

Music by George Frideric Handel

Conductor José Luis Domínguez Mondragon

> Scenic Design Stephen Wiseley

Costume Design Rebecca Kanach

Lighting Design M Connors

Stage Director Ben Robinson

Concept and Design Brandon McShaffrey

> Fight Director Ian Rose

Choreographer DC Passman

Producer Rose Freeman

Friday, April 5, 2024 • 7:30 PM Sunday, April 7, 2024 • 3:00 PM Tuesday, April 9, 2024 • 7:30 PM

Tomlinson Theater | 1301 W. Norris St. | Philadelphia, PA 19122

Ariodante by George Frideric Handel presented under license from Bärenreiter Kassel

Run time: approx. 2 hours, including a 15 minute intermission

This production is sponsored in part by The Temple University General Activities Fund.

Two hundred seventy-eighth, two hundred eighty-sixth, and two hundred ninety-eighth performances of the 2023-2024 season.

Cast

(in order of vocal appearance)

Ginevra	Katrina Dignum	
Dalinda	Marlena St. Jean	
Polinesso	Andreia Lucaciu	
AriodanteMc	Kenna Brunson	
Re	Timothy Hurtt	
Odoardo	Roberto Guevara	
Lurcanio	Nickolas James	
Covers		
Ginevrak	Kaitlyn Gaughan	
Dalinda	Roslyn Rich	
Polinesso	Ali Crosley	
Odoardo	Connor Husa	
Lurcanio	Weizhong Ding	

Ensemble

Benjamin Chen, Ali Crosley, Faith Crossan, Weizhong Ding, Connor Husa, Roslyn Rich, Sadie Roser, Elizabeth Stump

Dancers

Hannah Nguyen, Kasey Lazan, Alexandria Orr, Emily Walters, Yana Vilchynskyaya

Music Staff

Christopher Turbessi, Principal Coach Alexander Nguyễn, Assistant Conductor/Chorus Master Sirapat Jittapirom, Assistant Coach

Orchestra

VIOLIN I

Yuan Tian, Concertmaster Zhanara Makhmutova Ruslan Dashdamirov Alexander Covelli

VIOLIN II

Xi Wang, Principal Kyle Stevens Eunice China

VIOLA

Shannon Merlino, Principal Jasmine Harris AJ Stacy

CELLO

Mima Majstorovic, Principal Chloe Kranz

DOUBLE BASS

Hans Hibbard

HARPSICHORD (tutti)

Hanbyeol Lee

CONTINUO

Leigh Brown, cello Christopher Turbessi, harpsichord

OBOE/ENGLISH HORN

Ellie Rasmussen, Principal Sarah Walsh

BASSOON

Joshua Schairer

HORN

Jonathan Bywater, Principal Ethan Stanfield

TRUMPET

Trey Serrano, Principal Jacob Flaschen

Land Acknowledgement

"The land upon which we gather is part of the traditional territory of the Lenni-Lenape, called "Lenapehoking." The Lenape People lived in harmony with one another upon this territory for thousands of years. During the colonial era and early federal period, many were removed west and north, but some also remain among the continuing historical tribal communities of the region. We acknowledge the Lenni-Lenape as the original people of this land and their continuing relationship with their territory. In our acknowledgment of the continued presence of Lenape people in their homeland, we affirm the aspiration of the great Lenape Chief Tamanend, that there be harmony between the indigenous people of this land and the descendants of the immigrants to this land, "as long as the rivers and creeks flow, and the sun, moon, and stars shine."

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Synopsis

Act I

Princess Ginevra is professing her love for Prince Ariodante to her attendant Dalinda - a love that the king, her father approves. As Ginevra confides in Dalinda, Polinesso, Duke of Albany, who covets the throne bursts into the room and makes advances at her that she forcefully rejects. Dalinda tells Polinesso that Ginevra is already committed and tells him that she loves him. Polinesso then uses Dalinda's weakness for him to get revenge on Ginevra and gain his ends. Meanwhile, Ginevra and Ariodante exchange their vows after a blessing from the King, who intends to make Ariodante his successor.

Polinesso persuades Dalinda to dress up as Ginevra and let him into the royal apartments that night: he promises her that if she does, he will marry her; an excited Dalinda agrees. Then Ariodante's brother appears and declares his love for her, she quickly evades him.

Ariodante and Ginevra express their happiness and call upon the nymphs and shepherds to celebrate their joy in dance and song.

Act II

Later that night, Ariodante is walking through the royal gardens when he encounters Polinesso, who covets Princess Ginevra and claims to be enjoying Ginevra's favors. When Ariodante reaches for his sword at Polinesso's disrespect, Polinesso promises to prove his claim and tells Ariodante to hide and watch with his own two eyes. Lurcanio is shocked to see his brother speaking to the disliked Polinesso. Polinesso knocks on a door and Dalinda disguised as Ginevra admits him and closes the door. Ariodante is horrified by this betrayal is about to kill himself by falling on his sword when Lurcanio stops him. Ariodante leaves in despair.

Act III

The next morning, the King is in council about to declare Ariodante his heir, when Odoardo brings a report that the prince has thrown himself into the sea and drowned. Ariodante has survived but is in torment. He meets Dalinda, who now understands Polinesso's trickery and explains all to Ariodante. Polinesso challenges Lurcanio's story. They will duel, with Polinesso as Ginevra's champion. She resists this but the King insists, despite Ginevra's protests. During the duel, Lurcanio fatally injures Polinesso. A new challenger appears who reveals himself to be Ariodante. He promises to explain everything, as long as Dalinda is forgiven her innocent part in Polinesso's deception. Polinesso dies, having confessed everything, and Dalinda is forgiven. The King and community proclaim the triumph of love and innocence; however, in this production, Ginevra cannot forgive her father for denouncing her, nor recover from Ariodante's mistrust. She leaves to begin a new life on her own.

Director's Note

Ariodante is one of the finest examples of Baroque operatic drama, with its taut libretto, well-etched characters, and sumptuous score. In preparing for this project, my thoughts always seem to center on the word, "round." The ternary forms of the arias, which typically see the return of the primary "A" theme, show the characters bandying contrasting thoughts before coming full circle to arrive at an altered conclusion. The opera also ends much as it begins, with happiness. As such, the complicating dramatic structures of this opera must be circled so that the characters can return to their sense of joy and comfort. The round gestures of Handel's glowing music offer simmering perspectives on the dramatic balance of the plot: people rise to grace, then fall; then they must use the pursuit of the truth to become whole again.

What I find truly find remarkable about the opera is how relevant its themes are to an audience watching in 2024. There is a villain who is using deceit and disinformation in a quest for power. Women are cast aside or judged for their interactions with men, but the men are not held to the same level of accountability. The use of violence is questioned, but there is a bloodlust that influences the way certain characters think. In the face of all this, Handel and the story's likely creator, Antonio Salvi, have a progressive and forward-thinking agenda incorporated: the villain is defeated by truth; women get to speak and their voices of truth matter. Violence is a part of life, but discourse and peace prevail. Handel's gift for capturing this drama crystallizes his influence over two centuries of opera that follow in its wake.

Ben Robinson Stage Director

Musicologist Note

"Of ladies, knights, of passions and of wars, of courtliness, and of valiant deeds I sing." So opens Ludovico Ariosto's *Orlando furioso*, an epic Italian poem that follows a knight of Charlemagne and the many people he meets in his adventures. In the centuries after the poem's publication in 1532, *Orlando* proved an inspiration to numerous librettists and composers. The scope of the overall story, which as well as the knights and romance also includes a ride on a hippogriff and a brief trip to the Moon, defied adaptation. But the opera's colorful adventures were easily excerpted into dozens of operas with some recurring characters and elements, what might today be termed the Orlando Expanded Universe (the episode that provided the basis for tonight's opera also inspired part of Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*).

George Frideric Handel alone composed three Orlando operas, all dating from the 1730s. Since 1710, Handel had lived and worked in London, where he composed for aristocratic patrons, royal events, and various opera companies. His operas, which were performed in Italian for a London audience, were the height of fashion. Audience members did not always understand every twist in the Italian-language librettos, but they relished star turns by celebrity singers, emotionally intense and virtuosic music, and opulent costumes.

Unlike most Orlando operas, Ariodante is a drama on a human scale, without supernatural elements and with the unusual setting of Scotland (distant for Ariosto but not so much for London). It is, according to Handel scholar Winton Dean, one of Handel's most immediately accessible operas. Based on an episode in Canto V, narrated by lady-in-waiting Dalinda to Orlando, it features only one main plot thread and psychologically complex characters.

Ariodante also began a new phase in Handel's career: He was beginning an engagement at the Covent Garden Theatre (which would, several buildings later, become today's Royal Opera House), which also explains one of its more unusual features. While the rival Opera of the Nobility had hired Farinelli, the most popular singer of the day, Handel's company managed to nab Marie Sallé and her French dance company, and Ariodante thus features an unusual wealth of French-style dance music, including a dream ballet.

In lieu of Farinelli, Handel's company hired a newer singer, Giovanni Carestini, to sing the title role. Farinelli and Carestini were both castrati, Italian singers who had been castrated at an early age, meaning their voices remained in a high register but in time acquired the volume and power of an adult man. Castrati were celebrities—seen as extraordinary talents with more than a touch of the freak—and they were conventionally assigned the most heroic roles in operas, marked as special by their singular vocal abilities. (Today these roles are sung by mezzo-sopranos or by countertenors.)

Ariodante gave Carestini ample opportunities to display both his lyrical singing (in the haunting, tormented Act 2 aria "Scherza infida," where the voice is echoed by a

bassoon) and his virtuosity (in the joyful "Dopo notte," in Act 3). In comparison, Ginevra's music introduces her as innocent and emotional, though she gains stature as she becomes more haunted in the later acts. In the role of Polinesso, Handel created one of his slyest villains. Unlike Ariodante, Polinesso was written to be sung by a woman (a so-called pants role), and his music is aggressive and tense. Handel's aria-heavy style of opera, fortunately, gives the whole cast big moments, like Lurcanio's impetuous energy and the King's calm gravity.

Ariodante, it must be said, was not a hit at first. Queen Caroline wrote to her daughter that "Handel has not met with his usual approval," due to his opera's "pathetic and lugubrious" qualities. But today, the opera's melancholy and dramatic intensity have made it one of Handel's most popular, and today's audiences seem to agree with Handel's contemporary Charles Burney that it "abounds with beauties and strokes of a great master."

Dr. Micaela Baranello

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Mitten Hall, 3rd Floor Auditorium 1913 N Broad Street Philadelphia, PA 19122

For further information or to confirm events, please call 215.204.7609 or visit boyer.temple.edu.

Biographies

José Luis Domínguez Mondragon is a prominent talent on international orchestral and operatic stages. His conducting is described as "unrivaled, magnificent and with exemplary gesturing" (*El Mercurio*), and he frequents prominent stages across the globe.

He currently serves as Music Director of the Bucks County Symphony Orchestra, and was newly appointed Associate Professor of Orchestral Studies/ Director of Orchestras at Temple University, where he is Music Director of the Temple University Symphony Orchestra and Professor of Conducting. He is a regular guest conductor with the Opéra Saint-Étienne and is artistic director of the Musical Encounters International Music Festival in La Serena, Chile.

Domínguez was Artistic Director of the New Jersey Symphony Youth Orchestras from 2017-2023, where he served as a frequent guest conductor of the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra and is currently an advisor to the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra Youth Orchestras for the 2023-2024 season. He was Resident Director of the Santiago Philharmonic Orchestra, Chile (Orquesta Filarmónica de Santiago, Chile), at the Municipal de Santiago-Ópera Nacional de Chile from 2003-2016 and was Artistic Director/Principal Conductor, of the Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional Juvenil (National Youth Symphony Orchestra of Chile) from 2004-2016.

Recent commissions as a composer include the new ballet titled *La Casa de Los Espíritus* (*The House of Spirits*), based on the bestselling novel by Isabel Allende. Its premiere in September 2019 at the Municipal de Santiago-Ópera Nacional de Chile with the Ballet de Santiago and the Orquesta Filarmónica de Santiago (which Domínguez also conducted) was hailed as an "absolute triumph." In addition, Jason DePue, violinist of The Philadelphia Orchestra, commissioned Domínguez to write a piece for violin and piano titled Aitona that was included in DePue's 2021 debut solo album. His Concerto for Oboe premiered in early 2020 with oboist Jorge Pinzón and the Orquesta Filarmónica de Bogotá (Bogotá Philharmonic Orchestra), Colombia to critical acclaim.

The Library of Congress selected Domínguez's *Gratias Tibi* for physically distanced orchestra and choir, a New Jersey Symphony commission, for inclusion in its collection of works created in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Upcoming commissions include a mass, a violin concerto, a viola concerto, a cello concerto and a mass.

Future conducting engagements include the Orquesta Filarmónica de Buenos Aires (Buenos Aires Philharmonic Orchestra), the Orquesta Sinfónica de Chile (Symphony Orchestra of Chile), the Orquesta Sinfónica Universidad de La Serena (University of La Serena Symphony Orchestra), the Orquesta de Cámera de Chile (Chamber Orchesta of Chile) and the world-renowned Semanas Musicales de Frutillar (Frutillar Musical Weeks) held in Frutillar, Chile at Teatro del Lago.

Recent appearances have included the Houston Symphony, New Jersey Symphony Orchestra, Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de Colombia (National Symphony Orchestra of Colombia), Orquesta Filarmónica de Santiago (Philharmonic Orchestra of Santiago), Opéra Saint-Étienne, Orquesta Sinfónica Nacional de Peru (Lima University Symphony Orchestra in Peru), Staatsoper Orchester de Braunschweig in Germany, Orquesta Sinfónica UNCuyo (UNCuyo Symphony Orchestra) in Mendoza, Argentina and the Orquesta Sinfónica del Principado de Asturias (Symphony Orchestra of the Principality of Asturias) in Spain.

Domínguez recently released critically acclaimed Naxos recordings of his own ballet, *The Legend of Joaquín Murieta*, and the music of Enrique Soro with the Orquesta Sinfónica de Chile. He has collaborated most notably with Renée Fleming, Terell Stafford, Andrés Diaz, Ray Chen, Sergio Tiempo, Ai Nihira, Verónica Villarroel, Luciana D'Intino, Woo-Yun Kim and Daniel Binelli.

Ben Robinson is the General Director of Anchorage Opera, the Artistic Director of Opera Ithaca (New York) and Raylynmor Opera (New Hampshire), as well as the Managing Director of Lyric Fest (Philadelphia). He works as a director, librettist, educator, and arts administrator. As a stage and film director, he has mounted numerous productions, highlighted by new productions for which he also wrote new English libretti: Madame Butterfly, Macbeth, Hansel and Gretel, The Barber of Seville, The Impresario, Die Fledermaus and Pauline Viardot's Cendrillon. Ben's film production of Bastien and Bastienne, with his original English libretto setting the action in the social media-obsessed present, was released in March 2021 and subsequently streamed at the Arlington International Film Festival. He directed and edited a film release of Pagliacci for Raylynmor Opera in October 2020 and directed Gianni Schicchi for Opera Ithaca, which Opera Magazine heralded as the "deftest use... of Covid-era technology as part of modern operatic reality." He was announced as a 2021 recipient of the Ewing Arts Award, which celebrates the diversity and excellence of artists in the Monadnock region of New Hampshire.

In February 2023, his 2022 "moving, visually daring" (Opera News) Julia Child-inspired *Hansel and Gretel* film joined the Opera Philadelphia Channel and was subsequently streamed at a series of outdoor events for the company in September 2023.

Directing highlights include *Nabucco* for the inaugural Opera Ithaca Festival, *The Impresario* and *The Pirates of Penzance* for Ithaca College, a soap-opera-inspired conceptual production of *Così fan tutte* for Cedar Rapids Opera, *Hänsel und Gretel* for Temple University, *Orpheus in the Underworld* for Opera Ithaca and Raylynmor Opera, a cruise ship setting of *L'Italiana in Algeri* for St. Petersburg Opera, a suburban American *Le nozze di Figaro* (Opera Ithaca/Raylynmor Opera), a reimagined doubleblind production of *The Medium* (Amarillo Opera), a fashion-world inspired *La Cenerentola* (Raylynmor Opera), a new chamber production of *Suor Angelica* (West Texas A&M University), and the world premiere of Sally Lamb McCune's *We Wear the Sea Like a Coat* (Opera Ithaca/Ithaca College).

Projects for the 2023-2024 season include directing Scalia/Ginsburg and Rusalka for Opera Ithaca, The Elixir of Love for Anchorage Opera and Annapolis Opera, L'enfant et les sortilèges for Salt Marsh Opera, and Les mamelles de Tirésias for the inaugural Alaska Artist Development Program.

Christopher Turbessi (principal coach) is the Opera Coach at the Boyer College of Music and Dance at Temple University; he has also been on the faculty of the Collaborative Piano Institute since its inaugural summer in 2017. He irregularly materializes on the music staff of the Wolf Trap Opera Company, most recently as principal coach and continuo for their 2023 production of *Don Giovanni*; he will return in the summer of 2024 for La bohème. Planned recital appearances for 2024 include concerts with baritone Reginald Smith, Jr. at Temple University and soprano Amy Petrongelli at CPI.

Past adventures have included a Lecturer appointment at the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University; a summer 2022 recital with baritone Reginald Smith Jr. as part of the San Diego Opera Gala; stints as Music Staff at Utah Opera, Opera Santa Barbara, and the Castleton Festival; Music Director for productions with the Santa Fe Opera Tour and the Opera Institute at Augusta University; Assistant Conductor at Virginia Opera; and Chorus Master at Virginia Opera and Syracuse Opera. Previously an Assistant Conductor and the Musical Supervisor of HGOco at Houston Grand Opera, he oversaw the musical efforts of that department, including the workshops and world premiere performances of Carlisle Floyd's *Prince of Players*, Gregory Spears' O *Columbia*, and David Hanlon's *After the Storm*. He is a graduate of the Houston Grand Opera Studio, as well as young artist programs at Virginia Opera, the Aspen Opera Theater Center, and Syracuse Opera. He holds a master of music degree in collaborative piano from the University of Michigan, where he studied with Martin Katz.

Brandon McShaffrey (Concept and Design) has been teaching at Temple University since 2009 where he is currently the Head of Opera Production at Temple University. With TU Opera Theater he has directed Dark Sisters (Muhly), Le nozze di Figaro (Mozart), Turn of the Screw (Britten), L'elisir d'amore (Donizetti), Il Ritorno d'ulisse in patria (Monteverdi), Der schauspieldirektor (Mozart), La Canterina (Hadyn), Trouble in Tahiti (Bernstein), Dido and Aeneas (Purcell), The Merry Widow (Lehar), and Hansel und Gretel (Humperdink) and has directed and choreographed many plays and musicals in the theater department. He runs both graduate and Undergraduate Opera workshops and produces the annual Aria/Scenes programs. Professionally he has directed over 20 productions at Maples Repertory Theater. He is an active member and on the board of directors of the National Opera Association and is a founding member and Producing Director of Mauckingbird Theater Company.

Rose Freeman (Producer) is an award winning stage director, teacher, writer, and producer of theatre and opera. Operatic stage direction credits include Chicago Lyric Opera, City Lyric Opera, Pittsburgh Festival Opera, Opera Mississippi, GulfShore Opera, and Third Eye theatre ensemble, of which zie is a founding member. Zie once

managed monster truck rallies and ran a sailboat company (not at the same time). Freeman wrote the musical, *Chance the Snapper* with Spicer Carr at Temple University. Freeman occasionally acts, including touring with Tetro di Viti. Freeman has spoken on the panels for National Opera Association, Chicago Theatre Symposium, and Opera America. Freeman is a recipient of the National Opera Association's 2020 JoElyn Wakefield-Wright Stage Director Fellowship, Philadelphia's 2022 Illuminate the Arts Grant, and served as a Directing Fellow for Wolf Trap Opera's 2020, 2021, and 2022 season as well as a Lead Artist at Mercury Store. Freeman is represented by Marvel Arts Management. www.rosefreeman.org

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Department of Theater Graduate Assistants

Additional Staff for this Production

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	Ben Robinson
	Sarah Petko
Producer	Rose Freeman
	McKenna Brunson
	DC Passman
	Stephen Wiseley
_	Rebecca Kanach
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Asst. Props Master	Marielle Zakrzwki
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	Sirapat Jittapirom, Alexander Nguyễn
= = =	Ian Rose
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	Andy Frank
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	Ariana Kudner, Cotton Potter,
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	John Troy, Juliet Leos
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W. 1 1 C .	Teppei Tsubouchi, Ryan Amsden
	Becky Wetzel
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D	
	Dalana Arnwine, Caroline Heins, Ophelia Gilman
	Jack Habicht, Noah Sickman
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Hair and Makeup Crew	Lizzy Fryer, Cody Kanode
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Boyer College of Music and Dance

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Temple University

Temple University's history begins in 1884, when a young working man asked Russell Conwell if he could tutor him at night. It wasn't long before he was teaching several dozen students—working people who could only attend class at night but had a strong desire to make something of themselves. Conwell recruited volunteer faculty to participate in the burgeoning night school, and in 1888 he received a charter of incorporation for "The Temple College." His founding vision for the school was to provide superior educational opportunities for academically talented and highly motivated students, regardless of their backgrounds or means. The fledgling college continued to grow, adding programs and students throughout the following decades. Today, Temple's more than 35,000 students continue to follow the university's official motto—Perseverantia Vincit, or "Perseverance Conquers"—with their supreme dedication to excellence in academics, research, athletics, the arts and more.

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Temple University Opera Theater Past Productions

Fall 2023	Lucretia	Benjamin Britten
Spring 2023	Hänsel und Gretel	Engelbert Humperdinck
Fall 2022	Dark Sisters	Nico Muhly
Spring 2022	Le nozze di Figaro	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Fall 2021	Impressions de Pelléas	Claude Debussy / Marius Constant
Spring 2021	Die Fledermaus (Virtual)	Johann Strauss
Fall 2020	The Turn of the Screw (Virtual)	Benjamin Britten
Fall 2019	L'elisir d'amore	Gaetano Donizetti
Spring 2019	Il ritorno d'Ulisse in patria	Claudio Monteverdi
Fall 2018	Le Pauvre Matelot	Darius Milhaud
	Suor Angelica	Giacomo Puccini
Spring 2018	Così fan tutte	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Fall 2017	Dido and Aeneas	Henry Purcell
	Trouble in Tahiti	Leonard Bernstein
Spring 2017	Werther	Jules Massenet
Fall 2016	Der Schauspieldirekter	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
	La Canterina	Joseph Haydn
Spring 2016	Lucio Silla	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Fall 2015	The Merry Widow	Franz Lehár
Spring 2015	La Finta Giardiniera	Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
Fall 2014	Hänsel und Gretel	Engelbert Humperdinck
Spring 2014	Ofreo ed Euridice	Christoph Willibald Gluck
Fall 2013	Albert Herring	Benjamin Britten
Spring 2013	Gianni Schicchi	Giacomo Puccini
	Suor Angelica	Giacomo Puccini

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