

Her Edit

Our issue, our voice



Issue Fifteen
January/February 2016

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The New Issue

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thank you
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Front cover picture
Courtesy of Joanna Hall

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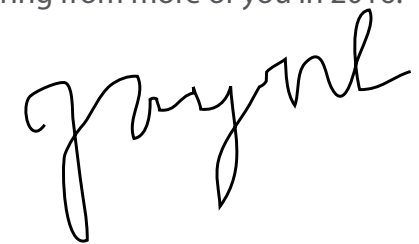
Welcome to Her Edit

At Her Edit we try to avoid the predictable, so I hope you'll forgive us for kicking off 2016 with our 'new' issue. It's been great to catch up with some of our contributors and find out 'what's new' with them. I think this may be the only publication where we can touch on mental health, livestock husbandry and fair trade with earthquake survivors in Nepal in the same issue.

The main reason I love doing this magazine is because we get to meet such a diverse range of wonderful women and hear about the amazing things they do. At the beginning of 2015 we read about Julie Hambleton of campaign group Justice4the21, who continues to try and find justice for her sister Maxine and others killed by IRA bombers over 30 years ago.

We begin this year asking for your support for the Equality for Mental Health campaign headed up by Emily Frith (page 13) and for the women left homeless by the earthquake in Nepal.

We want to embrace the new, but we do not need new year resolutions - the important things won't wait till the 'new' year. Thank you so much for your support. Please share Her Edit with as many people as we you can and we look forward to hearing from more of you in 2016.



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Left to right: Uta Frith ©WarrenJohnson, Joanna Hall courtesy Joanna Hall, Sophie Atherton ©CharlesWellsLtd

Above right: Women in Bhaktapur courtesy of Joanna Hall

New challenges for old



Courtesy Sam Wanamaker Playhouse



Her Edit

Adele Thomas

Adele Thomas is a theatre director. Her recent work includes *The Oresteia*, *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* and *Thomas Tallis at Shakespeare's Globe* and *The Golden Hours* at the Royal Court. She has also worked with the National Theatre Wales and was a recipient of the Regional Theatre Young Director Scheme in 2008.

In 2015 Adele directed a piece about the English composer Thomas Tallis, specially commissioned for the Sam Wanamaker Playhouse on the Southbank in London.

Here she talks about the challenges of working in a 'new' kind of space and finding insights into the work of the 16th century composer.

Follow Adele on twitter @_AdeleThomas_

IMAGE
Courtesy Adele Thomas

You only need to listen to Tallis's music in passing to recognise the depth of its spirituality; the profundity and luminosity of his love for God. Listening to Spem in Alium for the first time is – even to the most hardened atheist – to feel flooded with light, to feel the vastness of time and space, to believe, if only for a second, that heaven exists. It is surprising, then, that in Tallis's life story – what little is known of it – this work was born out of political pragmatism, of spiritual compromise and of survival.

Other than the unbelievable beauty of the music he has left, the most striking thing about the man is that he wrote music during the most politically, socially and theologically turbulent periods of English history.

Uniquely, Thomas Tallis wrote under four monarchs, and each of these was consumed by the desire to reform and restore the church, along with the music that filled it. Tallis wrote polyphonic Catholic masses in Latin for the Chapel Royal for Henry VIII, but his heir, Edward VI, commanded him to write music more appropriate for the new Protestant church. Mirroring the reforming power of white wash, Tallis's music would now need to be sung in English and would conform to a single phrase on a single line of music.

On Edward's death Catholic Queen "Bloody" Mary brought back the glorious Catholic, complex music. Elizabeth I then commissioned him in a manner that reflected her middle way – English protestant music for the public, but for her private church, Latin polyphony.

Theatre director, writer and playwright Jessica Swale was commissioned to write a play about Thomas's life and times, featuring his music to

be sung by one of the world's leading choirs, The Sixteen. The piece - entitled an 'entertainment' by Jess and a 'posh musical' by our boss Dominic Dromgoole (theatre director and artistic director of the Globe Theatre) – would weave together Tallis' life and music with other scenes of the wider political and social changes of the time. It would be performed in The Sam Wanamaker Playhouse, a replica of a Jacobean playhouse made from oak and lit entirely with candles.

I had wasted many happy and curious hours in the new Playhouse before it opened. Based on contemporary images of the Blackfriars' playhouse, an early rival to Shakespeare's Globe, the Playhouse is unlike any modern theatre space I had worked in before.

The audience wrap tight around the stage, almost 360°, and are tiered on a steep vertical: touching the starry ceiling in the upper gallery and gathering deep below the stage in the pit. The sightlines are often terrible by modern standards, but there's not a single audience member whose jaw doesn't hit the floor when they see the space for the first time.

The most obvious new-old challenge of all is that the space is entirely lit by candlelight. Candlelight and music were both hugely advanced in their theatrical sophistication in the Jacobean playhouses. Their indoor, snuggler playing spaces with relatively small audiences allowed for a more delicate visual and auditory experience than the outdoor theatres such as The Globe.

Jess' play moves with every scene to a new location and the candles themselves transform the space to create completely new geographical locations. At eight foot high, the six massive chandeliers hung from the ceiling light up the whole space with an

intimate, interior feel that helped us recreate Henry VIII's boudoir.

Drop those chandeliers to the ground and you instantly recreate the golden beauty of a cathedral. Snuff out all of the candles and you are on the run in Waltham Forest; hand held candelabras conjure up the darkened, secret corridors of Dr Dee's laboratories; a woman snuffing out the sconces on the walls takes the space from day to night. For me one of the most exciting things about making work in this space has been pushing at the limits of what this limited palette of beeswax candles can open up.

Sonically the playhouse also offers up a huge opportunity to experiment with sound. Working with one of the most respected classical ensembles in the world,

I really wanted to showcase their voices in ways that their audience had never experienced before.

The resonant, oak space gave us the chance to hear their singing from the musicians' gallery, from within the audience, from off stage, even from beneath the stage. At one point the choir's star soprano walked around the gallery that wraps around the audience as one by one the singers appeared at every door at every level of the theatre, so that the audience could experience being inside the choir itself.

The choir were asked to learn a lot of the repertoire by memory, but a few of the pieces - Videte Miraculum, Gaude Gloriosa and Nunc Dimitis - proved too complex to learn by heart. Even under candlelight, it was too dark to read the sheet music from the part books, so we invented hand held music stands that had their own candle holders. In a scene in which Dr Dee speaks to the Angel Gabriel, we explored how traditional Jacobean

theatrical sound effects could create a soundscape that felt hugely contemporary and theatrically inventive.

The space and the music can be a powerfully seductive opiate. However, behind them lies a darkness that is perpetually fascinating and Jess and I were keen to illustrate the horror that ran alongside Tallis's music. There are difficult questions in his life story: how could someone reconcile his love for God with the convenience of political negotiation? How, when his contemporaries such as William Byrd were fighting the system and being continuously punished, was Tallis able to survive and even work the system so effectively?

Art's complex relationship with the establishment felt like a great subject to tackle in a space that historically moved theatre away from the democratic outdoor theatres, into an expensive, elitist experience indoors.

I think I am an idealistic person and it troubles me deeply that a composer creating such extraordinary pure work could bend his beliefs so professionally. But what has been fascinating in looking at his music is finding small moments of rebellion; or at least, this is how I see it.

God Grant We Grace, written for the Protestant Archbishop Parker's psalter, is – although a simple single line – as skin-tingling as any piece of polyphony he wrote. But there is a single note in the last 16 bars, an F that feels like it twists the knife into the song's Protestant simplicity. I like to think that note is a little 'fuck you', a tiny moment of rebellion in which the artist refuses to allow his art to be dictated by the establishment.

Every time I hear that note, I am reminded that it is the artist's job to push to challenge, to defy and to refuse to conform.

'...the Playhouse is unlike any modern theatre space I had worked in before.'



Courtesy Sam Wanamaker Playhouse

Mental health is news



Courtesy Uta and Emily Frith

Uta and Emily Frith

Psychologist Professor Uta Frith is best known for her pioneering research on autism spectrum disorders. She is Emerita Professor of Cognitive Development at University College in London and her many accolades include Fellowship of the Royal Society, the British Academy and Honorary Dame Commander of the British Empire.

Uta wrote in our first issue of Her Edit. When we asked if she would write about something 'new' for us, she immediately said yes - her daughter-in-law's recent campaign.

Emily Frith ran the Equality for Mental Health campaign which launched in November 2015 with huge support from Norman Lamb MP, Alastair Campbell and a host of celebrities including Emma Thompson and Ruby Wax. It received widespread press and social media coverage.

Previously Emily was Special Adviser to then Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg. She recently joined think-tank CentreForum as Director of Mental Health and Rehabilitation.

Here they tell us why mental health is now firmly on the political agenda.

UF: It is not new for me to care about mental health, especially the mental health of children, and I have tried to understand autism and dyslexia throughout my career as a psychologist. But it is new that I can support a policy that targets the terrible neglect of mental illness in our society.

I am particularly excited that I can support my daughter-in-law, Emily Frith, who has recently become Director of Mental Health at the think-tank CentreForum. This is why I have asked her to write this piece for Her Edit.

EF: I have long been interested in politics and have most recently worked as an adviser to Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg in the coalition government from 2013 to 2015. Politicians have to listen to scientific evidence to make a difference to how we can improve policies that tackle questions of mental health.

So it was natural to talk to Uta about the science behind our understanding of mental illness and mental disability. For example, I have consulted her about dyslexia, which is a specific learning disability, when I wrote a report for the Driver Youth Trust.

But here we want to talk about something that I am only just starting to do. It is an urgent matter. Why is it urgent? Looking at data from the charity Young Minds I found that one in 10 children experience a mental health problem. That's three in every classroom. Yet three quarters of these children are not currently getting access to treatment.

That's a shocking discrimination at the heart of our NHS. In recent years, progress has been made and this issue is now more firmly on the agenda. In an era of tightened public finances, however, there is a real risk that mental health services will be at the front of the queue for cuts. Moreover, after decades of neglect, we are still in the foothills of the journey to equality for mental health.

This year, I am starting work on a new children's mental health commission. It is chaired by Norman Lamb MP, the former Minister for Mental Health, who I previously worked for as an advisor. As a Minister, Norman launched a blueprint for transforming children's mental health.

'Future in Mind' sets out a vision for a new way of supporting young people; a preventative approach which breaks down the barriers, which get in the way of young people getting the help they need. This was accompanied by £1.25bn funding over the next five years.

Our commission will look at how this work is being implemented across the country. Every area is developing its own 'transformation plan'. At CentreForum we are going to be looking at whether these plans are going far enough and developing strong recommendations for government and for local areas.

UF: I know you have been involved in another project that targets mental health in adults, which has only just been launched.

EF: This is the Equality4mentalhealth campaign. This is a cross-party, cross-society call to action to transform mental health services in this country.

Over 200 people from across society have backed our campaign including faith leaders such as the Archbishop of Canterbury, sportsmen and women including Sir Steve Redgrave and Dame Kelly Holmes, and celebrities from Steve Coogan to Miranda Hart. I am glad that the campaign has now been opened up to members of the public and has received over 18,000 signatures to date.

UF: I was one of the signatories! Writing about this together makes me feel hopeful that the new year will give us an opportunity to see equality in our need not only for physical but also for mental health.

EQUALITY FOR MENTAL HEALTH

We, the undersigned, have joined together to mount a cross-party, cross-society campaign aimed at persuading the Government to help reduce the suffering of those with mental ill health by increasing investment into the provision of mental health services.

As ministers make final decisions on the Spending Review, we urge them to treat mental health equally with physical health. We ask for the same right to timely access to evidence based treatment as those with physical health problems.

We accept, and urge ministers to accept, that this will require additional investment in mental health services. But we are strongly persuaded that sustained investment in mental health services will lead to significant returns for the Exchequer, both by reducing the burden on the NHS through the improved wellbeing of our citizens, and by helping people to stay in, or get back into work.

We note the many comments from ministers and opinion formers acknowledging the huge cost of mental ill health not just to individuals and their families, including veterans of our armed forces, but to the economy as a whole. Some estimates put this cost as high as £100bn a year, spent on visits to A&E, lost jobs, unemployment benefits, homelessness support, police time and even prison places.

Sign this petition
18,800 Signatures to date

First Name
Surname
Email
Postal Code
United Kingdom

SIGN THE PETITION

Your personal information remains private by signing, you consent our terms of service

Share Tweet

For more information and to add your support, you can visit centreforum.org or follow @centreforum.

Her Edit

Joanna Hall

Joanna Hall is a textile and fashion designer from Kent. She has been working alongside crafts people - weavers, block printers, tailors and jewellers - in India for more than 19 years. Twice a year Joanna showcases this beautiful range of clothing, textiles, jewellery, rugs, gifts and home furnishings at shows under the brand Bazaar.

She is passionate that not only does Bazaar embrace rigorous Fairtrade principles, but also that a part of everything she does puts something back into local communities.

In September, Joanna visited Nepal and met the women who knit for her. The earthquake in April killed over 9,000 people and injured over 23,000. Entire villages were flattened leaving hundreds of thousands of people homeless.

You can read about the 'knitting ladies of Bhaktapur' on the Bazaar Facebook page and donate [here](#)

Joanna has written about her fascinating life and work for Her Edit in issue 13. Here she kindly shared some of the moving and inspiring photographs from her 'new' experience earlier in the year.

IMAGES

All images courtesy of Joanna Hall



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IMAGES
All images courtesy of Joanna Hall

No beef with cereals!



Fidelity Weston

Fidelity Weston began her career as a parliamentary lobbyist working on disability issues, but for the past 30 years has managed her family's 70ha farm outside Sevenoaks in Kent. The farm is run on pasture-fed principles with a commitment to environmental stewardship and an ongoing programme of educational visits and open days.

Fidelity has been a trustee of a number of organisations including the Kent Wildlife Trust where she was Chair for seven years. She is Director of Pasture for Life.

We had a great response to Fidelity's last piece for Her Edit and we're delighted she's agreed to write for us again on rural issues and a 'new' way of feeding livestock.

Find out more following Fidelity @PastureForLife or @romshedfarm

IMAGES
Image overleaf courtesy Fidelity Weston

I was asked to write on something new in my life since my last contribution. That something new is beef and lamb that is grown and finished on 100% grass and forage – no cereals at all. This is being championed by the Pasture Fed Livestock Association, (PFLA), of which I am now a Director, and certified by a brand new Pastureforlife certification mark, which we believe is unique in Europe.

The product is healthy for you – ruminants have been roaming the world for millennia and are designed to convert grass into protein and into meat that is lower in total fat and saturated fat, higher in omega 3 and a healthier ratio to omega 6, higher in conjugated linoleic acid and a range of essential vitamins.

Feeding cereals to ruminants converts fat from unsaturated to saturated and undermines all the other natural benefits. It is also much better for the environment as cereals should be fed to the growing world population and not to ruminants: 60% of the world's grasslands are under-utilised and this includes much of the grassland in the UK. It has now been shown how reintroducing ruminants to depleted grasslands and even desertified areas across the world can help to rejuvenate them.

So, despite what you read about beef, it CAN be good for both you and the planet, but you have to choose your beef wisely!

I have found myself amongst a group of dedicated and innovative farmers and others associated with the business of farming and producing food from grass. As an organisation the PFLA, which is just four years old, has spread its influence across consumer groups, farming organisations, academic

institutions and now the meat industry, on a tiny budget. We employ the equivalent of one full-time person and the rest has been done by tenacious and highly focussed individual volunteers, notably the founding Directors, and our paid Executive Secretary who works far more hours than he is paid for.

I am quite sure that many readers will know about grass-fed beef and lamb but, as is the case with so many food labels, are you really aware of what this term means and is it clear? It covers a wide range of methods of production and the only underlying theme is that it is predominantly reared on grass i.e. 51% of its life. This means that they can be fed quite a considerable amount of cereals.

'Are you really aware of what this term means and is it clear?'

Part of my role over the last few months has been to speak to butchers and online suppliers to find out how they substantiate their grass-fed claims. Customers are clearly asking for grass-fed meat and assuming they are getting 100% grass-fed. It would seem

an obvious thing to be able to reassure consumers on this point. As it turns out the vast majority of suppliers either know that their beef is finished on cereals or they do not know but suspect that to be the case.

Apart from the health and environmental benefits there is also the taste. Most people will not have ever tasted 100% grass-fed beef so I will leave you with a quote from the wife of a farmer who has recently converted from grain finished to Pasture-fed,

'We ate our first Pastureforlife beef from the Belted Galloways. It was truly delicious. I think it has a fresher taste than normal steak and was very tender.'



©SophieAtherton

Sophie Atherton

Sophie Atherton is a freelance journalist and beer sommelier who specialises in writing about women's issues and feminism in her [blog](#) and on beer for the Guardian and her own site <http://afemaleview.net>. Follow Soph @SophWrites

I suppose it's cheating a bit to write about New York City when it's been called that since around 1664, but I've been obsessed with the place since I was a child.

Like almost everyone with a television, I grew up with New York because it was the setting for so many films and TV shows. I loved the look of those teeming streets and famous skyscrapers and I adored the, albeit fictional, New Yorkers I knew. These ranged from those tough female cops Cagney & Lacey, through to divorcee flatmates Kate & Allie and on to vigilante crusader Robert McCall - better known as The Equalizer.

As I grew older I learned of real New Yorkers I could identify with; the legendary mother of punk Patti Smith and singer-songwriter Suzanne Vega and then more fictional ones in the shape of Carrie Bradshaw and her friends in Sex and the City - a programme that celebrated the City as much as the Sex.

I've only managed to go to New York a few times, but each visit has confirmed my love for the place is real and the theme of 'new' seems to always run through my reasons for being

there. On my first visit it was a new place that I'd never been before; my second was to see a band called New Model Army and when I returned again it was with my husband for our honeymoon - as newlyweds.

And of course it is a place that has been forced to re-new itself. I still have a photo of myself on my first trip to New York which was in the year before 9/11. I'm strolling across the

Brooklyn Bridge with the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in the background and I remember blithely thinking how I'd visit them next time, having chosen to go up the

Empire State Building instead. I had no idea then that I would never get the chance.

What happened to New York on 9/11 changed not just the city and its people, but the whole world. But just as the city has bounced back so must all of us. I like to think of the new One World Trade Center being the equivalent of New York giving the finger to terrorists, extremists or anyone who believes they have the right to commit violence, oppression and murder for whatever misguided or deranged reason they put on it.

'...the theme of 'new' seems to always run through my reasons for being there.'

Her Agenda

New mind

Look more closely at mental health and the arts at this weekend festival.

6 - 7 February, Southbank, London

<http://www.southbankcentre.co.uk/whatson/festivals-series/changing-minds?gclid=CODNk52ggcoCFQw6GwodqLwILQ>

Light bulb moment

More than 20 artists will light up London's streets with new commissions and site-specific work for Lumiere London in 2016.

14 - 17 January 2016

Visit the website for details <http://www.artichoke.uk.com/>

New look

An exhibition of one of the most original, but overlooked artists of the 20th century, Maria Lassnig, at Tate Liverpool.

18 May - 18 September 2016

<http://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-liverpool/exhibition/maria-lassnig>

New lines

Maureen Younger's fabulous comedy nights continue with new material in Coventry, Birmingham, Leicester and London. In the words of Fred Pontin, book early!

<http://www.maureenyounger.com/mycomedy/>

New Year Resolution

Why you shouldn't have one more for the road! Emily Blunt stars as an alcoholic fantasist in the movie *Girl on a Train*.

7 October 2016

Taxing issues

New personal tax allowances come into effect in 2016. Tick that New Year's resolution box to be more fiscally responsible and visit the website.

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/413970/TIIN_4168_income_tax_personal_allowances_and_basic_rate_limit.pdf

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FOR THE INDEPENDENTLY MINDED WOMAN

Issue Sixteen
out March 2016

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