



## Rookh Quartet

Friday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2021, 1200

### Programme

Jamie Keesecker	<i>The Impetuous Winds</i>
Violeta Dinescu	<i>Abendandacht</i>
Drew Hammond	<i>Soliloquy</i> (world premiere)
Elizabeth Raum	<i>Quartet for Four Horns</i> <i>I. Allegretto con brio</i> <i>II. Andante con moto</i> <i>III. Scherzo</i> <i>IV. Echoes</i>
Alisson Kruusmaa	<i>Songs of a Black Butterfly</i>
Michael Kallstrom	<i>Head Banger</i>
Jane Stanley	<i>the evolution of Lalla Rookh*</i>

*\* This piece won't be performed on Friday, but will be added to the programme following the initial YouTube livestream and will be available on our YouTube channel together with the rest of the programme until 28<sup>th</sup> February.*

Q&A with Andy Saunders from Rookh Quartet and composers Jane Stanley and Drew Hammond after the performance

## Programme notes

### **Jamie Keesecker: The Impetuous Winds (2008)**

*The Impetuous Winds* was written in 2008 for a composition workshop with visiting horn quartet Quadre, whilst horn player Jamie Keesecker was studying for his Masters in composition at the University of Oregon. Quadre were struck by the drama and excitement in the work, and took it into their repertoire, including it on their album 'Our Time'. The whole range of the instrument is covered – almost 4 octaves – and there is a vast array of colour and contrast in the piece.

The punchy opening uses the quartet as a mini-big band at times, with rhythmic drive and thick, luscious harmonies. The central section of the work has a long melodic line, which never quite goes in the expected direction, and there are echoes of Mahler's horn writing in the duet that sits over a muted figure from two of the players. The big band feel returns for the ending, with a sprint finish towards the last note.

### **Violeta Dinescu: Abendandacht (1985)**

Composed after a trumpet player friend of Romanian composer Violeta Dinescu asked her for a piece only using specific notes, *Abendandacht*, or *Evening Prayer*, is a thought-provoking piece that gives a lot of freedom to the performers. Only a single melodic line is notated, with suggestions from the composer on approaches that can be taken. It could be played as written, as a 'flexible canon' without strict tempo, with free improvisation around it, as a call and response, reversed, aleatorically... it is a piece that exists without a frame, allowing the performers a creative role in responding to their circumstances at the time of the performance.

### **Drew Hammond: Soliloquy (2021)**

Written for the Rookh Quartet, *Soliloquy* was inspired by the walks on the hills and beaches of Scotland that the Covid-19 restrictions have put beyond reach for now. The work opens with an irregular series of statements from the quartet, linked rhythmically and harmonically, but each a fragment of a conversation. One of the players drops out from this conversation, playing a repeated muted note, which disrupts the flow, and slowly the others are drawn into a mesmerising, shifting fabric, as the lines weave around each other and around the open spaces that we crave in these times.

## **Elizabeth Raum: Quartet for Four Horns (1998)**

I. Fanfare: Allegretto con brio

II. Andante con moto

III. Scherzo

IV. Echoes

Elizabeth Raum's *Quartet for Four Horns* was written at the request of horn player Kurt Kellan, who had been a colleague in the Regina Symphony Orchestra. Premiered by the Canadian Horn Quartet at the 1998 International Horn Society summit in Banff, Canada, the quartet is a tour-de-force of the quartet repertoire.

The four movement work opens with a powerful fanfare. There is a *moto perpetual* feel comes and goes throughout the latter half of the movement - an impressive feat for this instrument! The second movement opens in a reflective mood, which gives way to a full blooded statement of the theme, before returning to a more meditative feel. The Scherzo movement requires some serious dexterity from the players, before a moment of calm (which references the 'lost hedgehog' movement from Janáček's *Concertino*) leads into a cadenza, which is shared between the quartet. The final movement builds gradually, with a pastoral feel which brings to mind the landscape around Banff.

Thanks to Cherry Classics Music for allowing us to film this performance.

## **Alisson Krussmaa: Songs of a Black Butterfly (2014)**

Written in 2014 as part of a symposium for young composers, *Songs of a Black Butterfly* is a two movement work for horn quartet which explores the softer side of the instrument. Harmonies are built up throughout the first song, with the pulse and density of the texture constantly shifting. A solo horn is left at the end – evoking the image of a tired butterfly, gently flapping its wings. The second song is in two distinct sections. The opening is almost a chorale, before an aleatoric passage where things wind down...the butterfly approaches the end of its life...and a pedal note slowly fades away.

## **Michael Kallstrom: Head Banger (2001)**

*Head Banger* was composed for the TransAtlantic Horn Quartet and they often play it to begin the second half of their concerts. As the title suggests, *Headbanger* is about powerful rhythmic and melodic motives over a strong and steady pulse. The opening features two of the horns providing the motivic underpinning with the remaining two playing a longer, melodic theme in unison. While three of the horns maintain these rhythmic motives in parallel motion to evoke the riffs typical of heavy metal bands, another solos

aggressively over this accompaniment in the middle section. After a quiet and more tranquil interlude, the opening texture returns and the work comes to a close with quartet pounding out statements of the rhythmic motive.

Thanks to Wavefront Music for allowing us to film this performance.

### **Jane Stanley: *Lalla Rookh* (2017, 2018, 2020, 2021...tbc)**

The original version of Jane Stanley's *Lalla Rookh* was written for the Being Human Festival in November 2017. For natural horn and speaker, the spoken text is constructed from lines extracted from a letter written by Lord Kelvin (William Thomson) to his sister Elizabeth written in 1874 in which he reflects upon his upcoming nuptials. The title comes from the name of Lord Kelvin's boat in which he sailed to Madeira, the *Lalla Rookh*. As an amateur horn player himself, the physicist would open his lectures on sound waves by playing the harmonic series on the natural horn (his instrument is now in the University of Glasgow's Hunterian Museum).

For the ensemble version, written for the Rookh Quartet in 2018, two modern horns with valves are woven into the texture, and the fourth player takes on the mantle of The Voice of Lord Kelvin. Their role is to shadow and support the natural horn, and by working in combination they produce a more rich and complex texture overall. The gestures and textures that form the piece serve as illustrations of and reactions to some aspects of Lord Kelvin's letter. The opening passage is characterised by hypnotic oscillating lines to evoke the gentle gliding of a boat sailing through calm waters. Contrast is provided by phrases made up of short repeated notes to suggest urgency in Lord Kelvin's thought processes. Later on, loud slides up through the harmonic series to create a declamatory mood. There are a few reflective passages too, where chant-like melodies unfold, which link to his feelings of optimism and gratitude.

*From Lalla Rookh* began as an experiment in referencing material and narrative intent from the earlier versions, scored just for quartet, without the speaker. There is a clear evocation of the sea beginning to swell, of waves overlapping, of a boat at anchor, but still at the mercy of the awesome power of the ocean. The natural horn is referenced in the final section, with the players using natural harmonics that are 'uncorrected', as a slightly sinister micro-tonal smear disturbs things.

The fourth version of the piece is very different! It has a very sparse score, evoking the image of ships at anchor, appearing out of the mist as an eerie foghorn sounds in the distance.

Developing version 3, and then version 4, of the piece was seriously hampered by the restrictions caused by Covid-19, so it is a work that will continue to evolve. Watching a piece begin as a letter from over 125 years ago, and then grow and change so much has been fascinating, so we are very much looking forward to seeing how it ends up!

## **Biographies**

### **Rookh Quartet**

The Rookh Quartet began life in 2018 when four of Scotland's horn players decided to get together regularly. The aim was to explore the quartet repertoire, to get out of their comfort zones and keep on pushing their own technical abilities, and to enjoy making music together - usually followed by a spot of socialising! Unlike most horn sections and quartets, where they are led by the Principal player, the Rookh Quartet takes a very democratic approach, with the players rotating around the seats and having to cover the full 4 octave range of the instrument a lot of the time.

The original plan did not involve doing any concerts – call it ‘continuing professional development’! This changed when a group withdrew from a concert at the University of Glasgow a few days before the brochure went to press...

The first concert also gave the group their name, as they gave the first performance of Jane Stanley's Lalla Rookh, for natural horn, 2 horns, and narrator. The piece is based on a letter written by a former University of Glasgow staff member and amateur horn player, William Thomson...also known as Lord Kelvin. The letter was written as he was anchored in the harbour of Funchal, Madeira, on board the Lalla Rookh. His natural horn can be found in the Hunterian Museum, in the room directly above the University's Concert Hall.

[www.rookhquartet.eu](http://www.rookhquartet.eu)

Instagram @rookhhornquartet

### **Stephanie Jones**

Stephanie studied at the Royal Northern College of Music from 2000-5. Following on from her studies Stephanie began her freelance career playing with orchestras including the Halle, BBC Philharmonic, Opera North, Chamber Orchestra of Europe, BBC National Orchestra of Wales, Philharmonia, City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Scottish Opera, Northern Ballet and Manchester Camerata. She also played on tour with Grammy Award-winning singer Adele.

Stephanie began her current post as Sub-Principal 4th horn at the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra in 2009. She regularly participates in

workshops and education projects with the BBC SSO including BBC 10 Pieces projects in primary and secondary schools and Tunes for Tots with pre-school children. Stephanie is also one of the regular coaches for the National Youth Orchestra of Scotland, and currently lectures at the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, a post she has held since 2012.

Stephanie enjoys chamber music and as well as exploring horn music with the Rookh Quartet she frequently joins colleague from the BBC SSO for chamber concerts.

### **Lauren Reeve-Rawlings**

Lauren is the third horn of The Orchestra of Scottish Opera. Before her move to Glasgow she worked as solo horn in the Mittelsächsische Philharmonie in Freiberg in Germany, whilst also completing a masters in solo performance in Dresden. She has spent time in Austria studying the Vienna horn with Hector McDonald (Vienna Symphony Orchestra), and prior to this completed her BMus (hons) at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London.

Lauren freelances in the UK and abroad, with many orchestras and chamber groups, including the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Royal Scottish National Orchestra and the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra.

### **Andy Saunders**

Born in Dundee, Andy Saunders grew up in Staffordshire where he began horn lessons as an excuse to miss science lessons! He studied Music at York University before moving back north to Glasgow to complete his Masters degree at the RSAMD with Hugh Potts.

After graduating he spent a season as Solo Horn of Slovenian National Opera and Ballet in Ljubljana, before returning to Glasgow to freelance. He now plays regularly with the Scottish Chamber Orchestra, BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra, Scottish Opera, Royal Northern Sinfonia, Daniel's Beard, and Rednote Ensemble in Scotland, and further afield with ensembles including Le Concert Olympique, Capella Aquiliae and Ensemble Modern.

Andy ran The Cottier Chamber Project, is currently the Co-Chair of New Music Scotland, sits on the board of The Night With..., and is the Performance Consultant for the University of Glasgow's music department.

### **Ian Smith**

After studies at The Royal College of Music, London, Ian was appointed to the horn section of the Royal Ballet Orchestra. He also worked extensively as a freelance horn player in both England and Wales, notably with The City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra, Halle Orchestra Royal Philharmonic Orchestra and The BBC National Orchestra of Wales.

He joined the horn section of The Orchestra of Scottish Opera in September 2007 and also freelances frequently with other orchestras in Scotland. He is a founder member of the Rookh Horn Quartet.

Ian is also a qualified Piano Tuner and Repairer.

**Jamie Keesecker** (b.1981) has at various times been credited as an instrumentalist, composer, arranger, improviser, conductor, recording engineer, sound artist, and computer musician. He has collaborated with musicians from a broad range of styles and artists from many disciplines, including visual arts, film, dance, and theatre. He draws inspiration from many sources, owing to a many-faceted musical upbringing immersed in traditional band and orchestral repertoire, jazz, popular music, computer music, and the magical world of video games. He holds a Ph.D. in Music Composition from Duke University where his work explored interactivity and the combination of live musical performance with real-time computer processing.

**Violeta Dinescu** (was born in Bucarest in 1953. After taking physics and mathematics as her main sixth form examination subjects in grammar school (liceul) Gheorghe Lazar, she studied composition, piano and pedagogics at the Bucarest Ciprian Porumbescu Conservatoire. A George Enescu scholarship enabled her to study, and she finished her studies in 1976 with distinction. After that she was a composition pupil of Myriam Marbe for a year; looking back, she describes this intensive year as a significant time in her life. From 1978 to 1982 she then taught music theory, piano and aesthetics at the Lyceum (grammar school) George Enescu in Bucarest.

Violeta Dinescu has been living in Germany since 1982. After teaching posts at the Heidelberg College for Evangelical Church Music in (1986-1991), at the Frankfurt College of Music and Drama (1989- 1992) and at the Bayreuth Academy of Evangelical Church Music (1990-1994) she has been since 1996 Professor of Composition at the Carl von Ossietzky University in Oldenburg, where she has initiated a series of composer colloquies (up to the present day over a hundred composers have been invited). In 2000 she founded the Archive of New Music – focal point Eastern Europe. She regularly directs courses at American universities and at various educational institutions in Germany and abroad.

She has received numerous scholarships, awards and international prizes for her compositions, including the Artists' Scholarship of the University of Mannheim (1985-1986); the Scholarship of the Artists' House Schreyahn (1986-1987); the Baldreit Scholarship of the town of Baden-Baden (1987-1988); the Grand Prize for Composition, Utah, USA (1983); the IAWM Prize, Kassel (1985); the Carl Maria von Weber Prize, Leipzig (1986); the Baldreit

Prize, Baden-Baden (1987); the NYU Prize for Composition, New York (1995).

Her catalogue of works consists of compositions of the most varied genres: Music theatre (including *Der 35. Mai* after Erich Kästner, commissioned by the Mannheim National Theatre; *Hunger und Durst* after Eugène Ionesco, commissioned by the Freiburg City Theatre; *Eréndira* after Gabriel García Márquez, commissioned by the Munich Biennale; *Schachnovelle* after Stefan Zweig, commissioned by the Schwetzingen Festival), ballets (such as *Der Kreisel* after Eduard Mörike, Ulm Theater; *Effi Briest* after Theodor Fontane, Magdeburg State Theatre; *Die versunkene Stadt*, Mainz State Theatre), silent- film music (to the film *Tabu* by Friedrich Wilhelm Murnau, Alte Oper Frankfurt), oratorios (such as the *Whitsun Oratorio*, das oratorio *Wie Tau auf den Bergen Zions...*, commissioned by the Hanns Lilje Foundation Hanover, or *An den Strömen von Babel...* for two choirs and large orchestra, commissioned by the Philharmonie Luxembourg). Another focal point is chamber music; her catalogue of works contains – apart from works for small and large orchestra – numerous works for solo instruments, for duo, trio, quartet, quintet, sextet and septet. Her music has been broadcast on the radio, recorded on CD and performed in Europe, the USA and Canada.

Since 1996 she organizes the *Komponisten-Colloquium* at the Carl von Ossietzky University Oldenburg (weekly during the Semesters). The Colloquien are integrated in the teaching activities of the students in bachelor and master and also doctoral activities.: More than 1.000 Composers, Musicologists and Musicians (ca. 70 % women) presented their works. Since 2006 she organizes also (every year) the *Zwischen Zeiten* Symposium (*Shifting Times*) with the participation of ca 70% women musicologists and composers.

**Drew Hammond** (b.1974) is a composer and musician based in Glasgow, Scotland. Born in Central Kentucky, he studied music at Guilford College in North Carolina and spent a large chunk of the 1990s touring in bands. Around the turn of the century, he moved to Glasgow, Scotland to study composition with Bill Sweeney. Since then he has gained a PHD in composition, has taught numerous music subjects at the University of Glasgow and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, and is on the Board of New Music Scotland. Drew writes music for a variety of instrumental and electronic forces.

**Elizabeth Raum** (b.1945) has had a career in music that has spanned over 45 years beginning in Halifax where she played principal oboe with the Atlantic Symphony Orchestra before coming to Regina when her husband



was offered a position in the Music Department of the University of Regina in 1975. She joined the Regina Symphony Orchestra at that time and from 1986 until her retirement in 2010, played principal oboe as a member of the Chamber Players.

Raum has established herself as one of Canada's most eminent composers with commissions coming from such important performing groups as the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, St. Lawrence String Quartet, Symphony Nova Scotia, the Calgary Philharmonic, the CBC, the Hannaford Street Silver Band, Ottawa International Chamber Music Festival, Music Toronto, Concours de Musique du Canada, Scotia Festival, Eckhardt-Grammatke National Competition, Thunder Bay Symphony Orchestra, Saskatoon Symphony Orchestra, Regina Symphony Orchestra, Maritime Concert Opera, as well as many other performing organizations and individuals. Her music is played all over the world in concerts and festivals throughout Canada, the US, Europe including Rome, England, Portugal, Switzerland, Germany, Hungary, Russia, China and Japan.

She has also been the featured composer for the Gravissimo! Festival in Portugal, James Madison University New Music Festival in Virginia, the Colours of Music Festival in Barrie, Ontario, the International Women's Brass Conference in Toronto, and International Tuba Conferences in Budapest, Minnesota, and Regina. She was awarded the Canadian Composer Award by the Canadian Band Association, has three times received the award for Best Musical Score by the Saskatchewan Film and Video Showcase Awards and won in the Best Classical Composition category for the Western Canadian Music Awards as well as being nominated in the same class two additional times. She has also been presented with the Commemorative Medal for the Centennial of Saskatchewan and the 125th Anniversary of the Confederation of Canada medal and in 2010 received the Saskatchewan Order of Merit. In 2004 she was given an Honorary Doctorate in Humane Letters From Mt. St. Vincent University in Halifax Nova Scotia. She received a commission from the Maritime Concert Opera, supported by the Ontario Arts Council, to write a full length opera, *Time of Trouble*, which was premiered by Opera Nova Scotia in December, 2016 and received a full production by Opera Nova Scotia the following year. Her three other operas, *The Final Bid*, *The Garden of Alice*, and *Eos: The Dream of Nicholas Flood Davin* were all recorded by the CBC.

An extremely prolific composer, her works include 4 operas, over 80 chamber pieces, 18 vocal works, choral works including an oratorio, several ballets, concerti and major orchestral works. She enjoys a reputation of being one of Canada's most "accessible" composers, writing for varied mediums and in remarkably diverse styles.

In June 2017, Estonian composer **Alisson Kruusmaa** (b.1992) graduated from the composition class of Helena Tulve. She holds both Bachelor and Master of Arts Diploma from the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre. In the semester of 2013/2014, she amended herself in the Conservatorio di Musica di Giuseppe Verdi di Milano, under the instruction of Professor Alessandro Solbiati.

Alisson Kruusmaa has written music for orchestras, ensembles and choirs as well as soloists. Her music is best described through ethereal, fragile and spacious soundscapes featuring a delicate and sparse orchestration which gives listeners some time to reflect. Kruusmaa's music has been performed by numerous talented artists, including ensemble SaxEst, Laura Põldvere (vocal), Maria Väli (vocal), Heigo Rosin (percussion), Johan Randvere (piano), Villu Vihermäe (cello) etc. Her works are often played at various concerts and festivals of contemporary classical music (Estonian Music Days, Autumn Festival of the Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre etc). In 2015, her *Piece for Solo Piano and Symphony Orchestra* was premiered by the symphony orchestra of EAMT and conductor Álvaro Gómez (Spain) at the Estonian Concert Hall. In 2017, Kruusmaa's piece for symphony orchestra *Circles*, which was inspired by chrystalline patterns of Saturn's rings, was also selected to be performed at the same venue.

So far, Kruusmaa's most significant works are *Mesmerism* for clarinet and piano (2015), *Piece for Solo Piano and Symphony Orchestra* (2015), *Songs of Silver Light* for mezzo soprano, trumpet and piano (2017) and *Silence of Birds* for mixed choir (2017).

In 2013, she was awarded Erkki-Sven Tüür Young Composer's Scholarship. In 2018, Kruusmaa was selected to participate at the 24th Young Composers Meeting by the world-renowned contemporary ensemble Orkest de Erepijs where her *Rain* for mezzo soprano and wind orchestra won the Best Composition Prize and was in the programme of Gaudeamus Muziekweek in Utrecht in the same year. In 2018, Kruusmaa was selected among the finalists of the competition organised by Los Angeles based Kaleidoscope Chamber Orchestra. In 2019, Kruusmaa was the guest composer of the Mise-En Festival in New York.

**Michael Kallstrom** has been composing and performing multi-media art works for over 35 years. The works of his Electric Opera series have been performed over 200 times and combine singing, acting, audio and visual media, and puppetry. His music has been performed on all seven continents, including Antarctica. His compositions include an opera, "Sunday Pages," on an original libretto, and an electronic ballet score for a new version of

"Frankenstein." He is retired from Western Kentucky University as a University Distinguished Professor, the institution's first in the performing or visual arts.

**Jane Stanley** (b.1964) is a UK-based, Australian-born composer specialising in chamber and orchestral music.

Jane's music has been performed and broadcast throughout the world and featured at festivals including Tanglewood, ISCM World Music Days, Gaudeamus Music Week, Asian Composers League, Wellesley Composers Conference, and June in Buffalo. She has received commissions from Tanglewood, Musica Viva, Robert Irvine, Bernadette Harvey, Continuum Sax, Ensemble Offspring, and Halcyon.

Her music has been recorded for release by artists internationally. Her solo 'cello piece *Winter Song* features on Robert Irvine's CD *Songs and Lullabies*, released by Delphian Records, and the recording of her *Piano Sonata* by Bernadette Harvey was launched on the Tall Poppies label early in 2018. One of her most often performed pieces [Helix Reflection](#) for flute and clarinet was recorded by Ensemble Offspring and appears on their [Cycles and Circles](#) album.

She received her PhD from the University of Sydney and in 2004-5 she was a Visiting Fellow at Harvard University. Her teachers include Anne Boyd, Peter Sculthorpe, Ross Edwards, and Bernard Rands. Jane was a composition fellow at Tanglewood Music Center in 2008, who commissioned *Palimpsest* for large brass ensemble. In 2009 she was a Fellow at the Aspen Music Festival and School.

In 2015 her piece *Pentimenti* for piano duo represented Australia at ISCM World Music Days in Wrocław, performed by the Lutoslawski Piano Duo. A highlight of 2017 was the premiere in Sydney of her *Piano Sonata*, commissioned by Bernadette Harvey and supported by a grant from the Australia Council for the Arts.

Her most recent pieces feature delicate ornamental textures and agile, virtuosic writing for instruments. She aims to exploit and maximise the colouristic potential of ensembles for which she composes and to construct nuanced and distinctive gestures. This can be heard most clearly in her *Suite* for clarinet, violin, cello and piano.

Jane is a Senior Lecturer in Music at the University of Glasgow. She is founder of the Scottish Young Composers Mentoring Project, a year-long programme that provides university students with experience in mentoring

secondary school-age people in composition. She is a founding member of the Young Academy of Scotland, a represented composer at the Australian Music Centre, and her music is also published by [Composers Edition](#).

## **Forthcoming *soundfestival* events**

**social sound | Fri 29 January | 2130**

Join us online for a chat about the day's events in the company of featured artists

**Promenade Concert | Sat 30 January | 1000**

Join us for a winter themed discovery of new music for the whole family with Ruth Wall (harp), Richard Watkins (horn) and Richard Ingham (saxophone)

**Gold.Berg.Werks | Sat 30 January | 1200**

Karlheinz Essl's unusual take of Bach's *The Goldberg Variations* performed by Xenia Pestova Bennett (piano) and Ed Bennett (electronics)

**Aberdeen | Sat 30 January | 1500**

New collaboration between David Fennessy, Sonia Cromarty and Tim Cooper

**Any Enemy & Brandon University New Music Ensemble | Sat 30 January | 1700**

Unique live digital performance including new works specially commissioned for joint performance by the two ensembles

**Richard Watkins, horn + Composer Conversation | Sat 30 January | 2000**

Philip Cashian's *Scenes from the Life of Viscount Medardo* and discussion with Philip Cashian, Aileen Sweeney and Rylan Gleave

**social sound | Sat 30 January | 2130**

Join us online for a chat about the day's events in the company of featured artists

**Listen Carefully | Sun 31 January | 1000**

Siobhan Dyson's audio-visual work depicts a day in the life of an autistic person

**Hebrides Ensemble *Diversions* | Sun 31 January | 1300**

Works by Joe Stollery, Ben Teague, Rylan Gleave, Siobhan Dyson, Ben Lunn, Jason Hodgson and Lucy Hale

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