

## The female body as a consumer object: from 'edible woman' to 'some body'.

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In *Satisfaction Guaranteed* (2000), a new brand with a range of consumer products, Polish artist Joanna Rajkowska deliberately uses the language of consumer culture, market economy, and branding to draw attention to categories used to oppress women. She portrays the female body packaged as products to be consumed and invites us to 'utilise [her] body'. Similarly, Aleksandra Ska (from Poland) in the video *Fat Love* (2009) portrays a woman tenderly caressing the 'beads' of her necklace made of sausages. She plays with food as a sexual metaphor in order to highlight sensuality of consumption used to emphasise woman's sexuality. Rajkowska and Ska portray deliciousness of the female body, however they do this differently and raise different issues pertaining to the problematic contextualisation of the female body as a consumer object.

The body is a material organism but it is also a site of identification where a strong 'I' emerges. Since early feminists claimed their bodies and identities as women, women started desiring to be 'some body'. Through a discussion on specific art projects by Joanna Rajkowska and Aleksandra Ska, this paper explores how women artists negotiate consumer culture and challenge the status of the female body as a desirable object. Both artists use the language of consumption as their own marketing tool to mobilise issues of the private and the public, communal consumption and the female body. Rajkowska twists the consumer routine and to produce the products of Joanna Rajkowska, she uses herself as an ingredient. She made commercial merchandise literally from her body and her. The project is an intimate self-portrait turned into commercial products for sale. Similarly, Ska offers a woman to be tasted.

Through radical interventions into representational strategies of the female body, Rajkowska and Ska expose the norms and values that are established and dictated by the capitalist society and manipulated onto the consumer. They observe, subvert and deconstruct consumer practices to unmask mechanisms of cultural consumption, which victimise women. They demonstrate that the female body is not to be consumed and digested visually but can be an *active* powerful tool in producing identity beyond bipolar patriarchal discourses and canons reinforced by the rise of consumerism and mass production. Through emphasising issues attached to the politics of vision, they negotiate the role of the female body as an *active subject* and a *producer* of culture rather than passive object stereotypically associated in market economy with physicality.