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"New York artist Rachel Lee Hovnanian's first solo show in Italy entitled 'Open Secrets'." *Arte Today*. (July 18, 2019).

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## New York artist Rachel Lee Hovnanian's first solo show in Italy entitled "Open Secrets"



It opens Saturday, July 20 (inauguration at 6pm), in the Medici Palace, Unesco World Heritage, in Seravezza in Versilia (Lu), the first solo show in Italy of the American artist, originally from Texas but stable for many years in New York, Rachel Lee Hovnanian entitled "Open Secrets". The exhibition, curated by Annalisa Bugliani and organized by Pechersky Family Foundation (London) in collaboration with Galleria Poggiali and the Terre Medicee Foundation, embraces the last ten years of work of this multi-faceted and multidisciplinary artist, who has always been linked to Versilia and has just come from a personal at the Leila Heller Gallery in New York, which combines painting, sculpture, interactive installations, works on paper and video art. Today the exhibition was presented at a press conference attended by the artist, the curator, the mayor of Seravezza Riccardo Tarabella, the councilor for culture Giacomo Genovesi and Marina Pechersky of the Pechersky Family Foundation. With "Open Secrets", open until September 15, Hovnanian proposes a personal artistic research on the dependence on social media and substance abuse, such as alcohol and the pressures of contemporary society through a female goal. In his works the social themes that reveal the dichotomy between personal value systems and our public image are addressed, continuing and

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deepening his previous project: "Perfect Baby Showroom". The exhibition path of "Open Secrets" composed of 31 works including installations, works and sculptures, highlights with irony the infatuation of society for hyper-connectivity. Despite all the new media, Hovnanian asks: "Are we connecting more intimately with others in this post-internet era?" From this starting point, the exhibition highlights the pressures exerted on individuals to use these new modes, to show our increasingly interesting lives and cared for. But in the quest for gratification, our increasingly virtual lives have begun to influence and obscure our relationship with reality. "Open Secrets" then reveals the double existences that have evolved online through the advent of the digital revolution. Among the exhibited works, one can see in particular the series of works "Too Good to be True", the installation "Swipe Left, Swipe Right" and the monumental "Beauty Queen Totem". The large Carrara marble sculpture, placed in the lawn in front of the Palace, winner of a competition in which the artist expresses the idea that our conceptions of beauty are encoded as touchstones of social power. Following the genesis of social media platforms and the ubiquity of smartphones, Hovnanian then created "Dinner for Two", an installation that shows a long dining table. Sitting at both ends there are two diners, represented with their images on a screen. Rather than looking at each other, the two characters spend most of their time looking at their phones. The installation sound reproduces only digital notification sounds. With the video installation entitled "CREEPS", the artist tells with his style how we offer our personal information in exchange for the opportunity to participate in the virtual "square". With the "Happy Hour" series,

