

RACHEL LEE HOVNIANIAN'S
Open Secrets
AT THE PALAZZO MEDICEO IN SERAVEZZA, ITALY



Above: Rachel Lee Hovnanian, Foreplay, 2014
Courtesy of the artist.

Open Secrets
On View: Saturday, July 20, 2019 – Sunday, September 15, 2019
Opening Night: Saturday, July 20, 2019, 6:30-8PM

SERAVEZZA, ITALY – We are pleased to announce contemporary artist **Rachel Lee Hovnanian's** exhibition of *Open Secrets* at the **Palazzo Mediceo** in Seravezza, Italy. *Open Secrets* is an exhibition spanning ten years of work from the New York based multidisciplinary artist that combines painting, sculpture, interactive installations, works on paper, and video art. It will be the artist's first solo museum exhibition in Tuscany.

With *Open Secrets*, Hovnanian posits a Humanist approach that emphasizes our autonomy within this digital age of addiction to perfection. Much like Hovnanian's oeuvre as a whole, *Open Secrets* delves into the embedded societal mores that reveal the dichotomy between our intrinsic value systems and our public selves, as seen in "Perfect Baby Showroom."

Open Secrets highlights the irony of society's infatuation with hyper-connectivity: despite all the new digital means of communication, Hovnanian asks, are we connecting with others as closely in this post-internet age? The exhibition brings to light the unspoken pressures on individuals to use these new modes of communication to display our curated lives. In seeking gratification, our increasingly virtual lives have begun to influence and overshadow our realities. *Open Secrets* reveals the dual realities fostered by our new virtual lives that have evolved online through the rise of the digital revolution.

Rachel Lee Hovnanian's oeuvre has long been attentive to the effects of media on our psyches, notably with her series "Too Good to be True", her installation "Swipe Left, Swipe Right," and her monumental "Beauty Queen Totem." A larger-than-life Carrara marble sculpture of a pageant winner, "Beauty Queen Totem" speaks to the idea that conceptions of beauty in our mediagenic age are codified as touchstones of social power.

Following the genesis of social media platforms and the ubiquity of smartphones, Hovnanian created "Dinner for Two", her installation of a hyperbolically-long dining table set for supper. Seated at either end are two diners, represented as their likeness on a screen. Rather than looking at each other, the diners spend most of their time gazing at their phones. The installation's audio plays only digital notification sounds.

With her "Happy Hour" series, "House of Empty Bottles", and "Taped Shut" sculpture, Hovnanian uses her own personal experience of growing up in a household where the effects of addiction were hushed because of societal pressures towards an image of perfection.

The rise of digital technology has allowed for great strides in science and in global connectivity. As explored in Hovnanian's video installation "C.R.E.E.P.S.," we openly offer our personal information in exchange for the opportunity to participate in the digital revolution. **Rachel Lee Hovnanian** uses this exhibition to initiate difficult conversations surrounding modern relationships with technology. With this collective body of work, Hovnanian challenges viewers to confront the potential future of digital technology.

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About Rachel Lee Hovnanian

Born in West Virginia and raised in Houston, Texas, Rachel Lee Hovnanian is a New York-based artist whose multidisciplinary practice explores the complexities of modern feminism, ideals of perfection, and the effects of media on collective consciousness. Hovnanian received her BFA from the University of Texas, Austin, and has since exhibited in both solo and group exhibitions in the United States, Asia, Europe, and the Middle East. Her work is in the collections of private individuals, corporations, and museums.

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

About The Palazzo Mediceo

Built in the 1560s by Cosimo I Medici, the Palazzo Mediceo di Seravezza was used as a residence for the Medici family when they were visiting the nearby marble quarries in Carrara and Pietrasanta. The palace has been named as a UNESCO World Heritage site and has housed the Museum since 1996. Seravezza is a riverside town in Lucca nestled in the Apuan Alps. Initially established as a mining town for iron, Seravezza soon became recognized as a site for sculptors because of the nearby marble quarries.

palazzomediceo.it | [@palazzomediceoseravezza](https://www.instagram.com/palazzomediceoseravezza)

Open Secrets

The Palazzo Mediceo

Viale Leonetto Amedei, 230 - 55047

Seravezza (Lucca) Italy

Saturday, July 20th – Sunday, September 15th, 2019

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