

A group of young musicians, primarily of Asian descent, are shown in a concert hall, playing cellos and violas. They are dressed in black formal attire. The lighting is warm and focused on the performers. The background is dark, emphasizing the musicians and their instruments.

N|E|C

New England
Conservatory

Concert Program

necmusic.edu

NEC Chamber Orchestra

Donald Palma, artistic director

Wednesday, October 8, 2025
7:30 p.m.
NEC's Jordan Hall

PROGRAM

Richard Strauss
(1864–1949)

Sextet for Strings from *Capriccio*, op. 85

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart
(1756–1791)

Serenade No. 6 in D Major, K. 239

“Serenata notturna”

Marcia maestoso

Menuetto

Rondo: Allegretto – Adagio – Allegro

Intermission

Mieczysław Weinberg
(1919–1996)

Symphony No. 7, op. 81

Adagio sostenuto

Allegro – Adagio sostenuto

Andante

Adagio sostenuto

Allegro – Adagio sostenuto

The NEC Chamber Orchestra was created to provide the students with an opportunity to apply the principals of chamber music in a small orchestral setting. The participants are chosen by audition at the beginning of the academic year and remain together throughout. As the ensemble rehearses and performs without a conductor, leadership responsibilities are rotated for every work performed. This affords the students an opportunity to develop communication skills, take responsibility for musical decisions and broaden their aural and score reading capabilities. Participation in the program also allows them to explore a wide range of the incredibly rich chamber orchestra literature.

NEC Chamber Orchestra
Donald Palma, artistic director

Violin

Maxwell Fairman **
Carson Howell ‡
Miles Huang §§
Jeremiah Jung
Yeongeun Kim ‡‡
Alice Lee
Hyunji Lee *
Minji Lee
Angeline Wang §

Viola

Chao An Hsu *
Peter Jablokow ‡
Yeh-Chun Lin §
William Sotiriou

Cello
Hun Choi *
Jae Eun Kim ‡
Ingrid Tverberg §

Double Bass

Dennis McIntyre

Timpani

Christian
Bartholomew

Harpsichord

Andrew Li

Principal players

* Strauss

‡ Mozart

§ Weinberg

Double symbol for
principal 2nd violin

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Program notes

Strauss *Sextet for Strings* from *Capriccio*

Capriccio was Richard Strauss' last operatic venture, and, like the valedictory works of other great composers – Haydn's oratorios, Verdi's *Falstaff*, Elgar's Cello Concerto – it not only summarizes a lifetime of stylistic achievement but also addresses concerns that the accumulation of years could not dim. For Strauss in this masterful opera, those concerns were two: one was the cataloguing of his greatest musical loves; the other was a consideration of the essential dilemma of all vocal music – the relative importance of words and music. To demonstrate the music that he held in the highest regard, Strauss quoted in the score snippets from the works of Mozart, Wagner, Gluck, and Verdi, and he even included fragments from some of his own compositions. (One of the joys of this opera for the knowledgeable listener is the identification of the many musical allusions.) Regarding the words/music controversy, which is the true subject of the opera, Strauss wrote, "The battle between words and music has been the problem of my life from the beginning, and I leave it with *Capriccio* as a question mark."

The lovely string Sextet that serves as the introduction to *Capriccio* was first heard six months before the work's official premiere. In 1942, Strauss and his wife moved to Vienna from their Bavarian home in Garmisch-Partenkirchen. Their refusal to hide their disgust with the Nazi leadership had made their position in Garmisch difficult when their Jewish daughter-in-law and her children were threatened with ostracism. The governor of Vienna, Baldur von Schirach, assured Strauss that he would shelter the family if they would make no further public anti-Nazi remarks. In appreciation, Strauss allowed the Sextet to be performed privately at Schirach's house on May 7, 1942. Despite this particular kindness, Schirach was sentenced to twenty years imprisonment for war crimes by the Nuremberg Trials in 1946.

The Sextet brings Strauss' opulent harmonic palette and rich instrumental textures to his stylized recreation of elegant Rococo chamber music. Though originally scored for six solo strings, the movement is usually played in concert in an arrangement for string orchestra. In the opera, the music begins before the stage is revealed. As it continues, the curtain rises to show the characters listening to the music played by an off-stage ensemble as the musician Flamand's birthday offering to the Countess. The words of Michael Kennedy about the complete opera apply equally well to this beautiful Sextet: "*Capriccio* is Strauss' most enchanting opera. It is also the nearest he came to unflawed perfection in a work of art. It is an anthology or synthesis of all that he did best, and it is as if he put his creative process into a crucible, refining away coarseness, bombast and excess of vitality."

Mozart *Serenade No. 6 in D Major, K. 239* "*Serenata notturna*"

Mozart wrote about 24 compositions titled "Divertimento" or "Serenade" for special occasions. Famous serenades by Mozart include the "Haffner" Serenade (which Mozart later worked into the "Haffner" Symphony, no. 35), the *Serenata notturna*, and one of his more well-known works, *Eine kleine Nachtmusik*, which was written a little

over a decade later.

The occasion or patron for which the *Serenata notturna* was composed, in Salzburg in January 1776, is unknown. The *Serenata notturna* consists of three movements: a light-footed march, a country-dance minuet, and a spirited rondo which seems to capture two rustic Salzburg melodies.

Weinberg Symphony No. 7, op. 81

Mieczław (Moisey) Weinberg was a child of the Warsaw Ghetto. At the age of 12, he entered the Warsaw Conservatory, where he studied piano and began composing. With the Nazi invasion of Poland in 1939, Weinberg fled (on foot) to Minsk. He was to lose both parents and a sister in the Holocaust. In Minsk he studied composition for two years before relocating in Tashkent. There he married the daughter of the legendary Jewish actor and director Solomon Mikhoels. In Tashkent he also met Shostakovich, with whom he formed a close lifelong friendship. Weinberg wrote, "It was as if I had been born anew....Although I took no lessons from him, Dimitri Shostakovich was the first person to whom I would show each of my new works." After the war, Weinberg and Shostakovich moved to Moscow, where they became next-door neighbors. In 1948, Weinberg's father-in-law, Mikhoels, was notoriously murdered by Stalin's operatives and Weinberg was black-listed by Stalin's regime. He was arrested in 1953 and his execution was delayed through the intervention of Shostakovich. Stalin died a month later and Weinberg was eventually released after 11 weeks in prison.

Weinberg was extremely prolific with over 150 opus numbers, including 25 symphonies, seven operas, and a vast amount of chamber music. About his musical style, one biographer wrote:

"Weinberg's compositional style is influenced by Shostakovich, Prokofiev, Myaskovsky, Bartók and Mahler; his works are often based on a program, largely autobiographical in nature and they reflect on the fate of the composer and of humanity in general. His compositions are programmatic in nature with an occasional use of Slavic and Jewish materials. His music has an absolute, even abstract, quality, where similar themes assume a variety of characterizations in given environments."

According to *Boston Globe* writer Jeremy Eichler's eloquent 2014 article on Weinberg, "the composer never saw himself as a victim, though along the way Weinberg did come to feel that it was, in his own words, "impossible to repay the debt" he had incurred through the simple fact of his own survival. He seemed to compose music almost penitentially—he once called it "creative hard labor"—to atone, to memorialize, to find sense in a world where there was none to be found."

The Seventh Symphony was composed in 1964 for the great Russian violist and conductor Rudolf Barshai and the Moscow Chamber Orchestra.

Donald Palma

Artistic Director

Donald Palma has an active career as double bassist, conductor, and educator. A native New Yorker, Don attended at the Juilliard School and at the age of nineteen joined Leopold Stokowski's American Symphony Orchestra. As a member of the newly formed contemporary music ensemble, Speculum Musicae, he went on to win the Naumburg Competition and secure management with Young Concert Artists. A founding member of the Orpheus Chamber Orchestra, Don has toured the globe and recorded over fifty compact discs for Deutsche Grammophone, including the Grammy Award winning Stravinsky CD, *Shadow Dances*. Don has also been a member of the Los Angeles Philharmonic and played Principal Bass in the National Arts Centre Orchestra under Trevor Pinnock. He played principal bass for Leonard Bernstein on his recording of *West Side Story* and was a featured artist on Kathleen Battle's recording, *Grace*. As a performer devoted to contemporary music, he has played and conducted dozens of premieres and recordings of important works. Elliott Carter's *Figment III*, Mario Davidovsky's *Synchronism No. 11*, and Charles Wuorinen's *Spin-Off* are among the many works composed for him. He has conducted three critically acclaimed CDs of American music with the Odense Symphony in Denmark. Don has conducted the Xalapa Symphony, the Bridgeport Symphony, at the Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center and at the Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires. He recorded Stravinsky's *L'histoire du soldat* with Rogers Waters narrating which was released by SONY in 2018. Don also appears with Orpheus on Wayne Shorter's *Emanon*, which won a 2018 Grammy. He frequently performs with Mistral, the Walden Chamber Players, at the Bridgehampton Chamber Music Festival, the White Mountains Festival and is Music Director of the Symphony-by-the-Sea in Beverly, MA.

Symphonic Music at New England Conservatory

Stanford and Norma Jean Calderwood Director of Orchestras Hugh Wolff is joined by Associate Director of Orchestras David Loebel, Chamber Orchestra founder Donald Palma, Head of Orchestral Conducting Stefan Asbury, and a rich array of guest conductors and coaches for dozens of FREE orchestral concerts in NEC's Jordan Hall this year.

Visit **necmusic.edu** for complete and updated concert information:

NEC Symphony, David Loebel, conductor

Tower Fanfare for the Uncommon Woman, No. 6; Haydn *Symphony* No. 85, "La Reine";
Franck *Symphony in D Minor*

Wednesday, October 22, 2025 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC Philharmonia, Hugh Wolff, conductor

Bacewicz *Overture*; Shostakovich *Piano Concerto* No. 1;
Prokofiev *Symphony* No. 5 in B-flat Major, op. 100

Wednesday, October 29, 2025 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC Philharmonia, NEC Symphonic Choir, David Loebel, conductor

Mozart *Symphony* No. 31, "Paris"; Debussy *Nocturnes*; Boulanger *Psaume* 129;
Poulenc *Gloria*

Wednesday, November 5, 2025 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC Chamber Orchestra, Donald Palma, artistic director

Stravinsky *Apollon musagète*; Dvořák *Serenade in E Major*, op. 22

Wednesday, November 12, 2025 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC Baroque Orchestra, Guy Fishman, director

Monday, November 17, 2025 at 7:30 p.m., Brown Hall

NEC Festival

NEC Symphony, David Loebel, Clancy Ellis '26 GD, conductor

Chadwick *Jubilee* from *Symphonic Sketches*; Strauss *Overture to Die Fledermaus*;
Stravinsky *Suite from The Firebird*; Joplin (arr. Schuller) *Overture to Treemonisha*;
Schuller *Seven Studies on Themes of Paul Klee*

Wednesday, November 19, 2025 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC Opera: Jonathan Dove "Flight"

NEC opera students are joined by members of NEC Philharmonia under the direction of Robert Tweten; Joshua Major is the stage director

Thursday-Saturday, November 20-22 at 7:30 p.m.; Sunday, November 23 at 3:00 p.m.
Plimpton Shattuck Black Box Theatre

Symphonic Music at NEC

–continued

NEC New Music Ensemble, Stefan Asbury, conductor

Monday, December 8, 2025 at 8:00 p.m., Burnes Hall

NEC Philharmonia 5, Hugh Wolff, conductor

Handel *Concerto Grosso*, op. 6 no. 4; Bartók *Music for Strings, Percussion and Celesta*;

Beethoven *Violin Concerto in D Major*, op. 61, Joshua Brown AD, violin

Wednesday, December 10, 2025 at 7:30 p.m., Jordan Hall

NEC Lab Orchestra

Clancy Ellis '26 GD, Joseph Bozich '27 GD and Leonard Bopp '27 GD conductors

Tuesday, December 16, 2025 at 8:00 p.m., Brown Hall

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Latecomers will be seated at the discretion of management.

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Concert Program

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Welcome to NEC!

I am thrilled to share New England Conservatory's 2025-26 concert season—a celebration of the power of music to connect and inspire one another.

Whether you are seated in one of our concert halls or watching online, we hope the performances of our students, faculty, and guest artists uplift you.

Above all, we thank you for supporting our students as they cultivate their artistry and contribute to the world through music.

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke.

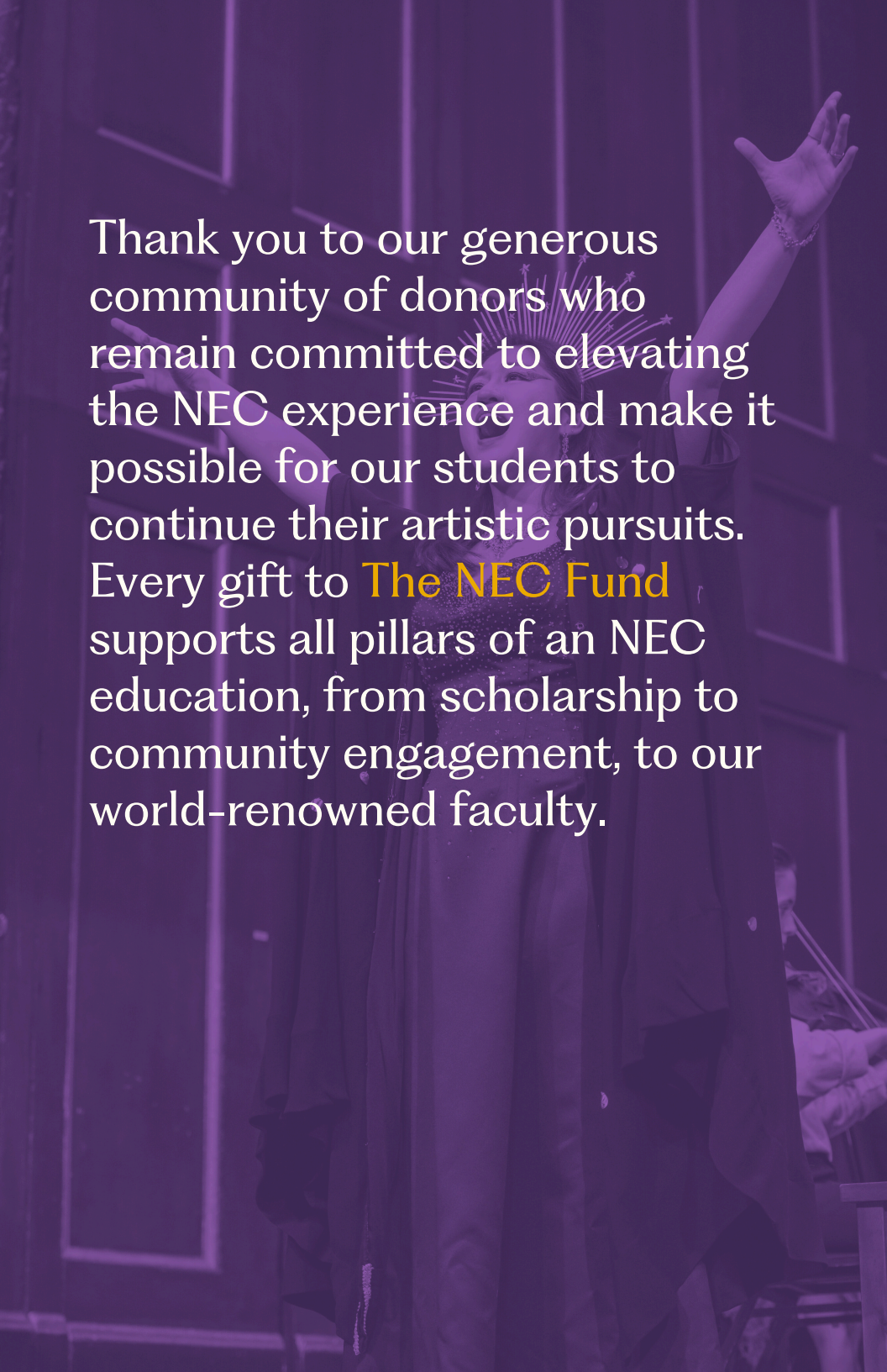
Andrea Kayln
President

A large orchestra is performing in a grand hall with ornate wood paneling and a high ceiling. The stage is lit with warm, golden light. A conductor in a dark suit stands on the right, facing the orchestra. A soloist in a bright red jacket and dark pants stands on the left, holding a microphone. The audience is seated in the foreground, seen from behind. A large white text box is centered over the image.

How can **you** keep the music playing?

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A woman in a black dress with a starburst headpiece, arms raised in a celebratory gesture, against a purple background.

Thank you to our generous community of donors who remain committed to elevating the NEC experience and make it possible for our students to continue their artistic pursuits. Every gift to **The NEC Fund** supports all pillars of an NEC education, from scholarship to community engagement, to our world-renowned faculty.

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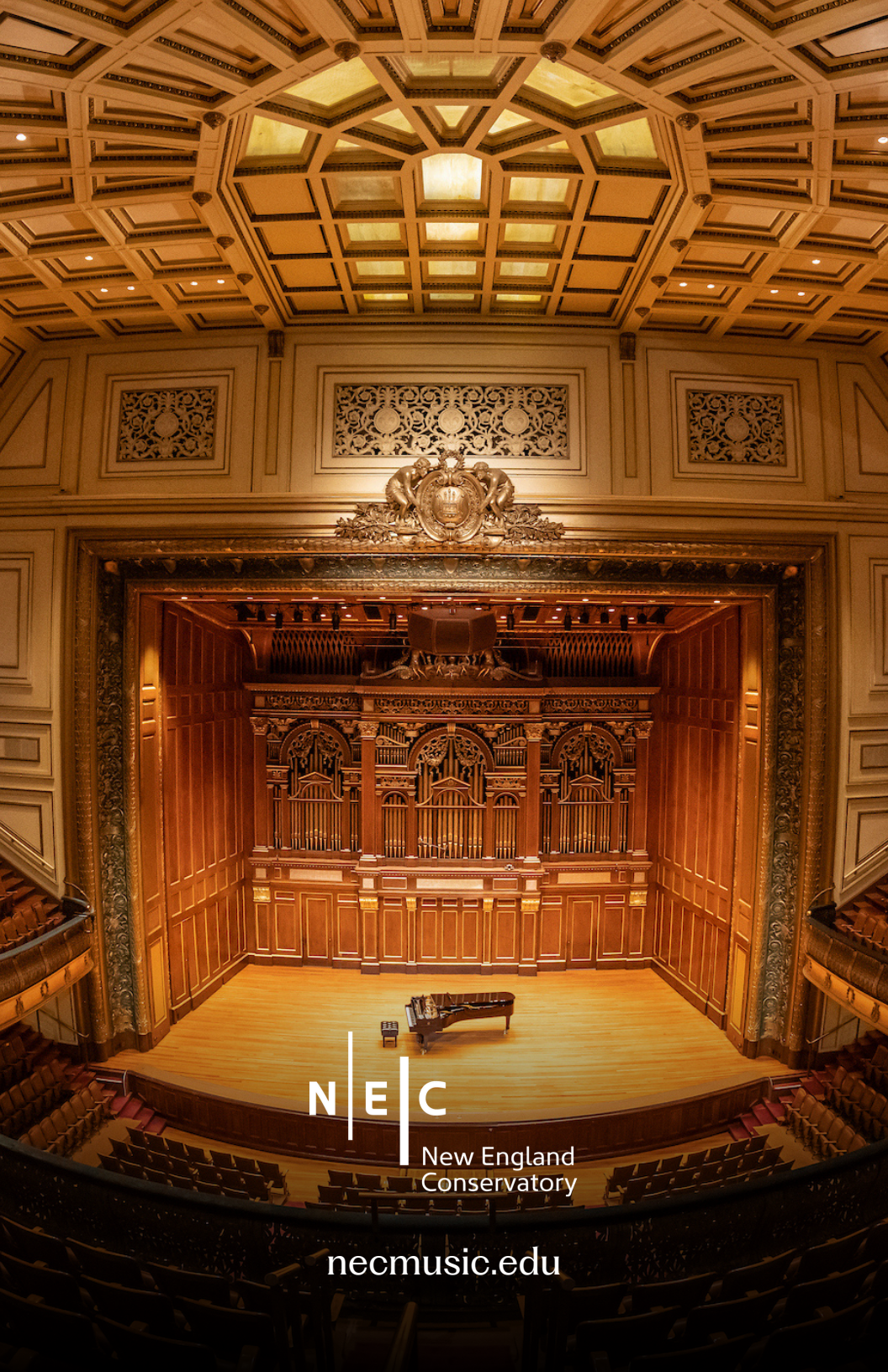
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