

Publishing a first article

These notes have primarily been prepared for those who wish to pursue a career as an academic or teacher in a conservatoire or academy where it is often a distinct professional advantage to have a research profile (in most institutions, perhaps, only if you are on the history/theory side of the institution's teaching rather than the instrumental or vocal side; the position varies greatly between institutions and countries). Much of the advice given here is also relevant to guitar teachers, collectors and others who wish to deepen their knowledge and share their findings in an authoritative manner.

For those in the process of preparing a doctorate, applications for grants, postdoctoral fellowships and indeed jobs made after the completion of the thesis are greatly strengthened if the CV notes one or more publications. One article is good, two or more is better, and a contract for a monograph with a respectable publisher (such as a university Press) perhaps based on your thesis, with a delivery date in the not too distant future, is best of all.

The notes assume that you are aiming high, and will wish to publish work that meets professional standards. Here that is principally understood to mean you will submit your material to a peer-reviewed journal. The peer review process is explained below.

When to publish

Publish when you feel you have an original and focused contribution to make, best of all one with evidence previously unknown, and on a topic which you profoundly believe in, *and are eager to impart*. Write your article in that spirit.

It is normal for an able researcher to find that fresh material is coming to light all the time, and you should not be afraid to publish on the grounds that new (and perhaps crucial) information may emerge that modifies or indeed falsifies what you have committed yourself to in print. That is all part of the process whereby learning advances. Nor should you hold back because your views will change and your judgment will mature. That will happen, and should.

Getting help and guidance

It is vital to have an experienced mentor, best of all a doctoral supervisor if you are at that stage, and in that world, who can advise you and review your drafts, both for content and style.

Taking the first steps

Choose the journal carefully (in our field, the range of options is not large) and have a view of the ideal destination for your piece right from the start. You can prepare by studying past issues of potential journals and exploring the mission statement of each one on its website. Obvious candidates (for articles in English) are *Soundboard Scholar* (the only peer-reviewed journal of guitar studies; published by the Guitar Foundation of America), *Early Music* (emphasis on performance practice, with excellent opportunities for reproducing pictorial material, including colour images), *Journal of the American Musical Instrument Society* and *Galpin Society Journal* (if the emphasis of your piece is technical and organological). All these journals are peer reviewed. The European Guitar Teachers Association publishes a journal, *EGTA Guitar Forum*, described on the EGTA site as 'a printed journal dedicated to in-depth scholarly work on the classical guitar, its technique and its repertoire' <http://egta.co.uk/egta-publications/egta-guitar-%20forum> Articles are refereed.

If you wish to reach instrument makers, there is *American Lutherie*, which does not send articles to peer review. *Classical Guitar* used to be a British publication, but is now published from the United States. It is not peer reviewed and rarely contains any scholarly articles.

Of the European journals, the Italian publication *Il Fronimo* is probably the longest-lasting. (*Gitarre und Laute* ceased in 2004 as a paper publication; there were a few online issues from 2007-2009 but it has not appeared since then. In France *Les Cahiers de la Guitare* is now extinct).

Since 2016 the German section of the European Guitar Teachers Association had published a Journal online http://www.egta-d.de/page/egta_journal.html

For *Roseta*, the Spanish journal, see:

<http://www.sociedad Española de la guitarra.com/index.php/roseta/numeros-de-la-revista>

There is no other Spanish magazine dedicated specifically to the guitar (and kindred instruments), with the exception of *Hispanica Lyra*, the magazine of the Sociedad Española de la Vihuela, that would almost certainly admit articles on later periods, including the Romantic era.

<https://dialnet.unirioja.es/servlet/revista?codigo=20053>

There are two more serious journals, the *Revista de Musicología* (published by the Sociedad Española de Musicología) and *Nassarre* (published by the Institución Fernando el Católico). Both would admit good articles about the guitar.

There have been (and still may be) others publications, but these are the most important.

As you write

Having chosen a journal, study carefully any 'author guidelines' on its website. It is also essential to familiarise yourself with the journal's house style in matters of layout, spelling, footnotes etc.

Ensure that your scholarship is up to date. Internet resources make this much easier than it was, but good contacts are also vital. Make contact with people in the field who will bear your interests in mind, mention conferences and papers that you might have missed, and so on. For an especially valuable resource, consult the pages that Dr. Thomas Heck maintains for the Guitar Foundation of America. Go to the home page, www.guitarfoundation.org, click the Resources tab, then Research.

If you want to reproduce images from a museum, art gallery, private collection, public archive or record office you should begin the process of seeking permission to use them early, for this can take a long time. Beware, also, that some copyright owners will charge fees, which can be considerable (up to £100 or over for rights of reproduction alone; virtually all academic publishers expect the author to pay these costs). If you are a member of a teaching or research institution of some kind, begin the hunt of research grants early.

Peer review

If you send your article to a peer-reviewed journal you will receive two, perhaps even three anonymous reports from readers nominated by the editor(s) of the journal. Be prepared for some chastening advice. Even the most experienced among us know what it is to complete an article, thinking it is our best work to date, only to find from the reports that it is not. This is all part of the process, and is done in your interests. Take careful note of all the criticisms and comments, and make the changes that you see fit. Anonymous readers save us from all kinds of idiosyncrasies and mistakes.

Open access

The internet, and the pressure for Open Access, has undermined the economic model for many academic journals (as it has for the rest of the publishing industry) so that it is very difficult for many of them to continue in print form at all. For the most part, they cannot pay authors for their work and some, including some of the most prestigious, will not supply you with a paper copy (if one exists) of the issue to which you have contributed. The situation is evolving rapidly and at the time of writing (Spring 2019) is not so fluid with regard to monographs, but may soon become so. The implications for libraries, and their subscriptions to journals, are still unclear.

If you are working within a university or other institutional context you may be asked to deposit your work in open access in your institutional repository. This should not be seen as merely an obligation, but as a way to make sure your work is widely read.

It will be wise to familiarize yourself with the terms of the Open Access debate which has become very heated in the United Kingdom, in some European countries and in the United States. A clear summary is available at <https://www.openaccess.nl/en/what-is-open-access> There is also a good Wikipedia entry which may be consulted at https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_access

For further reading, Wendy Laura Belcher, *Writing Your Journal Article in Twelve Weeks: A Guide to Academic Publishing Success* (2009) comes strongly recommended by one graduate who saw these notes in draft. There is a summary at <https://wendybelcher.com/writing-advice/how-to-write-a-journal-article/>

These notes were prepared by Christopher Page, Founder Member of the Consortium for Guitar Research at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, with the help of Erik Stenstadvold, James Westbrook, Gerhard Penn, Luis Briso de Montiano, Paul Sparks, Thomas Heck, Sarah Clarke, Cla Matthieu and Samantha Muir.