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MAGAZINE

JUL / AUG 2017

INSIDE

**The Canadians are coming, socially
conscious folk singers, a look at Taylor Mac
and Penny Arcade, and more**



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Queering Nostalgia

By Sean F. Edgecomb

Penny Arcade and Taylor Mac in performance

PAGE — 22

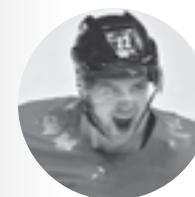
Stanford Live Staff & Sponsors	P—7
Welcome	P—8
Upcoming Events	P—10
Scene & Heard	P—16
Behind the Scenes	P—33
Membership	P—34
Stanford Live & Bing Concert Hall Donors	P—36
Calendar	P—38
Plan Your Visit	P—39



The Canadians Are Coming

A Conversation With Samantha Bee

P—12



Infographic

Oh, Canada! What Do We Miss About You?

P—14



Featurette

Where Have All the Socially Conscious Folk Singers Gone?

P—18



Timeline

Canadian Musicians You Oughta Know

P—20



Featurette

How I Survived Taylor Mac's 24-Hour-Long Musical History Lesson

P—26



Artist Voices

Penny Arcade Says Millennials Are Not the Problem

P—32



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CHRIS LORWAY

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Welcome to Summer at Stanford Live!

This July marks my one-year anniversary with Stanford Live, and I'm thrilled to be sharing with you our revamped *Stanford Live* magazine. Our goal with this publication is to offer you more in-depth features, wide-ranging stories from the artists in their own words, and other related content to take you behind the scenes of what we do. In addition to shining a light on our upcoming events, my hope is that we can tell the story of the season in an engaging and interesting way.

With this first issue, we take a closer look at some of the artists featured early in the fall, including the iconoclastic Penny Arcade, the folk-singing icon Buffy Sainte-Marie (who opens our season),

and the astonishing Taylor Mac, who brings his award-winning *A 24-Decade History of Popular Music* to the Bay Area.

In the meantime, I invite you to another festive summer at Bing that includes a Canada Day celebration in commemoration of that nation's 150th birthday; an Austrian-themed evening in Bing's Gunn Atrium (complete with music, food, and beer!); a journey back to the 1960s featuring music from Woodstock; world music superstar Youssou N'Dour; and collaborations with the Merola Opera Program, Stanford Jazz Workshop, and St. Lawrence String Quartet. Thank you for joining us, and enjoy the performances.

Stanford Live presents a wide range of the finest performances from around the world, fostering a vibrant learning community and providing distinctive experiences through the performing arts. With its home at Bing Concert Hall, Stanford Live is simultaneously a public square, a sanctuary, and a lab, drawing on the breadth and depth of Stanford University to connect performance to the significant issues, ideas, and discoveries of our time.



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AMPLIFICATION



AUDIENCE INTERACTION



JAZZ

Hiroimi Duet

Featuring

Edmar Castañeda

WHEN:
SATURDAY,
JUNE 24,
2017
8:00 PM

VENUE:
BING CONCERT
HALL



Grammy-winning keyboardist Hiroimi first heard the culture-blending Colombian harpist Edmar Castañeda at the Montreal Jazz Festival, and all she could say was, "Wow!"
Copresented with Stanford Jazz Workshop



CLASSICAL/POP/JAZZ

Canada Day

Celebration

WHEN:
SATURDAY,
JULY 1,
2017
4:00 PM

VENUE:
BING CONCERT
HALL



Stanford Live marks Canada's sesquicentennial with a daylong celebration in and around Bing that features Jenn Grant, David Myles, Wendy MacIsaac and Troy MacGillivray, the St. Lawrence String Quartet, and others.



WORLD

Federspiel

WHEN:
SATURDAY,
JULY 8,
2017
7:30 PM

VENUE:
BING CONCERT
HALL



With a splash of humor and undeniable charm, this seven-piece ensemble redefines brass band music with original folk tunes, pop-inspired melodies, and more. Join us for food, beer, and an Austrian-inspired evening in the Bing's open-air lobby.



CLASSICAL

Schwabacher Summer Concert

WHEN:
SUNDAY,
JULY 9,
2017
2:30 PM

VENUE:
BING CONCERT
HALL

Some of opera's greatest moments come to life as the Merola Opera Program's young artists perform staged vignettes from Mascagni's *Cavalleria rusticana*, Moore's *The Ballad of Baby Doe*, Massenet's *Thaïs*, Weber's *Der Freischütz*, Donizetti's *Lucrezia Borgia*, and more—accompanied by full orchestra with English supertitles.

JAZZ

Shai Maestro Trio

WHEN:
SUNDAY,
JULY 9,
2017
7:30 PM

VENUE:
BING CONCERT
HALL STUDIO



Shai Maestro may be one of the rising stars of jazz piano—but to call him a jazz pianist doesn't begin to hint at his boundless creativity and border-crossing approach to music.

Copresented with Stanford Jazz Workshop

POP

Classic Albums Live: Music of Woodstock

WHEN:
FRIDAY,
JULY 14,
2017
6:00 PM

VENUE:
BING CONCERT
HALL



This summer brings us a note-for-note, cut-for-cut recreation of classic albums. In honor of the 50th anniversary of the Summer of Love, get a taste of what was happening on the other coast! Bring a blanket and spread out on the lawn adjacent to Bing Concert Hall.

WORLD

Betsayda Machado and Parranda El Clavo

WHEN:
SATURDAY,
JULY 15,
2017
7:30 PM

VENUE:
BING CONCERT
HALL



Venezuelan powerhouse Betsayda Machado, dubbed the Black Voice of Barlovento, is joined by her hometown's resident percussion ensemble, Parrando El Clavo.

JAZZ

Lisa Fischer and Grand Baton

WHEN:
SATURDAY,
AUGUST 5,
2017
8:00 PM

VENUE:
BING CONCERT
HALL



Singer-songwriter Lisa Fischer was the best-kept secret in American music until 2013's documentary *Twenty Feet from Stardom* finally brought her center stage.

Copresented with Stanford Jazz Workshop

WORLD

Yousou N'Dour

WHEN:
WEDNESDAY,
AUGUST 9,
2017
7:30 PM

VENUE:
BING CONCERT
HALL



Closing out the summer, this legendary Senegalese singer will be paired with an aftershow by the up-and-coming Zimbabwean band Mokoomba for a blowout African music event.

CLASSICAL

St. Lawrence String Quartet

WHEN:
MON, JUNE 26,
12:15 PM

VENUE:
BING CONCERT
HALL

WED, JUNE 28,
12:15 PM

FREE

FRI, JUNE 30,
12:15 PM

SAT, JULY 1,
2:30 PM

Cherished for its freewheeling animation and passionate interpretations, Stanford's own St. Lawrence String Quartet is joined by internationally renowned artists for a celebration of chamber music.



The Canadians Are Coming

A Conversation with Samantha Bee

If we woke up every day and went, "Today, we're going to change the world!" it would be the unfunniest show.

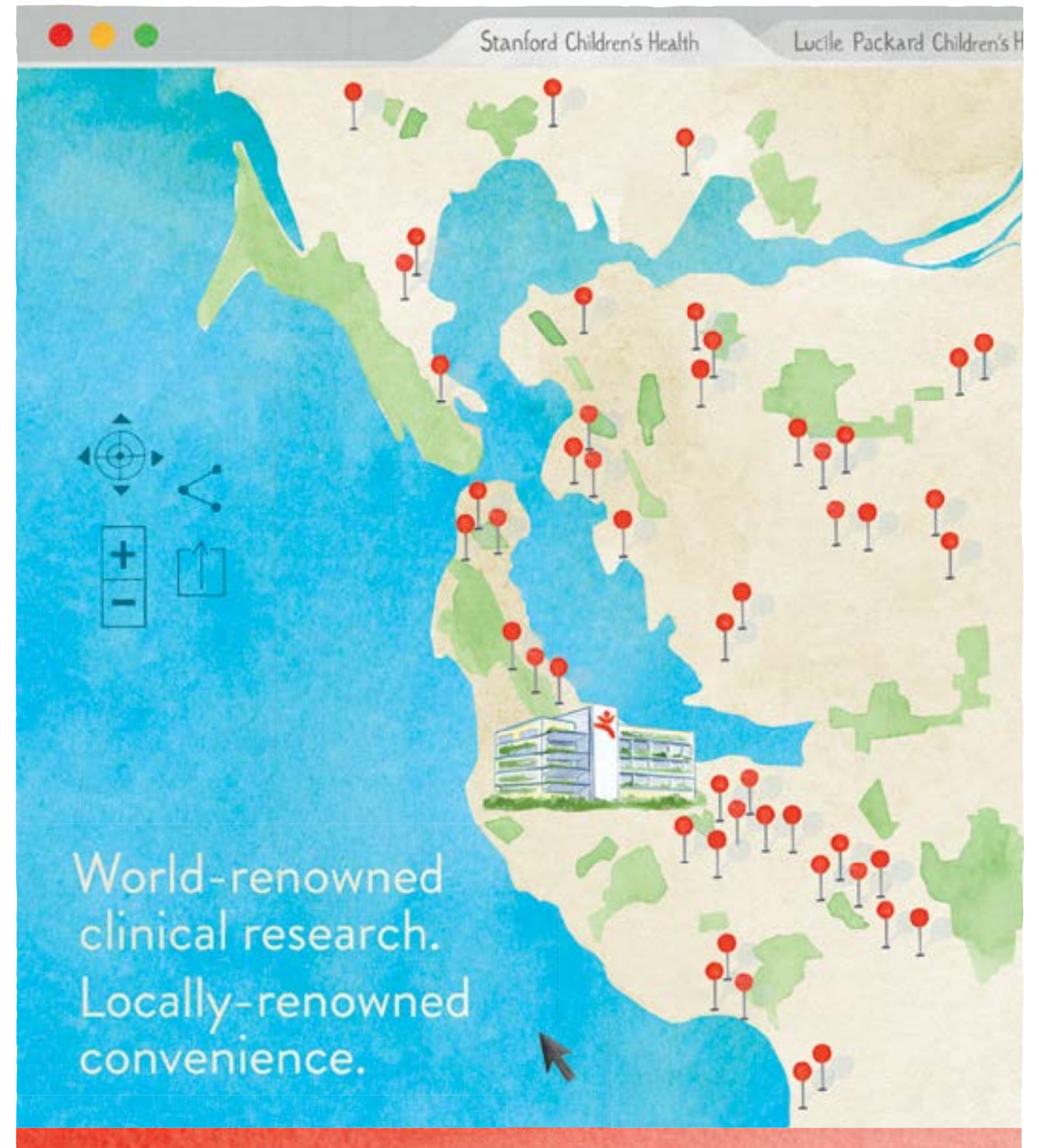
—SAMANTHA BEE

You may have noticed a few Canadian artists scheduled for the 2017–18 season, including our cover subject Samantha Bee and our season opener Buffy Sainte-Marie. Canada is having a big year in 2017, celebrating both the 150th anniversary of Confederation and the 375th anniversary of the city of Montreal. So we thought it would be fun to toast our neighbors to the north by bringing a few of them south.

On October 6, the late-night talk show queen comes to Memorial Auditorium for a one-night-only appearance. In the throes of the 2016 presidential election, Samantha Bee emerged as the clarion voice of American political satire. And while her full-throated feminist take on the news and jokes-per-minute blitzkrieg style almost betray her polite Canadian roots, she says the goal of a strong piece is not to "annihilate" but to tell the story.

"It's a satire show," Bee recently told the *Hollywood Reporter*, speaking of her hit series *Full Frontal*. "It's not an activism show. I think those lines get muddy sometimes, but for us, we're strictly doing the satire part. That's what we think we're doing. That's what we intend to do."

As Stanford Live looks at exemplary artists above the 49th parallel this season, Bee stands out to us as someone to offer some perspective about what makes America great.



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Access to Excellence.



The Stanford Live team asked members of the Stanford community who hail from the north to wax nostalgic about the things that make Canada great, eh? Here's what they had to say.

Tim Hortons

Hockey! Both playing it all winter on our backyard rink and living the NHL.

—GEOFF NUTTALL
VIOLINIST AND FOUNDING MEMBER
OF THE ST. LAWRENCE STRING QUARTET

Les Colocs

Maureen
Forrester

Joni Mitchell



Hockey

OH, CA

Leaves turning the most beautiful colors in the fall in the Laurentians; the stillness of a brilliant blue sky and the sun shining on a fresh bed of snow on a crisp winter morning walk on Mount Royal; the hallmark qualities of Canada's **supportive culture**—**welcoming and friendly**, kind and warm; the richness of multiple traditions living together in mutual respect.

—MARC TESSIER-LAVIGNE
PRESIDENT OF STANFORD UNIVERSITY

Maple Cookies

Leonard Cohen



Drake

The great wilderness, the cleanliness, and the beautiful nature

—FRANK ZHENG
COMPUTER SCIENCE AND HISTORY
MAJOR

Barenaked Ladies

The sense of living in a caring community. I miss being around people that believe **universal health care** is good. Also, Montreal bagels.

—MARK RAU
PH.D. CANDIDATE IN MUSIC

Shania Twain

Anton Kuerti

Coeur de Pirate

The Old Hockey Night in Canada Theme Song



Céline Dion

NADA!



Caring Community

I'm most nostalgic for Canadians' openness to the world around them and Canadians' propensity for seeing the good in others.

—ETHAN LANDY
DEPARTMENT OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT

K.D. Lang

The Tragically Hip

Universal Health Care



1



2



3

1 ALISA WEILERSTEIN & INON BARNATAN

Trine Sorensen and Michael Jacobson (right) with pianist Inon Barnatan and cellist Alisa Weilerstein, whose April 26 performance they sponsored.

2 BING FLING

On March 25, Stanford Live celebrated its generous Bing members at the annual *Bing Fling* gala with Broadway powerhouse Kristin Chenoweth.

3 YO-YO MA, EDGAR MEYER, & CHRIS THILE

Friends for years, Meyer, Thile, and Ma (L-R) took the Bing stage on April 29 for an all-Bach program.

4 ALISA WEILERSTEIN & INON BARNATAN

These two stellar musicians and longtime collaborators offered an intimate program of sonatas on April 26.



4



5

5 BING FLING

Bren and Larry Leisure were among the guests at the pre-performance reception.

6 YO-YO MA, EDGAR MEYER, & CHRIS THILE

Yo-Yo Ma (center) mingles with Deedee and Burt McMurtry, Cathy McMurtry, and Jim McLaughlin at the post-performance reception.



6



7



8

7 YO-YO MA, EDGAR MEYER, & CHRIS THILE

Chris Thile (center) chats with LeAnna and Andrew Wollenberg at the post-performance reception.

8 BING FLING

Marcia and John Goldman with Kristin Chenoweth, whose performance they sponsored.



1

Where Have All the Socially Conscious Folk Singers Gone?

By Nicholas Jennings



2

In the not-so-distant past, music had the power to change the world. Fuzzy, pie-in-the-sky thinking? Not at all. Back in the 1960s, songs were real rallying cries that won over hearts and minds. And those stirring anthems actually galvanized movements and helped to stop racism and bring an end to war. Seems like a strange dream today.

Can't start a fire without a spark, Bruce Springsteen tells us. The spark that ignited protest songs in the 1960s was the civil rights movement. Calls for racial equality grew louder

after thousands of African American protesters were arrested and many others killed by the Ku Klux Klan. A turning point came when the Freedom Singers performed at the Newport Folk Festival, where they linked arms with Bob Dylan, Joan Baez, and Peter, Paul, and Mary and sang "We Shall Overcome."

Like Pete Seeger before them, Baez and Dylan took up the cause of singing against social injustice with zeal. Dylan's "Only a Pawn in Their Game" and "Blowin' in the Wind" spurred other folkies to comment on issues of

the day, none more so than Phil Ochs, whose "I Ain't Marching Anymore" served as the clarion call for the anti-Vietnam War movement. One of the era's most powerful anti-war songs was "Morning Dew" by Canadian folk singer Bonnie Dobson. Inspired by her fear of a nuclear holocaust, it became a signature song of the Grateful Dead.

Canada's Buffy Sainte-Marie penned "Universal Soldier" in the Purple Onion coffeehouse in Toronto's bohemian Yorkville district. At the San Francisco airport while en route to Toronto, she witnessed badly wounded American soldiers returning home from Vietnam. "I got talking to some of the soldiers and started thinking about who was responsible for war," she recalled. "Was it the generals? The politicians? Then I realized that we're the ones who voted for the politicians, so really everyone's responsible." "Universal Soldier," Dylan's "Masters of War," and many of Ochs' compositions became catalysts that led the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam.

Born on the Piapot Cree First Nation reserve in the Qu'Appelle Valley, Saskatchewan, Sainte-Marie was adopted by family relatives and raised in Massachusetts. It wasn't long before interest in her indigenous heritage led to powerful songs like "Now That the Buffalo's Gone" and "My Country 'Tis of Thy People You're Dying" that highlighted the plight of her people. It's something the 76-year-old music legend has continued doing, mostly recently with her award-winning album *Power in the Blood*.

3



Musicians continue to respond to a disturbing world around them. Whether it's singer-rapper J. Cole paying tribute to Michael Brown and Eric Garner, both victims of police shootings, in his harrowing "Be Free" or Fiona Apple calling out Trump for his misogyny in her caustic "Tiny Hands," the protest song tradition is alive and well.

Nicholas Jennings is a Toronto-based music journalist and author of several books on Canadian music.

1. Buffy Sainte-Marie

2. Pete Seeger

3. Joan Baez and Bob Dylan

Canadian Musicians You Oughta Know

In honor of Canada's 150th birthday, here are 15 moments in musical history that shine the spotlight on our neighbors from the north.

1940

At 14 years old, Oscar Peterson wins the national music competition organized by the Canadian Broadcasting Company, launching his career as one of the greatest jazz pianists of all time.

1957

Paul Anka reaches no. 1 on *Billboard's* Hot 100 chart for the first time in his career with the song "Diana."



1969

Joni Mitchell wins her first Grammy Award—Best Folk Performance for *Clouds*.



1971

Neil Young records the iconic *Live at Massey Hall* record, on which listeners are introduced to hits like "Old Man," "Heart of Gold," and "Helpless" for the first time.

1974

Canadian rock band Rush debuts with their eponymous album, beginning a career that includes 10 platinum and 6 gold records in the United States



1982

Glenn Gould's rerecording of *Bach's Goldberg Variations* wins high praise at the Grammy Awards. The next year, he is posthumously inducted into the Grammy Hall of Fame.



1990

Céline Dion goes platinum in the United States for the first time with her album *Unison*. She remains the best-selling Canadian artist of all time.

1991

Bryan Adams' "(Everything I Do) I Do It for You" tops the *Billboard* charts for 7 weeks in the United States and 16 consecutive weeks in the United Kingdom.



1996

Shania Twain wins the Grammy for Best Country Album, *The Woman in Me*, en route to becoming one of the best-selling female country musicians of all time. Meanwhile, Alanis Morissette's *Jagged Little Pill* takes the Grammy for Album of the Year.

2002

Avril Lavigne is the best-selling artist of the year with her debut album, *Let Go*, reaching platinum Recording Industry Association of America certification four times.



2005

Diana Krall is made an Officer of the Order of Canada, the country's second-highest civilian honor for merit.

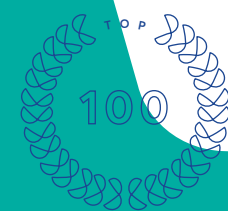


2011

Arcade Fire wins the Grammy for Album of the Year with *The Suburbs*.

2015

Canadian artists hold the top four spots on *Billboard's* Hot 100 chart for the first time: no. 1, "The Hills" by The Weeknd; no. 2, "What Do You Mean?" by Justin Bieber; no. 3, "Can't Feel My Face" by The Weeknd; and no. 4, "Hotline Bling" by Drake.



—COMPILED BY RYAN CHEN
PH.D. CANDIDATE, MANAGEMENT SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING



1

Queering Nostalgia

Penny Arcade and Taylor Mac in Performance

By Sean F. Edgecomb

Setting the Stage

When I first interviewed Taylor Mac almost 10 years ago for my book on the legacy of playwright and actor Charles Ludlam, who pioneered “the ridiculous” as a pointedly queer underground theater aesthetic, I asked Mac to name artists who had influenced his work. In addition to Ludlam, his list included innovative queer predecessors such as Ronald Tavel, John Vaccaro, Ethyl

Eichelberger, and Leigh Bowery. He also talked about the importance of Penny Arcade as a “motherly mentor” not only to him but also to many up-and-coming performers in New York City’s “downtown” scene.

Through Mac’s and Arcade’s groundbreaking performances presented by Stanford Live this fall—Mac’s *A 24-Decade History of Popular Music*

and Arcade’s *Longing Lasts Longer*—a conversation begins to emerge about how their intergenerational queer work intersects through different approaches to nostalgia. In this context, the best way to think about the challenging concept of queerness is as a kind of ambivalence, through which contradiction and inaccessibility become ways of living that stand outside prescribed notions of gender and sexuality. In other words,

queer ambivalence is a refusal to be pinned down, labeled, or backed into a singular identity. Both Mac’s and Arcade’s shows explicitly invite us to resist romanticized notions of nostalgia in response to a mainstreaming of history that favors regressive exclusion over universal empathy.

Queer Generations

Like many of the queer performers who were reared in the underground spaces of the Big Apple, Arcade and Mac share a distinct cultural bond, though they are separated by a generation. Arcade (born Susana Ventura) left New Britain, Connecticut, and landed in the middle of the New York scene in the midst of the youth counterculture in the 1960s. Although still a teenager, she was quickly taken under the wing of gay photographer and artist Jaimie Andrews (who purportedly gave her the sobriquet “Penny Arcade” under the influence of LSD).

Through Andrews’ connections, she would soon find herself the darling of the scene, taking part in productions of the Playhouse of the Ridiculous and Andy Warhol’s *The Factory*, infamously appearing as Penny in Warhol’s and Paul Morrissey’s film *Women in Revolt* (1972). This was the initial stage of a career that would continue to develop for over 50 years, perhaps most notably in her off-Broadway show *Bitch! Dyke! Faghag! Whore!* (1990), which garnered her international acclaim. For her artistic work, community engagement, and ongoing mentorship, Arcade truly is a foremother of queer American performance, earning the title “Queen of the Underground.”

Although she rules with empathy, Arcade’s performances embrace an ambivalent and often radical queerness. Refusing to be tied down or limited as

2



she ages, Arcade continues to create innovative shows, drawing from the past while also expressing frustration with young artists who claim that without funding, they can’t create new work. Although her tireless work and reputation have resulted in a variety of awards and resources, Arcade is a living example of what it means to make original, vibrant art from almost nothing.

In counterpoint to Arcade’s origins on the Atlantic seaboard, Mac (born Taylor Mac Bowyer) hailed from the West Coast, escaping the homogeneity of suburban Stockton, California, to cut his teeth on the stages of San Francisco in the early 1990s. It wasn’t until he relocated to New York in 1994, however, that he was inspired to trace the queer roots of his own distinct solo performances.

This exploration was set in motion when a variety of observers began to compare his gender nonconforming aesthetic with predecessors like Eichelberger and Bowery. Mac’s New York performances

started as small solo shows in found spaces and gay bars in the East Village but eventually graduated to larger ensembles in a variety of Manhattan theaters, culminating with the grand immensity of the *24-Decade History* marathon performance at St. Ann’s Warehouse in October 2016.

While themes of Mac’s shows have varied widely, from a biographical exploration of his life through the lens of Rodgers’ and Hammerstein’s “The Carousel Waltz” to a commedia dell’arte-style treatise on environmental protest, he consistently presents a stage-worthy representation of Taylor Mac—a persona who shares the same name but is a larger than life entertainer, fool, and provocateur.

In performance, Taylor uses the gender pronoun “judy,” partially in homage to Judy Garland, and suggests that judy’s nonconforming gender is that of “performer”—an ambivalent interpretation that lies beyond the boundaries of gender norms. Although

Mac's performances embody this queer ambivalence about identity in a variety of ways, it is particularly evident in his irreverent juxtaposition of the past and the present, colliding traditional theatrical techniques and skills with a completely avant-garde approach and aesthetic.

Queer Nostalgia in Performance

In her 2011 work *Longing Lasts Longer*, Arcade speaks from a concrete present, taking us back into the past through memory—sometimes vibrantly hilarious, sometimes murky and tragic, but always with the same biting wit. For Arcade, nostalgia is a *modus operandi* with which to reflect on the seemingly lost components of a past in which an active queer community was essential to survival.

After all, in addition to her rich artistic connections and subsequent legacy, Arcade was an activist through key events like Stonewall, gay liberation, and the AIDS crisis. When she implores us to consider that "young people live lives unmoored from history," it rings especially poignant as she dances her way through the recent past—and to a fabulously curated soundtrack.

Arcade's reshaping of nostalgia in no way favors the past over the present. Rather, it encourages us not only to honor our forebears but also to hold steadfast to dreams for a more equitable, ambivalent future—while still retaining autonomy beyond the normative boundaries imposed by social acceptability. She calls for a queer kind of authenticity that records buried histories and resurrects lost voices.

In this performance, Arcade embodies the process of queer aging, a narrative that is still only just beginning to develop after decades of oppression, exclusion, shame, and—of course—the overwhelming death toll of the AIDS epidemic. *Longing Lasts Longer* is a quilt stitched from disparate recollections and personal memories, and rather than asking us to revere her hand-crafted nostalgia, Arcade asks us to gingerly safeguard it for the future while adding our own needlework to the intricate design.

If Arcade repositions nostalgia as material with which to construct a metaphoric quilt, then Mac most certainly rips up that quilt and reforms it into a sequin-bedecked, outré ensemble. Several years before *A 24-Decade History* took shape, Mac dealt explicitly with the notion of nostalgia in his play *The Lily's Revenge* (2009). Within the character of The Great Longing Deity spreads a nostalgic plague, which inflects the land and its people with narratives of oppression drawn from the past.

In *A 24-Decade History*, nostalgia is akin to violence because Mac presents it as a construct that sanitizes the past and elevates patriarchal "facts" over narratives of emotional experience and oppression. Mac—along with musical director Matt Ray, costume designer Machine Dazzle, his band, and a supporting cast of "dandy minions" (a whimsical chorus of local performers that facilitate audience participation)—guides us through the traumas of the United States from its origin as a nation in 1776. Although Mac obviously was not alive to experience the popular music for most of these eras, transformed into judy, he acts as a medium to channel diverse voices drawn from the past while, similarly to Arcade, reawakening the marginalized and underrepresented.

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1. Taylor Mac in *A 24-Decade History of Popular Music*
2. Penny Arcade
3. The Be(a)st of Taylor Mac

Mac was inspired, in part, to create the concert by his recollections of the first AIDS walk that he attended in San Francisco in 1986. This experience of gathering, which Mac would come to reflect on as "a community that is falling apart as it comes together," was the seed to germinate *A 24-Decade History's* queerly ambivalent approach to historical revisionism. Throughout the concert, Mac extends this kind of activist care to consider how racism, sexism, homophobia, and religious intolerance have shaped the history of America, before actively exorcising these roots of oppression through the performances in what he deems a "radical faerie realness ritual."

The concept of nostalgia is a complex one, but we might begin to decipher it in a context particular to queerness,

which I understand as a mode that is mercurial and even contradictory in its ambivalence. To be queer presents a web of possibilities in contrast to more-limiting binaries of gender and sexual identity (male/female, gay/straight) that reinforce patriarchal structures of power. Different ways of thinking about how nostalgia shapes identity—from the personal to the political—provide a theme and running commentary through several of the events presented through Stanford Live this season (for example, appearances by Chuck Klosterman, Claudia Rankine, and 600 Highwaymen). In this context, Arcade's and Mac's nonbinary performances provoke a particularly relevant dialogue on how queerness and nostalgia relate to Americans in the LGBT community and its allies yesterday, today, and a more hopeful tomorrow.

Sean F. Edgecomb is an assistant professor of theater in the Department of Performing and Creative Arts at the College of Staten Island, City University of New York. His book Charles Ludlam Lives! Charles Busch, Bradford Louryk, Taylor Mac, and the Queer Legacy of the Ridiculous Theatrical Company was recently released by the University of Michigan Press.



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Hope Gangloff (U.S.A., b. 1974). Study for Search at Suvarnabhumi Airport, 2016. Acrylic on canvas. Courtesy of the artist and Susan Inglett Gallery, New York. © 2017 Hope Gangloff. Photo © Don Stahl, NYC, L.B.2.201

The Diekman Contemporary Commissions Program is organized by the Cantor Arts Center. We gratefully acknowledge support from The Diekman Special Projects Fund in honor of Mona Duggan and her extraordinary dedication to the arts at Stanford University.



1

How I Survived Taylor Mac's 24-Hour-Long Musical History Lesson

By Chloe Veltman

KQED senior arts editor Chloe Veltman chronicles her experience of attending the first-ever full performance in New York of *A 24-Decade History of Popular Music*—the acclaimed drag artist Taylor Mac's most ambitious project to date.

Editor's note: What follows is an abridged version of the author's article. Read the full version at KQED.org.

In the annals of marathon concert experiences, Taylor Mac's *A 24-Decade History of Popular Music* is right up there with legendarily lengthy sets played by the likes of the Grateful Dead, Bruce

Springsteen, and Chilly Gonzales. The acclaimed New York drag performance artist and Stockton, California, native appeared at St. Ann's Warehouse in Brooklyn, New York, in October 2016, presenting his 24-hour-long musical journey through U.S. history for the very first time. There are 246 songs in the work. And I was determined to stay awake for every one of them.

1776–1786: Act I

Mac begins the first of his eight three-hour-long acts with a discussion about the core values upon which our great nation is based. The performer takes us through spirited versions of "Black Is the



2



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BETYE SAAR, *Artist (left)*
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Color of My True Love's Hair," "Yankee Doodle," and other period favorites arranged by the production's formidable music director and pianist Matt Ray. ("Only 245 songs left to go!" Mac says after finishing the first one. Ray grins.) From these, Mac deduces that the United States' founding principles, among others, include "hating Congress," "liking black hair," and "making things."

Mac's getup sets the tone that will mark nearly all of the costumes for the show: He's in a beribboned periwig and hoop skirt contraption that I imagine is what Marie Antoinette would look like if she lost her head at a karaoke bar.

1786–1796

A section on women's lib involving a dress encrusted with disembodied dolls' heads, framed by a couple of

smoking wooden chimneys—an homage to the decade in which steam power was invented. Matthew Flower (aka Machine Dazzle) is Mac's costume designer and truly a mad genius.

1796–1806

A memorable decade, playing ribald drinking songs ("Nine Inch Will Please a Lady") off against hymns performed by a sniffy, bonneted temperance choir ("Drink to Me Only with Thine Eyes") to provoke a discussion about the often-strained coexistence between the puritanical and debauched in American society.

1806–1816: Act II

Mac takes audience participation in his shows seriously, and the floor is already a mess of ripped-up paper, ping-pong balls, etc. from the various antics of the previous three hours. He devotes this section to staging what he calls a "heteronormative jukebox musical about colonization."

1816–1826

Mac's helpers—whom he refers to as his "dandy minions"—pass out eye masks. We then spend the next hour stumbling about in the dark. Why? That's the decade braille was invented. Also, Mac wants us to rely less on our sense of sight. So he has us feed each other grapes, smell carnations, and play a giant game of blindman's bluff.

1826–1836

The next decade deals with the Indian Removal Act. Mac wears a cartoonish milkmaid dress with what looks like small plastic figurines protruding from it. As we learn about the Trail of Tears and one poor Native American orphan's journey from Cherokee lands in Georgia toward Christian salvation in Oklahoma, the cast performs hillbilly, washboard-infused renditions of children's songs

like "Turkey in the Straw" and "Goosey Goosey Gander."

1836–1846: Act III

This is perhaps the most pensive and dream-like of all the show's sections, dealing with the subject of slavery and the Underground Railroad that brought captives to freedom. As Mac and his band perform songs like "Wade in the Water" and "No More Auction Block for Me," puppeteers illustrate the spirit of the music with ghostly puppet sequences.

1846–1856

Mac announces an epic, *lucha libre*-style smackdown between Walt Whitman and Stephen Foster for the title of "Father of American Song." We're to yell "Oh Captain, My Captain" if we want Whitman to win and the flaccid "doo dah, doo dah" for Foster. Of course, the Captain wins every round of the fight, and the audience collectively pelts poor Foster with ping-pong balls. Still, when Mac performs one of Foster's most beautiful and socially conscious songs, "Hard Times," most of us vote in the composer's favor.

1856–1866

There are lots of spunky war songs in this section, from both the Union and Confederate sides, including "When Johnny Comes Marching Home" and that sickly nostalgic idyll to the South, "Dixie," which causes half the audience to hiss in disgust.

1866–1876: Act IV

Mac has decided it's time for us all to have a "family dinner." As we munch on delicacies culled from Catharine Beecher's 1871 cookbook, Mac treats us to ditties of the era, like "Home on the Range" (done in a moody, Dave Brubeck jazz style), while a bunch



3

of circus performers make human pyramids and perform other tricks.

1876–1886

After our civilized family meal, things start to get really weird. We're in the Gilded Age, and Mac decides to spend an hour performing an homage to Gilbert and Sullivan, who were as popular in the United States in the late 19th century as they were in their native England. Only he sets his abridged version of *The Mikado* on Mars.

1886–1896

This section deals with the Oklahoma Land Rush of 1889. Mac instructs the audience to make a run for a big bunch of helium-filled balloons, grab them, and then use them to stake out their turf. There aren't enough balloons to go around, so those left without have to negotiate with the new "landowners" for space in their domain.

1896–1906: Act V

We've officially reached the halfway point. Mac is wearing his most beautiful dress yet, a figure-hugging, Gustav Klimt-inspired creation of black and gold. We're exploring what it means to be a newly arrived immigrant to these shores. Over the next hour, we flop about on mattresses and think about what it's like to have sex in a tenement within earshot of dozens of family members while Mac performs tuneful renditions of popular songs by New York Jews of the time, like Irving Berlin's "All Alone."

1906–1916

Now we're in the trenches. Mac's songs about life during wartime include a terrific feminist take on "Keep the Home Fires Burning."

1916–1926

In this section about the Roaring Twenties, Mac chooses to view the hedonistic excesses of the era not as victorious jollity in the wake of wartime

deprivations, but rather as postwar trauma. Even though the hour is a loopy cocktail of balloons, good-time numbers like "Happy Days Are Here Again," and a conga line, Mac keeps reminding us that 16.5 million people died in the war.

1926–1936: Act VI

Now we're in the Depression era. Mac feeds our souls with "Minnie the Moocher," "It Don't Mean a Thing (If it Ain't Got That Swing)," and other hits. He also feeds our bodies: The dandy minions emerge with huge vats of delicious split pea soup and bread rolls. We get into snaking soup lines and gratefully accept this well-past-midnight snack.

1936–1946:

At some point during this act—I'm a little hazy on which decade exactly it happens—the performer transforms himself into a walking chocolate-vanilla ice-cream cone with sprinkles. "What decade are we in?" I ask a couple of

1. Taylor Mac involves an audience member in a scene from Act II

2. Taylor Mac in Act VII

3. Taylor Mac explores 18th-century drinking culture in Act I

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fellow audience members. No one seems to know. "It's at that time when it all slips away," I hear Mac say from the stage.

1946–1956

This decade is all about the white flight to the suburbs and the threat of the atomic bomb. Mac resembles a Stepford-wife-on-acid, with a wig made out of cardboard 3-D glasses and a shawl in the shape of a white picket fence.

1956–1966: Act VII

Guest singers Stephanie Christi'an and Thornetta Davis join Mac for this section about the civil rights era. Rambunctious performances of Nina Simone songs keep me going. When they get to "Mississippi Goddam," I start to cry. Someone hands me a boxed breakfast. I gratefully dig in, with salty tears pelting my yogurt.

1966–1976

An hour devoted to the disco era and the rise of gay activism, kicked off

by an energetic rendition of Curtis Mayfield's "Move On Up." In a sly act of genius, Mac reappropriates the homophobic Ted Nugent hit "Snakeskin Cowboys" as a gay prom song.

1976–1986

This one's all about a back-room sex party. It involves "Purple Rain," among other great let's-get-it-on tracks.

1986–1996: Act VIII

We're diving into the AIDS crisis. Mac is wearing a dress covered in cassette tapes. The music is a mad mix-tape of goth-pop hits like "Blood Makes Noise" and "Addicted to Love," with tracks like Whitney's Houston's "I Wanna Dance with Somebody" mixed in to throw us off, I guess.

1996–2006

This decade, devoted to radical lesbian songs, is a bit of a struggle for me. That said, I appreciate Mac turning this decade into a "lesbian tailgate party"

complete with vagina decorations, mimosas, hot dogs cooked up on a George Foreman grill, lawn chairs, and several happy-looking dykes. I eat two bags of popcorn in solidarity.

2006–2016

I forgot to mention that Mac has been steadily hemorrhaging musicians for 23 hours, at a rate of around one an hour. Now there's no one on stage but him. With a hoarse voice and almost slurred speech, Mac performs the last part of his musical journey solo, accompanying himself at different times on the piano, banjo, and ukulele. The songs are alternately angry and funny, and consistently moving. Mac composed them all himself. One track is dedicated to last summer's bloodbath at the gay club in Orlando; another, to the life of a "Rank and File Queer."

The 24-hour act of heroism ends quietly. Then the room erupts.

4



4. Taylor Mac enters the 1970s

5. Taylor Mac in Act VII





No, we are filled not with nostalgia, we are filled with longing. Longing lasts longer, longer than anything else.

—PENNY ARCADE
FROM *LONGING LASTS LONGER*

Millennials Are Not the Problem

By Penny Arcade

Millennials, as you may have heard, are the most studied group in history. Much is made of their “entitlement”—born of helicopter parenting—and their unique motivators, and they have been characterized as young people who demand a high level of attention, respect, and feedback. Yet many of the millennials I am meeting, despite this generational stereotyping, are on the same journey I was on as a young person. Older generations have given them access to information without bothering to place it in deep historical context, and one can make very little out of information that lacks a frame.

Millennials are not to blame for the overzealous parenting and all-encompassing reward system that boomers have put in place to address the custodial shortcomings of their own upbringing, which has left them clinging to a desperate nostalgia. *Longing Lasts Longer*, my performance piece, is a refutation of that nostalgia in which our society seems to be drowning. The “good old days” were not the good old days because every decade has its problems and disappointments; yet it is undeniable that in many ways, we are experiencing the erasure of history and, very possibly, the

end of a habitable planet. At the very time authenticity is being touted as the selling point for everything from beer to jeans, we are witnessing the destruction of the authentic itself as it becomes a branding mechanism.

Longing Lasts Longer is a context provider, historically and sociologically—my attempt to give my audiences a way to contextualize their own contemporary experiences. I want this to happen whether the viewer is 20 or 70.

I believe that young people, students today in search of

their own authenticity, their own becoming—like generations before them—will reject the kneejerk political correctness that often limits true inquiry. Just as students before them from the 1960s escaped the straitjacket of conformist thinking in their quest for personal freedom and social liberation, so will millennial students reject the conventionality of various new extremes of overprotection, from trigger warnings to the cult of entitled coddling. I feel a backlash to political correctness rising on college campuses everywhere. Viva la revolution!

Behind the Scenes

JUL / AUG 2017

Since arriving at Stanford last summer, one of the things I’ve been having the most fun with is playing with space. You may have noticed new configurations of the Bing main stage, studio, and lobby. And this summer, we will continue this experiment beyond Bing’s four walls with our first performance on the east lawn. We hope that these changes provide more-intimate interactions between artist and audience. The images here illustrate these new uses of the space for those of you who have yet to experience them in person.

—CHRIS LORWAY
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

1 STUDIO SERIES

In January, we launched our Bing Studio series with a performance by Alan Cumming. The beauty of this space is that it can be configured in an infinite number of ways, making it ideal for a wide range of performance types.

2 NEW MAIN-STAGE SETUPS

The Bing “end stage” is one of the new flexible main-stage configurations that offers the entire audience a front-facing view of the performers. This configuration works particularly well for amplified performances and was premiered at this year’s *Bing Fling* featuring Kristin Chenoweth.

3 OUTDOOR SHOWS

Bring a blanket, a picnic, and sunscreen for *Music of Woodstock* on July 14, which will feature an outdoor stage on the lawn adjacent to Bing (pictured in this rendering). This environment is ideal for festival-format shows where—in addition to great music—food, drink, and dancing are essential elements.





1

Donations in Action

Cultivating the next generation of music lovers

"We are so thrilled to have this at our school!" says Sarah Moulder as she finishes a coaching session with Stanford Live teaching artist Armando Castellano. The East Palo Alto middle school music teacher is part of a new collaboration between the Ravenswood City School District and Stanford Live, in which Ravenswood teachers receive one-on-one training from a master teaching artist. Castellano, an accomplished French horn player, also coaches beginning music students and brings his group

Quinteto Latino, a woodwind quintet dedicated to the music of Latino composers, to perform at school assemblies and even play alongside students in classes.

Moulder is also an enthusiastic participant in our teacher workshops, which cover topics from hip-hop culture as a teaching tool to working with students with disabilities. She's among the teachers taking advantage of donated tickets and subsidized bus transportation to our student matinees,

which feature many of our most popular main-stage artists. Student matinees, teacher workshops, and our in-school K-12 programs are made possible by the generous support of the Koret Foundation, an anonymous major donor, and all our Stanford Live annual donors.

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To make a donation to Stanford Live to support our performances and K-12 programs, please visit live.stanford.edu/give or contact Danielle Menona at 650.725.8782.

1 STUDENT MATINEES

More than 820 students and teachers from local schools attended a special matinee performance by the duo Black Violin (Kev Marcus and Wil B.) in January.

2 CLASS VISITS

Prior to their performance in Memorial Auditorium in March, members of New Zealand's Black Grace led a dance class at Eastside College Preparatory School.

3 TEACHER WORKSHOPS

Also in January, the educators of Alphabet Rockers used hip-hop as a teaching tool for participating teachers who were put through their paces in Bing Studio.

4 SCHOOL SHOWS

Before his presentation of *Morgan's Journey* in the Bing Studio last summer, Robert Morgan (aka Morgan the Clown) took time to make a visit to the Belle Haven School in Menlo Park.

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SEPTEMBER 22
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A 24-Decade History of Popular Music (Abridged)
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OCTOBER

Wed
OCTOBER 4
The Judas Passion
Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra

Fri
OCTOBER 6
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Wed
OCTOBER 11
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SEPT. 22



Sun
OCTOBER 15
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Wed-Sun
OCTOBER 18-22
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Sat
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The Music of Miles Davis
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OCT. 11



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The Interlude Café in Bing Concert Hall's lobby serves guests before performances and during intermission. For complete hours, menus, and preordering options, visit live.stanford.edu/dining.

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Performance Venue Information

- 1 Bing Concert Hall & Bing Concert Hall Ticket Office
- 2 Frost Amphitheater
- 3 Memorial Church
- 4 Memorial Auditorium
- 5 Stanford Ticket Office
- 6 Anderson Collection at Stanford University
- P Public Parking
- Walking Path
- F Alumni Café, Arrillaga Alumni Center



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Parking for Bing Concert Hall and Frost Amphitheater can be found in the Galvez Lot and on Lasuen Street, Museum Way, Roth Way, and the Oval.

Parking for Memorial Church can be found along the Oval at the end of Palm Drive, on Roth Way, on Museum Way, and on Lasuen Street.

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