

LEILA HELLER.

"Open Secrets', Rachel Lee Hovnanian's first solo exhibition in Seravezza." *La Voce di Lucca*. (July 18, 2019).



'Open Secrets', Rachel Lee Hovnanian's first solo exhibition in Seravezza

There are 31 works by the American artist exhibited from July 20 to September 15, 2019 in the Palazzo Mediceo and other places in Versilia. Art as a denunciation of new digital dependencies and against the obsessive search for perfection

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. His works deal with the social themes that reveal the dichotomy between personal value systems and our public image, continuing and 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,



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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 works on display, 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 series 'Happy Hour', 'House of Empty Bottles' and the sculpture 'Taped Shut', Hovnanian then expresses his dramatic personal experience of a woman raised in a family where the effects of addiction, in this case alcohol, are they have been hidden by social pressures aimed at offering an image of perfection in spite of everything. "I conceived and realized this exhibition - explains Rachel Lee Hovnanian - to start complex dialogues on modern relations with technology. With my works I want to challenge viewers to confront themselves with the future potential of digital communication, and on the role that humanity will be able to play". "Rachel Lee Hovnanian is one of the first artists to have touched on the theme of social media addiction - explains curator Annalisa Bugliani -, in fact for years she has understood that these tools have changed and distorted our lives and it is the most addictive form of addiction. strong that will overwhelm everything ". "We are proud to take this journey together with the American antistake - said Mayor Riccardo Tarabella - because this exhibition represents a leap for us in the future. After many summer exhibitions dedicated to the art of the past, it is the first time that we bring contemporary art into the Palazzo Mediceo and even more interesting is the fact that we have an artist like Rachel Lee Hovnanian of very high profile who still has a lot to say ". "Open Secrets" is a positive project that does not stop only at the Palazzo Mediceo in Seravezza but presents some side events in other places in Versilia. The Poggiali Gallery of Pietrasanta exhibits until July 26 the exhibition entitled "Silence" with a series of rigorously white works, which in this circumstance allude to the theme of whiteness and naturalness. "Open Secrets" also makes a stop at the Malo Boutique in Forte dei Marmi with NND Immersion Room, an installation presented for the first time in New York. Until mid-September, the boutique's garden becomes the setting for a strong and totally immersive experience. Finally a work by the artist will be exhibited in Forte dei Marmi in Piazza Tonini. The Poggiali Gallery of Pietrasanta exhibits until July 26 the exhibition entitled "Silence" with a series of rigorously white works, which in this circumstance allude to the theme of whiteness and naturalness. "Open Secrets" also makes a stop at the Malo Boutique in Forte dei Marmi with NND Immersion Room, an installation presented for the first time in New York. Until mid-September, the

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Rachel Lee Hovnanian

Born in West Virginia and raised in Houston, Texas, Rachel Lee Hovnanian is a New York artist whose multidisciplinary practice explores the complexities of modern feminism, the ideals of perfection and the effects of media on the collective consciousness. Hovnanian earned his Bachelor of Fine Art from the University of Texas at Austin. Since then he has exhibited in solo and group exhibitions in the United States, Asia, Europe and the Middle East. His work is in private collections, companies and museums.

www.rachelleehovnanian.com | [@rachelleehovnanian](https://www.instagram.com/rachelleehovnanian)

Medici Palace of Seravezza

The Palazzo Mediceo was built in 1560 by Cosimo I and used as a residence for the Medici family when they visited the nearby marble quarries of Carrara and Pietrasanta. The palace is a UNESCO world heritage site and has been a museum since 1996. Seravezza is a river town near Lucca immersed in the landscape of the Apuan Alps. Originally founded as a mining town for iron, Seravezza soon became a place frequented by sculptors due to its proximity to the marble quarries. www.palazzomediceo.it | [@palazzomediceoseravezza](https://www.instagram.com/palazzomediceoseravezza)

Exhibition: "Open Secrets" by Rachel Lee Hovnanian

Palazzo Mediceo Viale Leonetto Amedei, 230 - 55047 Seravezza (Lucca) Italy

Open every day from Saturday 20 July to 15 September 2019, from 5 to 11 pm, full ticket 7 euros reduced by 5 euros. Info: www.palazzomediceo.it www.rachelleehovnanian.com