



Category: Photography

Title: Here*Now

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Vanessa van Houten**

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Here*Now

Vanessa van Houten

Key Points

- “HERE*NOW” by Vanessa Van Houten got selected for the photobook exhibition in Athens Photo Festival 2018.
- Acclaimed Photographer, Vanessa van Houten, photographed over fifty Indonesians—women, men, warias (cross-dressers, transsexuals and transgenders) aged between 20 and 80 years old using natural light with her Leica SL camera.
- Vanessa photographed passionate chefs and baristas, young entrepreneurs, accomplished athletes, mothers, fathers, loved social influencers, dancers, beautiful yogis, makeup artists, sex workers, famous musicians, popular artists and talented fashion designers.

During the photoshoot only the person being photographed and Vanessa herself were in the room. She asked each person to think about their own 'inner beauty' for 50 minutes without talking and invited them to behave in the area provided as if they were at home. Each had complete freedom: to move, to sit, to stand. What they did with their hands, feet and hair was their own choice. For almost an hour, individuals silently focused their thoughts about inner beauty and their own core values. They went into their past to think about who and what was, or is, an influence on their lives. Straight afterwards everyone wrote one page about their inner beauty

Vanessa van Houten photographed each person twice; once in their favourite clothes and once almost bare in a white cloth, made especially for this project. The dots on the material were inspired by a Balinese tradition where rice kernels are stuck to the forehead while praying.

For each person the white cloth took on different meanings. Each used it to cover their body and head in their own way. There is truth and beauty when taking off clothes, revealing skin with all its scars, tattoos, birthmarks and shades, as well as stored emotions. In a time where many talk about diversity and differences.

The sessions, and the photographs, that resulted provide a glimpse into the lives of the people we are surrounded by. Even if we don't know each other we all live in the same city, we all stand on the same ground and breathe the same air.