ART THAT MATTERS
by Spannenburg.Art

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EXHIBITION REVIEW

The Evolution of 'RESTRAINT'

Published: January 20, 2026

Location: Kunstlinie, Almere, The Netherlands

> *Arjan Spannenburg, an award-winning Dutch fine art photographer and FEP Merit winner celebrated for his raw explorations of identity and human connection, created a pivotal moment in contemporary art history with his installation RESTRAINT. Originally a 200cm monochrome pigment print centerpiece for his People Like Me exhibition at Kunstlinie Almere (October–December 2024), the work was physically vandalized when a visitor severed the canvas, an act that inadvertently manifested the piece's theme of societal pressure on LGBTQ+ intimacy. Rather than retreating, Spannenburg transformed the destruction into a profound "participation artwork," leading a communal restoration joined by Alderman Maaike Veeningen, Meke Smeulders, and Pride Amsterdam chair Suzanna van de Laar. By physically mending the canvas, the community turned a site of violence into a symbol of resilience, leaving the work with a unique provenance that serves as a permanent cultural record of the struggle for LGBTQ+ rights in the Netherlands during the mid-2020s.*

SUMMARY

Arjan Spannenburg, an award-winning Dutch fine art photographer and FEP Merit winner celebrated for his raw explorations of identity and human connection, created a pivotal moment in contemporary art history with his installation RESTRAINT. Originally a 200cm monochrome pigment print centerpiece for his People Like Me exhibition at Kunstlinie Almere (October–December 2024), the work was physically vandalized when a visitor severed the canvas, an act that inadvertently manifested the piece's theme of societal pressure on LGBTQ+ intimacy. Rather than retreating, Spannenburg transformed the destruction into a profound "participation artwork," l…

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GALLERY



ART OPENS PEOPLES EYES AND MINDS.

Art should have an impact

The Quiet Strength of Vulnerability

The autonomous creation of Arjan Spannenburg (born Texel, 1978) resonates internationally with curators and private collectors alike. Central to his photography is the search for identity and self-expression. Through powerful, predominantly monochrome compositions, Spannenburg portrays youth standing on the threshold of adulthood.

We observe adolescents navigating a transient, uncertain phase of life. These sensitive portraits capture subjects in solitary contemplation, yet they simultaneously radiate a profound need for connection with the external world, a quest for support, understanding, and affection.

Gallery Representation & Exhibitions In addition to permanent representation by ZERP Galerie (Rotterdam), Spannenburg's photography has been selected for prestigious international platforms and events, including:

• PAN Amsterdam

• Kunstlinie, Almere

• Schwules Museum, Berlin

• Paratissima, Italy

• Tongerlohuys, Roosendaal

His creations are held in diverse private collections and are often seen in prominent public locations, including the City Hall of The Hague.



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