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by Spannenburg.Art

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RESEARCH

The Martyrdom of Beauty: Assessing Saint Sebastian as a Gay Icon in Visual Arts

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> *Saint Sebastian's transformation from a Roman soldier to a queer icon is a testament to the power of aesthetic reinvention. In this article Arjan Spannenburg tracks his journey from Renaissance anatomical ideals in Mantegna's work to the sensual ecstasy found in Sodoma. It concludes with Arjan Spannenburg's contemporary photographic approach, which replaces physical arrows with the psychological weight of identity, offering a modern sanctuary for the "hidden life" and the resilience of the queer experience.*

SUMMARY

Saint Sebastian's transformation from a Roman soldier to a queer icon is a testament to the power of aesthetic reinvention. In this article Arjan Spannenburg tracks his journey from Renaissance anatomical ideals in Mantegna's work to the sensual ecstasy found in Sodoma. It concludes with Arjan Spannenburg's contemporary photographic approach, which replaces physical arrows with the psychological weight of identity, offering a modern sanctuary for the "hidden life" and the resilience of the queer experience. To truly understand the prominence of Saint Sebastian within the visual arts, one must first look past the arrows and into the eyes of a…

NEW WORKS

• SAINT SEBASTIAN

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GALLERY



ART OPENS EYES AND MINDS.

Art should have an impact

The Silent Power 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 in a transient, uncertain phase of life. These sensitive portraits capture subjects alone with their thoughts, yet they simultaneously radiate a profound need for communication with the outside world, a search for support, understanding, and love.

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 pieces 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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