

# SEAN KELLY

"Exhibitions, the Lookout ," *Art in America*, February, 2017.

# Art in America

## EXHIBITIONS THE LOOKOUT



Johan Grimonprez  
**at Sean Kelly,**  
**through Mar. 11**  
475 Tenth Avenue

Belgian artist and filmmaker Johan Grimonprez assembled *blue orchids* (2017) from footage of interviews he conducted while working on *Shadow World*, a documentary about the arms trade that premiered last year. The sustained attention to two subjects—Chris Hedges, a journalist who was fired by the *New York Times* for his public opposition to the Iraq War, and Riccardo Privitera, a former arms dealer—offer sobering, personal perspectives on a global network of violence. Grimonprez's camerawork and editing hedges documentary's claims on veracity; some of the first shots focus on the lighting and how it constructs the audience's perception of his subjects. News footage outtakes include Tony Blair and George W. Bush laughing when confronted by a reporter's question about bribery, and Margaret Thatcher practicing the inflection of her declaration of war on Argentina. Hedges and Privitera articulate similar opinions about the rampant corruption of the arms trade, but from diametrically opposed positions. *blue orchids* takes its title from the name of an escort agency that Privitera says he used to entertain weapons procurers. Money and sex are all that matters in business, he says—a conclusion that dovetails with Hedges's somber declarations on the libidinal economy of power that promulgates violence and obstructs justice. Screenings of the 48-minute video begin on the hour. —*Brian Droitcour*

Pictured: Johan Grimonprez: *blue orchids*, 2017, video, 48 minutes. Courtesy Sean Kelly, New York.