



NATIONAL MEDAL OF ARTS | NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK

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**Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival Presents
Camille A. Brown & Dancers
in the World Premiere of *I AM***

**Emma Cianchi, House of Jit, Lady in the House Dance Co, Bindlestiff Family Cirkus,
and David Dorfman Dance will perform on the Henry J. Leir Stage**

July 2, 2024 (BECKET, Mass.)—Jacob's Pillow welcomes four-time Tony Award-nominated choreographer and 2016 Jacob's Pillow Dance Award Recipient, Camille A. Brown, back for her company's full week engagement during Week 6 of this summer's Festival. In their first appearance since 2017, Camille A. Brown & Dancers will perform the World Premiere of *I AM*, a work that features dance and music genres of the African Diaspora and is inspired by both the HBO series *Lovecraft Country* and the rhythms of the movie *Drumline*. The work imagines a creative space for cultural liberation and conjures the various ways that joy lives within Black culture. Camille A. Brown & Dancers will premiere this work in the Ted Shawn Theatre from Wednesday, July 31 through Sunday, August 4.

"It is a thrill to welcome Camille A. Brown back to the Pillow, this time for the world premiere of *I AM*," said Jacob's Pillow Executive and Artistic Director Pamela Tatge. "Since she received the Jacob's Pillow Dance Award in 2016, she has seen a meteoric rise as a choreographer and director of opera and Broadway productions, from her stunning work on Terence Blanchard's *Fire Shut Up in My Bones*, to her Tony nominated work this year on the Alicia Keys musical *Hell's Kitchen*.

"When I saw her Pillow Lab showing in January of 2023," Tatge continued, "I knew that her newest work for her own company needed to premiere at the Pillow. She has always had a gift

for sharing with audiences the ways that joy shows up in Black culture. We can't wait for her magnificent dancers and musicians to take over the Ted Shawn Theatre with this groundbreaking new work."

Week 6 of the Festival will also feature one-night-only performances on the Henry J. Leir Stage, beginning with Emma Cianchi's company, ArtGarage, from Naples, Italy, in the world premiere of *Il mare che ci unisce* on Wednesday, July 31. Bindlestiff Family Cirkus—a world-traveled duet of American artists that brings a unique hybrid of vaudeville, circus and sideshow spectacle—will perform on Thursday, August 1. On Friday, August 2, audiences will see House of Jit as well as A Lady In The House Dance Co., in a shared program that offers a thrilling peek into the world of Jit—a regional and acrobatic social dance from Detroit—and a performance by A Lady In The House's founder and legendary dancer in waacking and house dance styles, Nubian Néné. One-night-only performances are available on a Choose What You Pay model.

Jacob's Pillow will end the week of outdoor performances by welcoming David Dorfman Dance on Saturday, August 3 and Sunday, August 4 for performances of *(A)Way Out of My Body*—a collective story of searching for personal "truths" among fantastical sensations. Tickets for David Dorfman Dance start at \$40. All performances are now on sale.

In addition to performances, Jacob's Pillow will also offer a series of curated events for the public that explore the intersection of dance and technology. Conceived by Talvin Wilks with new media artist LaJuné McMillian, *Snakehips in our DNA* is a free, open-gallery experience in Sommers Studio features dancers responding to the soul and spirit of the legendary Harlem Renaissance era dancer, Earl 'Snakehips' Tucker. Co-commissioned by Jacob's Pillow and the Apollo Theatre in New York City, *Snakehips in our DNA* explores the trajectory of dance from the Harlem Renaissance to the present through video installation and new media. The gallery is open from Wednesday July 31 through Sunday August 4.

Then on Friday, August 2, Jacob's Pillow will present the beloved All Styles Dance Battle, in which dancers representing a wide range of styles—including Festival artists, dancers of The School at Jacob's Pillow, and regional artists—compete for first place. Tickets are on sale and start at \$50.

Jacob's Pillow will also offer a free event held on Saturday, August 3 centered on the campus's Eastern Woodlands Homesite, conceived and developed by Andre Strongbearheart Gaines Jr.—Creative Director of NO LOOSE BRAIDS and member of Nipmuc Nation—along with Tracy Ramos, William SmallEarCoyote Connors, Miguel WanderingTurtle Garate, and Nazario TallHairRedDeer Garate. This discussion onsite at Jacob's Garden will bring the Eastern

Woodland people and the public together to highlight urgent issues of access, health, and the sustainability of cedar swamps in the Eastern Woodlands.

Additionally, Jacob's Pillow will offer a free PillowTalk on Sat., August 3 at 4pm inspired by Harlem Renaissance-era dancer Earl 'Snakehips' Tucker—the focus of the open gallery experience *Snakehips in Our DNA* in Sommers Studio. Jacob's Pillow will also offer a workshop with headlining company Camille A. Brown & Dancers on Sunday, August 4. This event is open to all dance experience levels, ages 16+.

ABOUT CAMILLE A. BROWN & DANCERS

Recipient of the Jacob's Pillow Dance Award in 2016, four-time Tony Award-nominated choreographer and director Camille A. Brown continues her meteoric rise creating new work on stage, TV, and film as the founder of Camille A. Brown & Dancers.

Brown is a “prodigious” (*VOGUE*) Bessie, Obie, and Princess Grace Award-winning choreographer and director. She made history as the first Black director at the Metropolitan Opera when she co-directed *Fire Shut Up In My Bones* (2021). With the Broadway revival of *for colored girls...* in 2022 (which earned her a Tony nomination for Best Direction of a Play), she became the first Black woman to direct and choreograph a Broadway play since Katherine Dunham in 1955.

Following her work earlier this spring as the choreographer of the new Alicia Keys musical *Hell's Kitchen*—which led to a Tony Award nomination for Best Choreography (her third Tony nomination in this category)—Brown returns to the roots of her own dance company, deepening her exploration of Black joy in the world premiere of *I AM* in the Ted Shawn Theatre, developed in part through a Pillow Lab residency in 2023.

About the World Premiere of *I AM*

While Brown has often disrupted our understanding of the past, in this new work she imagines a creative space for cultural liberation—conjuring the various ways that joy lives within Black culture, querying the possibilities of imagination, and boldly investigating the future.

Inspired by the “I AM” episode of the HBO series *Lovecraft Country* and the rhythms of the movie *Drumline*, this new work picks up where *ink* (2017) left off by blasting us into a universe

where anything is possible. Featuring various dance and music genres of the African Diaspora, *I AM* includes live and original music by Deah Love Harriott, Juliette Jones, Jaylen Petinuad, and Martine Wade.

Lead commissioning support for I AM has been provided by Jacob's Pillow's Joan B. Hunter New Work Commission, The Joyce Theater, the Meany Center for the Performing Arts, and the Apollo.

The creation and presentation of I AM was made possible with major support from the Mellon Foundation and additional support from the New England Foundation for the Arts' National Dance Project (with lead funding from the Doris Duke Foundation and Mellon Foundation); the Rockefeller Brothers Fund; the Princess Grace Foundation-USA; Masterwork Music and Art Foundation; the Harkness Foundation for Dance; Ford Foundation; and the Howard Gilman Foundation. Public support was provided by the National Endowment for the Arts; the New York State Council on the Arts, with the support of Governor Kathy Hochul and the New York State Legislature; and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs.

I AM received creative development time and funding support for residencies through Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival's Pillow Lab (Becket, MA) and the Catskill Mountain Foundation's Orpheum Performing Arts Center (Tannersville, NY). The work also developed at Kaatsbaan Cultural Park (Tivoli, NY).

ABOUT EMMA CIANCHI

The outdoor Henry J. Leir Stage hosts Emma Cianchi and her company from Naples, Italy for their one-night-only Pillow debut on July 31. This performance includes a "Choose What You Pay" ticketing option, with a suggested ticket price of \$25.

Based in Naples, Italy, Emma Cianchi is the leading force of ArtGarage, and curator of dance at the Teatro Bellini. Cianchi's company in its United States debut will present the world premiere of *Il mare che ci unisce* (translation: *the sea that unites us*). The work explores the subtle connections that despite distances unite people across time and space. As if from a bas-relief, ancestral figures of the culture and history of the Mediterranean land appear in a work with music composed by the Neapolitan violinist Lino Cannavacciuolo who uses instruments typical of the musical culture of southern Italy in a new contemporary form. The presentation at Jacob's Pillow is supported by the Italian Ministry of Culture and American Dance Abroad.

ABOUT BUNDLESTIFF FAMILY CIRKUS

The outdoor Henry J. Leir Stage hosts Bindlestiff Family Cirkus for a special one-night-only performance on August 1. This performance includes a “Choose What You Pay” ticketing option, with a suggested ticket price of \$25.

Since 1995, The Bindlestiff Family Cirkus has traveled the world with a talented and diverse troupe of American circus artists, bringing a unique hybrid of vaudeville, circus, and sideshow spectacle to theaters, clubs, colleges, and festivals. Bindlestiff Family Cirkus combines jugglers, acrobats, contortionists, plate spinning, sword swallowing, novelty music and dance, and other risk-taking feats set to live music, creating an interactive evening of fun for the entire family.

The company’s shows have ranged from family events to annual Off-Broadway productions and Bindlestiff’s Flatbed Follies, a free mobile circus in the streets of NYC. Annually, Bindlestiff presents the NYC Unicycle Festival; the First of May Award for support of emerging artists; connects youth to the arts with Bindlestiff’s Cirkus After School and Cavalcade of Youth performances; and provides a springboard to development with Bindlestiff’s Open Stage Variety Show, the premiere open mic just for circus folks. The *New York Times* has called Bindlestiff Family Cirkus an “old-fashioned variety entertainment of the sort Ed Sullivan so astutely scooped up, but with twists,” while *TIME OUT NY* exclaimed that “this troupe of circus artists will remind your family what the circus is really about.”

ABOUT HOUSE OF JIT & A LADY IN THE HOUSE DANCE CO

The outdoor Henry J. Leir Stage hosts dancers from Detroit’s House of Jit and A Lady In The House Dance Company’s Nubian Néné for a special one-night-only performance on August 2. This performance includes a “Choose What You Pay” ticketing option, with a suggested ticket price of \$25.

This shared program offers a thrilling peek into the world of Jit, a regional social dance from Detroit marked by acrobatic flips and kicks, drops and spins, and feet that hit the air at high speed. House of Jit, making its Pillow debut, is a collective whose founder, Mike Manson, was featured on the television show *So You Think You Can Dance*, and who has performed around the world. For New England audiences, this is a rare opportunity to enjoy House of Jit’s unmatched style live, as the group works to spread the Detroit Jit culture into the mainstream.

Ticket buyers will also see a program by A Lady In The House’s founder Nubian Néné, a legendary dancer in waacking and house dance styles. Born in Montréal, Nubian Néné is a powerful artist who wears many hats: host, judge, performer, director, choreographer,

community builder, and more. She teaches, judges and performs nationally and internationally, and has appeared on stages including the New Victory Theater, Gramercy Theater, and at Lincoln Center. She is the founder of Waack Bazaar Festival as well as A Lady In The House Dance Co., and was a CUNY Dance Initiative 2022-23 Artist in Residence. At Jacob's Pillow, she hosted last summer's All Styles Dance Battle, and also performed on the Leir Stage with Passion Fruit in 2022 as well as with the collective Nefer Global Movement in 2023.

ABOUT DAVID DORFMAN DANCE

For almost 40 years, David Dorfman has been on a mission “to get the whole world dancing” by delivering audiences a provocative mix of visceral dance, music, and text, in performances that offer post-modern dance as something inviting, accessible, and interactive. Dorfman “has never shied away from open-hearted explorations of self and society, channeling big ideas into raw hyper-athletic movement that calls for go-for-broke dancers” (*The New York Times*.) At the Pillow, the company will perform *(A)Way Out of My Body*, a collective story of searching for personal “truths” among fantastical sensations. The piece features live music by singer/songwriter Lizzy de Lise and music director/composer Sam Crawford.

David Dorfman Dance has toured nationally and internationally from Turkey to Tajikistan, and has performed at major New York City venues including The Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM), The Joyce Theater, The Kitchen, Danspace Project/St. Mark's Church, La Mama Theater, The Duke on 42nd Street, The Met Breuer, and the 92nd St. “Y”/Harkness Dance Festival. Dorfman and the company's dancers and artistic collaborators have been honored with eight New York Dance and Performance (Bessie) Awards. Company alumni include Kyle Abraham, Raja Feather Kelly, Jennifer Nugent, and Kendra Portier.

PERFORMANCE & TICKET DETAILS

Tickets are on sale now; online at jacobspillow.org and via phone at 413.243.0745

Camille A. Brown & Dancers

July 31-August 4; Wednesday, Thursday, and Saturday at 8pm; Friday, Saturday, and Sunday at 2pm

Ted Shawn Theatre | Tickets from \$65

Emma Cianchi

Wednesday, July 31 at 6pm

Henry J. Leir Stage | Choose What You Pay

Bindlestiff Family Cirkus

Thursday, August 1 at 6pm

Henry J. Leir Stage | Choose What You Pay

House of Jit & A Lady In The House Dance Co

Friday, August 2 at 6pm

Henry J. Leir Stage | Choose What You Pay

David Dorfman Dance

Saturday, August 3 at 6pm; Sunday, August 4 at 12pm

Henry J. Leir Stage | Tickets from \$40

ADDITIONAL EVENTS**Morning Classes**

July 30 - August 2; Tuesday through Friday, 9-10am

Open to all dance experience levels, ages 16+. Offered weekly through the summer in Ruth St. Denis Studio. \$12 per class; \$50 for 5 class card. Pay via online pre-registration or cash/card at the door.

- **Ballet:** Tuesdays through August 20
- **Contemporary:** Wednesdays through August 21
- **West African Dance & Spiritual Well-Being:** Thursdays through August 22
- **Hip-Hop/Street Styles:** Fridays through August 23

Snakehips in our DNA

July 31 – August 4, Wed.-Sun., 1-8pm

Sommers Studio | FREE

A Dance & Technology Event

Snakehips in our DNA is a free, open-gallery experience where visitors can explore the trajectory of dance from the Harlem Renaissance to the present through a stunning video installation of Black movement artists. This choreographic media collage is commissioned by the

Apollo Theatre in New York City and conceived by director/dramaturg Talvin Wilks in collaboration with new media artist LaJuné McMillian.

Produced by SOZO, with an original score by Dominique Luis, sound design by Kwamina “Binnie” Biney of DreamWolf Projects, and co-commissioning support by Jacob’s Pillow, Snakehips In Our DNA utilizes new media technology such as motion capture animation, and features interview footage of dancers including Mickey Davidson, Drew Dollaz, Bernard Dove, Roobi Gaskins, Rocka Jamez, Chanon Judson, Michela Marino Lerman, and Maleek Washington, as they respond to the soul and spirit of the legendary Harlem Renaissance-era dancer, Earl ‘Snakehips’ Tucker.

This is a tribute and timely meditation on the Harlem Renaissance’s permanence in today’s contemporary culture, coming to Jacob’s Pillow this summer following a two-week appearance in the Apollo’s Victoria Theater in April 2024. This event is free and unticketed; entry and re-entry are permitted at any time between 1pm and 6pm from July 31 through August 4.

All Styles Dance Battle

Fri., Aug. 2, 8:30pm

Perles Family Studio

Join us for our All Styles Dance Battle as dancers representing a wide range of styles—including Festival artists, dancers of The School at Jacob’s Pillow, regional artists, and more—compete in this lively battle. Nubian Néné and Buddha Stretch will be returning for a second time in a row as host and DJ for the event. In addition, Mike Manson from House of Jit, Michela Marino Lerman, and Hurrikane will be guest judges for the dance battle.

Eastern Woodlands Homesite

Sat., Aug. 3, 12-1:30pm

FREE with online registration encouraged

Join Andre Strongbearheart Gaines Jr., Creative Director of NO LOOSE BRAIDS, with Tracy Ramos, William SmallEarCoyote Connors, Miguel WanderingTurtle Garate, and Nazario TallHairRedDeer Garate to learn about Eastern Woodlands culture, land use, and living presence through exploration of a traditional Nipmuc homesite.

PillowTalk: Snakehips in our DNA

Sun., Aug. 3, 4pm

Blake’s Barn

FREE

Inspired by Harlem Renaissance-era dancer Earl ‘Snakehips’ Tucker, this work by director/dramaturg Talvin Wilks and new media artist LaJuné McMillian will be discussed while it's on view in Sommers Studio.

David Dorfman Dance

Sat., Aug. 3 at 6pm; Sun., Aug 4 at 12 pm

Henry J. Leir Stage | Tickets from \$40

For almost 40 years, David Dorfman has been on a mission “to get the whole world dancing” by delivering audiences a provocative mix of visceral dance, music, and text, in performances that offer post-modern dance as something inviting, accessible, and interactive. Dorfman “has never shied away from open-hearted explorations of self and society, channeling big ideas into raw hyper-athletic movement that calls for go-for-broke dancers” (*The New York Times*.) At the Pillow, the company will perform *(A)Way Out of My Body*, a collective story of searching for personal “truths” among fantastical sensations. The piece features live music by singer/songwriter Lizzy de Lise and music director/composer Sam Crawford.

David Dorfman Dance has toured nationally and internationally from Turkey to Tajikistan, and has performed at major New York City venues including The Brooklyn Academy of Music (BAM), The Joyce Theater, The Kitchen, Danspace Project/St. Mark’s Church, La Mama Theater, The Duke on 42nd Street, The Met Breuer, and the 92nd St. “Y”/Harkness Dance Festival. Dorfman and the company’s dancers and artistic collaborators have been honored with eight New York Dance and Performance (Bessie) Awards. Company alumni include Kyle Abraham, Raja Feather Kelly, Jennifer Nugent, and Kendra Portier.

Related content on Jacob’s Pillow Interactive:

David Dorfman, 1997:

<https://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/david-dorfman-dance/season-athletes-project/>

David Dorfman, 2011:

<https://danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org/david-dorfman-dance/prophets-of-funk/>

Workshop with Festival Artists: Camille A. Brown & Dancers

Sun., August 4, 10-11:30am

Open to all dance experience levels, ages 16+

Experience the choreography from the 2022 Broadway revival of Ntozake Shange’s choreopoem *for colored girls who considered suicide/when the rainbow is enuf*, a work directed and choreographed by Camille A. Brown. Rehearsal Director and Assistant Choreographer on the production Mora-Amina Parker and CABD dancer Starla Edwards will facilitate this workshop in

the spirit of community and celebration of Ntozake Shange's work. Comfortable clothing and socks recommended.

Pittsfield Community Workshop - Seniors Get Down with David Dorfman and Lisa Race

Sun., August 4, 5-6:30pm | FREE

Common Room, Zion Lutheran Church, 74 First Street

Open to all dance experience levels, ages 16+

Movement of our precious bodies – in any way, shape, or form – is all important. In this workshop tailored to our senior population, we'll explore line dancing, disco, and improvisation. Seniors with any level of dance experience (or none!) can find joy and discovery in this workshop. In our unpredictable world, filled with daily obstacles of all kinds, how do we navigate toward positive change, resilience, and empathic behavior? Our answer is to dance through life with each other safely and with magical risk appropriate for the occasion. We need to move in new directions—discover paths we have only dreamt of. Online registration is strongly encouraged at <https://www.jacobspillow.org/events/community-workshops/>.

FESTIVAL EXHIBITS & ARCHIVES – ONGOING

JOHN LINDQUIST: AS OF TODAY

It's impossible to overstate how the photographs of John Lindquist (1890-1980) have shaped public perception of the Pillow's first four decades and influenced all subsequent photographers here. Now the institutional home for Lindquist's body of work, Harvard University's Houghton Library has digitized many thousands of images, and we are able to learn more about our past through these carefully-selected new prints, many of which are being exhibited for the first time. This exhibit will be discussed in a freePillowTalk on Sunday, August 11 at 4pm. *Blake's Barn; open Tue-Sun, noon through final curtain.*

ROYAL BALLET CONNECTIONS

Even as this season marks The Royal Ballet's Pillow debut, the links between these two iconic dance institutions run deep. Some of the evidence is on display here, in rare photos and footage spanning the decades. From Alicia Markova and Antony Tudor to contemporary artists including Pam Tanowitz and Wayne McGregor, the shared histories are surfaced and celebrated. *Ted Shawn Theatre Lobby; open Tue-Sun, noon through final curtain.*

FANTASY MEETS REALITY: THROUGH THE EYES OF A DENISHAWN DANCER

Curated by Phil Chan and Caroline Hamilton, this exhibition builds upon last year's initial look at Denishawn's 1925-26 Asian tour. With newly-discovered treasures, this re-examination of the tour focuses on the experiences of three Denishawn dancers: Ernestine Day, Mary Howry, and Jane Sherman. Included are costumes they retained, objects they purchased, and words they wrote—challenging viewers to ponder what it means to share culture with integrity. Co-curator Phil Chan will offer free public tours of this exhibition on Thursday, July 4 and Friday, July 5 at 4:30pm. *Blake's Barn; open Tue-Sun, noon through final curtain.*

Jacob's Pillow Archives/Norton Owen Reading Room

This spacious, informal library and reading room allows visitors to view videos, browse through books, access the Pillow's computer catalog, or peruse permanent collections of Pillow programs and photographs from the Archives. The Reading Room and new Special Collections Room also feature recent donations and more archival treasures from the Stephan Driscoll Collection. *Blake's Barn; open Tues.-Sun., noon through final curtain.*

Online Exhibit: Jacob's Pillow Dance Interactive

This evolving online resource features breathtaking video highlights of Pillow performances from the early 1930s through today, with an expanded section of multimedia essays featuring talks, photos, and other exclusive content organized into various themes.

danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org.

ABOUT JACOB'S PILLOW

Jacob's Pillow is a National Historic Landmark, recipient of the National Medal of Arts, and home to America's longest-running international dance festival, which celebrates its 92nd season in Summer 2024. Jacob's Pillow acknowledges that it rests on the ancestral homelands of the Muh-he-con-ne-ok or Mohican people. We pay honor and respect to their ancestors and elders past and present as we commit to building a more inclusive and equitable space for all. In addition, we acknowledge the Nipmuc, the Wampanoag and other tribal nations who also made their homes in what is now known as Massachusetts.

Founded by Ted Shawn in 1933, each Festival includes national and international dance companies and free and ticketed performances, talks, tours, classes, exhibits, events, and community programs. The School at Jacob's Pillow, a prestigious professional dance training center, advances the careers of the upcoming generation of performers and choreographers; during the Festival, 100 international dancers evolve as artists in ballet, choreography, contemporary, musical theatre, tap, and other genres, and year round, artist faculty and accomplished alumni nurture younger dancers in a series of Jacob's Pillow 360 workshops and intensives offered in partnership with leading dance institutions worldwide. The Pillow also provides professional advancement opportunities across disciplines of arts administration, design, video, and production through

its seasonal internship program. Through its community engagement programs, the Pillow serves as a partner and active citizen in its local community. The Pillow's extensive Archives, open year-round to the public and highlighted online at danceinteractive.jacobspillow.org, chronicle more than a century of dance in photographs, programs, books, costumes, audiotapes, and videos.

Notable artists who have created or premiered dances at the Pillow include choreographers Antony Tudor, Agnes de Mille, Alvin Ailey, Donald McKayle, Kevin McKenzie, Twyla Tharp, Ralph Lemon, Susan Marshall, Trisha Brown, Ronald K. Brown, Wally Cardona, Andrea Miller, and Trey McIntyre; performed by artists such as Mikhail Baryshnikov, Carmen de Lavallade, Mark Morris, Dame Margot Fonteyn, Edward Villella, Rasta Thomas, and hundreds of others. On March 2, 2011, President Barack Obama honored Jacob's Pillow with a National Medal of Arts, the highest arts award given by the United States Government, making the Pillow the first dance presenting organization to receive this prestigious award. The Pillow's Executive and Artistic Director since 2016 is Pamela Tatge. For more information, visit www.jacobspillow.org.

MAJOR INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT FOR JACOB'S PILLOW IS GENEROUSLY PROVIDED BY: Arison Arts Foundation, Barr Foundation, Bloomberg Philanthropies, Doris Duke Foundation, Ford Foundation, John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency, Mellon Foundation, Mertz Gilmore Foundation, National Endowment for the Arts, National Endowment for the Humanities, Craig H. Neilsen Foundation, The Shubert Foundation, and the U.S. Department of Education. *As of June 1, 2024.*

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