

MODERN PAINTERS

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CORNELIA PARKER

WHITECHAPEL LABORATORY

Cornelia Parker has erased all identifiable evidence of herself, the questioner, from this filmed conversation with the eminent American theorist Noam Chomsky. The clarity of his answers, however, effectively relegates one's instinct to extrapolate the questions to

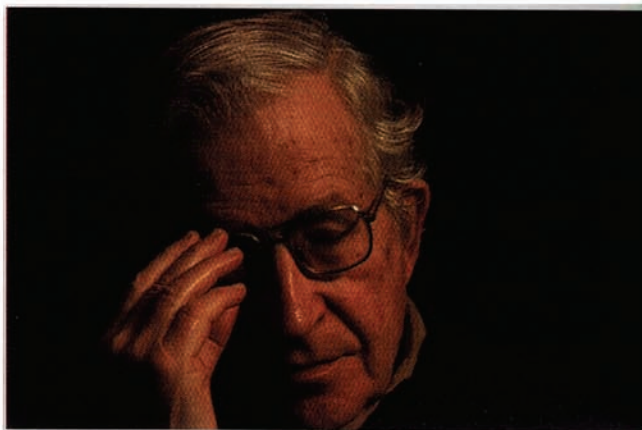
the level of box ticking. Other modes of communication may spring to mind when viewing this video (political documentary, media interview, academic lecture), but essentially it's a thorough discussion during which Chomsky explains the suspect global processes that link ecology, politics, and business. The focus is on the US, but his revelations of the shared means through which

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market makers and political systems influence public life, implicate everyone.

Several digressive pauses between insightful nuggets enable temporary disconnection of the intellectual content from the camera's static study of the subject, allowing Chomsky's innate humanity to be evidenced as much by the silent play of his facial expressions as by his words. Documentary film might seem a radical departure for Parker, yet this conversation's apocalyptic undertones easily situate it within her concerns for the destruction and salvage of everyday matter. One might argue that through the work of art this vital exchange is delivered from the politics of presentation into the arena of commodity. However, on view for free in a public institution, the film feels a step nearer to the widely disseminated social artifact it could potentially be.

—REBECCA GELDARD



Cornelia Parker, *Chomskian Abstract*, 2007. DVD, 42 min. Courtesy the artist and Frith Street Gallery, London. Commissioned by Ikon Gallery and Sharjah Biennial 8.