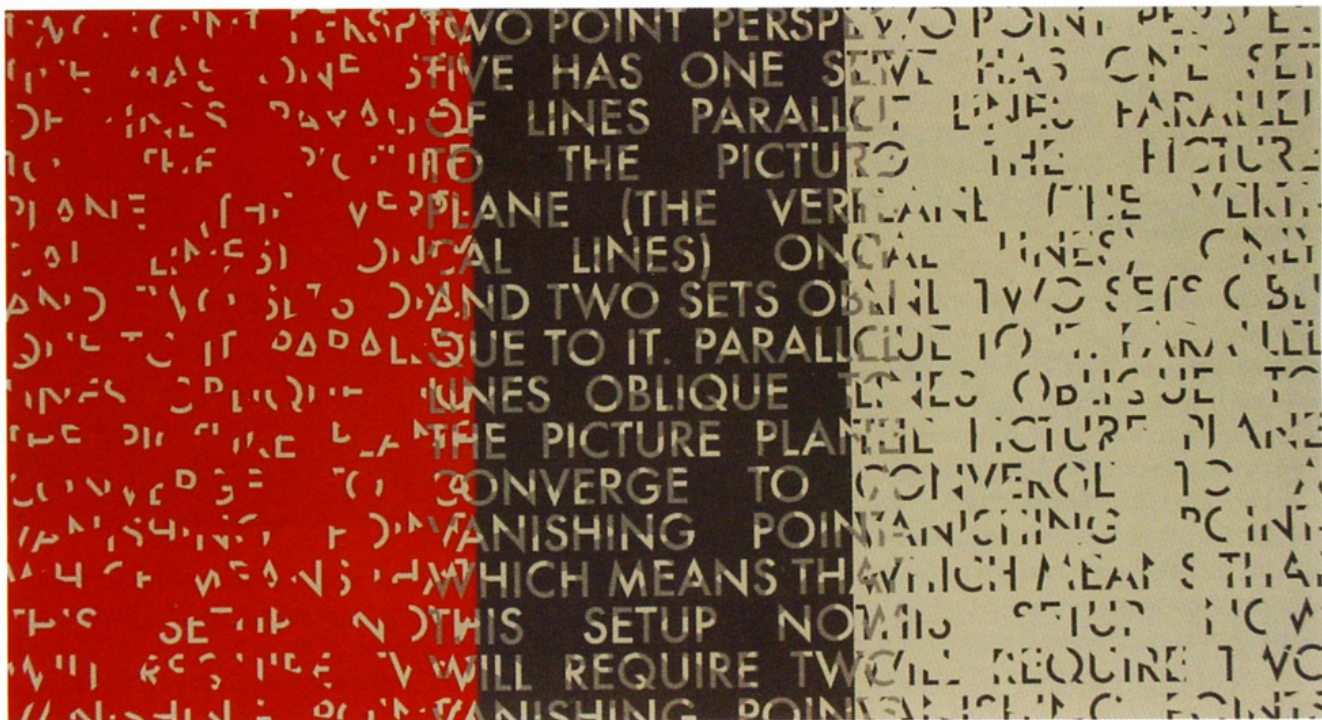


Olga Sankey: *Fictions*

9 October — 13 November

Dianne Tanzer Gallery, Fitzroy, Vic

Olga Sankey
HE SAID/SHE
SAID 2004
giclée print
80 x 144 cm



Constructed, deconstructed, split, inverted, the print matrix is used by Olga Sankey in her latest exhibition to investigate narrative structures and how information becomes fragmented in the telling. Point of view is everything; where you are coming from will decide where you end up.

Fictions at Melbourne's Dianne Tanzer Gallery presents an artist enjoying her considerable skills as a printmaker as she explores visual form and the play of language.

Sankey has long trod a fine line between subtle formalism and intellectual dissections of language. The new works take text and the many ways that text can be used to sway our perception. The exhibition title suggests the beautiful lie; the twisting of reality in the hope of exposing some greater truth.

Perhaps the key to *Fictions* is *elephant*. This work examines perception, in particular the danger of placing faith in individual interpretation. Sankey quotes John Godfrey Saxe's famous poem, 'The Blind Men and the Elephant', in which six blind men arrive at remarkably different conclusions as to what an elephant is, based on the mistaken information they glean from touching a single part of the elephant.

The new works, the artist says, contain 'a logic as to why they are prints as opposed to paintings'. Indeed, the prints are partly about printmaking itself; a kind of post modern view of art conflating the object with its own meaning. As the printed word seems to carry more weight than the handwritten, so too the printed image possesses an authority not present in drawings. The printed work directs our gaze with its voice, endlessly repeatable.

I said is a work composed of the broken down, deconstructed definition of one-point perspective while *he said /she said* invokes two-point perspective. Sankey plays with context, delivery, and juxtaposition to show how the story can change while the matrix remains constant. The work *Natural selection* uses the same three plates to tell different stories. Definitions collapse if we are open to the possibilities of multiple perspectives – there is no definitive version of anything.

Meaning in art is best divested over time. But arcane meanings may reveal themselves slowly, or maybe not at all. Should we make anything of the fact that the artist has used Futura font in some works? In the end a visual artwork depends upon its formal considerations through the window of the artist's own vision. *Fictions* is Sankey at her best, continuing to challenge herself as an artist, and provide intriguing puzzles for the viewer.

Shaw Hendry

Shaw Hendry is an artist and is also the editor of *Vitamin*,
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