

ART THAT MATTERS

by Spannenburg.Art

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EXHIBITION REVIEW

The Evolution of 'RESTRAINT'

Published: 20 January 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 vandalised 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 Maaïke 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 vandalised 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...

More Info <https://www.artthatmatters.gallery/en-HK/journal/the-evolution-of-restraint>

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ONLINE GALLERY



ART EXPANDS HORIZONS AND PERSPECTIVES.

Art should have an impact

The Silent Power of Vulnerability

Arjan Spannenburg (1978) is a Dutch contemporary artist who works in various media, including photography, video, and sculpture. His work often explores themes of vulnerability, connection, and the human condition.

His work has been exhibited internationally, including at the ZERP Galerie in Rotterdam, the Schwules Museum in Berlin, and the Kunstlinie in Almere.

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

- PAN Amsterdam
- Kunstlinie, Almere
- Schwules Museum, Berlin
- Paratissima, Italia
- Tongerlohuys, Roosendaal

His works 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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