

Uniform Titles (Filing Titles) for Musical Compositions University of Alberta Music Collection

The title of a musical work may appear in a variety of forms on the title pages and covers of scores and the labels of recordings:

Le Nozze di Figaro	Concerto No. 5 for Piano and Orchestra
The Marriage of Figaro	Fifth Piano Concerto
Die Hochzeit des Figaro	Piano Concerto no. 5
Les Noces de Figaro	Klavierkonzert Nr. 5
	Emperor Concerto

To save searchers the trouble of having to think of all possible versions of the title, cataloguers devise a standardized version of the title, called a "uniform title". They then include two titles in the catalogue record for a musical work, the title copied from the score or recording, and the uniform title. This makes it possible to retrieve all scores and recordings of a work by searching for the uniform title.

Uniform titles for individual compositions are constructed by following a detailed set of rules, but the basic principles are quite straightforward. Using those principles, it is usually possible to predict the form of the title being sought, and therefore to select appropriate search terms and strategies. Here is a summary of the rules used to construct uniform titles for separate works, for works which are excerpts from sets and cycles, and for collections of works by one composer.

Separate Works

Generic Titles

The name of the form or genre appears first. If there is just one genre term in the title, it is usually given in English, and in the plural (unless the composer wrote only one work in that genre). Then follows medium of performance (unless the medium is the normal one for the genre), numbers (serial, opus, thematic catalogue), and key, or as much of this information as is applicable to the work being named.

- Brahms. [Quintets, piano, strings, op. 34, F minor]
- Haydn, Michael. [Divertimenti, woodwinds, horn, P. 100, D major]
- Bach. [Präludium und Fuge, organ, BWV 540, F major]
- Bartok. [Rhapsodies, violin, piano, no. 1]
- Bridge. [Phantasy, piano quartet]
- Poulenc. [Sonatas, clarinets (2)]
- Haydn, Joseph. [Masses, H. xxii, 7, B flat major]
- Haydn, Joseph. [Symphonies, H. I, 104, D major]
- Widor. [Symphonies, organ, no. 1, op. 13, no. 1, C major]

Data for uniform titles of this type can often be found in the lists of works appended to articles on composers in *The New Grove Dictionary of Music And Musicians*. For example, to search comprehensively for scores and recordings of Haydn's Kleine Orgelmesse (Little Organ Mass), you need to know the number assigned to it in Anthony van Hoboken's thematic catalogue of Haydn's works, since cataloguers use Hoboken numbers in uniform titles as a means of identification.

The Haydn works list in *The New Grove* (1st edition, volume 8, p. 360; also in 2nd edition, volume 11, p. 205) supplies the number: XXII, 7; section XXII in the Hoboken catalogue lists masses, and the Little Organ Mass is no. 7 in that section.

Distinctive Titles

The title is given in the language of the text the composer set, or, in the case of instrumental works, in the native language of the composer. Articles and numbers that appear at the beginning of a title are omitted.

Mozart. [Zauberflöte]	(The Magic flute)
Stravinsky. [Vesna sviashchennaia]	(Rite of spring)
Bartok. [Táncszvit]	(Dance suite)

Original language titles can also be found in works lists in *The New Grove*.

Sets or Cycles

Sets or Cycles, with a single opus number or collective title assigned by the composer, are considered to be a single "work," whether or not the composer intended that they be performed complete. Their titles are formulated in the same way as the titles of separate works, and may be generic or distinctive. Initial numbers (specifying the number of compositions in the set) are omitted.

Marcello. [Sonatas, violoncello, continuo, op. 1]	
Schubert. [Winterreise]	(Die Winterreise)
Britten. [Chansons françaises]	(Four French songs)

Single compositions from a set or cycle are treated as excerpts, and assigned the title of the set, followed by the title of the excerpt:

Marcello. [Sonatas, violoncello, continuo, op. 1. No. 4]
Faure. [Duets, sopranos, op. 10. Tarentelle]
Wolf. [Mörike-Lieder. Jägerlied]

A collection of three or more compositions selected from a set or cycle is treated as a collection of excerpts:

Wolf. [Mörike-Lieder. Selections]

Again, *The New Grove* works lists are helpful in relating compositions to the sets or cycles of which they are a part. For example, the list appended to the article on Hugo Wolf (1st edition, volume 20, p. 492-501; also in 2nd edition, volume 27, p. 488-499) includes an index to the titles and first lines of Wolf's songs. It shows that the song "Jägerlied" is no. 4 in Wolf's cycle, *Gedichte von Eduard Mörike*.

The Library is more likely to have a score of the complete cycle than of the single song. An "Author / Starting with" search in the online catalogue under Wolf's name produces the following reference:

Wolf, Hugo, 1860-1903. *Gedichte von Eduard Mörike*.

search under: Wolf, Hugo, 1860-1903. Mörike-Lieder.
An "Any field / Containing" search:
hugo wolf and morike lieder not sound recording
leads to the desired score.

Collections by One Composer

Printed or recorded collections of three or more works, in which the compositions are all by one composer, but do not all come from a single composer-designated set or cycle, are assigned collective titles based on the genre or medium of performance.

Collections limited to a single genre

The collective title begins with the genre term in the plural, and continues with the medium of performance:

[Concertos, piano, orchestra]

[Sonatas, violin, piano]

unless the medium is the normal one for the genre:

[Symphonies]

or the medium varies from work to work in the collection:

[Concertos]

[Motion picture music]

If the collection is not complete, the word Selections is added at the end of the title:

[Quartets, strings. Selections]

[Songs. Selections]

Collections limited to a single medium of performance

The title states the medium of performance as specifically as possible.

[String quartet music]

[Chamber music]

[Piano music, 4 hands]

[Piano music. Selections]

[Keyboard music]

[Instrumental music. Selections]

[Choral music]

[Vocal music. Selections]

Miscellaneous collections

[Selections]

Complete collections

[Works]