

OUTI RATAMÄKI
OTTO LATVA

You are reading a special issue of *Trace*. The research articles are developed from a selection of papers presented at the conference *(Un)common worlds: Contesting the limits of human-animal communities*, which also figures in some of the other pieces. The conference was held in Turku in the August of 2018 and organized by the Finnish Society for Human-Animal Studies (also the publisher of *Trace*). As part of the organizing committee, we found the conference a success. It was as a multidisciplinary and inspiring event, as we had hoped, bringing together researchers from around the world to present their work. This special issue shows only one tip of the iceberg from the array of papers presented, but reflects the diversity of topics and approaches. We want to thank all those taking part in the conference and submitting their manuscripts, when we at *Trace* approached them with the request. We also send our thanks to all those organizations and people who helped in facilitating the conference.

(Un)common worlds was a result

of a long planning and dreaming process by the Finnish Society for Human-Animal Studies. The conference, as well as the editing work done for *Trace*, is evidence of the diligent and committed development work by the society's board, but it is also an indication of the need to discuss human-animal relations and shared communities globally and in interdisciplinary ways, including the dialogue of art and science. The spirit of *(Un)common worlds* will, we hope, live on in further conferences organized under other institutional auspices – plans have been made.

This issue will close Outi's period as the editor-in-chief of *Trace*. She will gladly forward the task to dr. Otto Latva. Otto is a historian and a writer specializing in human-animal studies, especially in past perceptions of the sea environment. Otto has a PhD in Cultural History from the University of Turku. Currently, he is working as a post-doc researcher at Åbo Akademi University, exploring the shared past of the Baltic animals, plants and humans. He is also an author of popular books.

We wish our readers to take notice of a slight change in the name of the journal, which will from now on be known as *Trace: Journal for human-animal studies* (dropping the “Finnish”). We hope this small change will reflect the international character of the journal. *Trace* will continue to provide a forum for research and discussion of human-animal relations from social and cultural perspectives – including, as before, local matters of a more general interest. We are happy to accept

manuscripts written in English while also offering space for publications in Finnish and Swedish. ■

This special issue was edited by the journal’s editor-in-chief Outi Ratamäki together with Annika Lonkila as a guest editor. Annika is a member of the Finnish Society for Human-Animal Studies and took part in the organizing committee of the (Un)common Worlds conference.

