

## PRODUCT PLACEMENT Text

Gridspace, Brooklyn, NY

PRODUCT PLACEMENT is an ongoing series of site-responsive artworks that place red, white and blue balloons printed with text into urban, suburban, and landscape settings. Here in the storefront window of Gridspace I have selected 12 images from various interventions in Kansas City, Missouri; Alma, Kansas; Manhattan and Brooklyn, New York; Venice, Italy; Lopud Island, Dubrovnik, Croatia; and Berlin, Germany. The interaction of objects, words, location and people in diverse national and international locations provoke multiple meanings and interpretations of the work.

### *Origin of the project*

In the fall of 2001 I was doing research into the psychology of consumption in preparation for a site-specific installation in a gallery surrounded by big box retail stores in Kansas. Then the attacks of September 11th happened. At that historical moment President Bush urged all Americans to go out and fulfill their patriotic duty and shop. In response, I created the installation *Retail Therapy 2002* which turned the gallery into a red, white and blue color coordinated superstore, fully equipped with floor to ceiling industrial shelving, pallets, and giant round balloons printed with text. The balloons served as what I called product surrogates hollow products containing only air. Each was printed with a single word. It was my way of using the incessant quotidian language of the time, buzzwords taken from marketing and media. Retail Therapy questioned whether we could simply go out and buy normalcy, security, relief, before, belonging, duty, happiness, life and liberty as a therapeutic prescription or antidote to emotionally and economically deal with a national tragedy.

Now ten years later, the quotidian lexicon of *Retail Therapy* finds its way into my current project *Product Placement*. Documented with photography and video, the product surrogates-text balloons are handled, bought, transported, exported, tethered, tossed, kicked, free floating and bursting in public space.

Returning the piece to NY has a particular poignancy and critique. Now seen in the context of our current economic reality in the United States, the tenets of the 99% occupy movement, and the debatable issues in the upcoming Presidential election allow these works to have new relevance and resonance in our minds and hearts. Personal, universal, situational, Wall Street, Main Street, Madison Avenue, Nostrand Avenue- issues of difference, sameness, disparity, race, class, and human desire continue to be explored in this ongoing project.