

Tcholaklan, Danielle. "Free Lucky Charms and Frosted Flakes Coming to Artist's Pop-Up in Soho," *DNA*, (September 4, 2014)

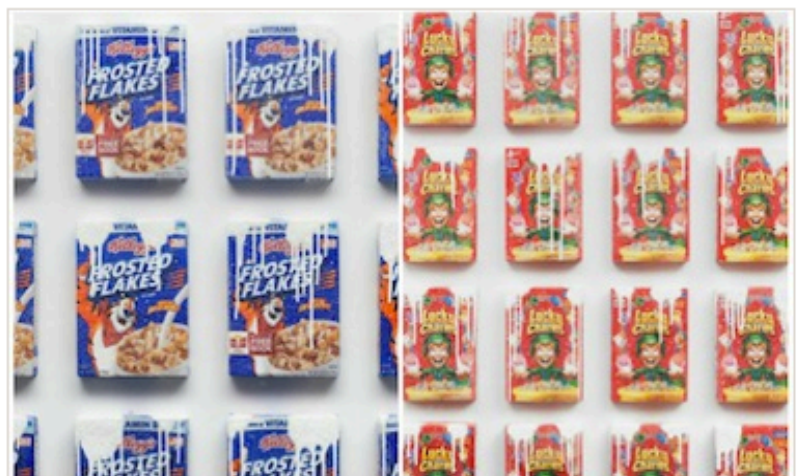
DNAinfo New York

Free Lucky Charms and Frosted Flakes Coming to Artist's Pop-Up Cafe in SoHo

SOHO — This exhibition's *grrrrrrrrreat*.

An artist is investigating her own relationship to technology — and sugary cereal — with a pop-up cafe and free cereal bar in **SoHo** later this month that aims to draw parallels between the two.

Rachel Lee Hovnanian's "Instant Gratification" installation will open Sept. 18 at 452 West Broadway, where visitors can get free bowls of Frosted Flakes or Lucky Charms from clear plastic containers. The space will also offer free Wi-Fi, in an attempt connect the ideas of overindulging on sweet cereal and social media.



Rachel Lee Hovnanian's "Instant Gratification" will open in SoH...

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Rachel Lee Hovnanian

Hovnanian said the exhibition was inspired in part by her mother, who ran a cooking school, was a gourmet chef and was distinctly not a fan of sugar cereal

"She basically would not allow me to have all those things," the artist said. "I would beg because all my friends were eating them. Whatever you don't get, you want, you know?"

Hovnanian's mother disliked what she saw as "synthetic" food.

"Like with Tang," Hovnanian said. "She would say, 'Why would you have fake orange juice when you could have the real thing?'"

This got Hovnanian thinking about her relationship to her phone and social media, which is often criticized as a sort of "synthetic" form of human interaction, she said.

"I'm so on my phone all the time. I just can't leave home without it, basically," she said. "I sort of put those two together."

Hovnanian said that neither sugar cereal nor social media are objectively bad — but they're better in moderation.

"I'm addicted to being online, I'm addicted to Wi-Fi, having Wi-Fi," she said. "I think there's, like, this little pause where I have to say, 'OK, wait a minute, I can eat a whole box of cereal, I can spend five hours on the phone.'"

Hovnanian said rather than casting judgment, she's using the topics as means for discussion as an artist.

"I'm sort of pausing to say, 'OK, this is all fun and it's great and I love it,'" she said, "'but we gotta also sort of watch ourselves so that we don't get totally sucked in all the time.'"

The installation is running at the same time as Hovnanian's show "Plastic Perfect," which opened Thursday, Sept. 4, at the Leila Heller Gallery in Chelsea and will be on view through Oct. 18.

"Instant Gratification" opens Sept. 18 at 6 p.m., and will be open 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. for the following three days, through Sept. 21.