

army repeating rifles. Already I don't like the link between rifles and bare legs, but then I read on, and learn that the same brand historically made swords.

At the opening, Kara serves me a plastic cup filled with something she calls her "potion": a homemade concoction of champagne yeast, mugwort, lemon and ginger. I eagerly accept, but hand it off discretely to a willing friend after I've had a few sips. I get the sense that there's magic at work here, some kind of gradual enchantment, and I wonder what might have happened had I finished my glass. Maybe if I'd drunk more of that potion, I think to myself, I could have cured myself of those hypnic jerks that make me jump from my sleep each time I'm about to enter a dream.

I wander into a dark booth, where a projected image is refracted through a series of mirrors and plexiglas panes. Two figures are moving inside a giant white fabric glove, and I marvel at the way their limbs are used so efficiently to activate the costume's five enormous digits: someone's right arm operating the thumb, two legs collaborating clumsily on a middle finger. The glove puts on a sorry show, in a way—the kind of show that might make an audience member get up and leave in the middle. It's a terrifying thing to watch the human body squeeze itself into another form, though it's something we do frequently. I ought to consider this morbid shape-shifting the next time I put on that stubborn pair of skin-tight jeggings, or apply concealer to hide the bags under my eyes. Then again, maybe we're just transformers, Lou and I—though transforming can be a harrowing process. I think I'll go home and exfoliate.

—Jacquelyn Ross

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REVIEW

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Hygiene Tricks & The People at Schick

written
by

Jacquelyn Ross

about
the
exhibition

Hypnic Jerk
Kara Hansen
Spare Room
2F/222 East Georgia Street, Vancouver
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IN THE SHAVING AISLE I'M ASSAULTED
by a stupefying assortment of
coloured razors, foams and waxes.
The women's shaving products



are all pink and lime green; the men's are dark blue and silver and black. I'm listening to that song, "Make Up", from Lou Reed's album *Transformer*, as I cruise through the fluorescent aisles of Shoppers Drug Mart, security guard at my back. *Eyeliner, whitener, then color the eyes. Yellow and green, ooh, what a surprise...* It's kind of a childish, circusy song, with a tuba that follows the melody line. I can't tell from Lou's voice whether he's being earnest or sardonic, especially when he belts out, *you're a slick little girl, oh, you're such a slick little girl...*so many times in the refrain.

I'm sure that the people at Schick are betting on the way my brain might mistake it for "slick" as I intuitively reach for a gold-coloured razor in their aptly-titled *Intuition*™ line. Do I intuitively reach for the *Intuition*™ line because of the brand's association to slickness? Or do I intuitively reach for it because the name *Intuition*™ cajoles me into thinking that such a thing as instinct still exists? Though it's plasticity and over-designed, in the end I'm sold on its promise of "moisturizing ribbons" that eliminate the need for shaving gel. I purchase the item at the till with a playful tap of my Enviro Visa, much to the chagrin of the skulking security guard.

Kara Hansen's exhibition *Hypnic Jerk* is dreamy like the handle of the *Intuition*™ razor and awkwardly surreal like being shaken from a nap by a coworker in the break room with the lights down low. In two large works on paper, gouache is smeared with hair oils and marbled shaving creams by leading market brands Gillette, Mr. Shaver and Max Supreme; an oversized glove hangs from the ceiling sprinkler pipe like a still-damp bath towel. There's something friendly and familiar—but also spooky, and sinister—about a lonely glove making paintings with shaving cream. Although, isn't that what personal hygiene is really like, after all? Tweezers are creepy; my hairbrush, a matted, alien utensil. Moreover, in the "History" section of schick.ca I learn that their innovative safety razor was invented in 1921 by a Colonel Schick (no word play, after all) who was inspired by

