

Editorial

For more than 100 years, the British Academy has held public lectures, lectures that have been cumulatively published in the *Proceedings of the British Academy*, which has thus provided a unique record of a century of scholarship in the humanities and social sciences.

In 2011 the Academy reviewed its lecture programme and the way that it was published. It decided that traditional print publication, within the *Proceedings* series, should be replaced by a new form of publication, an open access online journal that would meet the expectations of modern scholars and be more easily available for new readerships.¹ It also concluded that the purpose of the Academy's public lecture series—to provide a conspectus of the state of scholarship across the British Academy's disciplinary interests—would be better met if the lecture programme was extended to cover the range of subject areas in which the Academy is now interested,² and if the new *Journal of the British Academy* included not just these lectures but also additional articles, commissioned by its editors to enhance the overview of the Academy's scholarly concerns.³

In combining the best of 'old' and the 'new' methods of academic publication the *Journal* will maintain the Academy's high standards for scholarship. The *Journal* has two Editors, Professor Simon Frith, FBA (for humanities subjects) and Professor Janet Carsten, FBA (for social sciences subjects) and an Editorial Board, the British Academy's Publications Committee. All articles will be refereed. That said, the *Journal* is also clearly distinct from most other academic journals. It is, by design, multidisciplinary; articles will cover a great variety of topics using a great variety of approaches, drawing on methodologies and concepts from across the humanities and social sciences. We therefore hope and expect that the *Journal's* readers will be interested in reading articles from outside their usual disciplinary expertise, and will find such articles an illuminating and effective way of getting a sense of scholarship in other disciplines. With this in mind, Academy lectures are expected to be both significant for

¹The *Proceedings of the British Academy* series itself continues in existence, publishing themed volumes of essays in the humanities and social sciences.

²A list of the various lecture series contributing to the *Journal* can be found at www.britac.ac.uk/journal/lecture_series.cfm.

³Publication in the *Journal of the British Academy* is by invitation. Unsolicited articles are not accepted.

specialists, and accessible to scholars in different disciplines and to a broader readership; articles commissioned by the *Journal's* editors will have the same brief.

We are well aware that what is required here—to present specialist research in a way that is illuminating for both specialist and non-specialist audiences and readers—is a challenge, but this is the challenge with which the British Academy has always been concerned and the *Journal* is thus rooted in the Academy's best traditions. At the same time, we will be taking advantage of the technical facilities of digital publication. All articles will be published as downloadable PDF files and each article will be posted as soon as it is ready for publication. A 'volume' of the *Journal* will be composed of the articles that have been posted online in the course of a calendar year. The *Journal* will also make the most of the opportunities offered by online technology—for example, increased use of colour and the possibility of supplementing an article text with supporting data or with a recording of the original lecture. Indeed, in some instances, a video or audio recording may stand as the 'record' of a lecture.

The Academy is committed to open access dissemination of its lectures, and all articles published in the *Journal of the British Academy* are licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 Unported License. For readers who still value hardcopy publication, the text content of each 'volume' will also be made available in an annual print publication, purchasable through Oxford University Press.

This marks an exciting new stage in the British Academy's long history of disseminating scholarship. We welcome you to the *Journal of the British Academy*.

JANET CARSTEN
SIMON FRITH

Janet Carsten is Professor of Social and Cultural Anthropology at the University of Edinburgh. She was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 2011.

Simon Frith is Tovey Professor of Music at the University of Edinburgh. He was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 2011.

This article is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 Unported License.

Journal of the British Academy (ISSN 2052-7217) is published by
The British Academy—the national academy for the humanities and social sciences.
10–11 Carlton House Terrace, London, SW1Y 5AH
www.britac.ac.uk