



Performing Consumers: Global Capital and its Theatrical Seductions

Maurya Wickstrom

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Performing Consumers is an exploration of the way in which brands insinuate themselves into the lives of ordinary people who encounter them at branded superstores.

Looking at our performative desire to 'try on' otherness, Maurya Wickstrom employs five American brandscapes to serve as case studies: Ralph Lauren; Niketown; American Girl Place; Disney store and *The Lion King*; and The Forum Shops at Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas. In this post-product era, each builds for the performer/consumer an intensely pleasurable, somatic experience of merging into the brand and reappearing as the brand, or the brand's fictional meanings.

To understand this embodiment as the way that capital is producing subjectivity as an aspect of itself, Wickstrom casts a wide net, drawing on:

- the history of capital's relationship with theatre
- political developments in the United States
- recent work in political science, philosophy, and performance studies.

An adventurous study of theatrical indeterminacy and material culture, *Performing Consumers* brilliantly takes corporate culture to task.

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