



Cataloging Exhibition Publications: Best Practices
Assigning Subject and Genre/Form Headings

Written and Compiled by The ARLIS/NA Cataloging Advisory Committee

Art Libraries Society of North America

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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 Headings 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 their 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 Headings 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 traveling 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. Local policies are also being deployed in many libraries to replace biased, dehumanizing, or discriminatory headings that persist in *Library of Congress Subject Headings*. While the Cataloging Advisory Committee does not recommend deviating from the practices outlined in the *Library of Congress Subject Headings 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

Compiled by members of the ARLIS/NA Cataloging Advisory Committee, 2001-2008: Penny Baker, Lynda Bunting, Anne Champagne, Sherman Clarke, Linda Cuccurullo, Claudia Hill, Elizabeth Lilker, Nancy Norris, Elizabeth O'Keefe, Maria Oldal, Trudi Olivetti, Sarah Quimby, Elizabeth Robinson, Judy Silverman, Daniel Starr, Kay Teel

Updated by members of the ARLIS/NA Cataloging Advisory Committee 2018-2022: Bronwen Bitetti, William Blueher, Sherman Clarke, Marie-Chantal L'Ecuyer-Coelho, Tamara Fultz, John Maier, Calli Neumann, Elizabeth O'Keefe, Maria Oldal, Sarah Osborne Bender, Alexandra Provo, Andrea Puccio, Karen Stafford, Karly Wildenhaus

The Assigning Subject and Genre/Form Headings section is part of *Cataloging Exhibition Publications: Best Practices*. All sections are available at: <https://www.arlisna.org/cataloging-advisory-committee>

Relevant sections of the Subject Headings Manual

H184 Subject Headings Identical to Descriptive Access Points.

H910 Place as a theme in art, literature, motion pictures, etc.

H1095 Free-floating subdivisions. Art, In art

H1148 Subdivisions controlled by pattern headings. Art, Art and the war

H1250 Art and Fine Art.

H1255 Artistic photography.

H1334 Buildings and Other Structures.

H1334.5 Buildings and Structures in Cities.

H1360 Catalogs.

H1427 Collections of objects.

H1593 Exhibitions.

H1659 Illustrations.

H1935 Pictorial works.

H1945.5 Posters.

Best Practices

1. Personal name as subject heading: MARC field 600

1.1 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 subsequently the focus of an exhibition publication, add headings for the artist and any other headings as appropriate.

Example:

100 1# \$a Chagall, Marc, \$d 1887-1985.

245 13 \$a La Bibbia di Marc Chagall / \$c a cura di Mauro Corradini.

600 10 \$a Chagall, Marc, \$d 1887-1985 \$v Exhibitions.

630 00 \$a Bible \$v Illustrations \$v Exhibitions. (Exhibition of the author's illustrations for the Bible, not the illustrated Bible itself.)

1.2 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.

Examples:

245 00 Helen Frankenthaler, Ellsworth Kelly, Roy Lichtenstein, Jules Olitski : \$b XXXIII International Biennial Exhibition of Art, Venice, June 18-October 16 1966, Washington, D.C., December 1, 1966-January 15, 1967 / \$c organized by the International Art Program of the National Collection of Fine Arts, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.

600 10 \$a Frankenthaler, Helen, \$d 1928-2011 \$v Exhibitions.

600 10 \$a Kelly, Ellsworth, \$d 1923-2015 \$v Exhibitions.

600 10 \$a Lichtenstein, Roy, \$d 1923-1997 \$v Exhibitions.

600 10 \$a Olitski, Jules, \$d 1922-2007 \$v Exhibitions.

but

245 10 \$a Twelve New York painters : \$b April 1-27, 2006.

500 ## \$a "Mary Abbott Alcopley, Robert Beauchamp, Byron Browne, Charles Cajori, Jim Forsberg, Carl Heidenreich, Angelo Ippolito, Emily Mason, Robert Natkin, Robert Richenburg, Nina Tryggvadottir."

650 0 \$a Painting, American \$z New York (State) \$z New York \$y 20th century \$v Exhibitions.

650 0 \$a Painting, American \$z New York (State) \$z New York \$y 21st century \$v Exhibitions.

1.3 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, fictional characters, and mythological or legendary figures. Deities and mythological or legendary figures are also treated as topical subject headings, not personal.

Examples:

245 00 \$a Seeing David Smith : \$b photographs by Dan Budnik.

600 10 \$a Smith, David, \$d 1906-1965 \$x Portraits \$v Exhibitions.

245 14 \$a The artist as he imagined himself laughing : \$b a self-portrait by Franz Xaver Messerschmidt, 1736-1783.

600 10 \$a Messerschmidt, Franz Xaver, \$d 1736?-1783 \$x Self-portraits \$v Exhibitions.

245 13 \$a Hē klēronomiá tou Apóllōna.

600 00 \$a Apollo \$c (Deity) \$x Art \$v Exhibitions.

1.4 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.

Example:

245 14 \$a The Bader Collection : \$b Dutch and Flemish paintings.

600 10 \$a Bader, Alfred, \$d 1924- \$x Art collections \$v Exhibitions.

600 10 \$a Bader, Isabel, \$d 1926- \$x Art collections \$v Exhibitions.

1.5 Exhibitions of artists supported by named art patrons

Example:

245 00 \$a Ingres et Louis-Philippe.

600 00 \$a Louis Philippe, \$c King of the French, \$d1773-1850 \$x Art patronage \$v Exhibitions.

See also: [Named work of art as subject heading: MARC field 600, 630](#)

2. Corporate name as subject heading: MARC field 610

2.1 Exhibitions of named artists' groups

Example:

245 00 \$a Superflex :\$b the corrupt show and the speculative machine / \$c [editors, Christiane Berndes, Superflex, Daniel McClean, Kerstin Meimann].

610 20 \$a Superflex (Group of artists) \$v Exhibitions.

2.2 Exhibitions of works of art held by a corporate body

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.

Example:

245 10 \$a Durer to Matisse : \$b master drawings from the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art / \$c Roger Ward.

500 ## \$a Catalog of an exhibition organized by the Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art in cooperation with the Philbrook Museum of Art and held at the Philbrook Museum of Art, Tulsa, Okla., June 23-Aug. 18,1996; the Cummer Museum of Art and Gardens, Jacksonville, Fla., Sept. 20-Nov. 29, 1996; and the Hood Museum of Art, Hanover, N.H., Dec. 21-Mar. 2, 1997.

610 20 \$a Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art \$v Exhibitions.

2.3 Exhibitions of private corporate collections

Example:

245 00 \$a Contemporary realist art from the collection of Mellon Bank.

610 20 \$a Mellon Bank \$x Art collections \$v Exhibitions.

3. Meeting name as subject heading: MARC field 611

3.1 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 (LC-PCC PS for RDA 19.2.1.1.1 under Art Catalogs).

Examples:

245 12 \$a 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 \$a Centennial Exhibition \$d (1876 : \$c Philadelphia, Pa.) \$v Exhibitions.

245 14 \$a The new spirit : \$b American art in the Armory show, 1913 / \$c Gail Stavitsky, Laurette E. McCarthy, Charles H. Duncan.

611 20 \$a Armory Show \$d (1913 : \$c New York, N.Y.) \$v Exhibitions.

4. 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.

4.1 Name/title entries for named artworks

Examples:

240 10 \$a Claude Monet : \$b Water lilies / \$c Ann Temkin and Nora Lawrence.

600 10 \$a Monet, Claude, \$d 1840-1926. \$t Water lilies \$v Exhibitions.

245 10 \$a Allan DeSouza : \$b the world series ; Jacob Lawrence : The migration series.

600 10 \$a DeSouza, Allan, \$d 1958- \$v Exhibitions.

600 10 \$a Lawrence, Jacob, \$d 1917-2000. \$t Migration series \$v Exhibitions.

245 00 \$a Intimate landscapes : \$b the Canyon suite of Georgia O'Keefe / \$c [introduction by] Dana Self.

600 10 \$a O'Keefe, Georgia, \$d 1887-1986. \$t Canyon suite.

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.

Example:

245 10 \$a Coloring the Temple of Dendur / \$c Erin A. Peters

610 20 \$a Temple of Dendûr (Egypt)

610 20 \$a Metropolitan Museum of Art (New York, N.Y.)

However, the cataloger of art exhibition publications may wish to do so if this information is locally important.

Example:

245 00 \$a Las Meninas von Diego Velazquez / \$c Hermann Ulrich Asemissen.

600 10 \$a Velázquez, Diego, \$d 1599-1660. \$t Maids of honor.

610 20 \$a Museo del Prado.

4.2 Uniform title entries for named artworks

Use the uniform title as established in the authority file.

Example:

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

630 00 \$a Venus de Milo.

5. Topical subject heading: MARC fields 600, 610, 650, and 651

5.1 Group and Solo Exhibitions

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:

Examples:

245 00 \$a Nolde, Schmidt-Rottluff, und ihre Freunde : \$b die Sammlung Martha und Paul Rauert, Hamburg 1905-1958 / \$c herausgegeben von Eva Caspers, Wolfgang Henze, Hans-Jürgen Lwowski.

600 10 \$a Nolde, Emil, \$d 1867-1956 \$v Exhibitions.

600 10 \$a Schmidt-Rottluff, Karl, \$d 1884-1976 \$v Exhibitions.

650 #0 \$a Expressionism (Art) \$z Germany \$v Exhibitions.

650 #0 \$a Art, German \$y 20th century \$v Exhibitions.

600 10 \$a Rauert, Paul, \$d 1863-1938 \$x Art collections \$v Exhibitions.

600 10 \$a Rauert, Martha \$x Art collections \$v Exhibitions.

- 245 12 \$a A tapestry of memories : \$b the art of Dinh Q. Lê.
600 10 \$a Lê, Dinh Q., \$d 1968- \$v Exhibitions.
600 10 \$a Lê, Dinh Q., \$d 1968- \$v Interviews.
650 #0 \$a Vietnam War, 1961-1975 \$x Art and the war \$v Exhibitions.
651 #0 \$a Vietnam \$x In art \$v Exhibitions.
650 #0 \$a Photography, Artistic \$v Exhibitions.

5.2 Location

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 \$a Wondrous spaces : \$b New York State landscapes from New York State Museums : the romantic decades of the 19th century.
650 #0 \$a Art, American \$z New York (State) \$v Exhibitions.
650 #0 \$a Art, American \$z New York (State) \$y 19th century \$v Exhibitions.
651 #0 \$a 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)

5.3 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.

Examples:

- 245 00 \$a Group of Seven, Canadian landscape painters : \$b from the McMichael Canadian Collection, Kleinburg, Ontario, Ministry of Culture & Recreation, Province of Ontario : at the Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C., January 22-February 20, 1977.
610 20 \$a Group of Seven (Group of artists) \$v Exhibitions.
610 20 \$a McMichael Canadian Collection \$v Exhibitions.
650 #0 \$a 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:

Examples:

- 245 10 \$a Hugo Robus : \$b sculpture and paintings : May 10-June 22, 2007, Forum Gallery
600 10 \$a Robus, Hugo, \$d 1885-1964 \$v Exhibitions.
650 #0 \$a Art, American \$y 20th century \$v Exhibitions.

245 10 \$a Picasso : \$b objeto e imagen : Museo Picasso Málaga, 22.10.2007- 27.01.2008.

600 10 \$a Picasso, Pablo, \$d 1881-1973 \$v Exhibitions.

650 #0 \$a 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:

Example:

245 10 \$a Matthew Ngui : \$b points of view.

600 #0 \$a Ngui, Matthew, \$d 1962- \$v Exhibitions.

650 #0 \$a 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.

6. Genre/form heading: MARC field 655

Genre/form headings indicate the physical form or genre of the item in hand. These types of headings are coded in the 655 field. The genre/form terms refer to the resource, not to the content of the resource. Form headings do not replace subdivisions, e.g., use 655 Exhibition catalogs. \$2 lcgft even if you have \$v Exhibitions on other 6XX fields. (However, in local art library catalogs, a form heading for Exhibition catalogs may become too numerous to provide meaningful access. Therefore application or retention of this heading should be carefully considered.) Commonly-used thesauri and vocabularies for art materials are the *Art and Architecture Thesaurus* (coded \$2 aat), *Library of Congress Genre/Form Terms* (coded \$2 lcgft), and *Genre Terms: a Thesaurus for Use in Rare Book and Special Collections Cataloguing* (coded \$2 rbgenr). *LCGFT* is an intentionally broad vocabulary; look to *AAT*, *RBGENR*, or other thesauri when greater specificity is needed.

Examples:

245 04 \$a The photographer's cookbook / \$c originally conceived and edited by Deborah Barsel ; introduction by Lisa Hostetler.

650 #0 \$a Cooking.

650 #0 \$a Photographers.

655 #7 \$a Cookbooks. \$2 lcgft

245 10 \$a Joseph Goldberg.

600 10 \$a Goldberg, Joseph, \$d 1947- \$v Exhibitions.

650 #0 \$a Art, American \$y 20th century \$v Exhibitions.

650 #0 \$a Art, American \$y 21st century \$v Exhibitions.

655 #7 \$a Exhibition catalogs. \$2 aat

245 12 \$a 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 \$a Drummond, Blaise \$v Exhibitions.

650 #0 \$a Artists' books.

655 #7 \$a Artists' books. \$2 rbgenr

7. Subdivisions

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 Headings 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.

7.1 *A short list of some common subdivisions used – and not used – for art exhibition catalogs*

\$x or \$v Appreciation. H1148.

\$v Art. H1095.

\$x Art and the war [revolution, etc.]. H1200.

\$x Art collections. H1148.

\$x Art patronage. H1148.

\$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.

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Use also under the 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.

\$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.

H1158 and H1195. 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.

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\$x Themes, motives. H1148.