



# Decorated Skin: A World Survey of Body Art

*Karl Groning*

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**"A beautiful and celebratory volume."—*Explorer's Journal***

Since earliest times, humans have decorated their skin in endless ways and for fascinating reasons. Laden with cultural messages and imbued with aesthetic experience, body decoration is the ultimate form of self-expression in which the artists create for themselves a "second skin" as a testimony to the society in which they live, as a mirror of their own individuality, and as a reflection of the supernatural. This unrivaled collection of striking photographs traces more than ten thousand years of cultural history—from the body painting of stone-age peoples to the self-inflicted piercing of punks and the enduring image of the carnival clown in modern industrial society—illustrating an art form that is finding new relevance in the world of today. To set the plates in context, a distinguished team of art historians, ethnologists, and archaeologists has provided enlightening commentaries that document the development of an extraordinary spectrum of body painting, tattooing, and scarring techniques.

Originally published in hardcover under the title *Body Decoration: A World Survey of Body Art*. 422 illustrations and photographs, 378 in color

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