

TO: Joint Steering Committee for Development of RDA

FROM: Barbara B. Tillett, LC Representative

SUBJECT: Revision of RDA instructions for arrangements and adaptations of musical works (RDA 6.28.1.5.2 and 6.28.3.2.2)

LC thanks ALA for this proposal. We agree that it can be difficult to distinguish between the modifications that represent musical arrangements (new expressions in RDA), and the modifications that result in adaptations (new works in RDA). However, we do not support the current version of this proposal, and offer the following comments.

1. 6.28.1.5.2

Example (p. 3)

Addition of Rzewski. We don't agree to the addition of this example because it represents variations on a pre-existing tune, a related work, not an adaptation.

Addition of Didn't my Lord deliver Daniel. We believe this example is confusing because the transcription of the manifestation information includes the word "arranged", yet the purpose of the example is to illustrate an adaptation.

Regarding the existing example for Elling, Live in Chicago.

Although ALA did not address this, we question this example, as we see (and believe users see) improvisation in the jazz tradition as an aspect of a performance convention associated with this musical genre, not as a compositional activity. It is intended to support the statement "if two or more composers have collaborated in the adaptation, apply the instructions given under 6.27.1.3." The description of the resource in the example is "Jazz performances of songs by various composers." While that statement identifies the contents as performances, the example seems to imply the improvisation aspect puts these performers in a different, more composer-related category from other performers. We don't agree with this interpretation. Kurt Elling was assigned primary responsibility in the original AACR2 cataloging of this resource because of his role as the primary performer (a relationship in a sound recording treated differently in RDA) and not because of any compositional role on his part. The example can be seen in the light of a concern we have previously expressed – one to take up elsewhere – in the interest of improving treatment of music in RDA, the need for a thorough investigation of the musical conventions associated with all the various broad musical traditions. We suggest this example be removed.

Regarding the added instruction (p. 3), "If the composer of the adaptation is unknown", instead of the sentence proposed here we suggest:

If the composer of the adaptation is unknown or uncertain, see the instructions at 6.27.1.8.

2. RDA 6.28.3.2.2

We have reservations about introducing “traditional” here, and prefer that not be done. While we appreciate the attempt to start incorporating traditional music more directly in RDA, we think this addition may prove problematic in the future. We have yet to determine whether users search for traditional music differently from the way they search for Western art and popular music. Instead, they typically emphasize aspects such as ethnic group, geographic region, and instruments, when they are interested in non-Western ones. We aren’t yet sure whether certain aspects of traditional music will be treated separately in RDA as a result of these differences or not, but we prefer to allow for that possibility. So we find it preferable not to incorporate a term that could be seen as a model to adopt elsewhere, thereby beginning a practice that may eventually need to be undone.