

### Uniform Titles Help You Find Music!

In a library catalog, you expect to find all the different versions of the same work filed alphabetically together under the author's or composer's name. This is usually easy to do for books, which are unlikely to change title from one edition to another. But a musical work may be printed or recorded with titles that vary as to language or wording.

For example, different title pages of the same piano concerto by Mozart might begin with different letters of the alphabet, depending upon the language of the country of publication, or particular wording used by the publisher.

Concerto in A major for piano, K. 488  
Konzert A Dur, K. 488 fur Klavier  
Piano Concerto in A Major, K. 488

To bring all these different titles together alphabetically in the catalog, a distinctive or **uniform title** is created by the library cataloger according to fixed rules used nation wide. This uniform title appears immediately after the composer's name on all of the catalog records for that composition. All the versions of the aforementioned Mozart concerto would thus be filed under a single assigned title:

Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus, 1756-1791. Concertos, piano, orchestra, K. 488, A major.

—From Indiana University's Music Library web pages. Accessed and supplemented 7/29/02.  
<http://www.music.indiana.edu/collections/uniform/uniform.html>.

### Challenges to Finding Music

- Some works have several distinctive titles (e.g., *Rite of Spring* vs. *Le Sacre du printemps* vs. *Vesna sviashchennaia*).
- Form titles (e.g., "sonata" and "concerto") are generic; it is more difficult to do precise keyword searches on these titles.
- Many works have both generic and distinctive titles. For example, Beethoven's "Moonlight sonata" is also known as Sonata no. 14; "Mondscheinsonate"; Sonata in C# Minor, Klaviersonate Nr. 14; "Al chiaro di luna"; Sonata, op. 27, no. 2; etc.
- Works can have many editions (scholarly vs. performing vs. critical) and many publishers.
- Works come in many formats (e.g., print, sound recording, video recording, software, etc.).
- Works appear in multiple manifestations (e.g., full score, vocal score, choral score, parts, excerpts, arrangements, etc.).

*Uniform titles help eliminate many of these problems by grouping works together or providing better search terms.*

### Some Practical Applications in HOMER

- For an easy-to-browse list of a composer's works (complete with cross references), look up his or her last name in HOMER using the **Prolific Author/Composer search**. This search groups all the versions and titles of a musical work together by composer/uniform title.
- When doing a **Keyword--Boolean search**, use terms from the uniform title to construct more precise searches. This helps you find more items.

2	7	<a href="#">Donizetti, Gaetano, 1797-1848. Elisir d'amore</a> (complete opera)
3	1	<a href="#">Donizetti, Gaetano, 1797-1848. Elisir d'amore. Esultii pur la barbara</a>
4	2	<a href="#">Donizetti, Gaetano, 1797-1848. Elisir d'amore. Furtiva lagrima</a> (single aria)
5	3	<a href="#">Donizetti, Gaetano, 1797-1848. Elisir d'amore. Libretto. English</a>
6	4	<a href="#">Donizetti, Gaetano, 1797-1848. Elisir d'amore. Libretto. English &amp; Italian</a>
7	1	<a href="#">Donizetti, Gaetano, 1797-1848. Elisir d'amore. Libretto. English. Selections</a>
8	1	<a href="#">Donizetti, Gaetano, 1797-1848. Elisir d'amore. Quanto e bella</a>
9	1	<a href="#">Donizetti, Gaetano, 1797-1848. Elisir d'amore. Selections.</a>
10	2	<a href="#">Donizetti, Gaetano, 1797-1848. Elisir d'amore. Vocal score. English &amp; Italian</a>
11	1	<a href="#">Donizetti, Gaetano, 1797-1848. Elisir d'amore. Vocal score. German</a>

These can be scores, libretti, sound, or video recordings.

Example: a Keyword--Boolean search on **stravinsky and rite** finds several versions of his *Rite of Spring*, but typing **stravinsky and vesna** (the Russian word used in the uniform title) or **stravinsky and (rite or vesna)** finds even more items.

Turn the page to learn more about how to find and read uniform titles. Guessing at titles is only helpful to a point.

## How Uniform Titles Work

**A. Form Titles.** Many musical works have titles that actually are the names of forms or types of compositions (e.g., “sonatas,” “concertos,” “symphonies”). These titles contain the following elements (in order):

Example: Prokofiev, Sergey, 1891-1953. Sonatas, flute, piano, op. 94, D major. Adagio; arr.

1. Form (e.g., concertos). *Plurals are used if composer wrote more than one such composition.*
2. Performance medium (if not already implied). *Correct: Sonatas, flute, piano. Incorrect: Symphonies, orchestra.*
3. Sequential number (e.g., opus, or thematic catalog) or tonal key. *Uses just enough to distinguish item. Not a complete cite.*
4. Indication that item is an excerpt, selection (e.g., single movement), and/or arrangement for other instruments (“arr.”).

The example above is an Adagio from a sonata for flute and piano, arranged for something else (e.g., violin and piano). The title and subject heading in the Brief or Detailed HOMER record will tell you the actual instrumentation.

**ANOTHER EXAMPLE:** do a Prolific Author/Composer search on **beethoven**, then scroll down to “s” to see the sonatas:

Composer/Uniform Title is...	... so these are scores or recordings of
Beethoven, Ludwig van, 1770-1827. Sonatas, piano.	<i>All of Beethoven's piano sonatas.</i>
Beethoven, Ludwig van, 1770-1827. Sonatas, piano, no. 8, op. 13, C minor.	<i>Just the C minor sonata (no. 8, op. 13).</i>
Beethoven, Ludwig van, 1770-1827. Sonatas, piano, no. 8, op. 13, C minor. Rondo allegro.	<i>Just one movement from that sonata.</i>
Beethoven, Ludwig van, 1770-1827. Sonatas, piano. Selections.	<i>Some of Beethoven's piano sonatas.</i>
Beethoven, Ludwig van, 1770-1827. Sonatas, violin.	<i>Beethoven's complete violin sonatas.</i>
Beethoven, Ludwig van, 1770-1827. Sonatas, violin, piano, no. 9, op. 47, A major; arr.	<i>An arrangement of violin sonata for ???</i>

Tip: Musical works with form titles are most easily found using the Prolific Author/Composer search.

**B. Distinctive Titles.** These are titles that are *not* the name of a musical form. Usually they describe a person, place, event, mood, story, etc. Works include symphonic poems, operas, oratorios, ballets, and other vocal or stage works. Examples:

Commonly-known title	Uniform title in the catalog
Mozart's <i>Magic Flute</i> : an opera	Zauberflöte
Strauss's <i>Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks</i> , op. 28: a symphonic poem	Till Eulenspiegels lustige Streiche
Stravinsky's <i>Firebird</i> (l'Oiseau de feu): a ballet	Zhar-ptitsa

Many instrumental compositions also have distinctive titles. For example:

Commonly-known title	Uniform title in the catalog*
Bach's Six Brandenburg Concertos	Brandenburgische Konzerte**
Bach's 48 Preludes and Fugues ( <i>The Well-tempered Clavier</i> )	Wohltemperierte Klavier
Brahms's Hungarian Dances for orchestra	Ungarische Tanze
Stravinsky's Symphonies for wind instruments	Symphonies d'instruments a vent

\*These titles, originally used by the composers, have been retained in their original languages as the uniform titles in the catalog.

\*\*Note that the number “six” is dropped from the title. Likewise, you would search for “Songs,” not “Four Songs.”

- Some works with form titles have nicknames (e.g., Beethoven's Symphony No. 3, “Eroica”). These are usually filed under the form titles (e.g., Beethoven, Ludwig van, 1770-1827. Symphonies, no. 3, op. 55, Eb major), though sometimes keyword searches will pick up the nicknames. The library has reference books that match nicknames with form titles.
- Bach cantatas are filed under the name of the cantata. For example, search *Christ lag in Todesbanden*, not Cantata No. 4.

Distinctive titles are like form titles in that they list the full work first (e.g., the opera's title), then the specific movement or aria. Most titles are listed in their original language.

**EXAMPLE:** do a Prolific Author/Composer search on **mozart**, then scroll down to “n” to see *Nozze di Figaro*:

Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus, 1756-1791. <i>Nozze di Figaro</i> .	<i>Complete opera, recording or study score.</i>
Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus, 1756-1791. <i>Nozze di Figaro</i> . Deh vieni, non tardar	<i>Aria from the opera—excerpt from score or recording.</i>
Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus, 1756-1791. <i>Nozze di Figaro</i> . Libretto	<i>Opera's libretto.</i>
Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus, 1756-1791. <i>Nozze di Figaro</i> . Overture	<i>Is just the overture—score or recording.</i>
Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus, 1756-1791. <i>Nozze di Figaro</i> . Selections	<i>Selections from the opera—score or recording.</i>
Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus, 1756-1791. <i>Nozze di Figaro</i> . Vocal score	<i>Piano-vocal score of opera.</i>

Tip: Works with distinctive titles are easily found using either the Prolific Author/Composer or Keyword--Boolean searches. The former gives easier-to-read lists. The latter offers quick but potentially “messy” searching.

Example: a Keyword--Boolean search on **mozart and zauberflöte**—or better, **mozart and (magic or zauber?)**—finds more items than **mozart and magic**, since it incorporates words from the uniform (or “correct”) title.

**C. Collective Titles.** The library owns many editions and recordings that contain more than one composition by the same composer. Often, a particular composition that you want will be available only in such a collection. For example, several of the sonatas for piano by Beethoven will be found only in collections containing all thirty-two of his sonatas [filed under “Beethoven...Sonatas, piano”]. In this and similar instances, the catalog will not list the particular work you want, and no cross reference will show you the proper heading to search. You must use a bit of imagination to find a collection that contains the piece you want. (*Quoted from Indiana site.*)

In addition, as you browse Prolific Author/Composer lists, look for uniform titles to collections containing collections for the same medium of performance (all piano, all orchestra music, all string quartets, etc.), or even broader (all vocal, all instrumental, or all *works* by the composer).

**EXAMPLE:** if you need Beethoven’s Piano Sonata No. 8 in C Minor, do the Prolific Author/Composer search on **beethoven**, then look under the following titles in priority order below. Note: normally titles would be arranged alphabetically.

Beethoven, Ludwig van, 1770-1827. Sonatas, piano, no. 8, op. 13, C minor.	<i>Is the one sonata.</i>
Beethoven, Ludwig van, 1770-1827. Sonatas, piano.	<i>A complete set of the sonatas, including the one you need.</i>
Beethoven, Ludwig van, 1770-1827. Piano music.	<i>This complete set of piano music will have the sonata.</i>
Beethoven, Ludwig van, 1770-1827. Piano music. Selections.	<i>This incomplete set may have the sonata.</i>
Beethoven, Ludwig van, 1770-1827. Instrumental music.	<i>Complete collection of Beethoven’s instrumental music.</i>
Beethoven, Ludwig van, 1770-1827. Works.	<i>Composer’s complete output will have the sonata.</i>

## Identifying Uniform Titles (or, How do I find these?)

**Method 1:** To browse a composer’s works and uniform titles, use the Prolific Author/Composer search. This removes much of the guesswork. This search includes **cross references** for items known by more than one title.

Example: A Prolific Author/Composer search on **stravinsky** leads to →  which leads to

The “correct” title of *Rite of Spring*.

1	22	Stravinsky, Igor, 1882-1971. <i>Весна священная</i>
2	1	Stravinsky, Igor, 1882-1971. <i>Весна священная; arr.</i>
3	1	Stravinsky, Igor, 1882-1971. <i>Весна священная; Danse sacrée.</i>
4	2	Stravinsky, Igor, 1882-1971. <i>Весна священная; Selections.</i>
5	1	Stravinsky, Igor, 1882-1971. <i>Весна священная; Suite.</i>

which leads to

References for: Stravinsky, Igor, 1882-1971. *Rite of spring*

The references listed below may also contain information related to your search. References may include:

- See references
- See also references
- Search Under

See Stravinsky, Igor, 1882-1971. *Весна священная*

**Method 2:** Look at an item’s Detailed Record to see the uniform titles. This will give you ideas for future searches.

Uniform titles assigned by cataloger are highlighted in blue and appear in the “Uniform Title” and “Other Authors” fields. (Do not click on links. Instead, go back to the Search screen to start new searches.)

Titles as published on the CD appear in the “Title” field. Additional titles may also appear in “Table of Contents” notes further down in the record.

← previous    next →

Brief Record    Detailed Record    MARC Format

Database: UCAT: UCConn Libraries

Main Author: *Stravinsky, Igor, 1882-1971.*

Other Author(s): *Monteux, Pierre, 1875-1964.*  
*Stravinsky, Igor, 1882-1971.* *Petrushka,*  
*Boston Symphony Orchestra.* (2nd work)

Uniform Title: *Весна священная*

Title: *Le sacre du printemps* ; *Весна священная* [sound recording] / *Stravinsky.*

Variant Title: *Petrushka*  
*Весна священная*

Publisher: New York, N.Y. : RCA : Manufactured and distributed by BMG, p1987.

Description: Music  
Sound Recording  
1 sound disc (67 min.) : digital, stereo. ; 4 3/4 in.

Series: *Papillon collection*

Performer(s): Boston Symphony Orchestra ; Pierre Monteux, conductor.

Event Date/Place: Recorded in Symphony Hall, Boston, Jan. 28, 1951 and Jan. 1959.

**Method 3:** Use reference books to identify larger works in which an item might appear. Ask a librarian for assistance.

Example: You want to find Brahms’s song “Wenn ich mit Menschen.” A Keyword--Boolean search finds one LP. You check *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* and find that the song is part of a larger set called *Vier ernste Gesänge* (“Four Serious Songs,” op. 121). If you re-execute the search using the set’s title (using either the Prolific Author/Composer or Keyword--Boolean searches), you find three additional items. You should also look under the collective titles “Songs” or “Lieder” to find sets that may include these songs.

*Method 2 also works: do a keyword search on the song, check the LP’s Detailed Record, note the uniform title of the song set, then re-search using the uniform title (use the Keyword--Boolean or Prolific Author/Composer search).*

## Learn More about Uniform Titles

- Using Uniform Titles: A Tutorial: <http://www.music.indiana.edu/collections/uniform/uniform.html>  
*Very useful site with more complete explanations. Several examples in this document were drawn from this site.*
- Principles of Uniform Titles: [http://www.music.indiana.edu/tech\\_s/mla/ut.gui](http://www.music.indiana.edu/tech_s/mla/ut.gui)