Subject Headings

Written and Compiled by
The ARLIS/NA Cataloging Advisory Committee

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Cataloging Exhibition Publications: Best Practices
Assigning Subject Headings

Introduction

These best practices are concerned with applying the Library of Congress Subject Headings to art exhibition publications, and are intended for use with the relevant sections of the Library of Congress Subject Cataloging Manual. Assigning subject headings to exhibition publications presents a great opportunity for the exercise of cataloger’s judgment. Not only are art exhibition publications frequently published with little information about its subject beyond an artist’s name and a short checklist, but the existing bibliographic records that catalogers follow as examples can vary widely according to local practices. Many of these practices can depart from established standards published in the Library of Congress Subject Cataloging Manual. For example, some libraries choose to not add topical headings such as Art, French—19th century, a heading which quickly becomes redundant in a library that only collects art books. Other libraries may wish to provide subject access for every venue hosting a travelling exhibition, and still others may wish to assign a topical heading for the gender or ethnicity of the exhibiting artist(s), even if the gender and ethnicity of the artist(s) is not a focus of the exhibition. Still other libraries subdivide Exhibitions by the date and location of the exhibition. While the Cataloging Advisory Committee does not recommend deviating from the practices outlined in the Subject Cataloging Manual, it is important to be aware of the variety of local subject cataloging practices.

When assigning subject headings, keep in mind your institution’s needs, the needs and research habits of your patrons, and the size and focus of your library’s collection when adding headings not required by national standards, or when deleting headings that are required by national standards. If you contribute your records to a bibliographic utility, make sure they conform to national standards and make your local edits locally. Most importantly, be consistent. Choose a practice, stick with it, and document it well.
Credits

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The Assigning Subject Headings section of Cataloging Exhibition Publications: Best Practices, is the third title to be published following the Title and Statement of Responsibility and Notes sections. All three ARLIS/NA Online Publications are available at: http://www.arlisna.org/pubs/onlinepubs/index.html


**Personal name as subject heading: MARC field 600**

*Exhibitions of single artists*

Follow H1250.2, and add the name of the artist as the first subject heading. Assign additional headings for style, movement, theme, location, biographical information, and ownership as appropriate.

H1250.2.b states that personal name subject headings are not added for artists where the artist’s work is used for illustration, the main entry is the author of the text, and the artist is not the subject of the text. However, if the artist's illustrations are subsequent the focus of an exhibition publication, add headings for the artist and any other headings as appropriate.

100 1 Chagall, Marc, $d 1887-1985.
245 13 La Bibbia di Marc Chagall / Sc a cura di Mauro Corradini.
Exhibitions of more than one artist

H184 states that author, title, or series entries should not be treated as substitutes for subject headings, and that subject headings should be assigned without regard to whether identical headings have been assigned as descriptive access points.

Group exhibition publications frequently have long lists of artists’ names in their titles, subtitles, or tables of contents. For exhibitions of more than four named artists, prefer a listing in a 500 or a 505 field rather than creating subject and added entries for each artist in the exhibition.

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Exhibitions of portraits or self-portraits of persons

Use the subdivision $x Portraits or $x Self-portraits for individuals who lived after 1400 (H1095) and the subdivision $v Art for individuals who lived before 1400, deities, and
mythological or legendary figures. Deities and mythological or legendary figures are also treated as topical subject headings, not personal.

245 00 Seeing David Smith : $b photographs by Dan Budnik.
600 10 Smith, David, $d 1906-1965 $x Portraits $v Exhibitions.

245 14 The artist as he imagined himself laughing : $b a self-portrait by Franz Xaver Messerschmidt, 1736-1783.
600 10 Messerschmidt, Franz Xaver, $d 1736?-1783 $x Self-portraits $v Exhibitions.

245 13 Hē klētronimía tou Apóllōna.
650 0 Apollo (Greek deity) $x Art $v Exhibitions.

Exhibitions of private collections of named collectors

H1427.2 states that if a collection is owned jointly by a husband and wife, make entries for both if both names are in the authority file.

245 14 The Bader Collection : $b Dutch and Flemish paintings.
600 10 Bader, Alfred, $d 1924- $x Art collections $v Exhibitions.
600 10 Bader, Alfred, $c Mrs. $x Art collections $v Exhibitions.

Exhibitions of artists supported by named art patrons

245 00 $a Ingres et Louis-Philippe.
600 00 Louis Philippe, $c King of the French, $d 1773-1850 $x Art patronage $v Exhibitions.

See also: Named work of art as subject heading: MARC field 600, 630
Corporate name as subject heading: MARC field 610

General

Only assign the subject heading 610 20 [name of institution] $v Exhibitions if the exhibition is of objects in that institution’s permanent collection. (H1593.3) A library may decide to add subject headings for the other exhibition venues in their local catalog.


Exhibitions of named artists' groups

245 00 Intimate friends : $b Scottish Colourists from the Hunterian Art Gallery and The Fleming Collection : Peploe, Fergusson, Hunter, Cadell / $c [edited by Perilla Kinchin and Bill Smith].
650 0 Scottish Colourists (Group of artists) $v Exhibitions.

Exhibitions of private corporate collections

245 00 Contemporary realist art from the collection of Mellon Bank
610 20 Mellon Bank $x Art collections $v Exhibitions.

Meeting name as subject heading: MARC field 611

Individual named exhibitions, biennials, world’s fairs etc.

Only assign the subject heading 611 20 [name of exhibition, biennial, world’s fair, etc.] $v Exhibitions for exhibitions about the exhibition, if the named exhibition can be treated
as a corporate body (H1593.4) and if the art exhibition recurs under the same name (LCRI 21.1B1).

245 12 A treatise upon selected aspects of the Great International Exhibition held in Philadelphia on the occasion of our Nation's one-hundredth birthday, with some reference to another exhibition held in Washington commemorating that epic event, and called 1876, a Centennial Exhibition.
611 20 Centennial Exhibition $d (1876 : $c Philadelphia, Pa.) $v Exhibitions.

245 10 Padiglione Italia : $b 12 progetti per la Biennale di Venezia.
611 20 Biennale di Venezia. $e Padiglione Italia $v Exhibitions.
650 0 Exhibition buildings $z Italy $z Venice $v Designs and plans $v Exhibitions.

**Named work of art as subject heading: MARC field 600, 610, 630**

Assign a subject heading for a named artwork if it is the focus of an exhibition. Use the heading as established in the authority file. Prefer a topical heading if the exhibition is of four or more individual named works of art.

**Name/title entries for named artworks**

245 00 Mona Lisa : $b inside the painting.
600 00 Leonardo, $c da Vinci, $d 1452-1519. $t Mona Lisa.

245 00 Cyriacus of Ancona's Egyptian visit and its reflections in Gentile Bellini and Hieronymus Bosch.
600 10 Bellini, Gentile, d. 1507. $t Saint Mark preaching in Alexandria.
600 10 Bosch, Hieronymus, d. 1516. $t Garden of delights.

245 00 Gilbert & George : $b the Singing sculpture.
610 20 Gilbert & George. $t Singing sculpture.

H1250.3.a states that the cataloger should assign additional headings for location and ownership of the art work if the information is easily found in the work being cataloged, and should not do research in other sources if this information is not readily apparent.
However, the cataloger of art exhibition publications may wish to do so if this information is locally important.

245 00 Las Meninas von Diego Velazquez / $c Hermann Ulrich Asemissen.
600 10 Velázquez, Diego, $d 1599-1660. $t Maids of honor.
610 20 Museo del Prado.

*Uniform title entries for named artworks*

Use the uniform title as established in the authority file.

245 10 Disarmed : $b the story of the Venus de Milo / $c Greg Curtis.
630 00 Venus de Milo.

*Uniform title entries for manuscripts and manuscript groups*

AACR2 25.13B gives three options for formulating uniform titles for manuscripts and manuscript groups. In order of preference,

a. Use a title that has been assigned to the work after its creation or compilation:

630 00 Book of Kells $v Exhibitions.

b. Use the name of the manuscript(s) if the work is identified by that name:

245 10 Scrolls from the wilderness of the Dead Sea : $b catalogue of the exhibition, the Dead Sea Scrolls of Jordan.
630 00 Dead Sea scrolls $v Exhibitions.

c. Use the heading of the repository followed by $k Manuscript. $n [Repository's designation for the manuscript]

245 04 The Book of Kings : $b art, war and the Morgan Library's Medieval Picture Bible.
610 20 Pierpont Morgan Library. $k Manuscript. $n M.638 $v Exhibitions.
*Local entries for named artworks*

Prefer a local subject heading (690) or a local note (590) for works of art owned by the cataloger’s parent institution that are included in an exhibition, but not otherwise the focus of the exhibition.

590 A-KAG reproduction: Balla, Giacomo; Dynamism of a Dog on a Leash, 1912, p. 47 and on cover.
OR
500 A-KAG reproduction: Balla, Giacomo; Dynamism of a Dog on a Leash, 1912, p. 47 and on cover. $5 NBuAK

*Topical subject heading: MARC field 650*

Follow the guidelines in H1250. Keep in mind the needs of the local users and parent institution when assigning subject headings not required by national standards or deleting headings which are required by national standards.

For both group exhibitions and exhibitions of the works of single artist, follow H1250 and add topical subject headings for style, movement, ownership, and theme of the art in the exhibition, as it is described in the work being cataloged:

600 10 Nolde, Emil, $d 1867-1956 $v Exhibitions.
600 10 Schmidt-Rottluff, Karl, $d 1884-1976 $v Exhibitions.
650 0 Expressionism (Art) $z Germany $v Exhibitions.
650 0 Art, German $y 20th century $v Exhibitions.
600 10 Rauert, Paul, $d 1863-1938 $x Art collections $v Exhibitions.
600 10 Rauert, Martha $x Art collections $v Exhibitions.

245 12 A tapestry of memories : $b the art of Dinh Q. Lê.
600 10 Lê, Dinh Q., $d 1968- $v Exhibitions.
Assign a topical subject heading for location only if the works in the exhibition are all permanently located in one place. Use a geographical subject heading for exhibitions of art where the location is a predominant theme:

245 00 Wondrous spaces : $b New York State landscapes from New York State Museums : the romantic decades of the 19th century.
650 0 Art, American $ z New York (State) $ v Exhibitions.
650 0 Art, American $ z New York (State) $ y 19th century $ v Exhibitions.
651 0 New York (State) $ x In art $ v Exhibitions.
(Exhibition of works of art permanently located in New York State, featuring as a topic New York State)

Art form and place of origin

H1250.1.b-c recommends adding a subject heading for the art form, qualified by the place of origin and subdivided by historical period. Be as narrow and as specific as possible.

610 20 Group of Seven (Group of artists) $ v Exhibitions.
610 20 McMichael Canadian Collection $ v Exhibitions.
650 0 Landscape painting, Canadian $ y 20th century $ v Exhibitions.

For exhibitions featuring a single artist, qualify the art form by the country where the artist spent the bulk of his or her artistic career:

600 10 Robus, Hugo, $ d 1885-1964 $ v Exhibitions.
650 0 Art, American $ y 20th century $ v Exhibitions.
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600 10 Picasso, Pablo, $d 1881-1973 $v Exhibitions.
650 0 Art pottery, French $y 20th century $v Exhibitions.
*(Spanish artist living and working in France)*

If the artist is still living and has lived and worked in a number of different countries, do not qualify the art form by place of origin:

245 10 Matthew Ngui : $b points of view.
650 0 Ngui, Matthew $v Exhibitions.
650 0 Art, Modern $y 21st century $v Exhibitions.
*(Artist living and working in Australia and Singapore)*

If art in the exhibition has a variety of or indeterminate place of origin, don’t qualify the art form by nationality.

Records contributed to national bibliographic utilities should follow H1250.1.b-c and and H1250.2.a and include a subject heading for the art form qualified by place of origin and historical period, when applicable. However, in their local catalogs, many art libraries choose to not add broad topical headings such as Art, American $y 20th century $v Exhibitions, for single and/or group exhibition catalogs, as these headings quickly become redundant for specialized art collections.

**Genre term as subject heading: MARC field 655**

Form/genre subject headings are headings which indicate the physical form or genre of the item in hand. These types of headings are coded in the 655 field. While there are many Library of Congress subject headings, such as Artists' books or Photographs, that describe various forms or genres, the Library of Congress has only established form/genre subject headings for moving image works. To express the form/genre of other types of works, including exhibition catalogs, use subject thesauri other than the Library of Congress Subject Headings. Two commonly-used thesauri for art materials are the Art and Architecture Thesaurus (coded $2 aat) and Genre Terms: a Thesaurus for Use in Rare Book and Special Collections Cataloguing (coded $2 rbgenr).
245 10 Joseph Goldberg.
600 10 Goldberg, Joseph, $d 1947- $v Exhibitions.
650 0 Art, American $y 20th century $v Exhibitions.
650 0 Art, American $y 21st century $v Exhibitions.
655 7 Exhibition catalogs. $2 aat

245 12 A text to accompany the installation A short discourse on nature and culture at the Crawford Municipal Gallery of Art, Cork, Spring 1996 / $c Blaise Drummond.
600 10 Drummond, Blaise $v Exhibitions.
650 0 Artists' books.
655 7 Artists' books. $2 rbgenr

A short list of some common subdivisions used --and not used-- for art exhibition catalogs

When applying these subdivisions, please follow the detailed scope notes found in the Library of Congress subject authority records. A citation to the relevant section of the Library of Congress Subject Cataloging Manual follows each subdivision. Also remember the distinction between coding subdivisions as $x (for topical subdivisions) or $v (for form subdivisions). Topical subdivisions ($x) are used when the work in hand is about the subdivision; form subdivisions ($v) are used when the work in hand is an example of the subdivision. Prior to 1999, all form subdivisions were coded $x. In the list below, it is indicated if a subdivision can be coded both $x and $v.

$x or $v Appreciation. H1148.
$v Art. H1095.
$x Art and the war [revolution, etc.]. H1200.
$x Art collections.
$x Art patronage.
$x Attribution. H1148.
$x or $v Catalogs. H1148 and H1360. Use $v Catalogs for listings of art objects, etc., that are available or located at particular places, and are systematically arranged with detailed descriptions accompanying each entry. Use also under the under names of individual corporate bodies and types of organizations for works listing, art works, etc., produced
by, located in, or available from those organizations. Also use $v Catalogs under names of individual artists, craftspersons, families of artists and craftspersons, and corporate bodies for works listing their art works or crafts which are available or located in particular institutions or places. Also use under persons or families doing business as sellers under their own names. Use $x Catalogs for works about the types of publications listed above. Do not use $v Exhibitions $v Catalogs for exhibition catalogs.

$x or $v Chronology. H1148.

$x Conservation and restoration. H1148.

$x Copying. H1148.

$x or $v Exhibitions. H1593 and H1360. Use $v Exhibitions for exhibition catalogs. Do not subdivide further by $v Catalogs. Use $x Exhibitions for works about exhibitions, including for works on exhibition techniques and methodology.

$x Expertising. H1148.

$x Foreign influences. H1148. Not valid under period subdivisions.

$x Forgeries. H1148.

$x History. H1250.

$x History and criticism. H1250. Do not use with art headings.

$x or $v In art. H1095.

$x Influence. H1148.

$x Painting. Do not use with art headings. Use as a topical subdivision under individual materials and types of materials and individual land vehicles and types of land vehicles.

$v Photographs. H1395. Use only for catalogs that contain actual photographs.

$v Pictorial works. H1395.

$x Reproduction. H1148.

$x Technique. H1148.

$x Themes, motives. H1148.