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Bettina's Take: Rachel Lee Hovnanian's "Mud Pie" Preview at Leila Heller Gallery

By Bettina Zilkha 05/04/12 at 03:15 PM 2 Comments and 3 Reactions

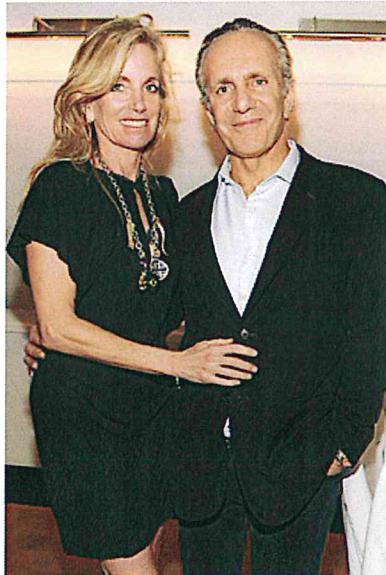


Photo: Patrick McMullan

Rachel Hovnanian is an artist whose work is always evolving. Each incarnation has hit the rare combination of being cerebrally engaging as well aesthetically pleasing.

Her most recent work, currently on exhibit at the Leila Heller Gallery, is no exception. The name of the exhibition is Mud Pie, and it explores the links we have lost to what is real, the experiences of closeness and sharing, to the narcissistic side of digital life. The exhibition includes

photographs, a performance piece called Cafe, which recreates a small cafe in Texas, an elegant dinner table installation for two with husband and wife replaced by LCD panels, and the gorgeous Gates of Narcissus Metal Panels.

"We've forgotten what is real," said Hovnanian. "Fast food chains replaced cafes; children think a package of pink powder mixed with water is real lemonade made with freshly squeezed pink lemons. We think we have 1,000 real friends on Facebook. We are sucked into our screens and can't find the time to separate from technology. Only when the power is down, or if we are visiting a remote place with no wireless, can we take a break."

Hovnanian's friends—and there are many—came to toast the artist for a preview on May 2nd.

"Has it been sold? I like that one," was heard everywhere as Beth De Woody, George Farias, Alex Hitz, Felicia Taylor, Emma Askari (here from London for Frieze), Zani Gugelmann, Eva and Lorenzo Lorenzotti, Larry Creel, Gigi Mortimer, Carlos Mota, Jenny and John Paulson, and Nicole Miller admired

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DAILY QUOTE



"Having Carrie wear the (Fendi) Baguette was a defining moment for us, and marked the beginning of everything...Once Fendi loaned us items, everyone was more willing to do so, which helped us dramatically in conveying Carrie's decadence." —**Sarah Jessica Parker** via the Financial Times

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the work.

After the preview, guests walked, or rode, to the nearby Son Cubano for mojitos and a Cuban feast to toast the artist and her latest achievement.

The show is definitely worth seeing.

Photo: Rachel Lee Hovnanian and Ara Hovnanian

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It almost had us fooled (only because we'd been traipsing

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NanCohen

Love her work! The silver paintings are so beautiful and a must see is the dining table with the missing people and talking IPADS. After seeing the show I have no idea what is real anymore. Next we will have avatar eating for us to stay thin! BBQ food byte was very strange indeed.

1 week ago

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