



SPENCER TUNICK AND THE NATIONAL COALITION AGAINST CENSORSHIP CHALLENGE SOCIAL MEDIA CENSORSHIP OF ARTISTIC NUILITY

4/15/2019 New York, NY— The National Coalition Against Censorship (NCAC) and artist-photographer Spencer Tunick will come together this summer to challenge censorship of artistic nudity on Facebook and Instagram.

Images of the human body have been a central subject of art for centuries. Nevertheless, Instagram, the most popular platform for artists who share their work online, and its parent company Facebook, while making an exception for nudity in sculpture and painting, both ban photographic representations of the body. Photography is an important art form. It is also a uniquely democratic medium of expression. The ban makes it hard for all artists to share their work online and disproportionately affects artists who use their own bodies in their work, including queer and gender-nonconforming artists. The policy also prevents museums and galleries from promoting exhibitions featuring nudes. And why? To protect the sensitivities of those who believe the human body is an object of shame?

NCAC's #WeTheNipple campaign calls for a change in Community Guidelines/Standards of both social media platforms to allow photographic artistic nudity.

Artist-photographer Spencer Tunick has challenged views of the body and its relationship to public space and nature for more than 20 years. He has staged more than 75 installations of hundreds or thousands of nude participants in urban and natural settings around the world. Yet, in order to share his work on Instagram, he is forced to meticulously—and overwhelmingly—censor.

As Tunick explains, “Treating the body as shameful damages everyone with a body. And treating the bodies of different genders in different ways, what can be shown, what can't be shown, it's all so arbitrary and just another form of control over how we express ourselves. Violence is censored on social media. The human body is also censored. In this context should the body be put in the same category as violence?”

Together with NCAC, Tunick will create an art action on June 2, 2019, to bring the #WeTheNipple campaign to New York City. Hundreds of nude bodies will stand against social media censorship of art.

NCAC's Director of Programs, Svetlana Mintcheva, acknowledges that private intermediaries have the legal right impose community content limitations. But she believes the actions of these companies impact us globally and should be subject to public scrutiny and criticism: “Facebook's ban on all photographic images of the body, no matter that such images are often part of museum exhibitions, contributes to the shame and alienation associated with the body. Art, on the other hand, offers us a chance to break through this process of alienation, to see once more the grace and truth of the real body—weighed by age, swollen with pregnancy, bent, sagging, flawed—a body through which we see the spirit in all its pain and joy.”

NCAC and Tunick are calling on Facebook to follow a path taken by YouTube over a decade ago. After NCAC and EFF's intervention, the popular video-streaming platform changed its terms of service to allow artistic nudity.

Further campaign details are available at ncac.org/wethenipple

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The **National Coalition Against Censorship**, a coalition of over 50 national non-profits, has spent 45 years defending freedom of expression and combatting censorship in all its forms. Its Arts Advocacy Program is the only national project dedicated to working directly with individual artists and curators involved in censorship disputes. ncac.org

Twitter: [@ncacensorship](https://twitter.com/ncacensorship) | Facebook: facebook.com/ncacorg | Instagram: [@ncacensorship](https://instagram.com/ncacensorship)

Spencer Tunick is a world-renowned artist photographer who has staged more than 75 site-specific nude installations around the world. Throughout his career, he has fought for his right to photograph nude participants in public spaces. spencertunick.com

Instagram: [@spencertunick](https://instagram.com/spencertunick) | Facebook: facebook.com/spencertunick

- Graphics available at ncac.org/wethenipple
- Campaign signatories will be added on a rolling basis. The list will be updated at ncac.org/wethenipple