

It's Happening Now: Two Developments Using Music Ontologies
MLA Annual Meeting 2017, Orlando, FL

Summary written by Michelle Urberg, ExLibris (ProQuest)

Session Presenters: Kimmy Szeto (Baruch College); Jean Delahousse (DOREMUS)

The It's Happening Now session was held on Friday February 24, at the annual MLA Conference in Orlando.

Kimmy Szeto opened this panel with his discussion "Medium of Performance Ontologies in Cataloging Practice" (which can be viewed here:

<https://vimeo.com/album/4456793/video/206776156>). Szeto's talk pulled one specific topic—medium of performance mapping—related to the Friday Morning Plenary (Ontologies, BIBFRAME, and Linked Data for Performed Music: MLA's Role in it All). The ontology proposed by Szeto is intended to make clearer who is playing what and how many people play a part in a work being cataloged.

The first point he made was that particular MARC 21 fields, such as the 382 (medium of performance field) and 048 (number of instruments or voices), the shift from AACR2 to RDA, and definitions in FRBR (Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records) have contributed to confusion in how to describe medium of performance in MARC format. Confusion about description can be seen particularly in three areas: describing the work as an original versus a derivative; identifying the number of performers (including implied groups like percussion or continuo); and recording instrument labels (including principal and doubling). Szeto focused primarily on the latter two in his proposed medium of performance ontology.

So what is the medium of performance about? The instruments? Or the parts? Or the performers? Which pieces of information are related to medium of performance? Which are sub-parts? Which are not related at all?

Szeto proposed answers to some of these questions through visualizations of the different subfield tags used in the 382 in MARC 21 and the 146 in UNIMARC. His portrayal of medium of performance in MARC and UNIMARC revealed that each can obscure the representation of medium of performance.

MARC 382 can be subdivided into three fields: name of instrument, number of performers or ensembles, and the total number of performers and ensembles. Unfortunately, the 382 field does not really distinguish between number of parts and number of performers playing those parts, making it a less robust model to follow for developing a linked medium of performance ontology.

UNIMARC 146 handles the discussion of parts in a hierarchical fashion, making subfields dependent on other subfields (e.g. subfield \$f may occur only if at least one subfield \$c or \$e is entered). However, the components of the UNIMARC 146 field, Szeto argued, can be a useful starting place to start creating a linked medium of performance ontology. Parts, instruments, and ensembles comprise this field. A closer examination of 'part' suggests that it is the center of this field. A clear definition can solve some issues with a medium of performance ontology. Parts are

the class, with instruments and ensembles being subclasses and performers being a class related to parts. The last section of Szeto's discussion was dedicated to examples demonstrating how parts help describe ensembles, instruments, and performers.

The second presentation was presented virtually. Jean Delahousse, leader of the DOREMUS project was not available to present, but he did provide a through introduction to DOing REusable MUSical data or DOREMUS (www.doremus.org). DOREMUS has three objectives: to improve music description for the purpose of encouraging open exchange and reuse of data; to make French music catalogs available and reusable with linked data; used the linked data catalog to study the use of music and offer an application to recommend music.

The project aims to describe a number of musical materials, including works, performances, recordings, and publications. It does this by enriching a current ontology FRBRoo (Functional Requirements for Bibliographic Records—object oriented), which is a blend of FRBR and the CIDOC Conceptual Reference Model (CIDOC-CRM), a description model used by museums to describe their collections. DOREMUS draws on a number of controlled vocabularies, including MIMO (Musical Instrument Museums Online) for medium of performance, IFLA for keys, International Standard Name Identifier (ISNI) for persons and corporate bodies, GeoNames/GeoEthno for geographical places, and Répertoire d'autorité-matière encyclopédique et alphabétique unifié (RAMEAU) for ethnic groups. The body of information for DOREMUS project comes from the Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF), Radio France, and Philharmonie de Paris, three French institutions with large musical libraries.

At the heart of this ontology is the event and from an event (i.e. performance) comes and individual work and a self-contained expression of that work. Actors or performers are related to the event. A linked data set will consist of many nodes of data, each comprised of an event, a work, and an expression. The materials related to a given event can be sound recordings, tracks on sound recordings, video recordings, and other ephemera (like publications about the music). The event itself can divide into a number of different types of performances. Delahousse presented a number of examples with these linked sets emerging from a single event to demonstrate how this works.

Delahousse and his team have both built tools to use in creating these linked data sets and created at least one interesting use case with the tools. Aside from the DOREMUS knowledgebase and the ontology, Delahousse and his team have built a MARC to RDF converter. All of these items are available at the project website, through a link to the project's GitHub code repository (<https://github.com/DOREMUS-ANR>). These tools have been deployed successfully to create links between music and materials in the library and the marketing needs of the Philharmonie de Paris. This ensemble has been able to provide more robust information about the music they perform in their concert season on their webpage, as well as use the metadata schema to enable more precise searching and indexing of the content by engines like Bing, Yahoo, and Google. The Philharmonie de Paris is also serving as a test case for the recommender application Delahousse and his team are developing.

Although quite different in focus, both presentations did a nice job of visualizing how the ontologies organize pieces of information about music.