Descriptive metadata standard for the cultural heritage community

essential pieces of information you would need to record in order to identify a work or image or collection
Core 4.0: What it is NOT

- not a data content standard
- not a technical or rights metadata standard
- not a blueprint for a local data model
VRA Core 4.0 **Elements**, Subelements, and Attributes

- **agent**
  - attribution
  - culture
  - dates (type)
    - earliestDate (circa)
    - latestDate (circa)
  - name (type)
  - role

- **culturalContext**

- **date** (type)
  - earliestDate (circa)
  - latestDate (circa)

- **description**

- **inscription**
  - author
  - position
  - text (type)

- **location** (type)
  - name (type)
  - refid (type)

- **material** (type)

- **measurements** (type, unit)

- **relation** (type, relids)

- **rights** (type)
  - rightsHolder
  - text

- **source**
  - name (type)
  - refid (type)

- **stateEdition** (count, num, type)
  - description
  - name

- **stylePeriod**

- **subject**
  - term (type)

- **technique**

- **textref**
  - name (type)
  - refid (type)

- **title** (type)

- **worktype**
Image Cataloging before VRA Core 4.0

- Catalogers worked closely with primary users to produce rich but idiosyncratic records
- Original cataloging without benefit of standards
- Data exchange less important
- Experimentation with MARC and CDWA
Standards Menu:

- Data structure standards (metadata element sets):
  - MARC, EAD, Dublin Core, CDWA, VRA Core

- Data value standards (vocabularies):
  - LCSH, LCNAF, TGM, AAT, ULAN

- Data content standards (cataloging rules):
  - AACR (RDA), ISBD, CCO, DACS

- Data format/technical interchange standards (metadata standards expressed in machine-readable form):
  - MARC, MARCXML, EAD, CDWA Lite XML, Dublin Core Simple XML schema, DC Qualified XML schema, VRA Core XML schema
Development of the VRA Core

- 1996 – 1.0 – based on CDWA
- 1996 – 2.0 – identified need for content standard origin of CCO
- 2000 – 3.0 – tested against existing data as part of the UCAI project
- 2006 – 4.0 (beta) – development of xml schema
- 2007 – 4.0 (final)
Record Type: Core Entities

RECORD TYPE=work, image, collection
Core defines a **work** as a **unique entity such as an object or event**.

- painting, sculpture, or photograph
- building or other construction in the built environment
- an object of material culture, or a performance
- simple or complex
- component parts that are related to the larger work in a whole/part or hierarchical fashion
Core Entities: Work

“...unique entity such as an object or event.”
Core defines an *image* as

*a visual representation of a work in either whole or part*

“The representation serves to provide access to the work when the work itself cannot be experienced firsthand. In image collections, such representations typically are found in the form of slides, photographs, and/or digital files.”
Core Entities: Image

“...a visual representation of a work in either whole or part.”
Core defines a collection as an aggregate of work or image records “may be comprised of multiple items that are conceptually or physically arranged together for the purpose of cataloging or retrieval”
Core Entities: Collection

“...an aggregate of work or image records”
Record Establishment: Relationships

- work to work
- work to image
- collection to work or image
The same element set may be used to describe a work, an image, or collection
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Name</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Record Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Image ID</td>
<td>517098</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agent</td>
<td>Charles Robert Ashbee, British, 1863-1942</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Writing Desk</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dates/Events</td>
<td>ca. 1902</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object Types</td>
<td>writing desk</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material</td>
<td>walnut with copper mounts</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technique</td>
<td>metalworking; cabinet-making</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dimensions</td>
<td>140 x 82 x 45 cm</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Galerie Historismus (Paris, France)</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style/Period</td>
<td>Arts and Crafts</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>View</td>
<td>front view</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Executed by the Guild and School of Handicrafts</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjects</td>
<td>secretary (furniture)</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Establishing Record Types

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field Name</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Record Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Image ID</td>
<td>517098</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Gold Jug</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dates/Events</td>
<td>8th century BCE</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Object Types</td>
<td>jug</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material</td>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style/Period</td>
<td>Late Assyrian</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>View</td>
<td>Detail views of base</td>
<td>I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Recovered from Tomb III, Northwest Palace, Nimrud</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjects</td>
<td>goldwork; archaeological objects</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work ID</td>
<td>10193</td>
<td>W</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VRA Core 4.0 Elements, Subelements, and Attributes

- **agent**
  - attribution
  - culture
  - dates (type)
    - earliestDate (circa)
    - latestDate (circa)
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  - role

- **culturalContext**

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  - latestDate (circa)

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  - position
  - text (type)

- **location** (type)
  - name (type)
  - refid (type)

- **material** (type)

- **measurements** (type, unit)

- **relation** (type, relids)

- **rights** (type)
  - rightsHolder
  - text

- **source**
  - name (type)
  - refid (type)

- **stateEdition** (count, num, type)
  - description
  - name

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- **subject**
  - term (type)

- **technique**

- **textref**
  - name (type)
  - refid (type)

- **title** (type)

- **worktype**
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- **culturalContext**
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- **description**
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  - position
  - text (type)
- **location** (type)
  - name (type)
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- **technique**

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  - name (type)
  - refid (type)

- **title** (type)

- **worktype**
VRA Core Element: Agent

AGENT
Subelements: name, culture, dates, earliest, latest, role, attribution

Definition: The names, apppellations, or other identifiers assigned to an individual, group, or corporate body that has contributed to the design, creation, production, manufacture, or alteration of the work or image. When more than one agent is cited, the extent attribute may be used to qualify the role subelement for one or both names. In the case of a named individual, group, or corporate body, the culture subelement refers to the nationality or culture of the individual, group, or corporate body in the name subelement. In cases where no identifiable individual, group, or corporate body can be named, creation responsibility is assumed by the culture subelement. To record the cultural context within which a work, collection, or image was created, independent of the nationality or culture of the creator, use the CULTURAL CONTEXT element.

Restricted schema data values for agent name type attribute: personal, corporate, family, other
Restricted schema data values for agent dates type attribute: life, activity, other
Data value encoding for earliestDate and latestDate subelement: data values should be formulated according to ISO 8601 standards for data content (http://www.cl.cam.ac.uk/~mgk25/iso-time.html), i.e. YYYY, YYYY-MM, or YYYY-MM-DD. For artists still living, use the value present in the latestDate subelement.

Comment: Use of a Personal and Corporate Name Authority, from which these data values may be derived, is recommended. See CCO Part 3, A1: Personal and Corporate Name Authority for a more thorough discussion about the role of a name authority in the creation statement.

CCO: Part TWO: Chapter 2: Creator Information

Not Required; Repeatable
Agent

**Definition:** The names, appellations, or other identifiers assigned to an individual, group, or corporate body that has contributed to the design, creation, production, manufacture, or alteration of the work or image.

**Restricted schema data values for agent name**

*type attribute:* personal, corporate, family, other

**Restricted schema data values for agent dates**

*type attribute:* life, activity, other
VRA Core 4.0 Outline
Elements, Subelements, Attributes

agent
  attribution
culture
dates
  earliestDate
  latestDate
name
role
VRA Core 4.0 Outline
Elements, Subelements, Attributes

agent
  attribution
  culture
dates (type)
  earliestDate
  latestDate
name (type)
role
VRA Core Subelement: Agent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VRA Core Element</th>
<th>XML element</th>
<th>XML sub-element</th>
<th>XML sub-element</th>
<th>XML sub-element</th>
<th>Data example (display value in bold)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AGENT</td>
<td>agent</td>
<td>name</td>
<td>type</td>
<td>personal</td>
<td>Rubens, Peter Paul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>vocab</td>
<td>ULAN</td>
<td>500002921</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>refid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>culture</td>
<td></td>
<td>Flemish</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>dates</td>
<td>type</td>
<td>life</td>
<td>1577-1640</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>earliestDate</td>
<td>1577</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>latestDate</td>
<td>1640</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>dates</td>
<td>type</td>
<td>activity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>earliestDate</td>
<td>1590</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>latestDate</td>
<td>1640</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>role</td>
<td></td>
<td>painter (artist)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>vocab</td>
<td>AAT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>refid</td>
<td>300025136</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>attribution</td>
<td></td>
<td>School of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Record Structure: Display vs. Indexing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>CREATOR</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Display</td>
<td>Frederick Catherwood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index</td>
<td>Catherwood, Frederick</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>DATE</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Display</td>
<td>Fourth Dynasty, reign of King Khafre (2575-2465 BCE)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>earliestDate:</td>
<td>-2575</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>latestDate:</td>
<td>-2465</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VRA Core Element</td>
<td>XML Element</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agent</strong></td>
<td>agent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VRA Core Element: Title

**TITLE**

**Attributes:** type

**Definition:** The title or identifying phrase given to a Work or an Image. For complex works or series the title may refer to a discrete component or unit within the larger entity (a print from a series, a panel from a fresco cycle, a building within a temple complex) or may identify only the larger entity itself. Record multiple titles in repeating instances of the title element. Indicate the preferred title with pref ="true" and alternate titles with pref="false". For an Image record this category describes the specific view of the depicted Work or Collection, and corresponds to the CCO View Description. Data Values: formulated according to data content rules for titles of works of art.

**Restricted schema values for WORK title type:** brandName, cited, creator, descriptive, former, inscribed, owner, popular, repository, translated, other

**Restricted schema values for IMAGE title type:** generalView, or partialView.

**VRA Core 2.0:** W2 Title; V7 Visual Document View Description

**VRA Core 3.0:** Title CDWA: Titles or Names-Text; Related Visual Documentation-Image View; Related Visual Documentation-Image View Type Dublin Core:

**CCO:** Part TWO: Chapter 1: Object Naming

**Not required; Repeatable**
## VRA Core Element: Title

### Arnolfini Marriage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VRA Core Element</th>
<th>XML element</th>
<th>XML attribute</th>
<th>Data example (display value in bold)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TITLE</td>
<td>title</td>
<td></td>
<td>Arnolfini Marriage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>type</td>
<td>cited</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>pref</td>
<td>true</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>source</td>
<td>Grove Dictionary of Art Online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>title</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Portrait of Giovanni (?) Arnolfini and his Wife (&quot;The Arnolfini Portrait&quot;)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>type</td>
<td>repository</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>pref</td>
<td>false</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>source</td>
<td>National Gallery of Art (London, GB)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VRA Core Element: Title XML

<titleSet>
  <display>Arnolfini Marriage</display>
  <title type="cited" pref="true" source="Grove Dictionary of Art Online">Arnolfini Marriage</title>
  <title type="repository" pref="false" source="National Gallery of Art (London, GB)">Portrait of Giovanni (?) Arnolfini and his Wife ("The Arnolfini Portrait")</title>
</titleSet>
Global attributes may be applied to any element/subelement
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>term</th>
<th>description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dataDate</td>
<td>refers to the date and/or time a particular piece of data was captured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extent</td>
<td>refers to the part of the work, image or collection being described by the element or sub-element that it modifies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>href</td>
<td>refers to a hypertext reference that provides a link to another electronic resource</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pref</td>
<td>indicates that a particular data value is the preferred value when multiple data values for the same element or sub-element exist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>refid</td>
<td>refers to id numbers or codes coming from the local institution or resource named in the source attribute</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rules</td>
<td>refers to any data content standards used to construct the value recorded in the element (e.g. AACR2, CCO)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>source</td>
<td>refers to the local, print, or electronic source from which information is derived for a specific element (e.g. Grove Dictionary of Art)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vocab</td>
<td>refers to the controlled vocabulary source from which the term or phrase is derived (e.g. AAT, LCSH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>xml:lang</td>
<td>refers to the language in which the information is recorded in the system</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VRA Core Element: Location

**LOCATION**
Attributes:
type
Subelements:
name
Attributes: type
refid
Attributes: type

**Description:** The geographic location and/or name of the repository, building, site, or other entity whose boundaries include the Work or Image. Inclusion of a type attribute distinguishes between different kinds of locations, e.g. repository locations, creation locations, discovery locations, etc. The optional extent attribute may also be used here to further specify or disambiguate geographic term types. Note that repository id numbers (museum or private collection accession or inventory numbers) formerly contained in the Core 3 ID Number element, are here mapped to the Location refid subelement. Inclusion of these alphanumeric strings that pinpoint a particular work within a particular location serves to disambiguate identically titled works by the same artist held by the same repository (e.g. Raphael, "Madonna and Child."). Repeatable subelements allow for the inclusion of multiple museum inventory numbers if an object id number has changed over time. For id numbers that are independent of repository, such as catalog raisonné numbers, use the TEXTREF element.

**Data Values (controlled):** TGN, BHA index, LCSH, *Grove Dictionary of Art* Location Appendix. Use of a separate Locations Authority, with data values populated from controlled vocabulary sources, is recommended. See CCO A2: *Geographic Place Authority* for further discussion about the role of a Geographic Place Authority

**Restricted schema data values for location type attribute:** creation, discovery, exhibition, formerOwner, formerRepository, formerSite, installation, intended (for unrealized projects), other, owner, performance, publication, repository, site (use for current locations for architecture and archaeology)

**Restricted schema data values for location name type attribute:** corporate, geographic, other, personal

**Restricted schema data values for location refid type attribute:** accession, barcode, shelfList, other

VRA Core 2.0 W9 Repository Name; W10 Repository Place; V5 Visual Document Owner

**VRA Core 3.0 Location, ID Number CDWA:** Current Location-Repository Name/Geographic Location; Current Location-Repository Numbers; Context-Architectural-Building/Site, Context-Architectural-Building/Site-Placement, Context-Archaeological-Discovery/Excavation Place; Related Visual DoDocumentation-Image Repository; Related Visual Documentation-Image Repository Numbers

**Dublin Core:** CONTRIBUTOR, COVERAGE

**CCO:** Part TWO: Chapter 5: *Location and Geography*

Not Required; Repeatable
Location

**Description:** The geographic location and/or name of the repository, building, site, or other entity whose boundaries include the Work or Image.

**Restricted schema data values for location type attribute:**
creation, discovery, exhibition, formerOwner, formerRepository, formerSite, installation, intended (for unrealized projects), other, owner, performance, publication repository, site (use for current locations for architecture and archaeology)

**Restricted schema data values for location name type attribute:** corporate, geographic, other, personal
VRA Core 4.0 Outline
Elements, Subelements, Attributes

location (type)
name (type)
refid (type)
### VRA Core subelement: location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VRA Core Element</th>
<th>XML element</th>
<th>XML attribute</th>
<th>XML subelement</th>
<th>XML attribute</th>
<th>Data example (display value in bold)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LOCATION</td>
<td>location</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Musée du Louvre (Paris, FR) Inv. MR 299</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>type</td>
<td></td>
<td>repository</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>name</td>
<td></td>
<td>Musée du Louvre</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>type</td>
<td></td>
<td>corporate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>xml:lang</td>
<td></td>
<td>fr</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>refid</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Inv. MR 299</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>type</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>accession</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>name</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Paris</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>type</td>
<td></td>
<td>geographic</td>
<td>TGN</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>vocab</td>
<td></td>
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Core Basic #3

What Are You Cataloging?
Work Type

**Definition:** Identifies the specific type of WORK, COLLECTION, or IMAGE being described in the record.
"Mondrian" day dress, autumn 1965
Yves Saint Laurent (French, born Algeria, 1936)
Wool jersey in color blocks of white, red, blue, black, and yellow
Gift of Mrs. William Rand, 1969 (C.I.69.23)

Mondrian day dress, Yves Saint Laurent, Vogue Magazine, slide collection, MMA Costume Institute, 1965, layout, fashion photograph
Other Useful Elements

**Material** - The substance of which a work or an image is composed.

**Style/Period** - A defined style, historical period, group, school, dynasty, movement, etc. whose characteristics are represented in the Work or Image.

**Subject** - Terms or phrases that describe, identify, or interpret the Work or Image and what it depicts or expresses.

**Rights** - Information about the copyright status and the rights holder for a work, collection, or image.