

Shehmir Shaiki, Ayesha Sohail, "Rachel Hovnanian's Open Secrets Exhibition On Personal Beauty And Digital Technology."  
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ARABIA <sup>Harper's</sup> BAZAAR

## Rachel Hovnanian's Open Secrets Exhibition On Personal Beauty And Digital Technology



Natural Beauty. 2010. Photograph in archival ink on rag paper. Image: 22 x 28 inches, Sheet: 26 x 32 inches

Launching 20 July, **New York**-based multidisciplinary artist **Rachel Hovnanian**'s first solo museum show spans ten years of work from paintings, sculptures, interactive installations to works on paper and videos. Entitled *Open Secrets* and housed within the 16th Century Palazzo Mediceo in Tuscany, Italy, the exhibition explores the effects of media and human relationships with technology.

"I conceived and realized this exhibition to initiate complex dialogues on modern relationships with technology", says Hovnanian, "With my works, I want to challenge viewers to confront the potential future of digital technology, and the role that humanity will have with society's alienating addiction to modern technology."

Curated by Italian actress Annalisa Bugliani, in collaboration with Galleria Poggiali and the Terre Medicee Foundation, Hovnanian portrays the emphasis on perfection and **media** influences that are prominent in the digital age. Comprising 23 works from *Beauty Queen Totem* (2009) to *Traveling Ape* (2019), the artist highlights the effects of digital communication and the ways in which reality can be obscured through this mode.

Entitled *Natural Beauty* (2010) from the *Too Good To Be True* series, the photograph depicts the desire for women to achieve a perfect youthful aesthetic. Similarly, *Natural Athlete* (2010)

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represents the societal pressures to maintain the ideal male body type. The thought-provoking works question beliefs surrounding personal beauty, the measures that we take to achieve it, as well as the role that **technology** plays in shaping our ideals and disrupting our realities.

*Open Secrets launches 20 July until 15 September at the 16th Century Palazzo Mediceo in northern Tuscany*



*Natural Athlete*. 2010. Photograph in archival ink on rag paper. Image: 22 x 28 inches, Sheet: 26 x 32 inches.  
Courtesy of the artist