

To: Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA
From: John Attig, ALA Representative
Subject: Musical arrangements: Discussion paper

ALA thanks EURIG for its investigations of issues relating to musical arrangements. We agree that these are challenging issues. Although we do not find the arguments presented in the paper convincing, we would welcome continued discussion. We offer the following comments, which were received from the Music Library Association:

1.1 Arrangements by composers

- Although it is indeed sometimes not clear cut whether to consider something an expression of an existing work or a new, related work, the types of musical arrangements described in this paper seem to fall quite clearly in the realm of expressions. If the basic musical content of the arrangement is the same as the existing work, then it's the same work.
- The paper's distinction between composers as arrangers and performers as arrangers is problematic. It doesn't matter who does the arranging, and the proposed arbitrary difference in treatment depending on who the arranger is would lead to inconsistency in cataloging. See the comments on section 1.3 for further elaboration on this point.
- The paper conflates arrangements and adaptations by citing 6.28.1.5 in an attempt to argue that "RDA admits that some arrangements can be regarded as new works." In fact, 6.28.1.5 outlines the criteria for deciding that something has gone beyond mere arrangement and is instead an adaptation, and therefore, a new work.
- When an arrangement has a different thematic index number and/or a different title from the original work, we suggest that this information could be coded in an expression record for the arrangement. The expression record could also have a variant access point under the name of the arranger. We agree that it would be useful to capture this information in a systematic, accessible way, even if we don't agree with going as far as naming the arrangement under the name of the arranger in an authorized access point.
- We fear a loss of the collocation function of authorized access points in the landscape that the paper promotes. If we consider arrangements to be new works, the arrangements will not collocate with the original version.

1.2 Works arranged by their own creator

- The paper contradicts itself by proposing to "distinguish versions of the same work" in its advancement of the idea of considering arrangements to be new

works. We note that even the authors of the document refer to the arrangement as *a version of the same work*.

- The proposed solution of distinguishing these different versions of a work by including medium of performance as qualifier is the same as the AACR2 and RDA solution for distinguishing actual different works by the same composer that just happen to have the same title and are for differing media. We object to the proposal to treat these two very different scenarios the same way.

1.3 Arrangements by non-composers

- The proposed method puts the burden of research on the cataloger to determine if the arranger is primarily a performer or primarily a composer. Many arrangers are both performers and composers.
- It also puts the burden of research on the cataloger to determine if the arrangement was made for pedagogical purposes, a distinction which shouldn't determine how the arrangement is treated.
- Again, the paper's distinction between composers as arrangers and performers as arrangers is problematic. It doesn't matter who does the arranging, and the proposed arbitrary difference in treatment depending on who the arranger is would lead to inconsistency in cataloging. David Vincent's arrangement for 4 saxophones of a work by Debussy is not different enough in principle from Ravel's orchestration of a work by Mussorgsky to warrant such different treatment.

In general, we observe that the proposed change in treatment of arrangements is not supported in our current environment and is not backwards compatible with AACR2. The paper seems to be trying to solve the problem of representing the complexity of musical expressions in our current environment by simply pushing the complexity up to the work level. Ideally, we want to represent clusters or webs of expressions in relation to the work that they all express. We don't do that terribly well now, but EURIG is trying to solve that problem by creating instead a web of works (and expressions), which doesn't simplify, but rather makes the landscape even more complex.

ALA Representative note: It should be noted that many of the attributes identifying a work may also differ between expressions of that work. Of those that relate specifically to musical works, one of them – Medium of Performance – is in fact defined as two separate elements in FRAD: Medium of Performance (an attribute of the work) and Medium of Performance of Expression. Two other attributes – Numeric Designation and Key – arguably *should* be similarly defined separately as attributes of the work and the expression. Recording these attributes would go a long way towards providing the information needed to distinguish arrangements of musical works.