

# LEILA HELLER.

"Open Secrets, international audience at the inauguration of the exhibition." *Versilia Today*. (July 22, 2019).

**Versiliatoday**<sup>®</sup>  
*Il quotidiano del giorno prima*



## Open Secrets, international audience at the inauguration of the exhibition

The "Open Secrets" exhibition was inaugurated on Saturday, the first solo show by American artist Rachel Lee Hovnanian in Italy. Palazzo Mediceo welcomed many visitors, many of them foreigners, who crowded the exhibition halls until late in the evening to admire the works of this artist who, as a central theme of her courageous artistic research, exposes the denunciation of the dependencies: the old ones like the alcohol, but above all new ones related to the unbridled use of technology, such as smartphones and social media.

Together with the public also many experts, gallery owners, critics, journalists and institutions represented at all levels. Together with the mayor of Seravezza Riccardo Tarabella and the councilor for the promotion and development of the territory Giacomo Genovesi, in fact, the president of the Regional Council Eugenio Giani and the parliamentarian Umberto Buratti were present.

«For Seravezza this exhibition represents an important novelty, a different formula from the past: the qualified attendance at today's inauguration, the interest generated in so many people, the great visibility that Seravezza has acquired in Italian newspapers since foreigners comfort us on the goodness of our choice, "said mayor Riccardo Tarabella. "The sums will be drawn at the end, but there are the premises to expect very positive results".

"The Medici Villa of Seravezza opens up to contemporary art with an exhibition of great charm and particular emotion", added the president Giani. "It is very nice to see the contrast between memory and the future: the memory represented by a villa commissioned by Cosimo I de Medici, whose 500 years of birth and the 450 years in which he became Grand Duke recurs this year and gave a precise

# LEILA HELLER.

identity to Tuscany; the future of an exhibition and artistic space that through contemporary art enters a planetary dimension on issues of great importance. The fight against addictions is a commitment that also arises in the institutions.

The art of the Hovnanian makes us reflect - even with a dose of irony and from a feminine point of view - on the pitfalls of a society that is increasingly infatuated with hyperconnectivity, which aims to annul human relationships and that drives us to obsessively search for a virtual identity that aims to show our increasingly interesting and cared for lives. "But in the search for this gratification," the artist says, "our digital existences have begun to influence and obscure our relationship with reality."

The exhibition, curated by Annalisa Bugliani and organized by Pechersky Family Foundation (London) in collaboration with Galleria Poggiali and Fondazione Terre Medicee, embraces the last ten years of work of this multi-faceted and multidisciplinary artist who combines painting, sculpture, interactive installations, works on paper and video art. The "Open Secrets" exhibition consists of 31 works, including the "Too Good to be True" series of works, the "Swipe Left, Swipe Right" installation, a video installation dominated by faces transformed into emoji, and the monumental "Beauty Queen Totem", a large Carrara marble sculpture placed on the lawn in front of the Palazzo, 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",

"Open Secrets" is an exhibition project that does not stop only at the Palazzo Mediceo in Seravezza but expands into 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 bronze sculpture by the artist is exhibited in Forte dei Marmi in Piazza Tonini.

The exhibition is open at Palazzo Mediceo until 15 September, every day from 17:00 to 23:00.