

BCC2006/MSWG/1

Music Library Association
 Working Group on Metadata Standards
Annual Report, October 2006

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The Metadata Working Group is nearing the conclusion of its work and is preparing its final report for submission to the Board in the coming weeks. Various metadata element sets and schema have been examined, including:

- Descriptive metadata
 - Metadata Object Description Schema (MODS)
 - Dublin Core Metadata Initiative
 - The metadata component of Variations 2: Indiana University Digital Music Library
- Archival finding aids markup
 - Encoded Archival Description (EAD)
- Rights metadata
 - Open Digital Rights Language (ODRL)
 - MPEG Rights Expression Language (MPEG-21/5)
 - METS Rights Extension Schema (METSRights)
- Metadata exchange
 - Metadata Encoding and Transmission Standard (METS)
- Music notation and transmission
 - Standard Music Description Language (SMDL)
 - Music Encoding Initiative (MEI)
 - MusicXML
- Other standards
 - MPEG Multimedia Content Description Interface (MPEG-7)
 - Metadata Authority Description Schema (MADS)
 - Metadata for Images in XML Schema (MIX)

There are many additional metadata standards either specifically music-related of which are used for the control of music materials, but we felt that these were the standards that are most important for us to track at the present time. A number of these standards are supported by the Library of Congress, and are widely used for the control of digital objects of all types. They are:

- Metadata Object Description Schema (MODS)
- Metadata Authority Description Schema (MADS)
- Metadata Encoding and Transmission Standard (METS)
- Encoded Archival Description (EAD)
- Metadata for Images in XML Schema (MIX)

Of these MODS and EAD are standards that have been used extensively to describe music materials. These two, along with Dublin Core, are the descriptive metadata standards that our final report focuses on, and for which best practices will be recommended.

METS is a standard for creating containers for the metadata, file inventories, and digital object structure and behavior that make up digital objects. At the present time METS is still in its infancy and METS profiles for musical objects are only just beginning to appear. This area should be monitored but it does not seem necessary for us to make any specific recommendations for its use with musical materials at this time. The descriptive portions of a METS file however, will

typically be coded using MODS or DC, for which we will provide recommendations.

Encoded Archival Description, the standard schema for encoding of finding aids, is frequently used to describe music materials and recommendations for its use are included in the report.

The Metadata Working Group report will not recommend that the MLA create a new metadata schema for music, but will enumerate an element set that can be expressed in a number of the existing metadata schemas, along with recommendations for best practices. We hope that this will promote a uniform practice for the description of music across different standards and provide for reliable mappings of data from one schema to another.

Last updated November 7, 2006