



*The Magic Music Makes*

Sixth National Women's Choral Festival

Houston, Texas

1991

# *The Sixth National Women's Choral Festival*

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The Sister Singers Network is proud to welcome you to the Sixth National Women's Choral Festival. Fifteen choruses from throughout the nation are here tonight to share the love, joy, and unity that music brings to our lives. The 1991 festival features several "firsts". This is the first festival to be held outside the Midwest and also the first to feature an exciting three-day format. By expanding to three days, we are able to include two concerts: the public performance on Saturday evening, and a private concert for registrants only. The special show on Friday night allows us to do what we do best: sing to and for each other. On Sunday, after a weekend of workshops, music, and fun, the Closing Ceremony allows us time to reflect on what we mean to each other and on the important role music plays in our lives. Join us as we rejoice in *The Magic Music Makes*.

# About the Choirs

## **ARTEMIS SINGERS**

ARTEMIS SINGERS was formed in 1980 and presently has 20 members. Through our music we give voice to the Lesbian Feminist experience. We are committed to helping each member expand on her musical skills and knowledge. We are a self-directed chorus; we feel that sharing the traditional director role has helped us all better understand the dynamics of making music as a group. We further develop our abilities through Camp Artemis where we practice such vital skills as sitting through many long hours of practice and learning to clear the mind so that we may approach each song anew each time sung, even immediately following intensive drilling. We constantly strive to hear, sing, and appreciate chords the rest of the world rejects.

## **BLOOMINGTON FEMINIST CHORUS**

The Bloomington Feminist Chorus sings music by, about and for women. We perform at Take-Back-the-Night marches, Women's Coffee Houses, International Women's Day celebrations and give chant workshops at the National Women's Festival.

## **CALLIOPE WOMEN'S CHORUS**

CALLIOPE WOMEN'S CHORUS celebrates the voices, power, strength, and diversity of women. We cherish our roots and experience in the lesbian community, and welcome women to join us in singing with pride and excellence. Our songs are sent forth as a source of healing and joy to soothe hearts and stir spirits. We offer our music in support of change towards freedom, justice, and equality.

## **CHARLOTTESVILLE WOMEN'S CHOIR**

As beautiful and strong as our native Blue Ridge Mountains, the voices of the Charlottesville Women's Choir come from women as varied in musical background and interests as the colors of the rainbow. These variations make learning and decision-making a challenge at times, but the end results — a wide repertoire, the opportunity to grow musically and the sheer joy of singing together — keep bringing us back together week after week, year after year.

## **HEARTSONG**

In June 1986 a small group of women formed a community chorus in Houston. Initially there were few members, but commitment was strong and the vision clear: music which is life and woman affirming can heal and empower.

In the five years following we have grown in number and in diversity. In addition to community events in support of peace and human rights, HeartSong performs an annual solo concert. HeartSong has joined local and regional musical groups in concert and has opened for Kate Clinton and Kay Gardner. However, performing for Governor Ann Richards' inauguration last January was an honor never imagined in 1986.

Two years ago HeartSong agreed to host the Sixth National Women's Choral Festival. Each member of HeartSong has given her time and energy as she was able. Now we look forward to singing together for a long time — just for the joy of it.

*The Magic Music Makes* was composed by John-Michael Albert for Kathy Biehl, our Festival producer. Originally a duet for him and Kathy, John-Michael arranged the song for HeartSong in 1991. Often through music we recognize forgotten truths or recall past experiences. Through music we celebrate the present and look to the future.

One of HeartSong's first performances was for a Women and AIDS conference in Galveston. Often we are called upon to perform at community fundraisers for HIV service providers. And it is not unusual for HeartSong to sing at the bedside of an ill or dying friend. These experiences heighten our commitment to life and life affirming music. Because today, right now — This is *The Best of Times*.

### **KANSAS CITY WOMYN'S CHORUS**

There is little, if anything, that the Kansas City Womyn's Chorus (long known as the Bowling Team of Women's Choruses) won't try. Last fall we celebrated our 11th anniversary complete with cake and photo albums. In the summer of 1990 we challenged ourselves with a musical, *The Clue in the Old Birdbath*, a parody of all those Nancy Drew mysteries so well loved by all. We operate through consensus (always a daunting prospect), arrange most of our own music and currently have seven directors, two of whom are directing one song together. Though this method sometimes leads to confusion, tears and other difficulties, our business meetings are getting shorter and more productive and our musical creativity and ability are always growing. All the music we are singing in Houston was arranged by chorus members. We are delighted to share it with you.

### **MUKWONAGO FEMINIST SINGERS, EATERS, AND FRIENDS**

They came to eat and stayed to sing! Members of Madison's Womansong met Milwaukee's Mukwonago Feminist Singers and Eaters at the pickup choir rehearsal space—a rest stop picnic bench on Highway I-94, just a mile from the Gobbler Family Restaurant.

Forged from the stolidity for which Mukwonago has long been famous in the women's community; ignited by the flaming sword of Madison's political correctness; and grounded in the cud-chewing center of the dairy state; this north country group makes its debut in Houston, Texas as the MUKWONAGO FEMINIST SINGERS, EATERS, AND FRIENDS.

### **MUSE**

We look forward to seeing our sister singer friends in Houston. The past year was full of great concert appearances, a workshop with Ysaye Barnwell, two nights for our spring concert (Mary Watkins wrote us a piece, *River*), and 1. discussions about a change in our philosophy statement, 2. how do we involve more women of color, and expand our audience, and last but not least, 3. costume questions, what do we wear? Believe it or not, the last question was the toughest for us.

*Exile* by Ysaye Barnwell, Text by Alicia Partnoy

Ysaye Barnwell set this text after she heard Alicia Partnoy describe her story. Alicia, a native of Argentina, was kidnapped, the government wanted to silence the power of her poetry. It made her more resolute; she grew two voices, "They cut off my voice, so I grew *two* voices in *two* different tongues. My songs I pour. So I grew two voices, *into* different tongues."

### **PHOENIX RISING: A FEMINIST WOMEN'S CHORUS**

PHOENIX RISING: A FEMINIST WOMEN'S CHORUS is a group of feminist women from Southern California who are committed to political and social consciousness raising through our music. Phoenix Rising is a new women's community chorus born in January 1991. The women of Phoenix Rising share a common vision: the unison of our voices in harmony and love to create positive change in our world. Phoenix Rising is an open, non-audition, collective-based chorus. Each woman offers her unique talents and skills, enhancing the quality of our chorus.

## *About the Choirs*

### **PORTLAND LESBIAN CHOIR**

The PORTLAND LESBIAN CHOIR began in 1986 when founding mother Cathryn Heron dropped off a stack of "come sing with us" fliers at the women's bookstore. Six women were at that first meeting and now, as the choir celebrates its fifth birthday, it will do so with 65+ members.

The choir is a "community chorus" made up of women with varying degrees of musical ability. Last season during Gay Pride the choir performed a joint concert with the Portland Gay Men's Chorus and guest Deirdre McCalla. Special guest at the annual spring concert was "Soromundi, Lesbian Chorus of Eugene."

### **ST. LOUIS WOMAN'S CHOIR**

The St. Louis Woman's Choir began in May 1978. We have been large, we have been small. Currently we are without a director or accompanist. We are undergoing metamorphosis and seeking new women, new energy, and new ideas.

### **SAN DIEGO WOMEN'S CHORUS**

This is the first choral festival of the Sister Singers that the San Diego Women's Chorus has attended. They bring with them 85% of their total membership. They have worked hard to raise the money to be here and had to choose to be here rather than the GALA Choral Festival in Denver as they could not afford to do both. This is a chorus in love with singing music that speaks of freedom, human rights and equality.

### **SISTRUM LANSING WOMEN'S CHORUS**

Founded as the Lansing Women's Chorus in January 1986, Sistrum has sung at previous National Women's Choral Festivals in Chicago and Kansas City. Our new name, Sistrum, emerged in a brainstorming session on the very long bus ride home from Kansas City two years ago. The sistrum is a musical instrument, a rattle, used ritually by ancient Egyptians. It was kept always in constant motion, as a symbol of Isis, the sacred and ever-changing Life Force. We hope we remind you of Her as well.

Our founder and director, Rachel Alexander is mid-way through a Master's degree in choral conducting, an exciting venture which is affording her many new skills but much less time than she'd like to put them to use. . . .

*I Be Your Water* by Bernice Johnson Reagon

This may not sound like a love song at first, but listen as we sing about Bernice's vision of how the hard, lonely work of self-loving and self-definition lays the groundwork for the sunburst of solid and passionate partnership.

### **TAPESTRY SINGERS**

In September 1987, singer/songwriter Ruth Huber formed the Austin Women's Chorus, inviting female singers to come out of the closet. In 1989, the chorus became Tapestry. Our purpose is to sing songs by or about women; to sing songs which offer a vision of a just and peaceful world; to bring the joy and healing that comes with singing; to encourage all women, regardless of race, color, sexual identity or vocal confidence, to explore their singing abilities; to gain through mutual support, the skills required to perform confidently and successfully; and to entertain and inspire a larger community by performing our music.

*We All, Ev'ry One of Us* appeals to us as a powerful statement in the universal theme of homecoming. *Tapestry* is, of course, our theme song. *Set Her Free* was inspired by a vigil for battered women, and we offer it in support of freedom everywhere.

## About Our Hosts

### **Cindy Freedman**

Cindy is a captivating singer and musician who performs her delightful blend of earth-heart music at peace gatherings, festivals and retreats across Europe and the U.S. Her fourth recording, *"Live the Life You Dream"*, has recently been released on CD and cassette. In addition to performing, Cindy hosts the Wednesday *"One to Three"* radio program on Houston's Pacifica station, KPFT 90.1 FM. She also conducts workshops on harmony and the healing power of sound through singing, chanting and vibration.

### **Marianne Pendino**

Marianne is a performer, writer and composer, and has been a company member of the Comedy Workshop of Houston for seven years. She has appeared in and directed musical scores at Main Street Theater, the Jewish Community Center and at Stages Repertory Theater. In 1989 she wrote and performed her one-woman musical comedy, *"One Woman a Million Laughs."* Marianne studied acting at Florida State University. She is completing a degree in music composition and theory at the University of Houston. She studied mime and fencing with Claude Caux, classical voice with Jean Preston, and improvisation with Del Close of Second City in Chicago. Her musical skills include piano, voice, synthesizer, guitar and arrangement for voice and instruments. Ms. Pendino has composed film scores for *"Forever Evil"* and the award-winning *"The Jet Benny Show."* Her most recent works include the jingles of radio and television commercials for First Colony Homes and Baytown Cadillac.

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## About Our Interpreters

Tonight's interpreters allow us to see that there is not only joy in the sound of music, but joy in the visual form as well. We would like to thank them for permitting us to share the beauty of our music through their hearts, souls and hands.

Nancy Busch  
Ruth Rowen

HeartSong  
MUSE

# Song Fest

## MUKWONAGO FEMINIST SINGERS, EATERS, AND FRIENDS

Conductor: Ev Glaspey

*Womanspirit Rising*

Beth York  
arr. Kathy Younger

*Voices of Evenin'*

learned from Alice Girard through the aural tradition  
arr. Ev Glaspey

*Freedom is Coming*

Unknown

## KANSAS CITY WOMYN'S CHORUS

*Girl Shoes*

Cheryl Dowdy  
arr. Joan Driskill & Theresa Vitt

*How Could Anyone?*

Libby Roderick  
arr. Canyon & Judi Carlson

*Ella's Song*

Bernice Johnson Reagon  
arr. Christy Simpson

## PHOENIX RISING

Conductor: Chris Gacsi

*The Politically Correct Potluck Song*  
(Adapted from *My Love's A Lady*)

Music by Wendy Caplin  
Original lyrics by Linda Backiel  
Adapted lyrics by Bits Foerg  
arr. Chris Gacsi

*More Little Boxes*

Malvina Reynolds  
Adapted lyrics by Joanna Cazden and the women of PHOENIX RISING

## CALLIOPE WOMEN'S CHORUS

Music Director: Mary Preus

*Love Will Guide Us*

traditional melody, words by Sally Rogers  
arr. Diane Benjamin

*The Gift of Love*

Evelyn Harris (Sweet Honey in the Rock)  
arr. K.J. Bandate-zut

*Testimony*

Ferron  
arr. Diane Benjamin

*Study War No More*

traditional melody arr. by J. David Moore

*Intermission*

*Friday, November 1, 1991*

**SISTRUM**

Musical Director: Rachel Alexander

Accompanist: Sarah E. Miller

*Big Boned Gal*

k.d. lang  
arr. Rachel Alexander

*The Telling*

Sarah E. Miller

*The Earth is Singing My Name*

Music by Marjan Helms  
Poem by Dar N'var

**BLOOMINGTON FEMINIST CHORUS**

Musical Director: Paula Zerkle

*Arise*

traditional

*Come Softly*

Roche Sisters  
arr. Paula Zerkle

*O Sinfuni Mungo*

Mary McCall, David Maddux, Mmunga Mwenebulongo  
& Ashukulu Yunu Mukalay  
adapted by Paula Zerkle & Noretta Koertge

*Sure As the Wind*

traditional

**SAN DIEGO WOMEN'S CHORUS**

Musical Director: Cynthia Lawrence-Wallace

Pianist: Deborah Morton

*Sisters You Keep Me Fighting*

From Spring of Vietnam by Patty Huntington  
arr. Diane Porter of MUSE

*Lullaby*

Shared with us by Sister Singers Network when we joined  
Flute: Ann Paterson Bass: Cathy Rochdashil

*We Don't Need The Men*

Melvina Reynolds  
arr. Phyllis Safman (formerly of SLC Women's Chorus)

*How Can Anyone*

Libby Roderick  
Learned by ear

**HEARTSONG**

Musical Director: Lynne Weynand

Accompanist: Judi Messina

*Fight Back!*

Lynn Herrick

*Bein' Green*

Joe Raposo  
arr. Judi Messina

*Let the River Run*

Carly Simon  
arr. Lynne Weynand

# *The Magic Music Makes*

## **SAN DIEGO WOMEN'S CHORUS**

Musical Director: Cynthia Lawrence-Wallace

Pianist: Deborah Morton

*One Fine Day*

Kay Weaver

arr. Nancy Peterson (formerly of LA Women's Comm. Chorus)

*Sister*

Margi Adams

arr. Phyllis Safman (formerly of SLC Women's Chorus)

*Circle Chant*

Linda Hirshhorr

Learned by ear

## **TAPESTRY**

Musical Director: Ruth Huber

*Tapestry*

Ruth Huber

*Set Her Free*

*We All, Ev'ry One of Us*

## **KANSAS CITY WOMYN'S CHORUS**

*Celebrate*

Deidre McCalla

arr. Joan Driskill & Theresa Vitt

*To Be Strong*

Laura Berkson

arr. Christy Simpson

## **PHOENIX RISING**

Conductor: Chris Gacsi

*Sweet Darlin' Woman*

Diane Lindsay

arr. Nancy Peterson

*Say No!*

Sandra Washington

arr. Nancy Peterson

percussion: Chris Gacsi

## **SISTRUM**

Music Director: Rachel Alexander

Accompanist: Sarah E. Miller

*I Be Your Water*

Bernice Johnson Reagon

## **BLOOMINGTON FEMINIST CHORUS**

Musical Director: Paula Zerkle

*Testimony*

Ferron

arr. Paula Zerkle

*Aure Volanti*

Francesca Caccini

*Seven Day Kiss*

Sweet Honey

arr. Jasmine

*Intermission*

*Saturday, November 2, 1991*

**HEARTSONG**

Musical Director: Lynne Weynand

Accompanist: Judi Messina

Signer: Nancy Busch

*The Magic Music Makes*

John-Michael Albert

*The Best of Times*

Jerry Herman  
arr. Anita Kerr

**ARTEMIS**

Director: Jan Rogers

Accompanist: Laurie Lee Moses

*Spiral Time*

Jan Rogers

Director: Midge Stocker

*Body Back*

We Three

**MUSE**

Artistic Director: Catherine Roma

Signer: Ruth Rowen

*The Stove* (Excerpt from  
*The Muse, the Stove and the Willow Plate*)

Music by Zae Munn  
Text by Ann Kilkelly

*Exile*

Music by Ysaye Barnwell  
Text by Alicia Partnoy

*Sky Dances*

Music by Roy Brown  
Text by Jimmy Durham  
arr. Jennifer Stasack

**MASS CHORAL PIECES**

*Women of the World*

Mimi Baczewski  
arr. Christy Simpson & Joan Driskill

*Wood River*  
Soloist: Barb Wilber

Connie Kaldor  
arr. Willi Zwodzdesky

Conducted by Rachel Alexander  
Accompanist: Sarah E. Miller

*Dreams of Peace*

Lee Hoffman & Comfree Coleman  
Conducted by Comfree Coleman

*This We Know*

Music by Ron Jeffers  
Text by Chief Seattle

Conducted by Catherine Roma

# *About the Mass Choral Pieces*

## **Women of the World**

*Written by Mimi Baczewska*

*Arranged by Christy Simpson & Joan Driskill*

*Submitted by the Kansas City Womyn's Chorus*

Written by a Missouri artist, **Women of the World** is an anthem celebrating the power of women to change the world as we weave our cultural and ethnic diversities in a band of sisterhood.

## **Wood River**

*Words & Music by Connie Kaldor*

*Arranged by Willis Zwozdesky*

*Submitted by Sistrum*

## **Dreams of Peace**

*Written by Lee Hoffman & Comfree Colman*

*Submitted by St. Louis Woman's Choir*

This is a song of hope and healing. It is a song not of separation but a prayer for balance. As we sing this song we call upon the strong "big picture", collective nature of woman energy to rise up in all of us, both man and woman, and come into balance with the strong focused and individual nature of man energy, also in all of us. We call upon the healing knowledge once manifested only by women to return again in the hearts of all. Call upon the woman in all of us to remember, to dream, and to hold the vision so that there may be balance, there may be peace, we may be one.

## **This We Know**

*Text by Chief Seattle*

*Music by Ron Jeffers*

*Submitted by MUSE*

Chief Seattle was nearly 70 years old in the Spring of 1855 when he signed the Point Elliot Treaty, a document which stripped his people of their ancestral home in the Puget Sound area of the northwest Pacific Coast. . . . After putting his name to the document Chief Seattle rose to address the crowd. His simple, eloquent statement about the interdependence of all life includes the text *This we know*.

## About the Pulse

In August of 1990, a call went out to HeartSong for volunteers to be part of the festival planning committee. The women who stepped forward became the heartbeat, "The Pulse" of the Sixth National Women's Choral Festival. In the following months, the Pulse organized, planned, panicked, cried, worried, and put forth the effort to bring this event to its magnificent conclusion. In the end, it was the vision of these dedicated women, and their belief in the power of music that has brought us all together tonight. This gathering is the culmination of their commitment to *The Magic Music Makes*, and it is the hope of "The Pulse" that you leave filled with the love and joy that music brings into our lives.

Gretchen Gemeinhardt  
Gayle Goddard  
M.M. Hall  
Judy Hobbs  
Laurie Jones  
Lois Kemp

Liz Mast  
Mary Helen Merzbacher  
Marte Parham  
Valarie Stinson  
Lynne Weynand

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## About Our Producer

When we looked for the perfect person to ask to produce our concerts, nobody's mind wandered any further than Kathy Biehl. She masters many traits, all of which support her role as producer of this event. Her keen production skills were honed by bringing to Houston several Romanovsky and Phillips concerts, classical song recitals, popular and folk music activities, and non-musical events as well. When she isn't producing, Kathy devotes time to her solo law practice, her Metaphysiques Tapes Company, and writing and editing columns for several local publications. Kathy is also a black belt soprano and performs regularly with other renown soloists like John-Michael Albert, and held her own in a not-to-be-missed group of acappella pop singers called "Nobody's Reel." All this, and she's nice too. We are honored to have Kathy's guiding hands calmly leading us through these festival concerts.

# *A Heart Felt Thanks*

Endeavors of this magnitude never come to completion without the hard work and dedication of many behind the scenes individuals. A complete listing would take volumes. However, there are always some who are willing to take the lead and give direction. We wish to recognize those who have guided our community volunteers through these demanding times. If not for you we would not be here tonight sharing this wonderful evening of music.

Transportation:	<i>Arden Eversmeyer</i>	Backstage:	<i>Montrose Singers</i>
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Registration:	<i>Donna Muniz</i>	Signing Coordinator:	<i>Nancy Busch</i>
Risers:	<i>Pasadena ISD Music Dept.</i>		

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## *Thank You HeartSong!*

In October of 1989, HeartSong found themselves in a back room at the Folly Theatre in Kansas City; to discuss hosting the Sixth National Women's Choral Festival. The Kansas City planning committee was there, and quite frankly, they looked exhausted! This should have been a clue to us, but HeartSong is known for their enthusiasm, and agreed to host this weekend's Festival. Silly Girls!

Much has been asked of HeartSong, and much has been given. On November 10, 1990, HeartSong hosted the Sister Singers Network festival planning meeting followed by one of their famous pot luck dinners and dances. HeartSingers came up with many entertaining ways to raise dollars. They sang Sweetheart Serenades, hosted a beautiful night of Indigo Dreams with Houston Jazz singer Kellye Gray, produced two nights of the hilarious HeartSong Follies, and held enough garage sales to clear out the houses of forty women. During all of this HeartSong has kept singing, loving, growing and giving, to each other and to the community. HeartSong believes in *The Magic Music Makes* and is happy to share that belief with you tonight.

We are honored and humbled by your love and commitment to this cause and bow to you in gracious thanks.

The Pulse Committee

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**Thanks, again, to  
everyone involved  
in making this  
week-end happen!**

**congratulations,**

**HEARTSONG!**

FROM DEBBY AND DIANE

*We are all behind you, Lynne!*

Goforth & Lewis



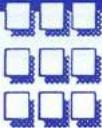
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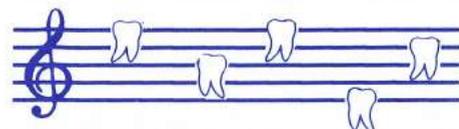
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Catherine,

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the cheesecake, and the late nights.  
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ending love and support.

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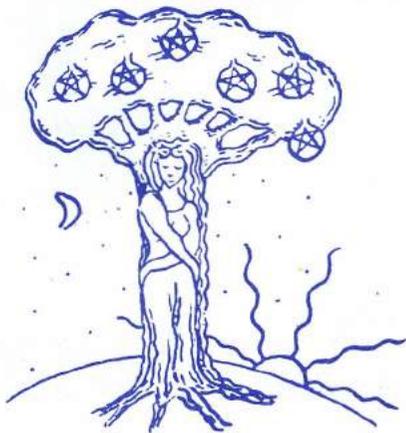
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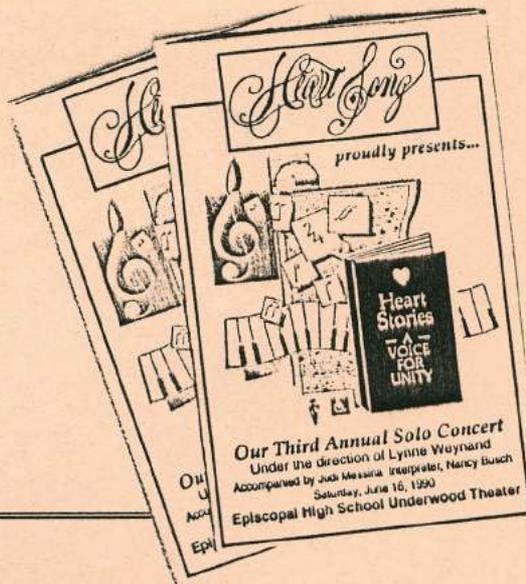
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