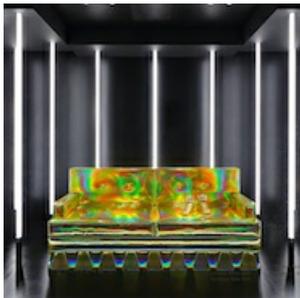


IN-STORE

Barneys breaks down New York-style living in quirky window display

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Barneys New York window display developed with Margaret Lee; photo by Tom Sibley

By STAFF REPORTS

Department store chain Barneys New York is turning its windows into an art gallery through a collaboration with Margaret Lee.

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Ms. Lee has taken over six panes at Barneys' Madison Avenue store and downtown Chelsea location, humorously exploring the sterile home environment many New Yorkers try to keep through domestic scenes. Through this depiction of flawed attempts at perfection, the artist is speaking to a local audience about control and consumption.

Life on display

Ms. Lee is perhaps most well-known for her installations, which often investigate the topic of luxury consumerism. The artist and founder of the galleries 179 Canal and 47 Canal also works in photography, sculpture and painting.



Barneys window display

"Margaret is one of the most intelligent, insightful artists," said Dennis Freedman, creative director at Barneys New York, in a statement. "She's very interested in objects and environments and has explored those ideas through her installation work.

"Her own practice has many parallels to the world of luxury consumerism," he said. "I knew she had the right sensibility to collaborate on a project like this."

Ms. Lee's perspective as a gallery owner gives way for this window display, titled "Having It Both Ways," which takes an eccentric look at the curatorial impulses of New Yorkers, whose homes act like gallery spaces.

One downtown window shows a fridge stocked solely with handpainted watermelons, while an uptown pane features a pristine bathroom with a fully functioning sink, with the order disturbed by a strewn Gareth Pugh raincoat.



Barneys window display

Scattered throughout the scenes is fashion merchandise, including a Dries Van Noten faux fur cape produced exclusively for Barneys, an exclusive Maison Margiela handbag made in Italy and a Rimowa suitcase.

"A lot of my work, and therefore these windows, is about when the balance shifts, and no matter how hard you try to make things perfect, your humanness shines through," Ms. Lee said. "You can't fight your own peculiarities like having a fridge stocked with only watermelons and a handbag or matching your couch to your gold Margiela sneakers."

Vocalist Helga Davis developed a spoken word soundtrack to accompany the windows.

Ms. Lee's window displays for Barneys will be up through June 26.

Art frequently has a place in retailer windows.

Department store Bergdorf Goodman previewed Sotheby's upcoming Contemporary Art Day Sale with a store window display of art mixed with apparel.

The displays, up from Sept. 26 through Oct. 13, 2014 featured work from the likes of Andy Warhol and Damien Hirst, representing the first time the retailer had used work of this scale in its windows. In addition to creating a street-level gallery to attract consumers, this gave Sotheby's publicity for its upcoming sale ([see story](#)).

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