

Hanna

Now we have the film, 'Breaking Up' by Sue Jo Wright.

This is a silent film, and it explores the idiosyncratic experience of connection and communication, in an era, where this process is becoming increasingly impersonal through social media.

With an increased reliance in English as a textual form to communicate and deliver information, many deaf people who struggle with English felt the gap between the deaf world and the hearing world widen immeasurably.

Through a cathartic self-dialogue, the artist, Sue Jo Wright, explores her unique and traumatic experience of how social media is paradoxically both an incredible gift and detrimental weapon, and its part in devaluing and negating her deaf identity. As symbolised by the sad, long goodbye to her own hand, which is the essence of her identity.

In some of the other films like Riana Head-Toussaint's piece, 'First Language', we got to see movements as vocabulary. To the other works that involve a lot of text, we have a situation where the words become gestures in of themselves. But for Sue Jo Wright's work, that link between gesture and communication is quite literal, and as an Auslan user, she has created this incredibly moving situation where she is leaning into silence.

And that's a silence both of sound and a silence of movement which is a silence of communication. Although, in an emotional sense, it's communicating quite a lot.

I found it to be a deeply moving work that just holds its own place within the kind of landscape of dance, where dance can be about the art of stillness as much as it is about the art of movement.

Matt

For me, this piece was such a strong world building experience and I felt as a viewer, really pulled into the world that Jo had created through her absence of movement or absence in sound, and it was the, it was the absence of the things that weren't said, that really gave me a feeling of being familiar with her experience, even though I'm not.

And, at the end of this film, I almost felt like I knew her personally.

Yeah, absolutely.

Ah, before you see the film, we have a deaf acknowledgement to make.

Liz

We acknowledge and respect the members of the Deaf Communities in Australia, who preserve their rich heritage, culture and our language: Auslan (Australian Sign Language). We also acknowledge our custodians of Auslan, promoting awareness, equality and access through our sign language.