

To: ALA/ALCTS/CCS Committee on Cataloging: Description and Access

From: Bibliographic Control Committee, Music Library Association

Re: Call for proposals to simplify AACR2 Ch. 21 special rules for sound recordings (21.23) [Part of *5JSC/Chair/5*]

The Subcommittee on Descriptive Cataloging of the Music Library Association's Bibliographic Control Committee has reviewed the rules for selecting access points for sound recordings in 21.23. We offer the following observations and recommendations.

Following the pattern of our earlier recommendation for special rules in Chapter 21, we believe these rules relating to sound recordings should be rearranged to better reflect the function of the responsible body (bodies) rather than grouping them together in a section for sound recordings.

One of the challenges in creating cataloging rules for sound recordings is that a single expression can contain one or more works, and often those works are the result of mixed creative responsibility. Within a single resource, catalogers may find information relating to the composer(s), the lyricist or librettist, the performer(s), the producer, the studio arranger, the recording engineer and the re-mixer, among others. In spite of the possible variations and levels of creative responsibility with different sound recordings, AACR2 21.23 has focused primarily on the differences between Western popular and art music and has emphasized primary access under either the composer or the performer, depending on certain conditions.

This distinction in AACR2 has caused music catalogers to grapple with determining when "the participation of the performer(s) goes beyond that of performance, execution, or interpretation" (excerpt from rule 21.23D1). In spite of the guidelines provided by AACR2 and various LCRIs, it is not possible to consistently determine the extent of the creative contribution of a musical artist on a sound recording. Although many music librarians prefer the current ability to enter certain types of recordings under primary performer instead of title main entry, the Subcommittee regretfully acknowledges that continuing the current distinctions will not lead to consistency in the creation of cataloging records, nor in the simplification of rules sought after in RDA.

However, there remain some situations where a musical artist has creative responsibility for the resulting sound recording and would thus be appropriate as the primary access point.

As a result of our deliberations, we also believe some of the existing terminology in AACR2 contributes to the difficulty of rethinking the rules. In our suggested revisions below we have replaced "performer" with "musical artist," which encompasses both performance and creative contributions. We have also used "music event" instead of "performance," since the latter term implies a pre-existing work that is being performed,

instead of including “new works” such as improvisations. With the implementation of this terminology, we recognize that this rule would be limited strictly to musical sound recordings.

We recommend that RDA include a general rule for establishing the primary access point for a sound recording containing a single work, which can then form the foundation for rules about two or more works by the same person or body, collections of works by different persons or bodies with a collective title, and collections of works by different persons or bodies with no collective title.

We suggest the following general rule for primary access for music events, which would essentially replace 21.23A:

Use as the primary access point for the recording of a music event the personal or corporate musical artist responsible for the creation of the intellectual or artistic content of the event. Creative responsibility, such as adaptation, improvisation or substantial re-composition, goes well beyond the responsibility associated with performing a previously existing work. In case of doubt concerning the level of creative responsibility of a musical artist, use the primary access point for the previously existing work as the primary access point for the music event.

Rule 21.23B is mostly addressed by 21.4A (for individuals) and 21.4B (for corporate bodies). If these rules are merged, include examples for recordings of music events in 21.4A and 21.4B.

21.23C relates to 21.7B, although the sound recording rules in AACR2 have allowed for primary access under principal performer. In RDA, the iteration of this rule should be informed by the proposed general rule for entering music events above. Thus, for collections of works by different persons or bodies with a collective title, if one personal or corporate musical artist has responsibility for creating the intellectual or artistic content of all of the works, the primary access point should be the musical artist, not the collective title. If this condition is not met, the sound recording should be entered under title.

21.23D relates to 21.7C and to the proposed revision of 21.23C above. Again, in RDA, if one personal or corporate musical artist has responsibility for creating the intellectual or artistic content of all of the works, the primary access point should be the musical artist. Otherwise, such a compilation should be treated as in 21.7C, with primary access under the heading appropriate to the first work.