

6 Aug–23 Aug
2014

BROOKE FERGUSON

HALF FINISHED SENTENCES

BLINDSIDIS

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BLINDSIDIS

I'm noticing that, as you get close, the white changes colour

It wasn't that I
It wasn't like I

THE SUN DIVIDED THE AIR

All visible parts will be intact except his eyes

GAME OF WORDS

Essay by:

Ruth McConchie

It's the multiplicity of endings, maybe you only have to say half of the sentence, if we are told to think before we speak, do we continue to think while we speak, there's this slowness of translation, complex or partial, visual, spatial thoughts, ideas, feelings into words, formed into sentences, what do we lose in fluidity, in the delay, does it even measure up, the implication that an idea is conveyed more fully through a complete sentence, that each listener, reader would receive the same information, the same words mean the same thing to everyone at the same time, the irony is that to speak is to exist, but in order to speak one must adopt a system of language made up of words that have no inherent meaning, we can rely only on language to prove our existence, yet it's an inadequate system for ascertaining any type of abstract truth, do we even read, listen to all the words before we start thinking, about the other possibilities, going off on tangents, relating the ideas to other incidents that happened earlier, correlating these words to ourselves, our histories, our knowledges, translating them back into half feelings, thoughts, I'm not sure, is there a word for that, because I can't remember what I was saying, sorry where was I, sometimes I'll restart a sentence halfway through because I realise I'm not saying it right,

we only start to think about the possibilities of the sentence when it is finished, does the sentence even end where the writer, speaker leaves it, nothing lasts, nothing is finished, nothing is perfect, or are we all adding on more, editing the statement in our heads, there are a lot of things rubbing each other up, disputing, questioning, but you know what I meant... do I, do you want to relinquish the control of meaning to me, was it even a question of control, agreed-upon rules, shared rules, if we stuff it up what are we actually losing, we can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them, could the misunderstanding be more useful, how did we end up here, if we slip up enough does that also create a logic of understanding, communication even, sometimes the stuff ups are more insightful than what they wanted to say, what I think they wanted to say, could have said,

Images:

Half finished sentences – Blindsight, Brooke Ferguson
(detail) 2014. Multiple – A3 digital print

Images courtesy the artist.

I can't even remember what was actually said but I think it was something like, how do spoken words translate into a written text, should they be read as the same words removed from their context, when you cut into the past the future leaks out, often the more intimate a relationship the fewer full sentences are used, needed, less translating into words, it's a faster conversation, it's shrugs, eyebrow raises, making strange noises with your mouth, sighing, hissing, twitching, widening eyes, flapping hands, bursts of laughter, dancing, show me, look, like this, disagreements don't seem to be such a big thing, is it because the form of communication is so obviously flawed, it's slippery and we recognise it, are we more forgiving, we didn't really talk about it but I think everything's ok now, there's sometimes greater understanding, or shared delusion of understanding, is it the history of sentences that have gone before, or the way each person has absorbed them into themselves, are we communicating more clearly, are we closer now, other times I feel like the person I'm talking to isn't interested, isn't following me, so I just never finish what I'm talking about, did they get it, even with the best intentions, language misused, language used stupidly, carelessly, brutally, language used wrongly, breeds lies, half-truths, confusion,

is the reader, listener more active, engaged when it's confused, re-reading the sentence, listening very carefully to each word, the brain is interested in uncovering patterns, and narrative is a basic human pattern. If you've already figured out the pattern in the cloud of information, it's only interesting for the brain if there's an exception, it demands more attention, do you slow down your thinking, do you linger where there is enough there that is familiar, drawing on your past experiences to try and work out what's happening, when something is clearly incomplete are you also kind of reassured that it's okay to be confused, grope for more information, ask questions to clarify, you don't really know where you are going, true pleasure in language is not the recognition, not in the familiar readerly experience, but in the delight of discovery.