

# GLAMOUR

## SLAVES TO FASHION

DAILY STYLE BLOG

### What Do You Hear When You Step Into The Dressing Room?

Wednesday, 10/28/2009 at 3:19 PM [Comments \(21\)](#)

"You shouldn't have eaten those Cheetos."

"Do I need more Botox?"

"It must be the lighting in here." Sound familiar?



Artist [Rachel Lee Hovnanian's latest exhibition](#), "Power and Burden of Beauty," opens tomorrow at [a pop-up Jason McCoy gallery here in NYC](#) and examines the emphasis we place on striving for beauty and the damage we do to ourselves in trying to get there. One of the coolest pieces in the exhibit is the dressing room installation, pictured above, complete with an unflattering fun-house mirror, intentionally terrible lighting, and an audio component that spits out all of the little phrases we women tend to use to beat ourselves up when we step inside the dressing room: "You shouldn't have eaten those Cheetos," and "Do I need more Botox?" being two of my favorites.

So just how did Rachel find herself examining the power and burden of beauty inside a dressing room, of all places? "We torture ourselves and we can be tortured," she told me when we spoke on the phone earlier today. "It's just about perfection and trying to measure up to those ideals. Everyone has to go shopping to buy clothes and you go into this small room by yourself to try things on and it's a very intimate experience. All of your insecurities really come out when you're there."

She spent time listening to what real women, including her own friends, had to say when they came in and out of the dressing room and turned that into The Fun House Dressing Room, a place that brings our attention to the unattainable standards so many women are unfairly focused on. Rachel (along with Nicole Miller, body image therapist Donna Fish, and a few other guests) will discuss the topic tomorrow night in a panel discussion in NYC, so [head over to her website](#) to find out more if you're interested.

And then tell me, ladies...what do you hear when you step into the dressing room? Is it "You shouldn't have eaten those Cheetos" or "Damn girl, you look great!" Is it a place fraught with body image issues and insecurities for you? Do you dread going shopping because you hate the trying-on part? Or do you feel comfortable enough in your own skin to embrace the dressing room? Do you agree with Rachel that it's a place filled with *impossible standards*? *Please dolls, SHARE!*

Check out "Power and Burden of Beauty" from tomorrow until December 22 at the Jason McCoy gallery, 520 West 20th Street, followed by an installation at 41 East 57th Street. More info at [www.jasonmccoyinc.com](http://www.jasonmccoyinc.com)

Photo: Kevin Nobel/courtesy of Jason McCoy Gallery

by [Tracey Lomrantz](#)



(Average rating 5 stars)

## Comments

My thoughts: "hey! not too shabby! Suck in my stomach. Actually this looks great! But the lighting is terrible. You'd think they would use more flattering lighting so that people would be more apt to buy things. I know they have other sales tricks that they use to get customers to buy more, so you'd think they would know to use more flattering lighting. What shoes do I have to go with this? I really need to find a good pair of brown riding boots for winter that I can tuck my skinny jeans into and wear with sweaters. I wonder if we're going to visit dad's family in Chicago for thanksgiving or stay in town and have mom's relatives over. Ya know it wouldn't kill one of mom's sister to offer to have thanksgiving for once. Oh there's the sales girl knocking on the door. I actually would like to try this top on in a 6, I hate how my boobs make me have to go up a size in tops.."

Posted 10/29/2009 7:35:15pm

by missmaura17

Haha I swear I'm not conceited but I've never felt bad about myself in a dressing room. Sure I'd like it if my stomach was a little flatter but I'm not going to berate myself about in the dressing room!

Posted 10/29/2009 6:25:26pm

by FightingViolet

And sweet exhibit btw!!!

Posted 10/29/2009 12:43:45pm

by ljtretiak

I've had my fair share of mall retail jobs, and the mirrors and lighting and everything the stores use are TERRIBLE. People and customers would talk about them and be upset. Really...what is the point? To make

the person look bad so they don't buy it? Where I worked it was never a problem, but I've seen this problem in so many stores! I don't get it! I HATE trying things on!!

Posted 10/29/2009 12:43:23pm

by ljtretiak

Are there really cameras in fitting rooms? That can't be legal!

Posted 10/29/2009 7:41:01am

by iluvgeddy

I'd usually stare at myself in the mirror check out my butt in the jeans I'm trying on, then I realize how fat I look in the cashmere sweater I was trying on then I get depressed and slam my self-esteem. Not to mention the camera's in the changing rooms I wonder if they like what they see

Posted 10/29/2009 1:36:07am

by Angela100

It depends on the day, but 90 percent of the time I spend time admiring my legs in a mirror. Sometimes it creeps me out to try clothes on, because I wonder who is watching the security tapes, and then it makes me wonder if I had on cute undies that day LOL

Posted 10/28/2009 8:19:37pm

by mizjazzegirl

Thank you for showing this woman artist's work. I went to her website and the crowns are my favorite. The frame is so beautiful, too. I have many memories of looking good and not looking good. It's hard to look as good as the women in the magazines no matter how beautiful you are. It's funny how the internet always has a picture of a celebrity without makeup, which only proves nobody looks as good as in the magazines which should give everybody hope. I love this artwork! Thank you. It's funny, it's sad and it's great!

Posted 10/28/2009 8:11:18pm

by megandynan

Oh this just made me feel really fortunate. I actually don't mind dressing rooms, it's just another mirror with different light. Trying on clothes is fun, it's great to go in there with a friend or my mom and if something doesn't fit one of us right the other one tries it on. I definitely don't have a perfect body but I've grown to appreciate it and finding stuff to put on it is fun. I just wish I could afford more of it!

Posted 10/28/2009 7:51:56pm

by helloagain

Women and teens don't go into dressing rooms because it makes them feel depressed it ruins their entire day. No wonder everyone orders their stuff on the internet and sends it back if the clothes don't fit. My daughter gets depressed for a week and she is in good shape she is always comparing herself to some drugged celebrity with an eating disorder who is a size 0 or is made to look like that with a computer. I can't talk to her about it she just locks herself in her room. I am sick of the issue of looking too fat too thin too ugly too dumpy too this too that. OMG when will it stop! This artist is the only one talking about it. Usually when I am in the dressing room with my daughter there is crying and screaming because nothing is right! I feel helpless because I understand even though I say you look good because I feel the same way if my clothes are too tight or whatever.