



Chapter 4

Stylistic, Cultural, and Chronological Information

Style / Culture / Date

4.1 ABOUT STYLISTIC, CULTURAL, AND CHRONOLOGICAL INFORMATION

4.1.1 Discussion

This chapter introduces the Style, Culture, and Date elements that refer to a work's stylistic characteristics, cultural origins, and date of design or creation.

Style

The Style element identifies the named, defined style, historical or artistic period, movement, group, or school whose characteristics are represented in the work being cataloged. Designations of style, period, group, or movement are derived from scholarly tradition within given fields of expertise. The terminology places the work in the context of other works created in the same or a similar style.

Often styles or periods take their names from a technique used in a particular place at a certain time. Terms such as *Red-figure*, *Black-figure*, and *Pointillist* are examples of styles based on technique. Some terms, such as *Surrealist*, may refer to a style or artistic movement not necessarily tied to a particular period or a single technique. Stylistic similarities may be the basis for the concept of school, which can refer to movements such as the American *Ashcan School* or to artistic families or groups such as the Japanese *Kano School*.

Terms referring to style or period may be based on historical eras and thus have a chronological reference; for example, periods may be delimited by dates associated with certain rulers or governments. The names of dynasties, such as *Ming*, are used for artistic periods in China, Japan, and Egypt. Ruling families provide names for periods and styles such as *Tudor* or *Stuart*. A style term may refer to

the reign of a specific monarch, such as *Louis XIV*, *Napoleonic*, *Victorian*, or *Ptolemaic*. Certain broad terms, such as *Ancient Greek*, *Medieval*, or *Renaissance*, have generally accepted chronological boundaries; they may be subdivided into well-known secondary eras, for example, *Archaic*, *Classical*, *Hellenistic*.

For further discussion of style, see *Categories for the Description of Works of Art: Styles/Periods/Groups/Movements*.

Culture

The Culture element contains the name of the culture, people, or nationality from which the work originated. This element is useful to institutions that wish to note the culture associated with the work in order to place the work in the context of other works created in the same culture.

Nationality and culture are also included in elements of creator information, detailed in Chapter 2: Creator Information and in Part 3: Personal and Corporate Name Authority. If you wish to avoid the redundancy of recording culture-nationality with both the creator and the work, record the nationality or culture with the creator information (instead of in the Culture element discussed in this chapter), even when the creator is unknown. Unknown creators are discussed in Chapter 2: Creator Information.

Given that the culture that produced the work is nearly always the same as the creator's culture, the Culture element in this chapter may seem redundant; however, it may be a necessary element for some institutions. It is recognized that, for unknown creators, some institutions may choose to leave the creator fields blank and construct headings for display, for example, *unknown Italian* or *Italian*. Where such local practice exists, this Culture element becomes critical for works with unknown creators. It is generally not necessary to enter a value in the Culture element when the work has a known creator, such as Matisse, who was French (because the nationality/culture of Matisse would be recorded in the authority).

Date

The Date element records the date or range of dates associated with the creation, design, production, presentation, performance, construction, or alteration of the work or its components. This chapter does not deal with the date of the surrogate visual image, although it is recognized that visual resources collections will typically require fields to document dates for images. See also Part 1: Works and Images and Chapter 9: View Information: View Date.

The Creation Date for a work of art may simply be a single year. In other cases, a work of art or architecture may have more complex dates. It may have been created over a span of time or may have multiple dates associated with phases or activities surrounding its creation. For example, a manuscript may have been illuminated in one century and bound in another. Architectural structures may have been created over a period of years, decades, or centuries, often completed in multiple building campaigns during different periods of time. Other types of works may have been completed in several separate and discrete stages. For example, the dates of a photographic negative and the prints made from it can differ widely (for example, negatives, such as those of Ansel Adams, are often reprinted). Some types of works, such as ephemeral street art or installations, may have a finite

range of dates associated with their existence. Performance art or happenings may require a date more specific than the year; they may have taken place on a specific day and time of day.

Uncertainty will often be a factor in recording a date. Approximate dates may represent a range of a few years or a broad range of a century or more. Dates may be qualified with terms such as *circa* (*ca.*), *about*, *before*, or *after* (for example, *after 1611* or *ca. 830 BCE*). Dates may also be recorded by century (for example, *12th century*).

Specificity

Style and culture should be recorded at the most specific level appropriate, keeping in mind the scope of the collection, available information, and the expertise of the cataloger and intended users; a hierarchical authority file should be used to provide access through broader concepts. For example, if a narrow, specific term such as *Hadrianic* or *Norse* is used for style/period, the concept authority would provide access to the broader terms such as *Roman* or *Scandinavian* to facilitate retrieval and understanding of context.

In the free-text date field, the date of the work should be recorded with the greatest level of specificity known, but expressed in a way that conveys the correct level of uncertainty or ambiguity to the end user (for example, *ca. 1820*). The indexing fields, earliest and latest dates, should indicate the broadest span relevant for the free-text date (for example, *Earliest: 1815* and *Latest: 1825*). The Earliest and Latest Dates should not be visible to the end user, but should be used only in record retrieval.

Organization of the Data

Style and culture should be recorded in repeatable controlled fields. Terminology for both should be controlled by an authority file or controlled list. See Part 3: Concept Authority, which could be used to control the terms for style and culture. Style is not a required element. Culture is not required, except in the situation discussed above, where an institution does not record creator information for unknown creators, but instead wishes to construct displays for unknown creators by using culture and other elements.

Date of Creation is a required element. It is recommended that both display and indexing fields be included. Dates can be recorded in a free-text field, which should then be indexed using two numbers to delimit the beginning and end of the implied date span.

Example

Display Date: late 14th century

Earliest: 1375; **Latest:** 1399

Sets of dates should be repeatable (for example, some institutions will differentiate dates of design, construction, and so forth in separate sets).

Recommended Elements

A list of the elements discussed in this chapter appears below. Required elements are noted. Display may be a free-text field or concatenated from controlled fields.

Style
Style Qualifier
Culture
Display Date (required)
Earliest Date
Latest Date
Date Qualifier

About the Examples

The examples throughout this chapter are for illustration only. Local practice may vary. The examples tend to show the fullest possible use of display and indexing fields, which may not be necessary for visual resources collections and some other institutions.

4.1.2 Terminology

4.1.2.1 Sources for Terminology

4.1.2.1.1 STYLE AND CULTURE

Style and culture terminology should be controlled by using an authority file or controlled lists. The terms used for each may often be derived from the same sources, and may thus overlap. Sources of terminology may include the following

Getty Vocabulary Program. *Art & Architecture Thesaurus (AAT)*. Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Trust, 1988-. http://www.getty.edu/research/conducting_research/vocabularies/aat/. (Especially the Styles and Periods hierarchy).

Library of Congress Authorities. *Library of Congress Subject Headings*. Washington, DC: Library of Congress, 2005. <http://authorities.loc.gov/>.

Grove Dictionary of Art Online. New York: Grove's Dictionaries, 2003. <http://www.groveart.com/>.

Levinson, David, ed. *Encyclopedia of World Cultures*. Boston: G. K. Hall, 1991-1996.

4.1.2.1.2 DATE

Date information must be formatted consistently to allow retrieval. Local rules should be in place. Suggested formats are available in the ISO standard and W3C *XML Schema Part 2*.¹

ISO 8601:2004 Numeric representation of Dates and Time. *Data elements and interchange formats. Information interchange. Representation of dates and times*. Geneva, Switzerland: International Organization for Standardization, 2004.

XML Schema Part 2: Datatypes, 2001. <http://www.w3.org/TR/xmlschema-2/>.

4.1.2.2 *Choice of Terminology*

4.1.2.2.1 CONSISTENCY

Consistent terminology for style and culture elements is essential to efficient retrieval. Consistency in data format within the Date elements used for retrieval is especially critical. Consistency is less important, but still desirable, in a free-text note than in a controlled field. Although uncontrolled terminology should be accommodated, terminology that is consistent with the terms in controlled fields is nonetheless recommended for the sake of clarity. Consistent style, grammar, and syntax are recommended.

4.1.2.2.2 USE OF AN AUTHORITY RECORD

If possible, style and culture terminology and definitions (for example, scope notes) should be stored in a hierarchical authority file, which is linked to the Work Record. See Part 3: Concept Authority. If it is not possible to use an authority file, terms may be taken from controlled lists.

4.2 CATALOGING RULES

4.2.1 Rules for Style

4.2.1.1 *Brief Rules for Style*

Record one or more terms that denote the style, historical period, group, movement, or school whose characteristics are represented in the work being cataloged. If necessary, write a fuller description of the style of the work in the Description element (see Chapter 8).

Adjectival Forms

Generally use the adjectival form of terms for style and period.

Examples

- Style:** Byzantine
- Style:** Constantinopolitan
- Style:** Medieval
- Style:** Baroque
- Style:** Impressionist
- Style:** Neo-Pop

Record nouns or gerunds when they are used as adjectives, as appropriate.

Examples

- Style:** Early Bronze Age
- Style:** Black-figure
- Style:** Orientalizing

Alternatively, the noun form of terms (for example, *Impressionism* rather than *Impressionist*) may be used to accommodate local practice. Be consistent.

Capitalization and Abbreviations

Capitalize terms for styles and periods. Some exceptions occur, for example, with very broad designations (such as *protohistoric*); use capitalization as indicated in your source (for example, the AAT). Avoid abbreviations.

Examples

Style: Old Kingdom (Egyptian)

Style: Renaissance

Style: Pre-Raphaelite

Style: Postmodern

Style: Cameroonian

Style: Nayarit

Style: Western Arctic Inuit

Style: protohistoric

Language of the Terms

Use terminology in the language of the catalog record (English in the United States), except in cases where no exact English-language equivalent exists. Use diacritics as required.

Examples

Style: Abstract Expressionist

Style: Louis XVI

Style: Bāzāklik

Style: Ch'ien-lung

Style: Ya' Furid

4.2.1.2 Additional Recommendations for Style

4.2.1.2.1 VARIOUS TYPES OF STYLE TERMS

Terms for style, period, group, or movement vary depending on the discipline and the kind of work being cataloged. When the meaning of a style term overlaps with data designated in another element (for example, culture or date, as described below), record the pertinent information in that element as well.

Referring to Visual Appearance

Record a style term if the visual appearance, configuration of artistic elements, method of creation, geographic reference, and time frame of creation of the work correspond to the definition of a particular style. For definitions of the individual styles, see the AAT.

Examples

[for a drawing by Parmigianino]

Style: Mannerist

[for a building by Charles Moore]

Style: Postmodern

[for porcelain figures by the Doccia porcelain factory]

Style: Rococo

[for a painting by Claude Monet]

Style: Impressionist

[for a 19th-century house]

Style: Gothic Revival

Referring to a Technique

If the style is defined by a medium or technique, repeat the information in Materials and Techniques (see Chapter 3).

Example

[for a Panathenaic amphora, *Black-figure* refers to technique]

Styles: Black-figure • Attic

[for an 11th-century Chinese painting, style term refers to both medium and subject]²

Style: Ink-bamboo

Referring to Theme or Subject of the Work

If the style term refers explicitly or implicitly to the subject or other thematic or visual content of the work, repeat the information in the Subject element (see Chapter 6).

Examples

[for a Scythian ornament, reference to subject is explicit]

Style: Animal Style

[for a painting by Caspar David Friedrich, reference to subject is implicit]

Style: Romantic

Referring to a Place

If the style term refers to a geographic or geopolitical entity, repeat the information in the Location element (see Chapter 5). Such style terms may also overlap with culture (see Culture below).

Examples

[for a 12th-century tomb]

Style: Catalan

[for an 18th-century painted chest]

Style: French Colonial

Referring to a Period

If the style or period term refers to a chronological period, repeat the information in the Date element.

Examples

[for a Kouros statue]

Style: Archaic (Greek)

[for an ancient Egyptian crown]

Style: Middle Kingdom (Egyptian)

For the purposes of cataloging, a century is not a period per se; do not record centuries in the Style/Period element. Use the Date element for recording centuries (for example, *14th century*).

Referring to a Ruler

If the style or period term refers to the reign of a ruler or to a dynasty, you may repeat the information in fields for donor or patron, if your institution captures such information (see Chapter 2: Creator Information).

Examples

[for a 10th-century Indian statue of Shiva]

Style: Chola

[for 14th-century Japanese armor]

Style: Kamakura

[for a 16th-century carpet by Maqsud of Kashan]

Styles: Safavid • Persian

[for an ancient Roman building]

Style: Hadrianic

Referring to a Cultural Group

If the term for style or period refers to a culture or group, it will probably overlap with the Culture element, which is also discussed in this chapter. Institutions that require culture should repeat this information in the Culture element.

Examples

[for a Pre-Columbian vessel]

Style: Maya

[for an African mask from the Congo]

Style: Chokwe

4.2.1.2.2 GROUPS OF WORKS

For a group of items, include all the styles represented in the group. If there are too many to list them all, include the most important within the context of the group or the most typical styles evident in the group.

Example

[for a group of pastel drawings]

Styles: Impressionist • Post-Impressionist

4.2.1.2.3 UNCERTAINTY

When in doubt regarding the specific style, period, group, or movement to which a work belongs, choose a broader term about which you are certain. For example, use the broader term *Roman* if it is uncertain whether the period is *Monarchic* or *Early Imperial*.

4.2.1.2.4 QUALIFIERS OF STYLE/PERIOD

Some institutions may wish to distinguish if the term refers to the style, period, group, movement, or dynasty, thereby differentiating between each type. Qualifiers may be used for this purpose. Given the overlap between these concepts, assigning qualifiers is often difficult and unnecessary, unless retrieval is required based on these distinctions. The qualifier would best be recorded in the Concept Authority rather than in individual Work Records.

Example

[for a chair]

Style: Arts and Crafts

Qualifier: movement

4.2.2 Rules for Culture

4.2.2.1 *Brief Rules for Culture*

Record the culture or nationality from which the work originated. See Part 3: Personal and Corporate Name Authority: Nationality for further discussion on how to record culture and nationality.

Adjectival Forms

Generally use the adjectival form of a proper noun for a culture, region, nation, or continent.

Examples

Culture: Celtic

Culture: Italian

Culture: Siberian

Culture: African

Culture: Pre-Columbian

Culture: Middle Eastern

In rare cases, when there is no commonly used adjectival form for a term, use the noun form.

Example

Culture: Asia Minor

Capitalization and Abbreviations

Capitalize terms for culture and nationality. Avoid abbreviations.

Examples

Culture: Abbevillian

Culture: French

Culture: Sienese

Culture: East Asian

Culture: Native American

Language of the Terms

Use terms in the language of the catalog record (English in the United States), except in cases where no exact English-language equivalent exists. Use diacritics as required.

Examples

Culture: Russian

Culture: Il Chamus

Culture: Canaliño

4.2.2.2 Additional Recommendations for Culture

4.2.2.2.1 VARIOUS TYPES OF TERMS FOR CULTURE

Terms for culture or nationality may be adjectival forms of a name for a tribe, band, ethnic group, linguistic group, cultural group, civilization, religious group, nation, country, city-state, continent, or general region. For further discussion of issues surrounding culture and nationality, see Part 3: Personal and Corporate Name Authority.

Examples

[terms refer to a culture]

Culture: Celtic

Culture: Khoikhoi

Culture: Sioux

[terms refer to a nation, country, or city-state, present or historical]

Culture: Italian

Culture: Burgundian

Culture: Egyptian

Culture: Sienese

[terms refer to a continent]

Culture: African

Culture: Asian

[terms refer to an ethnicity or racial group]

Culture: Hispanic

Culture: Polynesian

[terms refer to a religious group]

Culture: Islamic

Culture: Buddhist

4.2.2.2 GROUPS OF WORKS

For a group of items, include all the cultures represented in the group. If there are too many to list them all, include the most important or the most typical cultures evident in the group.

4.2.2.3 UNCERTAINTY

When in doubt about which specific culture or nationality produced a work, choose a broader concept about which you are certain. For example, use the more general *Western Sudanese* if it is uncertain whether the culture is *Dogon* or *Bamana*.

4.2.2.4 UNKNOWN CREATORS

Record unknown creators in the Creator elements (see Chapter 2: Creator Information). Alternatively, when local practice forbids this, if the creator of the work is unknown and the creator field is not filled in, the Culture element is required.

4.2.2.5 OVERLAP WITH STYLE

Because a culture may have a recognizable style, the terminology used to describe the culture may also be recorded in the Style element (see above).

4.2.3 Rules for Date

4.2.3.1 *Brief Rules for Date*

Recording the date of either design or creation is required. In the Display Date, record a year, a span of years, or a phrase that describes the specific or approximate date when the work was designed or created. In Earliest and Latest Dates, record years that delimit the span stated or implied in the Display Date. Earliest and Latest Date will be hidden from end users.

Example

Display Date: ca. 1750

Earliest: 1745; **Latest:** 1755

Use the proleptic Gregorian calendar, which is produced by extending the Gregorian calendar to dates preceding its official introduction. See also Gregorian and Other Calendars, below.

Format

In the Display Date, use natural word order. For Earliest and Latest Dates, record appropriate numbers following ISO 8061 or *W3C XML Schema Part 2*.

Example

Display Date: completed between 1950 and 1952

Earliest: 1950; **Latest:** 1952

Capitalization and Abbreviation

Do not capitalize words other than proper nouns or period names. Avoid abbreviations, except with *ca.* (for circa), the numbers in century or dynasty designations (for example, *17th century*), and *BCE* and *CE*.

Examples

Display Date: constructed ca. 1730-ca. 1750

Earliest: 1725; **Latest:** 1755

Display Date: 17th century

Earliest: 1600; **Latest:** 1699

Display Date: New Kingdom, 18th dynasty (1404-1365 BCE)

Earliest: -1404; **Latest:** -1365

Include all digits for both years in a span; for example, with four-digit years, do not abbreviate the second year (for example, record *1780-1795*, not *1780-95*).

Language

In the Display Date, use ordinal numbers (for example, *4th*) and Arabic numbers (for example, *1959*), as appropriate. Express words and phrases in the language of the catalog record (English in the United States), except in rare cases where no English-language equivalent exists or where the foreign term is most commonly used, such as with the name of a period. Use diacritics as required.

4.2.3.2 Additional Recommendations for Date

4.2.3.2.1 SYNTAX: DISPLAY DATES

If a specific date is known, record the year. If a span of dates is applicable (as when a work was completed over several years), record the year beginning the span, followed by a dash and the year ending the span.

Examples

Display Date: 1944

Earliest: 1944; **Latest:** 1944

Display Date: 1821-1826

Earliest: 1821; **Latest:** 1826

To express uncertainty or otherwise clarify the dates, place editorial commentary before the years (for example, *ca.*, *designed*, and the like) when possible. Use natural word order.

Examples

Display Date: ca. 1610
Earliest: 1605; **Latest:** 1615

Display Date: designed 1911 or 1912
Earliest: 1911; **Latest:** 1912

Display Date: probably late 12th century
Earliest: 1150; **Latest:** 1220

4.2.3.2.2 SYNTAX: EARLIEST AND LATEST DATES

Years

For Earliest and Latest Dates for retrieval, record years without commas or other punctuation, except for the dash, which is used to express negative numbers for dates BCE. Use four digits for most years. If possible, for years that require fewer than four digits, follow the standards, which suggest inserting leading zeroes (for example, *0009*). Dates BCE may require more than four digits (for example, *-10000*).

Examples

[for a four-digit year CE]

Display Date: 1997
Earliest: 1997; **Latest:** 1997

[for a date BCE]

Display Date: 12-9 BCE
Earliest: -0012; **Latest:** -0009

Day and Time

Generally, recording the year a work was created is specific enough for good retrieval; for ephemeral art or performances, however, record the precise day and time, if possible. Use the following syntax: *YYYY-MM-DD* (year, month, day, separated by dashes), if possible. Format time as *hh:mm:ss* (hours, minutes, seconds, separated by colons). The standards suggest alternate possibilities. You may use an alternative syntax if you are consistent and it is compliant with the standards.

Examples

[for an ephemeral installation]

Display Date: 1 January through 25 May 2000
Earliest: 2000-01-01; **Latest:** 2000-05-25

[for performance art, includes time]

Display Date: 5 November 1983, midnight-2:30 pm
Earliest: 1983-11-05 00:00:00; **Latest:** 1983-11-05 14:30:00

TIME ZONE

A date and time designation as written above is assumed to be in a local time zone. There is no international standard for abbreviations for civil time zones such as PDT (Pacific Daylight Time) or CET (Central European Time). If your institution wishes to record the time zone, be consistent. In order to indicate that a time is measured in Universal Time (UTC, which has replaced Greenwich Mean Time), the standards suggest appending a capital letter *Z* (for *zero meridian*) to a time, as in *14:30:00Z*. Local times are then recorded as plus or minus UTC (for example, U.S. and Canadian Eastern Standard Time is the UTC minus five hours). See the pertinent standards for further guidance.

4.2.3.2.3 DATES BCE AND CE

In the display date, use *BCE* (Before Common Era) to indicate dates before the year 1 in the proleptic Gregorian calendar.

Examples

[for a Greek amphora]

Display Date: 463 BCE

Earliest: -0463; **Latest:** -0463

[for a Chinese sculpture, where date is a span in BCE]

Display Date: 221-206 BCE

Earliest: -0221; **Latest:** -0206

For dates after the year 1, do not include the designation *CE* (Current Era), except where confusion may occur because either the span of dates begins *BCE* and ends *CE* (for example, *75 BCE-10 CE*) or the date is within the first few centuries of the Current Era. Do not use *BC* (Before Christ) or *AD* (Anno Domini). Indicate dates *BCE* with negative numbers in earliest and latest dates.

Examples

[for an Indian bracelet, where date is a span in BCE and CE]

Display Date: 15 BCE-20 CE

Earliest: -0015; **Latest:** 0020

[for a Roman monumental arch]

Display Date: 312-315 CE

Earliest: 0312; **Latest:** 0315

Dates “Years Ago” or “Before Present”

For very ancient works, artifacts, and in certain other disciplines (for example, in pre-Columbian studies), *BCE* is often not appropriate. Use the phrases *years ago* or *before present* if your source indicates age relative to the present rather than an absolute date. Do not abbreviate designations (do not, for example, use *y.a.* or *B.P.*).

Example

[for rock carvings in Jinmium, Australia]

Display Date: created about 75,000 years ago

Earliest: -76000; **Latest:** -70000

For Earliest and Latest Dates, translate the dates into the proleptic Gregorian calendar. Use an appropriate calibration table, if possible. Alternatively, if your computer system can accept multiple dating systems, record the dates as given in the source and flag them as *years ago* or *before present*.³

4.2.3.2.4 GREGORIAN AND OTHER CALENDARS

In general, record dates in the Display Date according to the proleptic Gregorian calendar. If your source provides a date in another calendar (for example, Julian, Napoleonic, or Islamic calendars), record it in the Display Date element, clearly designating the alternate calendar. Also include the year in the proleptic Gregorian calendar to avoid confusion. Index the dates in the Earliest and Latest Dates elements using the proleptic Gregorian calendar.

Examples

[for a Persian carpet, expressed according to the Islamic lunar calendar]

Display Date: 946 anno Hegirae (1540 CE)
Earliest: 1540; **Latest:** 1540

[for a French print, in the French revolutionary calendar]

Display Date: année II de la République (1794 CE)
Earliest: 1794; **Latest:** 1794

4.2.3.2.5 SPECIFICITY: YEAR OF COMPLETION

Record the year of completion, if known. If the Display Date is a single year, put that year in both Earliest and Latest Dates. Do not leave a field blank.

Examples

[for a painting]

Display Date: 1862
Earliest: 1862; **Latest:** 1862

[for a skyscraper]

Display Date: 1976
Earliest: 1976; **Latest:** 1976

If the single year does not refer to the year of completion, explain the significance of the year in the Display Date. In Earliest and Latest Dates, record the estimated span of time during which the creation of the work took place.

Examples

[for a Korean temple]

Display Date: construction began in 689
Earliest: 0689; **Latest:** 0720

[for a church completed in the 17th century]

Display Date: dedicated in 1643
Earliest: 1550; **Latest:** 1643

4.2.3.2.6 SPECIFICITY: SPANS OF YEARS

For architecture and other works that were constructed over a period of time, express the dates as a span of years, if known. Explain the significance of the span in the Display Date.

Example

[for a fortified complex]

Display Date: constructed 1378-1485

Earliest: 1378; **Latest:** 1485

Also record a span of dates when the date of design and production are separated by a period of time.

Example

[for a sculpture]

Display Date: designed in 1462, cast in 1469

Earliest: 1462; **Latest:** 1469

For ongoing works, such as an interactive Web site, record the date when the work was begun. For the latest date, estimate the end of a broad span during which the work could continue.

Example

[for a Web site]

Display Date: begun in 2004

Earliest: 2004; **Latest:** 2054

4.2.3.2.7 SPECIFICITY: UNCERTAIN AND APPROXIMATE DATES

If the specific year or years is not known, record dates with the greatest accuracy known. In the guidelines below, the conventions are arranged from greatest level of accuracy to the least; use the greatest possible level of accuracy, based on the information at hand.

Probably

If there is doubt among scholars regarding the date of a work, indicate this in the Display Date by using the word *probably* or a question mark. Index such dates with Earliest and Latest Dates representing an appropriate span based on available information. In the example below, for example, a span of one year on either side of 1937 was allowed.

Example

[for a Mexican costume]

Display Date: probably 1937

Earliest: 1936; **Latest:** 1938

Or

If the date of a work is known to be one particular year or another, indicate this in the Display Date by using the word *or*.

Example

[for an engraving]

Display Date: 1568 or 1569

Earliest: 1568; **Latest:** 1569

Circa

If the precise date is unknown, preface the year with *ca.* (for *circa*) or *about*. Estimate Earliest and Latest Dates based on available information about the work and conventions surrounding various historical periods.

Examples

[for a photograph]

Display Date: ca. 1935

Earliest: 1930; **Latest:** 1940

[for an ancient palace]

Display Date: ca. 500 BCE

Earliest: -0550; **Latest:** -0450

For works produced within the last few centuries, use a ten-year span for approximated (*ca.*) Earliest and Latest Dates. For example, subtract five years from earliest and add five years to latest to create a ten-year span. Thus *ca. 1860* could be indexed as *Earliest: 1855; Latest: 1865*. For ancient works, use a 100-year span. For example, *ca. 1200 BCE* could be indexed as *Earliest: -1250; Latest: -1150*. Alter these recommendations to allow an appropriately greater or lesser span if warranted by available information.

If *ca.* is used with a span of dates, repeat it as necessary to indicate whether it applies to the beginning year, the ending year, or both. Estimate Earliest and Latest Dates as appropriate.

Examples

[for a large carved altar, completed over several years, but both the beginning and the end of the span are uncertain]

Display Date: ca. 1505-ca.1510

Earliest: 1500; **Latest:** 1515

[for a house, where only the beginning year of construction is uncertain]

Display Date: constructed ca. 1750-1756

Earliest: 1745; **Latest:** 1756

[for a shrine, where only the ending year of construction is uncertain]

Display Date: constructed 1834-ca. 1850

Earliest: 1834; **Latest:** 1855

Preface centuries or other broad dates with *ca.* as needed. Estimate Earliest and Latest Dates appropriately, based on available information.

Example

[for an African mask]

Display Date: ca. 19th century

Earliest: 1775; **Latest:** 1925

For very ancient works, use the word *about* rather than *ca.* (for example, *about <x> years ago* or *about <x> years before present*).

Example

[for a tool kit from Dyuktai Cave, Siberia]

Display Date: about 18,000 years ago

Earliest: -19000; **Latest:** -13000

Before and After

When an exact date is unknown, express dates relative to a *terminus ante quem* or a *terminus post quem* (meaning *date before which* and *date after which*), if appropriate. In the display date, use the words *before* or *after*. Estimate earliest and latest dates based on available information; allow a ten-year span if nothing else is known.

Examples

[for an architectural garden pavilion]

Display Date: before 1758

Earliest: 1748; **Latest:** 1758

[for a wall mosaic]

Display Date: after 547

Earliest: 0547; **Latest:** 0557

Spans Indicating Uncertainty

When an exact date is unknown, record the span of years during which the creation took place, if appropriate. Distinguish between the span indicating that a precise date is unknown, but the work was created at some point during the span, and the span that is known, during which the creation process took place over a number of years (for example, for architecture, which is discussed in Specificity: Spans of Years, above). When necessary to avoid ambiguity, clearly describe the meaning of the date in the Display Date.

Examples

[for a drawing]

Display Date: created between 1859 and 1862

Earliest: 1859; **Latest:** 1862

[for a textile, the free-text date implies a broad span]

Display Date: 3rd or 2nd century BCE

Earliest: -0299; **Latest:** -0100

A dash or forward slash may be used in certain ways, provided it will be clear to the user what is meant. Use the dash to indicate a span during which a work was made, as when a building was constructed over several years. For example, *ca. 1435-ca. 1560* means that construction took many years, from ca. 1435 to ca. 1560. Use the forward slash when a specific date is not known, to indicate a span that contains some year or years when the work was made. For example, for a bowl, *1735/1745* means that the date is uncertain but that creation occurred sometime between 1735 and 1745.

Example

[for a building, the start and end date of the span in the Display Date field are themselves a span]

Display Date: constructed 118/119-125/128 CE

Earliest: 118; **Latest:** 128

Decades and Centuries

When the exact date is unknown, indicate the date to the nearest decade or century, when appropriate. Do not use an apostrophe with decades (for example, *1890s*, not *1890's*).

Examples

[for an American poster]

Display Date: 1890s

Earliest: 1890; **Latest:** 1899

[for a Peruvian textile]

Display Date: 16th century

Earliest: 1500; **Latest:** 1599

[for a Tibetan building]

Display Date: 2nd century BCE

Earliest: -0199; **Latest:** -0100

Qualify decades or centuries with *early*, *mid-*, and *late*, as warranted. Assign appropriate Earliest and Latest Dates by dividing the decade or century into thirds (for example, *late 18th century* may be indexed as *Earliest: 1770, Latest: 1799*), unless this formula is contradicted by available information.

Examples

[for a German chair]

Display Date: late 18th century

Earliest: 1770; **Latest:** 1799

[for an American silver tray]

Display Date: 1720s or 1730s

Earliest: 1720; **Latest:** 1739

[for a Chinese ceremonial vessel]

Display Date: late 12th or early 11th century BCE

Earliest: -1130; **Latest:** -1070

Dates by Period or Era

If there is no more precise date known than the broad period or the reign of a ruler, express dates according to a named period, dynasty, or ruler's reign, as appropriate. The periods may be divided into *early*, *middle*, or *late*. Earliest and Latest Dates for retrieval should be based on dates applicable for that period, if no more specific date for the work is known. In some cases, the period named in the Date element may be the same as the period recorded in the Style or Culture element.

Examples

[for a North American Woodland Indian bannerstone; earliest and latest dates refer to the period]

Display Date: Late Archaic Period

Earliest: -2000; **Latest:** -1000

[for a Spanish crucifix; earliest and latest dates refer broadly to the period]

Display Date: Medieval

Earliest: 1100; **Latest:** 1499

[for a Precolumbian Chilean ceramic vessel; ca. 2300 BCE refers to the vessel at hand, which is within the range and culture of Diaguita Phase II; Diaguita could be repeated in the style or culture elements as well]

Display Date: ca. 2300 BCE (Diaguita Phase II)

Earliest: -2500; **Latest:** -2100

[for a Mughal textile; the parenthetical date span refers to the reign of the Shah, not specifically to the particular textile at hand, because no more accurate date for the textile is known]

Display Date: reign of Shah Jahan (1628-1657)

Earliest: 1628; **Latest:** 1657

No Date

Do not use *n.d.* to indicate *no date*. Do not leave the date fields blank. If a date is uncertain, determine a possible date range based on available information, including the dates of other art works, associated historical events, or the birth and death dates of the artist. For example, unless the work was completed after his or her death, the death date of the artist would be the *terminus ante quem* for the work he or she created.

4.2.3.2.8 GROUPS OF WORKS

Groups of works commonly contain items created over a period of time. For the group, record either the *inclusive* or the *bulk dates*. Inclusive dates, also called *span dates*, are the years of the earliest and latest dated works in the group (for example, *1911-1951*). Bulk dates are the years representing the earliest and latest dates for the most important or principal body of items in the group. There may

be multiple sets of bulk dates for any group (for example, *1914-1918 and 1939-1945*). Indicate in the Display Date if the dates are inclusive dates or bulk dates (for example, use parentheses as in the examples below).

Examples

[for a box of photographs]

Display Date: 1887-1894 (bulk dates)

Earliest: 1887; **Latest:** 1894

[for a group of Japanese musical instruments]

Display Date: ca. 1673-ca. 1695 (inclusive dates)

Earliest: 1668; **Latest:** 1700

The type of dates used for groups may be indexed with the **Qualifier** element. See **Date Qualifiers** below.

Example

[for a group of architectural drawings]

Display Date: 1968-1978 (inclusive dates)

Qualifier: inclusive

Earliest: 1968; **Latest:** 1978

4.2.3.2.9 CREATIVE ACTIVITIES ON DIFFERENT DATES

When it is known that different activities in the creative process took place at different times, indicate this in the free-text date field.

Example

[for a sculpture]

Display Date: 1372, reworked 1377-1379

Earliest: 1372; **Latest:** 1379

Date Qualifiers

Some institutions may wish to use date qualifiers. If your institution follows this practice, when the span of time between different creative activities is significant, use repeating sets of earliest and latest dates to index the various activities separately, if possible. Use qualifiers to label the various sets of dates. Examples of terminology for qualifiers include *creation*, *design*, *execution*, *alteration*, *restoration*, and *addition*. See also **Groups of Works** above.

Examples

[for a monumental sculpture]

Display Date: designed 1482, executed 1532-1534

Qualifier: design

Earliest: 1482; **Latest:** 1482

Qualifier: execution

Earliest: 1532; **Latest:** 1534

[for a sofa by Duncan Phyfe]

Display Date: ca. 1815, reupholstered in 1895

Qualifier: execution

Earliest: 1810; **Latest:** 1820

Qualifier: restoration

Earliest: 1895; **Latest:** 1895

[for Beauvais Cathedral]

Display Date: plans drawn in the 1230s, construction began in 1247, vaults collapsed in 1284, construction ended ca. 1500

Qualifier: design

Earliest: 1230; **Latest:** 1239

Qualifier: execution

Earliest: 1247; **Latest:** 1510

4.3 PRESENTATION OF THE DATA

4.3.1 Display and Indexing

4.3.1.1 *Free-Text vs. Controlled Fields*

For a discussion of when and why separate free-text and controlled fields are recommended, see Part 1: Database Design and Relationships: Display and Indexing.

4.3.1.2 *Fields in Authority File and Work Record*

Controlled Fields for Style

For the Style element, a repeatable controlled field should be used for indexing the style, period, group, or movement in which the work being cataloged was created. A free-text display field is not required, but may be used whenever it is necessary to express uncertainty or ambiguity. Where multiple styles or periods are assigned, if a display is desired, it can be constructed by concatenating data from the repeatable controlled field.

Example

Style displays *[concatenated]*: Gothic; Rayonnant

Styles: Gothic • Rayonnant

Controlled Fields for Culture

For the Culture element, a repeatable controlled field should be used for indexing culture or nationality. A free-text display field is not required, but may be used whenever it is necessary to express uncertainty or ambiguity. Where multiple cultures or nationalities are assigned, if a display is desired, it can be constructed by concatenating data from the repeatable controlled field.

Controlled Fields for Date

The Date element should ideally consist of a set of three fields: a free-text field to express nuances of the date to the user, and two indexing fields representing the earliest and latest dates implied in the Display Date. Earliest and Latest Dates are controlled fields intended to provide consistently formatted data that will be used in retrieval but not visible to the end user.

Example

Display Date: constructed 1378-1485
Earliest: 1378; **Latest:** 1485

The Earliest and Latest Dates should be controlled by rules in ISO or W3C standards (see Terminology section). It is recognized that practical considerations, such as the limitations of the institution's computer system, may require departure from the standards (for example, some systems do not allow storage of leading zeroes with numbers).

Controlled Field for Date Qualifier

Some institutions require qualifiers for dates. The values should be controlled by a controlled list.

4.3.2 Examples

Examples of Work Records are included below. For additional examples, see the end of Part 1, the end of each chapter, and the CCO Web site. In the examples, *controlled* refers to values controlled by an authority file, controlled list, or other rules (for example, rules for recording dates). *Link* refers to a relationship between a Work Record and an Authority Record or between two Work Records. All links are controlled fields. In the examples that follow, Related Work Records are abbreviated for the sake of brevity. All Work Records should be as complete as possible. See the various chapters for discussions of individual metadata elements, whether they should be controlled, and the respective advantages of an authority file or a controlled list. In all examples in this manual, both within and at the end of each chapter, data values for repeatable fields are separated by bullet characters.

Figure 22

Work Record Linked to an Authority Record for Culture: Ottonian Manuscript⁴

Required and recommended elements are marked with an asterisk.

Work Record

- **Class** [controlled]: manuscripts • European art
- ***Work Type** [link]: sacramentary • illuminated manuscript
- ***Title**: Sacramentary | **Title Type**: preferred
- ***Creator display**: illuminated by unknown German active in Mainz or Fulda, binding by unknown Mosan artist
 - *Role** [link]: illuminator | **Extent** [controlled]: illuminations | [link]: unknown German
 - *Role** [link]: artist | **Extent** [controlled]: binding | [link]: unknown Mosan
- ***Creation Date**: illuminated in 2nd quarter of 11th century, binding from 12th century, with later additions
[controlled]: **Qualifier**: illuminations; **Earliest**: 1025; **Latest**: 1060 | **Qualifier**: binding; **Earliest**: 1100; **Latest**: 1199
- ***Subject** [links to authorities]: **Extent**: overall; **Terms**: service book • sacramentary • prayers • Mass | **Extent**: cover; **Terms**: Christ in Majesty • Ascension
- **Culture** [link]: Ottonian
- ***Current Location** [link]: J. Paul Getty Museum (Los Angeles, California, United States) | **IDs**: MS. LUDWIG V 2; 83.MF.77
- **Creation Location display**: binding: Mainz or Fulda (in modern Germany); illuminations: Mosan region (in modern Belgium)
- **Creation Locations** [links]: Fulda (Hessen, Germany) • Mainz (Rheinland-Pfalz, Germany) • Mosan (Europe) • Liège Province (Belgium)
- ***Measurements**: 179 leaves; text block: 26.6 x 19.1 cm (10 1/2 x 7 1/2 inches); text area: 17 x 13 cm (6 3/4 x 5 1/8 inches); oak covers: 27.3 x 19.8 cm (10 3/4 x 7 7/8 inches)
[controlled]: **Extent**: leaf; **Value**: 26.6; **Unit**: cm; **Type**: height | **Value**: 19.1; **Unit**: cm; **Type**: width | **Extent**: text area; **Value**: 17; **Unit**: cm; **Type**: height | **Value**: 13; **Unit**: cm; **Type**: width | **Extent**: cover; **Value**: 27.3; **Unit**: cm; **Type**: height | **Value**: 19.8; **Unit**: cm; **Type**: width
- ***Materials and Techniques**: tempera colors, gold, silver, and ink on parchment, with hammered and engraved binding of copper gilt, silver, brass, and niello
Extent: illuminations; **Material** [link]: tempera • ink • parchment | **Extent**: binding; **Material** [link]: gilt silver • brass • oak | **Technique** [link]: niello
- **Description**: Although the Ottonian book was written and illuminated in Germany, the binding was produced in Mosan, a region in present-day Belgium noted for medieval metalwork and enamel traditions.
- **Description Source** [link]:
J. Paul Getty Museum online. <http://www.getty.edu> (accessed February 10, 2004).

Concept Authority Record

- ***Term**:
Ottonian (preferred)
- ***Note**: Refers to the period, style, and culture associated with the rule of the Ottonian emperors (919-1024) and Salian rulers Conrad II and Henry III, through most of the 11th century. The style is an amalgam of elements including the ideals of the Carolingian art, a renewed interest in Early Christian art, and the influence of contemporary Byzantine art.
- ***Hierarchical position** [link]:
Styles and Periods Facet
.... Styles and Periods
..... European
..... Medieval
..... Ottonian
- ***Source** [link]: *Art & Architecture Thesaurus* (1988-).



CREDIT: The J. Paul Getty Museum (Los Angeles, California). Illuminated by unknown German active in Mainz or Fulda, binding by unknown Mosan artist; *Christ in Majesty* (cover), and *The Ascension* (illumination), from *Sacramentary*; illuminated 2nd quarter of 11th century, binding from 12th century, with later additions; oak boards covered in red silk fitted with hammered and engraved silver and copper (cover); tempera colors and gold on parchment (illumination), 26.6 x 19.1 cm, text area 17 x 13 cm, oak covers 27.3 x 19.8 cm; Ms. Ludwig V2, 83.MF.77.20, (illumination), fol. 23 recto and 83.MF.77. cover. © The J. Paul Getty Trust.

Figure 23

Work Record Linked to an Authority Record: Corinthian Temple
Required and recommended elements are marked with an asterisk.

Work Record

- **Class** [controlled]: architecture
- ***Work Type** [link]: temple • town hall • dwelling
• stable • church • museum
- ***Title**: Maison Carée | **Title Type**: preferred
Title: Nîmes Temple | **Title Type**: alternate
- ***Creator display**: unknown Roman
***Role** [controlled]: architect | [link]: unknown Roman
- ***Creation Date**: 16 CE
[controlled]: **Earliest**: -0016; **Latest**: -0016
- ***Subject** [link to authorities]: Roman temple • Gaius Caesar • Lucius Caesar
- ***Current Location** [link]: Nîmes (Languedoc-Roussillon, France)
- ***Measurements**: length: 25 m (82 feet); width: 12 m (40 feet)
[controlled]: **Value**: 25; **Unit**: m; **Type**: length | **Value**: 12; **Unit**: m; **Type**: width
- ***Materials and Techniques**: cut stone, bearing masonry construction
Material [link]: masonry | **Technique** [link]: dimension stone • load-bearing walls
- **Style** [link]: [Corinthian](#)
- **Culture** [link]: Ancient Roman • Gallo-Roman
- **Description**: Temple was dedicated to Gaius and Lucius Caesar, adopted sons of the first Roman emperor Augustus. Noted as best-preserved Roman building remaining in Gaul.

Concept Authority Record

- ***Term**:
[Corinthian](#) (preferred)
- ***Note**: Refers to the third of both the three Greek architectural orders and the later five traditional classical orders of architecture that, with Doric, Ionic, Tuscan, and Composite, was used by the Romans and through the Renaissance and beyond. It seems to have been influenced by Egyptian architecture, though it probably developed in Greece in interior architecture, and was used in exterior architecture by the 3rd century BCE. In Greek architecture it is characterized by a form that is lighter and more ornate than Doric or Ionic, a bell-shaped capital with acanthus stalks emerging to support graceful volutes, and a column that is seated on a base and usually fluted. It was the most common of Greek styles in Roman architecture, and in Roman and later architecture the style was often modified. It is distinct from "Corinthian order," since an architectural order refers strictly to the specific system or assemblage of parts that is subject to uniform established rules and proportions, regulated by the role that each part has to perform.
- ***Hierarchical position** [link]:
Styles and Periods Facet
..... Mediterranean
..... Aegean
..... <Aegean styles>
..... Corinthian
- ***Source** [link]: *Art & Architecture Thesaurus* (1988-).



CREDIT: Maison Carée, Nîmes, France.
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Figure 24

Work Record Linked to Authority Records: Neoclassical Building
 Required and recommended elements are marked with an asterisk.

Work Record	Concept Authority Record
<p>■ Class [controlled]: architecture • American art</p> <p>■ *Work Type [link]: mansion • president's dwelling</p> <p>■ *Title: White House Title Type: preferred Title: Executive Mansion Title Type: former Title: President's Palace Title Type: former Title: President's House Title Type: former</p> <p>■ *Creator display: James Hoban (American, 1762-1831) *Role [link]: architect [link]: Hoban, James</p> <p>■ *Creation Date: 1793 to 1801, burned 1814, porticos 1824 to 1829 [controlled]: Earliest: 1793; Latest: 1829</p> <p>■ *Subject [links to authorities]: architecture • presidency • power</p> <p>■ Style [link]: Georgian • Neoclassical • Palladian</p> <p>■ *Current Location [link]: Washington (DC, United States)</p> <p>■ *Measurements: 3 stories, over 100 rooms, White House and the grounds occupy 7.2 hectares (18 acres) [controlled]: Extent: rooms; Value: 104; Type: count Extent: stories; Value: 3; Type: count Extent: grounds; Value: 7.2; Unit: hectares; Type: area</p> <p>■ *Materials and Techniques: cut-stone bearing masonry construction Material [link]: masonry Technique [link]: dimension stone • load-bearing walls</p> <p>■ Description: Design was the result of a public competition in 1792. Among the entrants was Thomas Jefferson, later president of the United States. James Hoban won the commission with a plan for a Georgian mansion in the Palladian style.</p>	<p>■ *Terms: <u>Neoclassical</u> (preferred) Neo-Classical Neoclassicism</p> <p>■ *Note: Refers to the style of European and American architecture and fine and decorative arts between the mid-18th century and the mid-19th century inspired by archaeological discoveries in the Mediterranean and Near East and characterized by the imitation of Greek and Roman forms and motifs. Also considered a reaction to Rococo opulence, Neoclassical works are often linear, symmetrical, and even severe.</p> <p>■ *Hierarchical position [link]: Styles and Periods Facet Styles and Periods European <modern European styles> Neoclassical</p> <p>■ *Source [link]: <i>Art & Architecture Thesaurus</i> (1988-).</p>
	<p>■ *Term: <u>Georgian</u> (preferred)</p> <p>■ *Note: Refers to the style in architecture, interior design, and decorative arts in Britain and Ireland and spread to the United States during the reigns of George I to George IV, between 1714 and 1830. Some authors omit the reign of George IV and refer to the period ca.1790 to 1830 as Regency. Though Classical forms and motifs dominate, the style encompasses Renaissance and Rococo forms as well as a range of Neoclassical styles such as Pompeiian Revival and Etruscan style.</p> <p>■ *Hierarchical position [link]: Styles and Periods Facet Styles and Periods European <Renaissance-Baroque styles> Georgian</p> <p>■ *Source [link]: <i>Art & Architecture Thesaurus</i> (1988-).</p>

CREDIT: White House, Washington, D.C. © 2005 Patricia Harpring. All rights reserved.

Notes

1. The ISO standard recognizes year zero. Humanities projects, however, will generally omit it in calculations of earliest and latest dates.
2. *Ink-bamboo* painting was a style of Chinese painting that emphasized a distinctive relationship between ink as a medium and bamboo as a subject.
3. Years in ages estimated by radiocarbon dating, potassium/argon dating, and other such relative dating methods do not necessarily correspond to years recorded in a calendar; therefore, calibration tables are designed for the particular circumstances surrounding the specific relative dating process. Calibration tables are often unavailable; however, dates should still be estimated, because the fields must not be left blank and slight inaccuracies in earliest and latest dates will not affect overall retrieval.
4. This example is intended to illustrate metadata elements discussed in this manual. Field names and data values in the example do not necessarily represent the record for this object in the Getty Museum's information system.