

Caroline Roll

## Metadata for Searching Moving Image Collections

I searched the UCLA Film and Television Archive and the Academy Film Archive.

1. How easy was it to find what you were looking for? Was there good documentation about how to search?

At first I preferred UCLA's search function to the Academy's. I searched "Mary Pickford," and UCLA showed results for their Mary Pickford collection, which included a downloadable list of their holdings. The following results were informational entries, mainly about movies she appeared in. When I performed the same search on the Academy's website, the results were very mixed. Most of them were articles in which her name appeared, but there were also results for people named Marie, and other Marys, like Mary Poppins. I couldn't get any sense of whether or not the Academy had anything related to Mary Pickford in their archive. UCLA has a "Quick Start Guide" and an "Advanced User Guide" to aid in searching the catalogue. The Academy doesn't have anything comparable, from what I could find.

2. Were there multiple ways of searching (e.g. simple and advanced)?

Initially, it seemed like neither website allowed me to do an advanced search, which is frustrating when trying to determine what holdings they have. However, I did find UCLA's online catalogue, which supports both simple and advanced searches. I couldn't find an online catalogue for the Academy, and only simple keyword searches are supported.

3. Was the search interface easy to use? Was both browse and search supported?

The Academy's website seems pretty browse-oriented, and might be difficult for researchers to find useful. The main collections page shows all of their collections in alphabetical order, and more results appear as you scroll down. I don't really like this function, I can't even jump down

further in the alphabet; I have to wait for the collections to load in order as I scroll. An archive's website should have much more varied search functions. UCLA's website allows for some browsing. There are lists of holdings in their motion picture collections, television collections, audio collections, Hearst Metrotone News, etc. I could easily lose track of time browsing through each topic.

4. Did you get the results you were expecting? Did you get what you were looking for?

Overall I was pleased with UCLA's search functions, and they met my expectations of how an academic archive's website should work. The Academy's was pretty disappointing. I could find some interesting things if I browse for a while, but it leaves a lot to be desired for researchers.

5. Could you tell what metadata standard was used and if so which one? Is there documentation about the metadata? Make sure you look around the site to see if there is any documentation. If it doesn't say see if you can determine which.

UCLA's catalogue uses MARC. I don't know what the Academy uses. I chose the Alfred Hitchcock collection to see if I could look deeper, but it only offers a brief summary of the collection, and not a list of its holdings. At the bottom is a link to a viewing request form, which seems to be the only way to get more information.

6. How well did you think the metadata supported finding what you were looking for?

In UCLA's catalogue, I looked at an entry for Alfred Hitchcock's *The 39 Steps*. There is a lot of useful metadata - date, version, cast and crew, and tags for genres, subjects, and other related entries. Below is list of holdings information for multiple copies of the work. The MARC record shows this same information, except for the holdings information. N/A for the Academy.

7. After doing a search were the search results displayed in a meaningful way? Could you tell how they were ordered and was it easy to sort through them?

As previously mentioned, the Academy's search results were very mixed, and there doesn't seem to be much logic to the order in which the results are displayed. Results from UCLA seemed to be ordered by relevancy. The search term is highlighted in each result, which I suppose makes it a bit easier to see how significant it is to the entry itself. A simple keyword search tends to bring a lot of results, which can be difficult to sort through, but narrowing it down in the advanced search, by year for example, makes it much easier to find what you're looking for.