



# VRA Metadata Schema in the Phillips Collection and Barnes Foundation Digital Repositories

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# Introduction

- Metadata quality and controlled vocabulary use are extremely important to ensure that digital repositories are maintaining accurate records that can be compared to and communicate with other collections.
- The Phillips Collection and Barnes Foundation are art museums in Washington DC and Philadelphia that have digital repositories
- It would be beneficial for related museums such as these two to have digital repositories that are interoperable



# Visual Resources Association Metadata Schema

- Visual Resources Association (VRA) Metadata Schema is intended for visual resources such as art and photographs.
- It consists of 19 elements

- |                  |                   |
|------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Record Type   | 13. Subject       |
| 2. Work Type     | 14. Relation      |
| 3. Title         | 15. Description   |
| 4. Measurements  | 16. Source        |
| 5. Material      | 17. Rights        |
| 6. Technique     | 18. Inscription   |
| 7. Agent         | 19. State Edition |
| 8. Date          |                   |
| 9. Location      |                   |
| 10. ID number    |                   |
| 11. Style/Period |                   |
| 12. Culture      |                   |



# Project Goals and Questions

- Assess the element usage of the Phillips Collection and the Barnes Foundation digital repositories
  - Assess the metadata quality of the Phillips Collection and the Barnes Foundation digital repositories
  - Assess the semantic interoperability of the Phillips Collection and the Barnes Foundation
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- What VRA elements are used by the Phillips Collection and the Barnes Foundation?
  - What locally created elements are used by the Phillips Collection and the Barnes Foundation?
  - What controlled vocabularies are used by the Phillips Collection and the Barnes Foundation?



# Project Methods

- 30 metadata item records were retrieved from the Phillips Collection and the Barnes Foundation
- Elements from both digital repositories were mapped onto VRA elements, and the remainder were called locally added elements
- A frequency table was created to assess VRA and non-mapping element use within individual repositories and across both
- The results of the frequency table and metadata item record analysis were used to assess completeness, accuracy, and consistency of the digital repositories metadata item records
- The controlled vocabulary use, along with metadata quality analyses were used to assess interoperability between the two digital collections

# Phillips Collection Digital Repository

- The Phillips Collection Digital Repository was accessed through ARTstor (<https://www-jstor-org.ezproxy2.library.drexel.edu/site/artstor/ThePhillipsCollection-100142287/?searchkey=1682564297196>)
- The Phillips Collection digital repository has about 3,150 metadata records

A Child Whose Home Is an Alley Dwelling near the Capitol

CREATOR  
[Esther Bubley](#)

TITLE  
A Child Whose Home Is an Alley Dwelling near the Capitol

WORK TYPE  
Photographs  
Black and White Photograph

DATE  
1943

MEDIUM  
Gelatin silver print

MEASUREMENTS  
overall: 10 7/8 in x 10 1/8 in; 27.62 cm x 25.72 cm

REPOSITORY  
The Phillips Collection  
Gift of Cam and Wanda Garner, 2012

ACCESSION NUMBER  
2012.017.0016

SUBJECTS  
[documentary photography](#)  
[children](#)  
[poverty](#)

COLLECTION  
[The Phillips Collection](#)

STABLE URL  
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/community/16025069>

REMOTE ACCESS URL  
<http://ezproxy2.library.drexel.edu/login?url=https://www.jstor.org/stable/community/16025069>

SOURCE  
Image and original data provided by The Phillips Collection

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RESOURCE TYPE  
[Images](#)

FILE NAME  
[Phillips\\_Complete\\_L03\\_2012.017.0016\\_8b\\_sRGB.tif](#)

SSID  
16025069

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# Barnes Foundation Digital Repository

- The Barnes Foundation digital repository was accessed through the Barnes Foundations website (<https://collection.barnesfoundation.org/>)
- This collection holds numerous artworks, specifically “modern european paintings” and can be organized by colors, lines, light, and space



Vincent van Gogh, The Postman (Joseph-Étienne Roulin), 1889. BF37.

Location

On View: [Room 2, North Wall](#)

Artist

[Vincent van Gogh \(Dutch, 1853 - 1890\)](#)

Year

1889

Medium

Oil on canvas

Accession Number

BF37

Dimensions

Overall: 25 7/8 x 21 3/4 in. (65.7 x 55.2 cm)

Viewing Status

Currently on view

Copyright Status

**Public Domain**



# VRA Mapping – Phillips Collection

- Using the VRA Core 4.0 Element descriptions, some elements used within the Phillips Collection were mapped onto VRA that fit the same purpose

<b>VRA Element</b>	<b>Phillips Collection Mapped Element</b>
Record Type	Resource Type
Material	Medium
Agent	Creator
ID Number	SSID





# VRA Mapping – Barnes Foundation

- Similarly, Barnes Foundation elements were mapped onto VRA metadata elements that fit

<b>VRA Element</b>	<b>Barnes Foundation Mapped Element</b>
Measurements	Dimensions
Material	Medium
Agent	Artist
Date	Year
Rights	Copyright Status



# Phillips Collection Locally Added Elements

- Repository
  - Accession Number
  - Collection
  - Stable URL
  - Remote Access URL
  - File Name
  - Local Identifier
- 
- Repository, collection, stable URL, remote access URL, and file name are used in all 30 item records



## Barnes Foundation Locally Added Elements

- Accession Number
  - Viewing Status
- 
- Both used in all 30 metadata records

# Element Usage

VRA Elements	Phillips Collection n/30	% of total elements n/441	% number of metadata records	Barnes Foundation n/30	% of total elements n/250	% number of metadata records	Total n/60	% of total elements n/691	% of total metadata records
Record Type	30	6.80%	100%	0	0%	0%	30	4.34%	50%
Work Type	7	1.60%	23.40%	0	0%	0%	7	1.01%	11.70%
Title	30	6.80%	100%	0	0%	0%	30	4.34%	50%
Measurements	29	6.60%	96.70%	30	12%	100%	59	8.54%	98.40%
Material	28	6.30%	93.40%	30	12%	100%	58	8.39%	96.70%
Technique	0	0%	0%	0	0%	0%	0	0%	0%
Agent	30	6.80%	100%	30	12%	100%	60	8.68%	100%
Date	30	6.80%	100%	30	12%	100%	60	8.68%	100%
Location	0	0%	0%	30	12%	100%	30	4.34%	50%
ID Number	30	6.80%	100%	0	0%	0%	30	4.34%	50%
Style/Period	0	0%	0%	0	0%	0%	0	0%	0%
Culture	2	0.45%	6.70%	10	4%	33.40%	12	1.74%	20%
Subject	4	0.91%	13.40%	0	0%	0%	4	0.58%	6.70%
Relation	0	0%	0%	0	0%	0%	0	0%	0%
Description	0	0%	0%	0	0%	0%	0	0%	0%
Source	30	6.80%	100%	0	0%	0%	30	4.34%	50%
Rights	11	2.50%	36.70%	30	12%	100%	41	5.93%	68.40%
Inscription	0	0%	0%	0	0%	0%	0	0%	0%
StateEdition	0	0%	0%	0	0%	0%	0	0%	0%
<b>Locally Added Elements</b>								34.70%	
Repository	30	6.80%	100%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Accession Number	16	3.63%	53.40%	30	12%	100%	n/a	n/a	n/a
collection	30	6.80%	100%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Stable URL	30	6.80%	100%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Remote Access URL	30	6.80%	100%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
File Name	30	6.80%	100%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Local Identifier	14	3.17%	46.70%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Viewing Status	n/a	n/a	n/a	30	12%	100%	n/a	n/a	n/a



# Controlled Vocabulary Use

## **The Phillips Collection**

- Uses controlled vocabularies in the elements: record type, work type, agent (creator), medium (material) and subject
- Library of Congress Subject Headings
- Getty Art & Architecture Thesaurus
- Getty Union List of Artist Names

## **The Barnes Foundation**

- Uses controlled vocabulary in the elements: medium (materials) and culture
- Library of Congress Subject Headings
- Getty Art & Architecture Thesaurus



# Completeness

## The Phillips Collection

- Uses record type (written as resource type), title, measurements, material (written as medium), agent (written as creator), ID number (written as SSID) 100% of the time
- Uses technique, location, style/period, relation, description, inscription, and stateedition 0% of the time

## The Barnes Foundation

- Uses measurements (written as dimensions), material (written as medium), agent (written as artist), date (written as year), and rights (written as copyright status) 100% of the time
- Uses title record type, work type, technique, ID number, style/period, subject, relation, description, source, inscription, and stateedition 0% of the time



# Accuracy

- Both the Phillips Collection and the Barnes Foundation seem to have accurate item records that correctly represent the artwork within their digital repositories



# Consistency

## The Phillips Collection

- Many elements are used very inconsistently such as work type, culture, subject, rights, accession number, and local identifier
- Large inconsistencies in the formatting of date
- Some of the medium element uses Getty thesaurus vocabulary while others do not
- Some inconsistency in name order in creator

## The Barnes Foundation

- Very consistent in the dimensions element, and the location element
- Small amount of inconsistency in the date element with formatting of years
- Inconsistently uses the culture element, however this always occurs when artist is filled in with “unidentified maker” increasing some consistency





# Interoperability

- The Phillips Collection and the Barnes Foundation are very different in terms of their metadata item records
- The Phillips Collection metadata records vary widely within the repository which makes it hard to compare records internally as well as with other similar collections
- The Barnes Foundation uses a small amount of VRA elements consistently and very little controlled vocabularies, which leaves out a lot of potential comparisons with other collections
- The Phillips Collection and Barnes Foundation have low semantic interoperability as of now



# Conclusions

- The Phillips Collection and the Barnes Foundation have very different metadata item record techniques, and are in turn currently very dissimilar and interoperability between the two is difficult
- To increase interoperability both the Phillips Collection and Barnes Foundation would need to use more VRA elements, and controlled vocabularies consistently