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## Cornelia Parker



*Cold Dark Matter: An Exploded View* 1991, Mixed media

'Cold Dark Matter', resembles the explosion of a garden shed. Cornelia Parker has gotten the British Army to blow up her garden shed, only to reassemble the bits and pieces in a gallery. The purpose of using a light bulb in the middle of the sculpture is to give the effect that the garden shed was exploding and therefore emitting light from the centre. Her sculpture is reassembled in a way that it looks as if time has stood still and the explosion has been paused in action.

Before the explosion Parker filled the shed with many objects such as; silver objects were found within the artwork such as forks. This, although seemingly random, created a link to another of her works 'Thirty Pieces of Silver' (1988). In this work she has flattened the silver cutlery with a steam roller, into an exact width. This work embodies the transformation of objects from their former identity and destroying them using an extreme force. Also domestic items were found within the sculpture (often metal) such as teapots. They are a commonly recognized theme that reoccurs in many of Parker's sculptures. She used the teapot that was used in her other sculpture 'Object that Fell off the White Cliffs of Dover' (1992).

This sculpture was mainly about the deconstruction of objects and the different forms they can take. Lastly, Parker had included expectable items that you'd find in a garden shed such as; wooden frames (that resemble a window), garden rakes, parts of flower pots, parts of a lawnmower and gumboots.

*Parker's compelling transformations of familiar, everyday objects investigate the nature of matter, test physical properties and play on private and public meaning and value. Using materials that have a history loaded with association, a feather from Sigmund Freud's pillow for example, Parker has employed numerous methods of exploration- suspending, exploding, crushing, stretching objects and even language through her titles. – Wikipedia*

This means that the contents of the shed carry their own stories. What Parker does is to continue that story in a new direction but not obliterate it. No matter how destructive the forces are the objects still carry something of their past into the future.

Cornelia Parker's reoccurring idea of exploding objects and transforming them to create a new identity, is important to show her idea of the affect materialistic objects have on our lives. Such as in 'Thirty Pieces of Silver' She has changed their structure and removed their inability to function properly by flattening them and reducing their value and worth, therefore destroying them and consigning them to the same fate.

She shows the transformation and deconstruction of objects but shows that they still have a purpose by using the same objects in her sculptures. Exploding objects allows Parker to understand expansion in terms of forces and intensity but also in the sense that the value and worth of the objects she uses, is expanding by the way she is able to reuse many of the objects in previous works and therefore giving them a new meaning and idea.

*"I resurrect things that have been killed off...My work is all about the potential of materials – even when it looks like they've lost all possibilities."*<sup>1</sup> Here she is saying that all objects, even when they have been destroyed, can be useful and can create new meanings for the objects.

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