

Uncensored: Nude photographs by AdeY that were deemed too risqué for our feeds



She-Man Part II © AdeY

Have you ever had an image removed from your Instagram feed for sharing something that was against the social network's nudity guidelines? It's happened constantly to artist AdeY whose work is a study of the human body's balance, strength and physics in all its purest form: bare, undressed and naked.

Now an upcoming exhibition and accompanying photo book entitled *Uncensored* responds to such moves by Instagram. "I have been silenced, harassed, censored and removed by Instagram for sharing my artworks that aim to provoke and challenge the viewer. I implore Instagram to take social responsibility and engage positively in promoting art on their platform."

With a background in performance, choreography and contemporary dance, AdeY hopes to create a "non-sexualised and open-minded representation of humankind, which is based on a dream of acceptance". His works certainly tread a fine line of nudity and erotica but ask us whether we should be the judge of what's deemed as art.

Set against various backdrops and not always as you'd expect, his series imagines a world where the human body is celebrated and ourselves united. On top of or inside washing machines, around door frames and grand staircases, in dirty, litter-strewn back alleyways, and in abandoned warehouses or factories, there's often surprising humour to each photograph, perhaps hinting at the absurdity of the world's obsession with modesty and keeping things covered up what is natural and beautiful.



Layer © AdeY



Hangout Part IV © AdeY

The Swedish/British artist also likes to explore people's differences whether their physics, gender, race or sexuality. Experimental in his approach, AdeY seeks to highlight our vulnerability, loneliness, and strengths, whilst capturing those little moments of social oppression, isolation, anxiety, and depression that appear to play a central role in the human condition.

In a letter to Instagram following the removal of his account in August 2017, the artist wrote: "I'm a British photographer whose work features nude models creating images that challenge gender roles and normative behaviour within society. The images I create are never sexually driven, never about sex and not sexually suggestive. They are about equality, love, connection, acceptance, and breaking down stigmas associated with same-sex relationships."

The images in question were taken between 2014 and 2019 at locations around the world. AdeY's Instagram account was deleted nine times in the space of 18 months. He's not alone, as other artists have suffered the same fate. In the letter, he goes on to ask Instagram to "take social responsibility by engaging positively in debates around diversity and difference" particularly when there seems to be "double standards that exist". AdeY points out the hypocrisy of social media, saying you do not have to look far to find accounts with hundreds of thousands or even millions of followers who regularly post images that "sexualise, objectify and degrade, in the majority of cases, women". He adds: "How can a picture of a naked woman with her legs spread and child's teddy bear covering her genitals be acceptable whilst my image of two men embracing in a hug cannot?"



Accumulate © AdeY



Laundry Time © AdeY

He concludes: "Instagram is still in many ways a great tool for artists to share and meet people who want to be challenged by the status quo. Most people, including myself, think there should be some kind of monitoring of what is shared on the platform, but by automatically removing artists' work that promotes equality and human rights will not lead to a safer or progressive social media platform, nor will it, for that matter, help society evolve as a whole."

Uncensored will go on show at Galerie XII in Los Angeles this December. The accompanying book, *Uncensored* by AdeY, is now available from www.boysboysboys.org or www.girlsgirlsgirls.org – the first 100 copies come with a limited edition print.



Yin-Yang © AdeY

