

KEVIN SONG

Winner of Contemporary Art Awards 2016

Memories and Perceptions of Place

By Dr Julie Rees

Born in Seoul, South Korea, Sydney artist Kevin Song (b.1988) won the *2016 Contemporary Art Awards* first prize of \$3000 with his painting *Winter Landscape* (2015). The image depicts a snow-clad empty sports field illuminated by dawn's first light. Kevin's inspiration for this piece began with a photograph (taken in 2006) of the view from his grandparents' apartment in Uijeongbu, South Korea. By using this photo as a reference point, the work reflects Kevin's interest in memory and perception.

In Kevin's art practice, landscape and nature play a central role; the natural world becomes a palette for his imagination. The photograph of the view from his grandparents' apartment triggered memories, nostalgic thoughts, and feelings, which led to the creation of *Winter Landscape* (2015). The work ties Kevin's personal history and memory to 'place'. By merging lived experience and observations of daily life, the work is an example of how memory and perception of place can be represented visually. Landscape is an authentic pathway to explore this subject matter and even though viewers may generate different interpretations, *Winter Landscape* (2015) invites us into a poetic world, which sets the stage for both contemplation and anticipation.

Kevin's painting methods are carefully considered to convey his ideas. Layered with meaning, his

choice to change the photo's original colours to a limited palette gives the audience an indication that the image reflects an old memory. The distribution of warm light throughout the painting alludes not only to Kevin's connection to the location but to his emotional bond towards his grandparents. Kevin's work acts as a reminder that our contemporary experience of place is ongoingly shaped by the interlinking of place and family in our thoughts, feelings, memories, and perceptions.



in's work acts as a reminder that our contemporary experience of place is ongoingly shaped by the interlinking of place and family in our thoughts, feelings, memories, and perceptions.

Trained in painting, Kevin graduated in 2010 with a Bachelor of Fine Art with Honours from the Elam School

of Fine Art at the University of Auckland, New Zealand. This gave him a firm grounding in visual arts on which to develop his practice. Since then, he has completed a Masters of Teaching (Secondary) at University of Western Sydney. By maintaining his art practice and exposing his students to various mediums, Kevin hopes to inspire them to express their creative ideas through art.

On this page, *Winter Landscape* (2015), acrylic on canvas, 76 x 61cm

Image courtesy of the artist

Kevin Song's artwork can be viewed at:

www.contemporaryartawards.com/finalist-exhibition-2016