

# Her Edit

Our issue, our voice



Issue Seventeen  
May/June 2016

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The Body Issue

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Front cover picture  
Radio & Juliet by Emma Hack commissioned by  
the Western Australian Ballet  
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# Her Edit



## Welcome to Her Edit

**W**elcome to the Body Issue. If this were one of the main women's titles on sale now, I could highlight one of our features on losing weight so you can feel confident in a bikini this summer or, if we were being feminist and forward thinking, how to forget the diet, wear the bikini anyway and feel confident doing so.

Thank our lucky stars that we have more interesting body issues to discuss! Emma Hack's art involves painting naked bodies so they are 'camouflaged' by their background. It raises all kinds of interesting challenges about nudity and exposure. I was interested she says her models feel 'clothed' when they are painted. Are they still naked if they don't look it? Send us your thoughts and comments on our website or [twitter](#)

Female Genital Mutilation is so abhorrent it beggars belief that 140-170 girls and young women have been subjected to or are at risk of this violence in the UK. Please read Hilary Burrage's excellent article and what we can all do to end this appalling crime. 'Summer weight loss' and the 'best bikini buy' really don't seem very important do they.

Enjoy the next couple of months and we'll be back in July with our Summer of Love special.

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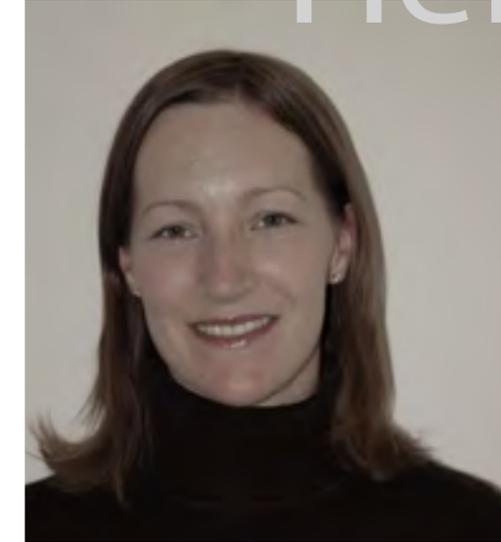
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## IMAGES

Clockwise from above: Body artist, Emma Hack, archaeologist Isabella Mulhall, journalist Bekah Leonard and sociologist Hilary Burrage.

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the art of illusion

# Emma Hack

## Her Edit

Emma Hack is an Adelaide-based artist working in the unique medium of body paint installation and photography. Emma now exhibits internationally making her unique creations for collectors, commissions and commercial clients. She shared some thoughts and images with Her Edit.

Possibly not since the look-a-like photographic trickery of Bafta Award-winning artist Alison Jackson exposed the British royal family and various celebrities in an array of bizarre or shockingly domestic situations, has visual charades captured the public imagination quite like the work of Emma Hack.

Based in Adelaide, Emma has regularly exhibited her work throughout Australia since 1999, notably her Wallpaper series (2005-2010) in which she painstakingly camouflaged the human form by hand painting her models into the remarkable wallpaper designs of the legendary Australian designer and personality Florence Broadhurst.

Drawing inspiration from Australia's unique flora and fauna and absorbing Oriental influences, Emma enjoyed a considerable reputation and success in her home country, but it was her collaboration with Grammy award-winning musician Gotye that propelled her on to the international art scene.

Featuring the musician being painted by Emma, [Somebody That I Used to Know](#) won the Grammy Award for Record of the Year, a string of Billboard Awards and the video has been viewed by over 550 million people worldwide on YouTube.

She says it was possibly her most challenging piece of work to date along with the car crash sculpture piece, Body Crash.

'Both were ground breaking examples of body art at the time with no reference of difficulty or whether it was possible. That makes it difficult as well as fatigue. The Gotye video was 23

hours straight working.'

Body Crash was commissioned by the Motor Accident Commission in South Australia where Emma built a sculpture of 17 bodies painted as a crashed car. Again, it drew world-wide attention. We wondered if having a brief or being commissioned by a commercial client is a welcome challenge of an artistic straight jacket.

**"The Gotye video was 23 hours straight working."**



### IMAGES

Page 5: making the Gotye video; page 7: Emma Hack at work; above: Royal Hanging Gardens  
All courtesy Emma Hack

### TEXT

Jayne Phenton



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'Both. I try and work with open-minded clients so that I can push the realms of body art; there is no need to repeat yourself or work with clients that have a restricted vision. My best work comes from these collaborations and I welcome them.'

Primarily though, Emma's work is 'fine-art' and she has had held successful one-man shows at galleries across the globe including Rebecca Hossack in London, The Cat Street Gallery in Hong Kong and Bluerider Art in Taipei. Through a combination of painting on canvas, body painting and studio-based photography, she evokes a rich array of visual narrative and magic realism.

She's inspired by 'nature, clouds, plants, travel and other cultures', but the female form is a key integral part of her work.

'I find the female form represents myself and my femininity. The classical female nude goes back in history as being the form of beauty and strength that I feel resonates in my artwork.'

Of course, the 'classical female nude' has traditionally either been passive and objectified or challenging and overtly sexual, such as Velazquez's *The Toilet of Venus* or Manet's confrontational *Olympia*. As Hack is essentially clothing her subjects, it begs the question whether her models feel exposed as one might if posing nude or whether they no longer feel naked once painted.

Hack explains:

**'I have the power of making somebody feel beautiful or worked to exhaustion. It is all about my muse on the day..'**

'Absolutely. In fact when I paint the full body, the amount of time to create it makes it quite comfortable for the model by the time they are completed. To be honest, a full body paint is more of a 'clothed' feeling than wearing a bikini. The illusion of a great artist is that they can make the muse feel clothed.'

It's interesting that by colluding in the illusion, Hack's models seem to have a much more active role in the final piece than models might do traditionally. While on one hand Hack is making her models invisible, it paradoxically creates an interesting dynamic between 'artist' and 'sitter'.

'I have the power of making somebody feel beautiful or worked to exhaustion. It is all about my muse on the day, how they feel is extremely important to the outcome and they must feel included

in the process to give you their all.'

Florence Broadhurst was the master of reinvention, changing her hair style, colour, her name and her history several times over during a seemingly capricious and fascinating life which ended with her unsolved murder at the age of 78. Hack's work similarly seems to offer the opportunity to create our own narratives and stories and convince ourselves that the illusion is reality.

Emma opened her own gallery in her hometown of Adelaide and is represented by galleries in London, New York, Singapore, Taipei and Hong Kong. Follow her on twitter @emmahackartist and @emmahackgallery and find out more from her [website](#)

## IMAGES

Left: Florence Broadhurst accessories.  
Courtesy and copyright Emma Hack

# Her Edit



## IMAGES

Left to right: Natura, Brazil, Goanna in Sturt  
Desert Rose, Utopia - Blossom butterfly.  
All copyright Emma Hack.



## FGM: patriarchy incarnate

Hilary Burrage is a sociologist, consultant and writer and author of *Eradicating Female Genital Mutilation*, described by the Guardian as 'the most definitive book ever on FGM' and 'An invaluable tool to help eradicate it worldwide.' The continuation of this barbaric assault on girls and young women, must be one of the most important 'body issues' for our generation. For Her Edit, Hilary explores the culture behind it and what we can do to stamp it out for good.

The myths and methods are many, but the reality doesn't change. Every instance of female genital mutilation (FGM), whoever does it and for whatever claimed rationale, is an act of violence against the person and against their human rights<sup>1</sup>; and in almost every country in the world FGM is now illegal under national as well as international law.

To many people the continuing practice of FGM is incomprehensible; and that there are now estimated to be at least 200 million women and girls alive today with the condition is beyond belief.

How can women who know the pain it brings permit their own daughters – infants, small children or adolescents – undergo the same grim 'procedure'? But the truth is, that whilst women know from personal experience that FGM brings pain, they often don't know it is the cause of much ill-health in adulthood.

<sup>1</sup> We might add that men and boys are not infrequently damaged by circumcision, most especially when performed on adolescents in public ceremonies; and the medical imposition of male circumcision to control HIV infections has in some places resulted in the women demanding back their 'right' to FGM in the name of 'fairness'.

Rather than (as is often believed) enabling fertility, it can cause many problems ranging from period pain and difficult conception and pregnancies / deliveries, to the death of neo-nates and the unending nightmare of obstetric fistula.

The eradication of FGM is therefore nothing to do with respect for 'cultural practices' and everything to do with the health, happiness and human rights of women and children (baby boys as well as girls). Indeed, many in traditional communities now insist that we understand the difference between traditions, sometimes harmful, and culture, positive and good.

Dr Morissanda Kouyate, Guinean physician and Executive Director of the Inter-African Committee on Harmful Traditional Practices, is amongst those firmly of this view.

So FGM has to stop. But whilst programmes to achieve this end are now having some success, UNICEF (2016) affirms in its latest information sheet that 'current progress is insufficient to keep up with the increasing population growth. If trends continue, the number of girls and women undergoing FGM/C will rise significantly over the next 15 years.'

There is no single solution to this grim challenge. Each element of the equation requires careful and consistent attention.

Work to shift and enlighten community and family understandings; education to enable women (and men) to have adult autonomy and financial security, unbound by hardened traditions; learning, for some of both genders, that women are not chattels owned by men; determined moves away from early and forced marriage; respect for human rights – sometimes barely understood or acknowledged - as well as for established social mores; enforcement of the law everywhere.... all these aspects of FGM eradication are critical.

We in the UK have moved in the right direction to a degree, but there is so much still to do – and many considerations still to be taken on board – if we are to make FGM even in our own land history.

As yet there has not even been a successful prosecution in Britain – where 140-170 thousand women and girls are thought to have experienced or be at serious risk of FGM.

Despite the enormity of the issue, however, each of us has a part to play. Wherever we are, we can stay

informed. [The Guardian](#) has an excellent [#EndFGM](#) website.

We can ask questions about the provision of child safeguarding, support for providers, and education in schools, and we can make sure our politicians and policy makers keep their eye on the ball.

We can even help to fund the various charitable bodies that tackle FGM and other abuses, if we wish.

But the most important thing of all is not to do what we all dearly wish we could do, and simply put these matters aside. Please keep talking and asking questions. Even one child spared is a child who can live her life intact. It is perseverance on multiple fronts which will eventually and finally mean that no child need fear ever again the awful blight of female genital mutilation.

Follow Hilary on twitter @HilaryBurrage or visit her [website](#)

Books by Hilary include: [Eradicating Female Mutilation \(Routledge, 2015\)](#) [Female Mutilation \(New Holland, 2016\)](#)

# Remains of the day





# Isabella Mulhall

Isabella Mulhall (picture below, right) is Assistant Keeper in the Irish Antiquities Division (IAD) and coordinator of the Bog Bodies Research Project at the National Museum of Ireland; she is also co-curator of the Kingship and Sacrifice exhibition there. Here she shares her fascinating account of the discovery of the incredibly well-preserved human remains unearthed from Irish peatlands, known as bog bodies.



IMAGES  
All images courtesy the National Museum of Ireland

## Her Edit

In 2002, I joined the staff of the [National Museum of Ireland](#) as an archaeologist and within months of being in my new position I was given the responsibility of looking after peatland archaeology.

I was delighted, and relished the prospect of witnessing the secrets of the Irish boglands revealing themselves over time. Nothing, however, could have prepared me for the voyage of discovery that I was about to embark upon.

What unfolded over the following months was a significant event in Irish wetland archaeology: the discovery, only months apart, of two separate instances of prehistoric mummified human remains in bogs in the Irish midlands.

Owing to the remarkable preservative properties of peat, two exceptionally well-preserved young adult male bodies came to light within months of each other in bogs in counties Meath and Offaly.

The unearthing of mummified or fleshed remains from bogs is a rare occurrence, making this double find a unique opportunity to gain fascinating new insights into life and death in prehistoric Ireland. Shortly after their discovery, the remains, soon to become known as Clonycavan Man and Oldcroghan Man after their respective findspots, were radiocarbon dated to the earlier part of the Iron Age (the Iron Age in Ireland dates from around 500BC-AD400).

Following their discovery, the remains were carefully transported to the National Museum. There, the newly-established Bog Bodies Research Project set about analysing and documenting the bodies, but also exploring how they came to be deposited in

bogs and trying to determine the rationale behind their gruesome deaths.

I was given the amazing opportunity of co-ordinating the intensive multidisciplinary scientific investigation. This involved the collaboration of museum personnel with over forty international specialists, all of whom were very willing and enthusiastic participants in such a rare project.

Extensive examinations were carried out on the remains including CT and MRI scanning, fingerprinting, and palaeodietary, anatomical and pathological analyses, all of which produced a wealth of exciting results. Through these detailed studies we were able to gather a comprehensive picture of both living and dying in the distant past.

More specifically, scientific data was able to estimate not only the ages of the men when they died, but also the seasons that they died in, and the manner in which they were killed before their deposition in the bog.

Specialist studies also provided detailed information on the mens' physical statures (Clonycavan Man was small and slight in stature in contrast to Oldcroghan Man who was tall and powerfully built), their health and wellbeing, and even their diet. Thanks to investigations of Oldcroghan Man's alimentary tract, for example, we were able to tell that his last meal consisted of cereals and buttermilk.

Incredibly, since the Bog Bodies Project was established, many more instances of human remains have been unearthed in the Irish wetlands and are currently being examined and documented as part of the project. One of the most significant discoveries of recent times is that of Cashel Man from Co. Laois.

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Dating to the early Bronze Age (around 2000BC), the remains are those of a young adult male most likely the victim of human sacrifice.

Although skeletonised remains of greater antiquity have come to light in bogs, for example the 5000-year old skeleton from Stoneyisland, Co. Galway, the remains of [Cashel-Man](#) appear to represent the oldest fleshed bog body to have been found to date in Europe. These discoveries, ranging in date from the Neolithic period (4000-2500BC) to early modern times, bring to over one-hundred and thirty the number of bodies found in Irish bogs since the first published report of a discovery in the late eighteenth century.

Bog bodies, however, are not a specifically Irish phenomenon. To date, hundreds have been discovered across the rich peatlands of north-western Europe. The best known are perhaps Britain's [Lindow Man](#) Denmark's 'Tollund Man', 'Yde Girl' in the Netherlands and 'Uchter Moor Girl' in Germany. Readers might even be familiar with the name Tollund Man as referenced by Seamus Heaney in his series of 'bog body' poems:

"Those dark juices working  
Him to a saint's kept body,"  
(extract from The Tollund Man )

A permanent exhibition entitled [Kingship and Sacrifice](#) was set up at the National Museum of Ireland to showcase the main findings of our research and to allow the visitor to literally come 'face to face' with Ireland's ancient past.

Featured in the exhibition are Clonycavan Man and Oldcroghan Man in addition to two other Iron Age bodies from the NMI collections - Gallagher Man, Co. Galway (discovered in 1821) and Baronstown West Man, Co. Kildare (discovered in 1953). The title of the exhibition reflects Eamonn Kelly's interpretation that human sacrifice and the deposition of the victims along tribal boundaries in these bogs is, in fact, bound up in Iron Age sovereignty and kingship rituals. As well as presenting these ideas, the exhibition explores the archaeological significance of the bog bodies in addition to displaying other related Iron Age artefactual material.

'They share with us...the darker elements of their enigmatic worlds - of murder and of human sacrifice...'

Whatever the circumstances of their violent demise over two millenia ago, these remarkable people come to us as ambassadors of their time. They share with us not only the darker elements of

their enigmatic worlds—of murder and of human sacrifice— but also the most routine aspects of their everyday self-care and survival, aspects that we may all, in our shared humanity, profoundly relate to.

The Bog Bodies Research Project will be published in full by the National Museum of Ireland in a forthcoming monograph. A summary account of the main findings of the scientific investigation can be found in 'British Archaeology' <http://www.archaeologyuk.org/ba/ba110/feat4.shtml> 5

Isabella wishes to thank colleagues from the NMI, particularly from the IAD, the Conservation Dept. and the Photographic Dept. and the numerous experts for their unwavering commitment to the project.



## IMAGES

Old Croghan Man, County Offaly  
All courtesy and copyright of National Museum of Ireland



Her Edit

# Bekah Leonard

Bekah Leonard is a writer currently completing an apprenticeship in journalism with careers advice website and network [unisnotforme](#). Here Bekah shares her thoughts on body issues after an unusual spa experience. Read more of Bekah's work on Facebook/[bekah.leonard](#) or follow her on twitter [@scribblerboo](#)

IMAGES  
All courtesy and copyright of Bekah Leonard



Recently, I turned 20. Leaving the teen years behind me, you'd think it would have felt like quite a big deal. The thing is, I left education and started a full time job when I was 18.

Without sounding like a complete and utter snob, I hadn't really felt like a teenager for the last couple of years. Working full time while I studied for my diploma did mean I held a little more stress in my back, neck and shoulders than a lot of other 20 year olds – arguably.

So for my birthday (which I happen to share with my Mum - happy birthday Tracy! Have a few hours of labour!) I decided to book a spa day because, allegedly, spa days are relaxing. Having never been on one, I wouldn't know.

There were a number of different packages on the website, but one in particular caught my eye because it included an all-you-can-eat salad bar lunch; an afternoon tea; celestial floatation.

I know, that last bit is going to need a little more explaining. Simply put, it involves floating in a warm pool for 45 minutes in a very pretty looking room. At first, that's all I thought it was. However, by the end of the day, I knew better and had

experienced something quite unusual, quite unexpected, and quite lovely.

Every day, our bodies carry us around. They walk us about, hold us up, speak, move and breathe for us. They also carry a lot of our stress. It's easy to only see stress as a mental condition; it makes us feel tired and frustrated so logically it's all in our heads. We often forget about the physical aspect.

Your body holds on to tension which sits in your shoulders, your back, your neck, even in your gut. With months' worth of frustration and negative emotion building up in your body, it becomes impossible for you to clear your mind of it.

This is a new realisation for me, and it came during this bizarre experience at a little spa in Wokingham.

I should mention at this point, that there was actually a lot more to this floatation business than I originally thought. The ocean is 3% salt, the celestial floatation pool was ten times that at 30% salt. To emphasise just how much that is, the pool has 50 tonnes – yes that's tonnes – of Dead Sea salt in it. I'll just let that sink in. Well...float in I guess.

The pool is round, with a very gentle current slowly pushing its occupants around as they float

**'There was actually a lot more to this floatation business than I originally thought.'**



beneath a beautiful starry sky, to the sound of soft music and the trickling of water. Already, it sounds relaxing doesn't it?

Even with this information, I still underestimated just how easy it would be to float. Or rather, how difficult it would be not to float. Before we entered the pool, we were given a master class in how to stand back up and what to do if – God forbid – we were to roll over onto our fronts by accident. This was quite alarming.

The second I stepped into the pool, I felt the physical effort required to keep my feet firmly planted on the floor. My legs were trying to lift to the surface, a very strange sensation to say the least. Armed with a neck pillow, I let myself sit back into the water and allowed my body to lift to the surface. That wasn't so hard was it?

The softly spoken therapist dimmed the lights and padded out the room; she wouldn't be returning for 45 minutes. I was hyperaware of all my limbs – there were another four people in this pool and I

was utterly convinced some one's foot was going to touch my face. Luckily, when this did happen, it was my Mum's toes I found myself face to face with. That wasn't great, but it was better than colliding with one of the random strangers I was sharing the experience with.

Inevitably, I got the giggles. Every time my shoulders shook the entire pool shifted, making me laugh more. While trying desperately to stifle my laughter in a near silent room, I noticed all of my stomach muscles were clenched, as though in an effort to stay afloat.

Cautiously, I let my rippling six pack (shush please) relax, and marvelled at how I remained there. With a great deal of focus, I did the same to each of my muscles. Concentrating on one at a time, my legs, my arms, my shoulders, I let each of my muscles release until no part of me was even the slightest bit tensed.

**'My mind was suddenly the only thing I felt connected with, as though separated entirely from my body.'**

Unless you've experienced weightlessness, it's a very bizarre thing to describe. After about ten minutes, I found myself twitching my limbs to check they were still there. Nothing was supporting my back, I was horizontal, yet totally cradled as if gravity had disappeared. I closed my eyes, and began drifting in and out of consciousness.

I was completely unaware of the other people in the room, and occasionally didn't know where or what I was. My mind was suddenly the only thing I felt connected with, as though separated entirely from my body.

I didn't think about anything in particular, I didn't take the opportunity to sort through my problems, I didn't have any dramatic epiphanies. I just drifted, and snoozed, I just...was. I was so disconnected, I didn't even notice when the lights were back on and people had begun exiting the pool.

Once out I rolled my shoulders, stretched my back and clicked my fingers while I marvelled at how soft and loose everything felt. My shoulders didn't feel bunched up by my ears, my back wasn't riddled with knots, and I felt the most rested I ever had.

This wasn't because I had paddled about a pool for half an hour, it was because I gave my body a well needed and well deserved break from the weight of my mind. I let it recover and be empty for a while, without all my worries sitting inside it as it lugged me around.

I don't for a moment expect you reader, to hop off to a salty swimming pool now expecting a magic out-of-body-experience, but I think everyone should find a way of resting their beautiful, strong body without it being occupied with everything happening in your brain.

They do absolutely everything for us, our bodies, and I think every now and then they need as much of a rest as our heads.

# Her Edit

FOR THE INDEPENDENTLY MINDED WOMAN

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