - 13 October, 2018

Exhibition Catalogue

Slanted Mansions

Mason Kimber is anchored by the inbetweenness of architecture and memory: places that serve as timestamps, surfaces that form sentiment, and colours that trigger. Kimber's practice deals with the collision of experienced places — interiors and exteriors that have become sanctuaries for the artist. His recent works involve a process of casting, breaking and reassembling fragments, enshrining them as islands of form and texture through a process of sculpting, pouring, marking, and setting.

In *Slanted Mansions*, Kimber presents a new series of works based on silicone impressions created during a recent trip to Manila, as well as in his Sydney studio environment. They focus on the skins of buildings, interiors, and sentimental objects -- surfaces rich in history, yet through decay, are in the process of being lost forever. Many of these motifs contain the residue of a human touch or hand-crafted materials where the scars of time can be seen and felt. Presented as multi-layered wall slabs, they rupture, swell, and splinter like a memory puzzle that minces before with the 'now', and in doing so, they become monuments to the stories worth preserving.

Mason Kimber

Window/Shift, 2018

acrylic, synthetic polymer, gypsum, extruded polystyrene, polyurethane foam, resin

116 x 76.5 x 5 cm

Mason Kimber

Hallway/Slide, 2018

oil, acrylic, synthetic polymer, gypsum, extruded polystyrene, polyurethane foam, resin

119 x 80.5 x 5.5 cm

Mason Kimber

Stone/Loop, 2018

acrylic, synthetic polymer, gypsum, extruded polystyrene, polyurethane foam, resin

116.5 x 79 x 6.5 cm

Mason Kimber

Rooftop/Sway, 2018

flashe, acrylic, synthetic polymer, gypsum, extruded polystyrene, polyurethane foam, resin

122 x 81.5 x 7 cm

Mason Kimber

Bone/Slant, 2018

acrylic, synthetic polymer, gypsum, extruded polystyrene, polyurethane foam, resin

61 x 48 x 7 cm

Mason Kimber

Husk/Draft, 2018

acrylic, synthetic polymer, gypsum, extruded polystyrene, polyurethane foam, resin

59.5 x 41.5 x 6 cm

Mason Kimber

Base/Fold, 2018

acrylic, synthetic polymer, gypsum, extruded polystyrene, polyurethane foam, resin

57 x 41.5 x 5cm

Mason Kimber

Husk/Drift, 2018

acrylic, synthetic polymer, gypsum, extruded polystyrene, polyurethane foam, resin

61 x 45 x 5.5 cm

Mason Kimber

Marble/Crush, 2018

acrylic, synthetic polymer, gypsum, extruded polystyrene, polyurethane foam, resin

56.5 x 37 x 4 cm

Mason Kimber

Portico/Glide, 2018

acrylic, synthetic polymer, gypsum, extruded polystyrene, polyurethane foam, resin

55 x 43 x 5.5 cm

Mason Kimber

Sidewalk/Slope, 2018

oil, acrylic, synthetic polymer, gypsum, extruded polystyrene, polyurethane foam, resin

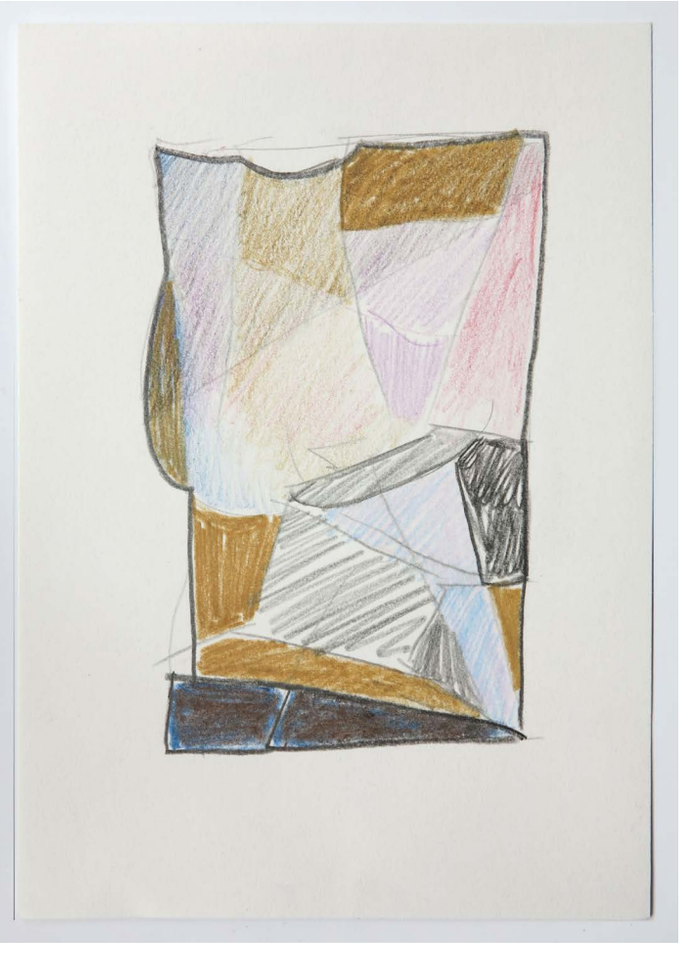
60 x 42.5 x 6 cm

Mason Kimber

Fragment Drawing 1, 2018

pencil on paper, framed

33.5 x 26.5 x 3 cm



Mason Kimber

Fragment Drawing 2, 2018

pencil on paper, framed

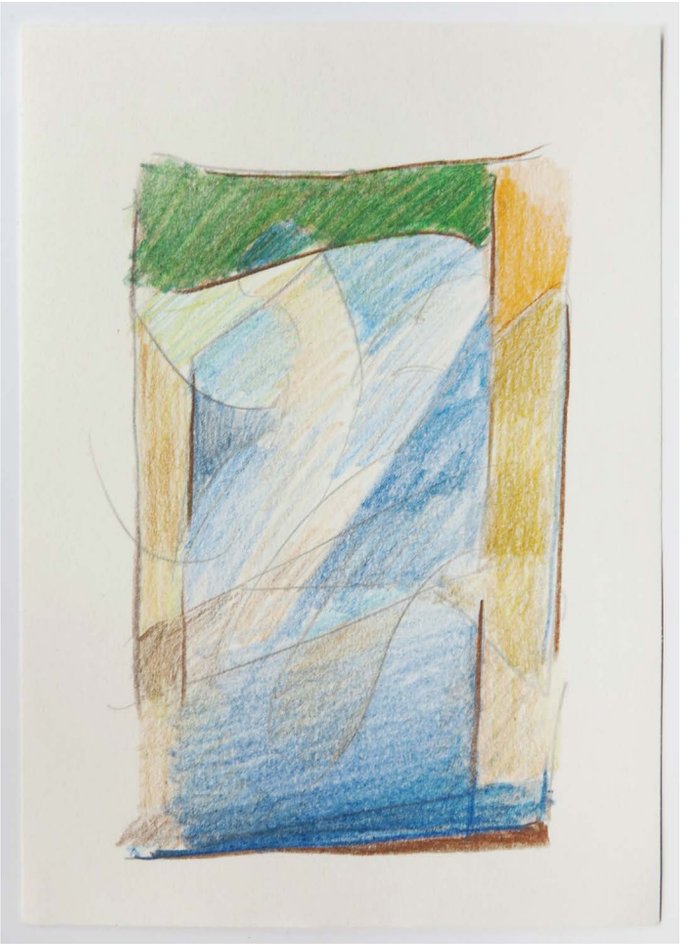
33.5 x 26.5 x 3 cm

Mason Kimber

Fragment Drawing 3, 2018

pencil on paper, framed

33.5 x 26.5 x 3 cm



Mason Kimber

Fragment Drawing 4, 2018

pencil on paper, framed

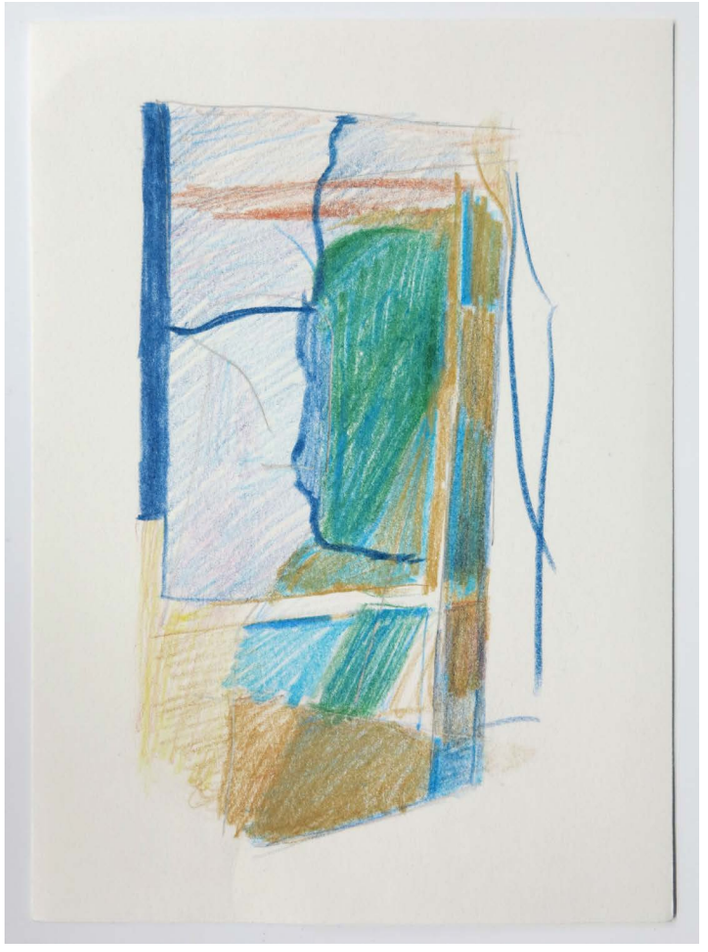
33.5 x 26.5 x 3 cm

Mason Kimber

Fragment Drawing 5, 2018

pencil on paper, framed

33.5 x 26.5 x 3 cm



Mason Kimber

Fragment Drawing 6, 2018

pencil on paper, framed

33.5 x 26.5 x 3 cm

In Slanted Mansions, Mason Kimber presents a new inventory of sculptural tablets, floating fragments, and compositional sketches that preserve the decaying chapters of places and memories in Manila, The Philippines.

The story starts in June of this year. Kimber and I visited my hometown of Quezon City, in the ripe howls of monsoon season. Mummified into raincoats, we explored my childhood home, former school, and my uncle's marble factory—poignant sites that shaped my family's lives and today continue to decline from the decades-old sway of time, weather, and neglect. Kimber listened to my stories of growing up in this vivacious megacity, which exists within a climate cocktail of earthquakes, super-typhoons, landslides, and volcanic eruptions.

These natural disasters left neighbourhoods in a hotchpotch—slanted homes, tangled gardens, and rubbled walkways. My family reset ourselves many times: we'd replace soaked beds, repair roofs, salvage floating debris, and wash out lava ash from our clothes. Eventually, we learnt to become limber to the dance moves of this ever-shaking metropolis. We painted our homes in cornflower blue and peppermint—colours that behaved as pulsating way-finders during acid rain and electrical brownouts. We erected steel gates to keep floods out. We staked walled perimeters with thorny fields of smashed soft-drink bottles to deter wind-hurled structures, as well as looters. It was here that I developed pre-mourned gratitude for possessions, knowing there was a chance they'd break or float out the door in the next wet season.

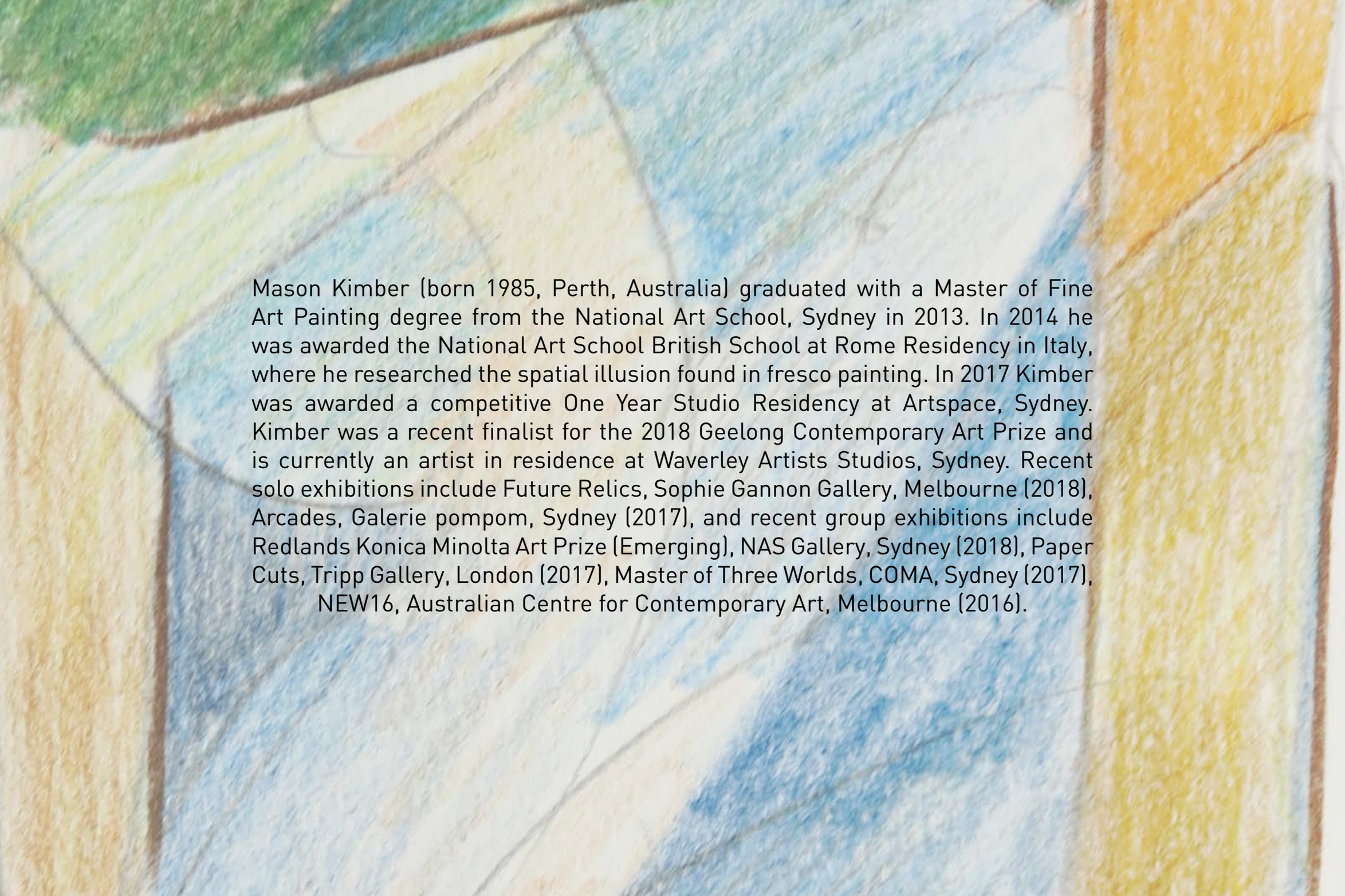
In Tagalog, the phrase 'sumaging lagi sa alaala' has dual meaning: 'to haunt a memory' and to 'keep a memory.' It's similar to this mixed feeling of letting go of an object in your mind mentally, while still being able to touch it physically; a reverse phantom-limb of sorts. The jumbling of memory is a main propeller for Kimber. Before he was a full-time artist, he collected vinyl and hosted radio shows as a music producer in Perth. He spent days hunting down rare, yesteryear records and chopping them up to reconfigure into new sounds.

Today, as a visual artist, he remains faithful to this method, splicing memories and weaving them into new compositions—often while listening to the same songs in the studio. Esteemed music producer Mark Ronson summed it up elegantly: 'Sampling isn't about hijacking nostalgia wholesale. It's about inserting yourself into the narrative of a song while also pushing that story forward.' In Slanted Mansions, Kimber recorded his personal observations and shared experiences of Manila, and remixed them into a new authorship that paid ode to the legacies of keeping and haunting a memory.

While in Manila, Kimber entombed mnemonic surfaces with sticky coats of amethyst-purple silicon moulds: structural shapes like gates, roofs, windows, and balcony walls, and portable items, such as plants, carved furniture, and heirlooms. Once hardened to rubber, these moulds were peeled off, like escape pods detached from their source, to unearth replicas of fissures and mounds. The shapes are then remastered with gypsum and resin to form odd-edged slab pillows that emanate off walls and clustered fragments that lash around like steep glaciers or bulbous stalagmites; one reminds me of a chocolate bar broken up to share.

These works are by no means intricate copies. Rather, they triumph the intuitive and abstract marks of a studio process — with their sunken edges, rasped patterns, and goosebumped imprints—in the same way that memory fogs and fades through time. 'My intention is not to recreate the physical exactness of a space or object,' Kimber says, 'it's about capturing their memories and tangible qualities, and turning them into monuments to stories that are worth preserving.'

Text by Mariam Arcilla



Mason Kimber (born 1985, Perth, Australia) graduated with a Master of Fine Art Painting degree from the National Art School, Sydney in 2013. In 2014 he was awarded the National Art School British School at Rome Residency in Italy, where he researched the spatial illusion found in fresco painting. In 2017 Kimber was awarded a competitive One Year Studio Residency at Artspace, Sydney. Kimber was a recent finalist for the 2018 Geelong Contemporary Art Prize and is currently an artist in residence at Waverley Artists Studios, Sydney. Recent solo exhibitions include Future Relics, Sophie Gannon Gallery, Melbourne (2018), Arcades, Galerie pompom, Sydney (2017), and recent group exhibitions include Redlands Konica Minolta Art Prize (Emerging), NAS Gallery, Sydney (2018), Paper Cuts, Tripp Gallery, London (2017), Master of Three Worlds, COMA, Sydney (2017), NEW16, Australian Centre for Contemporary Art, Melbourne (2016).

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