



THE SAN FRANCISCO
TAPE MUSIC
FESTIVAL
2016

PROGRAM 2

SATURDAY JANUARY 9 2016 8PM
GRAND THEATER

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<i>Experimental Talking Clock</i> (1878)	Frank Lambert
<i>Mambo a la braque</i> (1990)	Javier Alvarez
<i>Urban Paradise (excerpt)</i> (2003)	L.J. Altvater
<i>Wasting</i> (1986)	Brad Garton, Paul Lansky, and Andrew Milburn
<i>Spanish Panoramas</i> (2015)	Thom Blum
<i>Excerpts from Forbidden Planet</i> (1956)	Bebe and Louis Barron
<i>L'ermitage au toit de chaume</i> (2015)	Mirtru Escalona-Mijares

interval

<i>Masse: Fly, Little Bee</i> (1860)	Édouard-Léon Scott de Martinville
<i>Ring, Resonate, Resound</i> (2014)	Leah Reid
<i>Middle Armand Bayou</i> (2010)	Tom Bickley
I. walkingchirpsbirdfrogsfrogs1	
II. 19secFrogs	
III. MiddleArmandBayou	
<i>@.fine</i> (2001)	Tetsu Inoue and Carl Stone
<i>Chorale for Ola and Tomek</i> (2016)	Cliff Caruthers
<i>Mixed Emotions</i> (2000)	Bebe Barron
<i>MAYDAY: Requiem for Those Lost at Sea</i> (2015)	Rodney Waschka II

FRANK LAMBERT

Experimental Talking Clock (1878 :: 1:40 :: mono)

Seeking to create a more durable recording, Lambert chose to experiment with a cylinder made of lead rather than the more common practice of recording onto a wrapping of tin foil. Lasting 1 minute 40 seconds, the hand-cranked recording features an assortment of peculiar sounds, from Lambert calling out the hours of the day, to indistinct speech, and what may be chimes or bells. Portions of the recording sound in reverse, which raises the possibility that the phonograph may have been cranked counter-clockwise during certain points of recording. The recording for his 'talking clock' remains the oldest existing recording playable without scanning technology.

FRANK LAMBERT (1851–1937) was a French American inventor. Lambert is perhaps best known today for making the second-oldest playable sound recording (1878), on his own version of the phonograph. Lambert was also famous for inventing a typewriter on which the keyboard consists of one single piece.

JAVIER ALVAREZ

Mambo a la Braque (1990 :: 3:12 :: stereo)

Like words made out of cutting letters from a newspaper, *Mambo a la Braque* (Braque-like Mambo) uses short musical segments from the well known mambo *Caballo Negro* by composer Damaso Perez Prado – to whom this short piece pays homage. I assembled the segments into a sound mosaic with a few other sounds to 'glue' them together. My aim was to create a sort of cubist music, or put in other words, a mambo of my own invention made out of mambo cuttings.

Born in Mexico City in 1956, JAVIER ALVAREZ is one of the best-known Mexican composers of his generation and many of the works in his prolific oeuvre often combine the intricacies of music technology with diverse instruments and dance influences from around the world. Alvarez initially studied clarinet and composition with Mario Lavista, and later attended the Royal College of Music and the City University in London.

A number of Alvarez's works incorporate elements from Latin American dance genres, like the mambo. His work has been recognized with a number of prizes, including: ICEM Prize in Paris, the Bourges International Festival and Austria's Prix Ars Electronica. In 2005, he was appointed Head of the Musical Arts Department of the Escuela Superior de Artes de Yucatan, returning to his native Mexico after nearly 25 years abroad. He is currently working on several composition projects that include the Instrumenta Festival and for the Orchestre Nationale de France.

L.J. ALTVATER

Urban Paradise (2015 :: 4:00 :: stereo)

The sounds outside my studio windows overlooking San Francisco's Mission Street have always impressed me as being reminiscent of ocean waves. Notwithstanding the occasional truly obnoxious noises, the continual passing of cars is a rather gentle and soothing sound. This sound formed the basis for *Urban Paradise*, which was recorded using a Sony Walkman stereo cassette recorder. The dynamic range was compressed and limited and some EQ was used to reduce the noise inherent in cassette recordings, but otherwise the original recording was unedited and no effects were used. I then sampled the sounds of pots and pans found in my kitchen—clanging them together, filling them with water and tapping on them with sticks and mallets, and so on. These samples were loaded into software samplers—some rather dry, some heavily processed, some played backward, pitch modulated etc.—and triggered with random waveform LFOs and allowed to run free for the duration of the field recording.

L.J. ALTVATER is a visual artist who has also been active as a musician and recording artist since his days in 1980 as a drummer with the Columbus, Ohio rock band The Highly Evolved Cosmic Beings. He creates experimental recordings under the name Mission Hypnotic, mostly non-musical in nature, involving layered and manipulated field recordings and randomly triggered sounds. He also produces electronic music under the name Green & Submarine and is the recording engineer, co-writer and producer of the collaborative effort Project Tierra. He has lived in San Francisco since 1989.

BRAD GARTON, PAUL LANSKY, and ANDREW MILBURN

Wasting (1986 :: 7:55 :: stereo)

Wasting is a collaborative composition involving five people. Richard Kostelanetz wrote and recorded the poem which provides the sonic source for the piece. In it, a poor soul describes his weight and height for each year of his unfortunate life. Brad Garton, Paul Lansky and Andy Milburn then used LPC (Linear Predictive Coding) to transform the voice to reflect the emotional and physical characteristics of each year. Finally Steve Mackey provided the guitar sounds which are the 'excitation function' of our friend's late teen years.

The piece was realized with cmix and MIX software running on a DEC Microvax II/Ultrix microcomputer and an IBM 3081/(CMS/TSO) mainframe; a DEC PDP-11/34 was used for digital audio conversion. Computer music in the 1980's was a fairly painstaking process. Nothing happened in real-time, so the work together was more like a team on a research project than any kind of ensemble-like improvisation that would happen today.

BRAD GARTON received his BS in pharmacology from Purdue University, where he also worked towards an MS in psychoacoustics. He eventually entered the graduate music composition program at Princeton University and was awarded a PhD in music composition in 1989. He is currently a Professor on the composition faculty of Columbia University, where he also serves as Director of the Computer Music Center. His recent work has focused upon the real-time use of music performance models, especially in collaboration with Terry Pender and Gregory Taylor in the improvisatory group "PGT". He is an active composer and music software developer, co-authoring the computer music language RTcmix. He has written a number of 'language objects' for Max/MSP, melding the capabilities of diverse music and general-purpose programming languages with the extensive music and graphics processing of the Max platform. He has worked as consultant on the design and installation of computer music facilities throughout the world.

PAUL LANSKY was born in 1944 to a recording engineer father and a politically progressive mother. He was named for famed African American bass Paul Robeson, and grew up in the Crotona Park neighborhood of the South Bronx. He attended the High School for Music and Art in Manhattan, whose school song is half-remembered in *Looking Back* (1996). Lansky went on to receive an undergraduate degree from Queens College, where he pursued composition and French Horn. He received his graduate degree from Princeton, studying with Milton Babbitt and Earl Kim, and joined the faculty in 1969. He retired from Princeton in 2014 as William Shubael Conant Professor of Music.

Lansky's setting of poetry by Thomas Campion (1979) as read by his wife, Hannah McKay, inaugurated his embrace of language.... The process of speaking and listening and understanding underlies a series of works: *Idle Chatter*, *just_more_idle_chatter*, and *Notjustmoreidlechatter*.

Since the mid-1990s, Lansky has moved to writing for performers and instruments, rather than machines. His aesthetic shift from computer to instrumental music was detailed in a 2008 feature piece in the *New York Times*. But the new means is being put to the same ends. Lansky's entire oeuvre is united by a single concern, which he himself has elegantly and succinctly described. "I view my work as a constant attempt to 'get it right,'" he explains, "to find and express the implicit music within me rather than within an instrument or machine."

After graduate school at Princeton, ANDREW MILBURN founded *tomandandandy*, a music production company based in NYC and LA. His recent work includes scores for the *Resident Evil* film franchise (2010, 2012), *The Details* (2011), *The Hills Have Eyes* (2006), *The Strangers* (2008) and *The Rules of Attraction* (2002). Andrew has also produced music with NYC artists Lou Reed, Dara Birnbaum, The Starn Brothers, and David Byrne.

THOM BLUM

Spanish Panoramas (2015 :: 8:45 :: stereo)

Spanish Panoramas is a fixed-media composition based on an earlier “fixed + live” version, *Spanish Panoramas - guided improvisations with SoundFisher*, that was performed at the 2015 International Society for Music Information Retrieval Conference in Málaga, Spain. The composition consists of three sonic characters or storylines: (1) an anecdotal story told through the arrangement of unprocessed field recordings collected across Spain; (2) an abstract line consisting of overlapping sounds that were conjured up from a personal sound database supporting a retrieval method known as “query by sound”; (3) a third character made up of processed recordings of flamenco guitarists. The weaving together of these three lines knits a unique and whimsical travelogue of Spain. This fixed-media rendition is true to its more improvisational predecessor. The same vocabulary of sounds are utilized in both (see “Note” below). And both use the same “guide track” (storyline “1” above), however this fixed-media version better fed my cruel obsession with precision editing, and that makes the two renditions distinctly different yet the same.

Note: For some of the “anecdotal storyline” of the piece, field recordings of Spain, contributed to freesound.org by the following users, were included: 20020, 3bagbrew, antigonía, ariat, bram, carybarney, dobroide, falconbeard, kontest1, sergeeo, susoooo, and xserra. —TB

THOM BLUM has been composing electroacoustic music since 1972. His early teachers and mentors included James Tenney, Ingram Marshall, and Curtis Roads (California Institute of the Arts, 1972-1974), Thomas Whitney and Charles Csurí (Ohio State University, 1975-1977). Recent performances and installations include *Sound Portraits* for the San Francisco Asian Art Museum (2015), The 2015 International Society for Music Information Retrieval Conference (concert), Málaga, Spain, the 6th annual Hörlursfestival, “Like Now”, in Solleftea, Sweden (2015), the 2015 San Francisco Tape Music Festival, and the “SoundScrapper Project” for live crowd-sourced soundscaping performances (2014). He is co-founder of The International Computer Music Association, former reviews editor of the M.I.T. Press Computer Music Journal, and a member of the six-person San Francisco Tape Music Collective.

BEBE and LOUIS BARRON

Excerpts from Forbidden Planet (1956 :: 4:00 :: stereo)

The 1956 sci-fi thriller *Forbidden Planet* was the first major motion picture to feature an all-electronic film score – a soundtrack that predated synthesizers and samplers. It was like nothing the audience had seen – or heard. The composers were two little-known and little-appreciated pioneers in the field of electronic music, BEBE and LOUIS BARRON.

Married in 1947, the Barrons received a tape recorder as a wedding gift. They used it to record friends and parties, and later opened one of the first private sound studios in America. The 1948 book *Cybernetics: Or, Control and Communication in the Animal and the Machine*, by MIT mathematician Norbert Wiener, inspired Louis Barron to build electronic circuits, which he manipulated to generate sounds. Bebe's job was to sort through hours and hours of tape. Together they manipulated the sounds to create an otherworldly auditory experience.

The Barrons' music caught the ear of the avant-garde scene: In the early 1950s, they worked on a year-long project with composer John Cage. They also scored several short experimental films.

But avant-garde didn't pay, and the Barrons decided to cash in by turning to Hollywood. Their score for *Forbidden Planet* drew critical praise, but a dispute with the American Federation of Musicians prevented them from receiving proper credit for the soundtrack. Their names were also left off the film's Oscar nomination.

Union rules continued to be an obstacle, and technology eventually passed the Barrons by. Though they never scored another film, Louis and Bebe Barron, who divorced in 1970, continued to collaborate until his death in 1989.

Bebe Barron didn't compose for a decade, but in 1999 she was invited to create a new work at the University of California-Santa Barbara, using the latest in sound-generating technology. The work, completed in 2000, is called *Mixed Emotions*, heard in the second half of tonight's concert.

MIRTRU ESCALONA-MIJARES

L'ermitage au toit de chaume (2015 :: 15:25 :: stereo)

This piece is a small tribute to the Buddhist monk Ryōkan Taigu (良寛大愚) (1758–1831) and the impression it left on me after reading some of his poems.

The starting point of *L'ermitage au toit de chaume* is the poetic image of five tanka (Japanese poem without rhyme, 31 syllables in five lines) written by Ryōkan in different periods of his life.

MIRTRU ESCALONA-MIJARES is a composer from Venezuela. For Mirtru Escalona-Mijares, electronics are the logical extension of acoustic instruments. His research is mainly concerned with the limits of audibility as an expressive source, as well as discovering a poetic world and spirituality through his music. Born in 1976, he was initiated into music in the internationally known Venezuelan Sistema, where he studied with Rafael Saavedra and Gerardo Gerulewicz. José Manuel López-López and Paul Méfano invited him to continue his studies in Paris, where he has been working since 2000. In France, he obtained his Masters degree in New Music Technology and Composition at the Conservatoire National Supérieur de Musique de Lyon, where he studied under Robert Pascal and Michele Tadini. He also received degrees in Composition from the Music School of Blanc-Mesnil where he studied under Philippe Leroux, and the National Conservatory of Strasbourg where he worked with Ivan Fedele. He also obtained a degree in Electroacoustic Composition from the Music School of Pantin. He has attended the master classes of Helmut Lachenmann, George Benjamin, Paul Méfano, José Manuel López-López, Betsy Jolas, Sergio Ortega, Diogenes Rivas, Antonio Pileggi and Jacopo Baboni-Schilingi, among others. Mirtru Escalona-Mijares has received multiple international awards, including the Simon Bolivar University Award, as well as first prize in the Kuhmo International Composition, the 26th ICOMS Competition, the 5th Sun River Composition, the Caracas City Municipal, and the Earplay Donald Aird Memorial Award. He works regularly with highly recognized ensembles and instrumentalists as Proxima Centauri, C Barré, Accroche Note, Quartetto Prometeo, Earplay New Chamber Music, Clara Rodriguez, Jorge Isaac, Mario Caroli, David Nuñez, Jacques Ghestem, Cyprien Busolini, Charlotte Testu, among others.

ÉDOUARD-LÉON SCOTT DE MARTINVILLE

Masse: *Fly, Little Bee* (1860 :: 0:14 :: mono)

ÉDOUARD-LÉON SCOTT DE MARTINVILLE (1817–1879) was a French printer and bookseller who lived in Paris. He invented the earliest known sound recording device, the phonograph, which was patented in France on 25 March 1857. From 1854 he became fascinated with a mechanical means of transcribing vocal sounds. While proofreading some engravings for a physics textbook he came across drawings of auditory anatomy, and sought to mimic their use in a mechanical device. This device, dubbed the phonograph, collected sound using a horn attached to a membrane which vibrated a stiff bristle. An image was then inscribed on a lampblack-coated, hand-cranked cylinder. Scott built several devices with the help of acoustic instrument maker Rudolph Koenig. Unlike Edison's later invention of 1877, the phonograph only created visual images of the sound and did not have the ability to play back its recordings. Scott de Martinville's device was used only for scientific investigations of sound waves, and his recordings lay tantalizingly dormant in France's patent office and at Académie des Sciences.

In 2008 researchers at First Sounds (firstsounds.org) began releasing digitized realizations of these phonograph recordings, using the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory's virtual stylus technology and an alternate playback method devised by First Sounds cofounder Patrick Feaster, using software designed to handle optical film soundtrack formats. Phonograph recordings, never intended to be played back, were revealed for the first time, pushing back the era of recorded sound by a generation. These primitive echoes, captured more than 150 years ago, give us a powerful reminder of the wonder of recorded sound.

Masse: Fly, Little Bee is the final phonogram from the inventor of sound recording, employing a new amplifying lever, and representing his final development of the phonograph. The melody was identified through playback: "La Chanson de l'Abeille" from the comic opera *La Reine Topaze* by Victor Massé, first performed in 1856.

LEAH REID

Ring, Resonate, Resound (2014 :: 7:23 :: seven channels)

Ring, Resonate, Resound is an acousmatic composition written in homage to John Chowning. The piece tips its hat to Chowning's *Stria*, *Turenas*, and the beautiful sonic landscape Chowning explored through his research and discovery of FM synthesis. *Ring, Resonate, Resound* is dedicated to him. The composition explores timbre through dozens of bell sounds, which provide the harmonic and timbral material, structure, foreground, and background for the piece. The composition is comprised of five sections, each examining a different set of bells and materials with which they interact. The piece begins thin and bright, then gradually increases in spectral and textural density until the listener is enveloped by a thick sound mass of ringing bells. The bells gently fade into waves of rich harmonic resonances. The piece was composed using a multidimensional timbre model Reid developed while at Stanford University. The model is based on perceptual timbre studies and has been used by the composer to explore the compositional applications of "timbre spaces" and the relationship between reverberant space and timbre, or rather the concept of "timbre in space."

LEAH REID writes vibrant compositions that examine the innermost nature of sounds. Her work is noted for its exploration of time, timbre, and texture. Reid holds a D.M.A. and M.A. in composition from Stanford University and a B.Mus from McGill University. She has won numerous awards, including the International Alliance for Women in Music's Pauline Oliveros Prize for her piece *Pressure*, and the Film Score Award in Frame Dance Productions' Music Composition Competition. Reid's work is frequently performed throughout Europe and North America, with notable premieres by the Jack Quartet, Sound Gear, Talea, Yarn/Wire, and McGill's Contemporary Music Ensemble. Her works have been presented at festivals and conferences including the International Computer Music Conference, Acousmatic Transcendence: A Feast of Diffusion, Forgotten Spaces: EuroMicrofest, and EviMus among others. Her principal teachers include Mark Applebaum, Jonathan Berger, Brian Ferneyhough, and Sean Ferguson. Reid's music is available through Ablaze Records.

TOM BICKLEY

Middle Armand Bayou (2010 :: 2:17 :: stereo)

I. *walkingchirpsbirdfrogsfrogs1* (0:59)

II. *19secFrogs* (0:19)

III. *MiddleArmandBayou* (0:59)

In *Middle Armand Bayou* I employ digital *musique concrète* techniques to connect the Gulf Coast soundscape I knew as a child with sounds I encountered via shortwave radio and in the works of Karlheinz Stockhausen. Both of those soundworlds continue to influence my life as a musician. Armand Bayou Nature Center in Pasadena, TX (near Houston) provides a fantastic natural sonic environment. On 23 December 2009 I recorded frogs, insects, birds, water, wind, and my own footsteps along the Karankawa Trail. Middle Bayou was renamed Armand Bayou in 1970 in honor of environmentalist Armand Yramategui.

TOM BICKLEY composes electro-acoustic music, plays and teaches recorder, performs with *Gusty Winds May Exist* (with shakuhachi player Nancy Beckman), *Dream Down Duvet* (with Nancy Beckman and vocalist Viv Corringham) and *Three Trapped Tigers* (with recorder player David Barnett), co-founded and directs the Cornelius Cardew Choir, and is on the Library Faculty (music, philosophy, & political science) at CSU East Bay, and the music faculty of the Bay Area Center for Waldorf Teacher Training. His education includes degrees in music, theology, and library and information science and the Certificate in Deep Listening. He lives with his spouse Nancy Beckman and cat 虎 (Tora) in Berkeley.

TETSU INOUE and CARL STONE

@.fine (2001 :: 5:22 :: stereo)

@.fine is a track from Innoe's and Stone's CD *pict.soul* (c74) documenting the first meeting between two giants in the experimental, ambient, and post-ambient world. With a variety of approaches and ways of organizing sound that intermingle in ways guaranteed to vex and delight the serious trainspotter, the collaboration ventures to places where the individual artists might not visit in their solo work.

TETSU INOUE is a producer of electronic music. His style could be described as ambient with a heavy minimalist influence. He has lived in Japan, San Francisco, and New York, and has collaborated with musicians such as Pete Namlook, Bill Laswell, Andrew Deutsch, Jonah Sharp, Taylor Deupree, and Uwe Schmidt. His debut solo album, *Ambiant Otaku*, is regarded by some as a classic of minimalist ambient techno. The album was initially released in a limited edition of 1,000 copies on Pete Namlook's Fax label.

CARL STONE is one of the pioneers of live computer music, and has been hailed by the Village Voice as "the king of sampling," and "one of the best composers living in (the USA) today." He has used computers in live performance since 1986. Stone was born in Los Angeles, was a long-time resident of San Francisco. He now lives in Japan. He studied composition at the California Institute of the Arts with Morton Subotnick and James Tenney and has composed electro-acoustic music almost exclusively since 1972. His works have been performed in the U.S., Canada, Europe, Asia, Australia, South America and the Near East. In addition to his schedule of performance, composition and touring, he is on the faculty of the Department of Media Engineering at Chukyo University in Japan. A winner of numerous awards for his compositions, including the Freeman Award for the work Hop Ken, Carl Stone is also the recipient of grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Rockefeller Foundation and the Foundation for Performance Arts. Recordings of Carl Stone's music has been released on New Albion, CBS Sony, Toshiba-EMI, EAM Discs, Wizard Records, Trigram, t:me recordings, New Tone labels and various other labels. Carl Stone served as President of the American Music Center from 1992-95. He was the Director of Meet the Composer/California from 1981-1997, and Music Director of KPFC-fm in Los Angeles from 1978-1981. Other activities have included serving as a regular columnist for Sound & Recording Magazine in Japan, serving as web editor for Other Minds, and for the official web site of the John Cage Trust.

CLIFF CARUTHERS

Chorale for Ola and Tomek (2016 :: 12:00 :: stereo)

We began to sing. Time slowed. There were many faces. Then none. We are transported.

"The song becomes the meaning itself through the vibratory qualities. When we begin to catch the vibratory qualities...the song begins to sing us...I don't know anymore if I am finding that song or if I am that song." – Jerzy Grotowski

CLIFF CARUTHERS continues to search for direct and tangible relationships to complex technologies, creating narrative soundscapes and psychologically charged atmospheres from recordings of real and imagined environs. His work has been featured at the Society for Electroacoustic Music in the United States (SEAMUS), the San Francisco Electronic Music Festival, The San Francisco Tape Music Festival, Deep Wireless 2006, Noise Pancakes, Quiet American's Field Effects series, and the Prague Quadrennial 2007. A California resident since 2000, Mr. Caruthers has established himself as a preeminent sound designer in the Bay Area, working with Berkeley Repertory Theater, American Conservatory Theater, California Shakespeare Theater, Cutting Ball Theater (associate artist), The Acting Company, Guthrie Theater, Aurora Theatre Company, Crowded Fire, San Jose Stage Company, Marin Theatre Company, and TheatreWorks. He joined the San Francisco Tape Music Collective in 2002.

BEBE BARRON

Mixed Emotions (2000 :: 6:02 :: stereo)

In the Summer of 2000, Bebe was invited to be composer-in-residence at the University of California, Santa Barbara for 2 weeks, collecting sounds at their CREATE studio with the help of assistants. Luckily, by that time, technology had advanced to allow computers to mimic the analog sounds she had always loved. The following October, she brought these sounds on CD as AIFF files to my studio in Santa Monica, and I imported them into Digital Performer on the Mac. Over the next six weeks, she created her last work. As recording engineer and studio assistant, I felt privileged to have facilitated the composition of her final piece, *Mixed Emotions*. Almost 50 years after *Forbidden Planet*, though created by very different means, *Mixed Emotions* bears Bebe's personal stamp. – Jane Brockman

RODNEY WASCHKA II

MAYDAY: Requiem for Those Lost at Sea (2015 :: 9:00 :: stereo)

MAYDAY: Requiem for Those Lost at Sea attempts to give voice to those missing beneath the tides and to create a remembrance of the deceased. Recordings of thunder, rain, gale-force winds, and the composer's voice saying the word "MAYDAY" were manipulated to create crashing, knocking, and metallic-scraping sounds, as well as an electronic chorus of both perpetual unease and infinite calm emanating from under the waves. The work received its world premiere at a concert of the Bristol University Loudspeaker Orchestra in Bristol, England.

RODNEY WASCHKA II is a composer best known for his unusual operas and works utilizing algorithmic compositional techniques. Waschka works have been performed throughout the world and recorded by labels in the UK, the USA, Canada, Portugal, and Australia. Waschka's teachers include Larry Austin, Robert Ashley, Clarence Barlow, Paul Berg, Thomas Clark, Charles Dodge, George Lewis, and Joel Ryan. He received his doctorate from the University of North Texas and also studied at the Institute of Sonology at the Royal Conservatory of The Netherlands, and Brooklyn College. He is Director and Professor of Arts Studies at North Carolina State University where he directs the Arts NOW Series of performances, including the North Carolina Computer Music Festival.

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