KINONIK

THE COMFORT OF STRANGERS (1990)

Directed by Paul Schrader

WEDNESDAY June 17th 7PM

SATURDAY June 20th 2PM / 7PM



Among my favorite English words insinuation ranks as an all-timer.

Merging with traffic. Flowing on foot into a crowd of pedestrians. The opening gambit of an eavesdropper. A sideways accusation or a needle breaking the skin. Harold Pinter writing four characters talking around a thing. Christopher Walken squirming his way into your pants.

Each calculated dissonance in Badalamenti's waltzing dirge of a score; Spinotti's disembodied post-giallo SteadiCam; Everett, Richardson, Mirren and Walken performing with a degree of seriousness and discipline beyond the expectations of a thriller... all unified by Schrader's weird sleights of hand that prevent this film from being one.

A genre tease was always a risky move, so let me be blunt: this is not a thriller. The print we present this week will hopefully heighten what Schrader's earlier audiences weren't primed to see: "Just like language can have a surface of politeness, I tried to create a beautiful surface, an apple that is so shiny and so delicious that you can't help but bite into it."

Maybe it's just me, but a chomp is not the right way to eat an apple. It always scrapes your gums. The introduction of a sharp knife is the best way, really, to open one up.

Come, bask in the light of these summer shadows.