

Gallery review

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Gallery Review: Ana Mendieta's Facial Hair Transplants The exhibition displays seven different pictures, which represents a case of facial hair transplant. In this exhibition, there are two people shown carrying out the transplant. The two are male and a female. In the first row of the picture, the lady and the man both stand before what seems to be a machine. In this picture, both also focus on an object on their hands. It is also notable that the gentleman in the picture has very long hair both on his head and around his face including the chin and on the cheeks. In fact, he looks shaggy and rough in appearance. The lady by his side is, on the other hand, has the hair well attended to and everything on her appears organized. The second picture in the same row indicates both the lady and the gentleman holding on their cheeks as they focus keenly on the object before them.

In the second row, there is the side view of the same lady, but now with very thick layer of side beards and the beards are also all over her chin. The second picture in the row shows the front view of the same lady's face with the hair still around it. In the last picture, in the row, both are shown, the lady right in front of the gentleman, the man also with visible changes on his face. The hair on his head remains intact, but the hair around his face on the cheeks and the chin are all shaved, and these spots remain clear save for the moustache.

In the last row, the first and the second pictures both show the two in front of the machine-like object, now standing side by side and staring at it. Both still have the changes introduced in their faces. In these two pictures, the two interchange their positions. The writing below the exhibition reads, "...is a unique work that examines the boundary of what is typical"

My thoughts about the exhibition

What seems to be exhibited is the work of facial hair transplant from a man to a woman. I tend to believe that the exhibition would want to display to the judgment of the viewers, if the transfer of some of the external features like the facial hair, from a man to a lady would really make a man appear like a woman and a woman like a man.

In my view and judgment, this does not really happen. This is because despite the hair being introduced on to face of the lady, as evidenced in the middle row pictures; the lady still looks feminine while the man whose facial hair has been shaved still appears masculine in all manner of appearance. I think this exhibition informs the viewers that the question of femininity or masculinity is not all about the physical appearance, and I would strongly concur with this. In fact, in the last picture, the two even exchange positions apart from just exchanging the facial pictures, but still it can be easily told at a glance that the one in beards is the lady while the other is the man. This indicates that not only the physical attributes can be used to tell between a man and a woman.

Work cited

Mendieta, Ana. Untitled (Facial Hair Transplant). Hessel Museum of Art. 2012.