

FALL 2003 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

All events are at the Asian Arts Initiative, 1315 Cherry Street, unless otherwise noted.

RAP SERIES

Atomic Tropic

Friday, September 19, 8 pm

Shifting spaces and borders. Crackling energy. Wacky characters. Fragments of stories, heard and overheard. The staccato sounds of urban existence. Jump start the season with authors Karen Tei Yamashita and Sesshu Foster as they share selections of poetry and prose that explore the tensions that shape transnational migration and current global culture. Guest curated by local poet Mytili Jagannathan. Co-sponsored by the Kerry Sherin Wright Prize at the Kelly Writers House.

Live Traditions / Contemporary Issues

Friday, October 17, 8 pm

Join us for this visual anthology of Asian dance that showcases a select group of Philadelphia-area artists who practice diverse disciplines ranging from Korean ritual to Cambodian court dance. Guest curated by dancer/choreographer Roko Kawai, and followed by audience discussion about the dynamics of teaching traditional art forms in contemporary American society.

Wince at the Sun

Friday, November 21, 8 pm

Unafraid to dispense social commentary that ranges from satirical to inflammatory, the Himalayan Project represents the essence of underground hip-hop and the sound of things to come. Join MCs Chee Malabar and Rainman as they launch a new album that dissects issues of race, pollution, immigration, and capitalism – and takes listeners on a trip from Bombay to New York, with stops in China, Europe, San Francisco, and South America!

Women of Color / Women of Conscience

Friday, December 19, 8 pm

Come out for a holiday dance party hosted by the DC-based First Ladies DJ Collective! Dedicated to breaking the “vinyl ceiling” and making DJ culture more accessible to women from all walks of life, the First Ladies’ sally-go-round and Th Pinstriped Rebel celebrate the end of the year with us, spinning early 80’s gems and Japanese disco grooves!

GenerAsian Next Teen Showcase

Friday, January 16, 7 pm

Teen participants from our Youth Arts Workshop programs throw down and show us their stuff! Featuring performances by the GenerAsian Next theater troupe, PSA’s produced through our Listen Up! video project, and a Gallery exhibition of visual art work created by Big Picture mural artists.

GenerAsian Next Theater Workshop

Mondays 4-6:45 pm, starting October 6

For Asian American teens who have something to say! Join this weekly workshop where you can tell your stories and hear from other teens. All while practicing writing and performance techniques to help you tell your story on stage! (No experience necessary.)

Big Picture Mural Arts Workshop

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 4-6:30 pm, starting October 7

What do you think about the murals in this city? This is your chance to design and paint what YOU think should be on the walls of Philadelphia. Start with general drawing and painting skills, then work together with other teens to choose a theme and create an outdoor mural. (No experience necessary.)

Listen Up Video Workshop

Wednesdays, 4-6:30 pm, starting October 8

Like watching videos? How about getting behind the camera for a change? You’ll look at the way videos are made so you can write and direct your own 30-second public service announcements. (No experience necessary.)



Initiative teens Beuchler, Teena, & Gena in Chicago



GenerAsian Next performs at the APIA Summit in Chicago

YOUTH ARTS WORKSHOP

Youth Artists Chillin’ (YAC) Fall Open House

Friday, September 26, 4-6 pm

YAC is an ongoing teen-produced event with games, art-making, music, snacks, and time to just chill. Over the last year, we’ve had Open Mic’s, played Taboo and Pictionary, Dance Dance Revolution (DDR) competitions, and made up some of our own games. Come check out the first YAC of the school year and get involved!

EXPLO WEEK:

Monday, September 29 – Thursday, October 2, 4-6 pm

A great way to find out what the Youth Arts Workshop has to offer... Four days of free art workshops where you can meet the teaching artists and staff at the Initiative, try your hand at a bunch of art projects, and think about what art means to you and what you want to do with it!

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THANK YOU 2002-2003 MEMBERS!

Sabrina Margarita Alcantara-Tan • Dr. & Mrs. VR. Alla • Kevin Alloway • Noel Alunit • Anonymous Donor • Doris & Masae Arimizu • Sara & Steve Becker • Amelia Belardo-Cox • Nicholas Bovino • Donald Brown • Gerard Brown & Carmina Ocampo Brown • Allison Budschalow • Darryl Bundrige • Bob Butera • Christina Cantrill • Gregory Kober & Hai Cao • Robert Capanna • Mia Cariño • Pallabi Chakravorty • Benji Chang • Fernando Chang-Muy • Suzan Chau • Vijay Chauhan • Grace Chen • H.T. Chen • Helen Cheung • Lai Har Cheung • Nina Chien • John Chin • Kevin Ching • Jim Lee & Julie Cho • Susan Cho • Inja Coates • Laura Cohen • Joe Cohn • Jeff Cylkowski • Aline De Vera • Kathie deNobriga • Tamiko Doi-Smith • Dee Eckstein • Anne Edmunds • Susanna Eng • Paul Santoleri & Helena Espvall-Santoleri • Carmen Febo San Miguel • Felice Fischer • David Forlano • Clare Fu • Mitchell Furumoto • Tony Garcia • Mark Gifford • Tony Heriza & Jane Golden • Bihong Guan • Devalina Guha-Roy • Anuj Gupta • Toshi Abe & Nancy Hall • Jenny Hamilton • Suheir Hammad • Jennifer Harmelin • Matthew Hart • Shu Hsien Ho & Royd Hatta • Glenn & Eileen Hing • Huong Hoang • Lynne & Harold Honickman • Herb & Miiko Horikawa • Welma Horn • Phuong Ho & Steve Huang • Ken Hung • Imperial Inn Restaurant • Wai Man Ip • Albert Isa • In Memory of Albert Isa o Barbara Isa • Gayle Isa • Hazel Isa • Michelle Isa • Steven Wong & Leslie Ito • Heather Clark & Mytili Jagannathan • Leigh Jerner • Steve & Amy Jo • Florence Jung • Robert Kafes • Juli Kang • Peter Kang • Mari Kawai • Roko Kawai • James & Madelyn Kawano • Fusaye Kazaoka • Valerie Keller • Marnie Kerr • Parag Khandhar • Anita King • Bill Kishi • Michael Knox • Mary Burke & Ed Kobayashi • Jackie Kraemer • Robert Krebs • Edward & Marcia Kung • Corinne Lagermasini • Krishna Lahiri • Alison Lam • Grace Lee • Ju-Yeon Ryu & Cliff Lee • Lawrence Lee • Romana Lee • Simon Lee • Sophia Lee • Valerie Lee • Eric Park & Grace Lee-Park • Leanna Lee-Whitman • Annette & Morton Levitt • Laura Lewis • Tony Shen & Jenni Li Shen • Keang Lim • Amanda Lin • David Lin • Richard Liu • April Logan • Evan & Hao-Li Tai Loh • Robert Louis • Julie Lu • Ferdinand Ma • Moira Ma • Patricia Ma • Paul MacDonald • Mitzie Mackenzie • Eric MacMillan • Louise Maehara • Aryani Manring • Rene Marquez • Yu Wei & Jared Martin • Magda Martinez • Aleyamma Mathew • Suja Mathew • George McCollough • Joseph McGroory • Ashmi Mehrotra • Rosina Miller • Mr. & Mrs. Mirani • Peter Missimer • Alice Moy • Sesh Mudumbai • Samuel Munemitsu • William Han & Sally Munemitsu • Michelle Myers • Masaru Nakawatase • Vani Natarajan • Kat Schwab & Dat Ngo • Ngo Thanh Nhan • Kristen Hopkins & Karen Nipper • A. H. & Sumie Nishikawa • Michiko Okaya • Jesse Olanday • Victor Moreland & Irene Oshiro • Kai Ouye • Neal & Kathleen Ouye • Dawn Page • Peter Park, PhD • Francie Shaw and Bob Perelman • Philadelphia Corporations for Aging • The Philadelphia Foundation and Anonymous Donor • Chon Phoeuk • Douglas Pike • Charles Ramirez • Hanalei Ramos • Kapila Ratnam • Eva Ray • Joan Reilly • Sam DiIorio & Angie Reyes • Craig & Diana Roberts • Mike Roque • Julia Rossi • Leonard & Laura Rossio • Thaddeus Rutkowski • David & Elaine Ryan • Kevin & Patricia Ryan • Cathy Salsar • May Sam • Geena Sankoorikal • Barney & Suedy Sasaki • Leo & Kiku Sasaki • Lori Sasaki • Mark Stern & Susan Seifert • Shoba Sharma • Alex Shaw • Yen Ling Shek • Rick Shiomi • Shiv and Uma Shivakumar • Nakeeb Siddique • Misoon Silverberg • Kati Sipp • Kevin So • Donghee Song • Jonathan & Judy Stein • Jeanne Stoops • Sean Stoops • Tom Andrzejewski & Jane Sung • Edward Swenson • Julie Sze • Lena Sze • Tony Sze • Patrick Tabo • Miki Takamori • Taiyo Takeda • Janice Tanaka • Buech Leng Tang • Christopher Tang • Michi Tashjian • Bouy Te • Tymo Teang • Anita Thakkar • Ishwar & Mrs. Jaya Thakkar • Marian Thambayayagan • Andrew & Pat Toy • Amanda & Michael Tran • Hannah Tran • Pauline Tran • Walter Tsou • Wanyip Tsui • Phelma Tu • Kathy Uno • Hiroshi & Grayce Uyehara • Mary Yee & Paul Uyehara • Neville Vakharia • Sharlene Valencia • Kieu Linh Valverde • Christopher Wang • Heidi Warren • Chuck Watterson • Alix Webb • Amber West • Saul & Joan Wider • Dorothy Wilkie • William Penn Foundation o Jenny Wong • Ken & Carol Wong • Evelyn Wu • Kellie Kue & Doua Xiong • Juan Xu • William & Tseng Yang • John Fong & May Yee • Lily Yeh • Cecilia Yep • Chamrooun Yin • Claire Yoo • Ron & Miye Yoshida • David T. Rammler & Suzanne Young (as of 9/1/03)

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GALLERY

Robots vs. Monsters

September 22 – December 19

Artists Reception: Thursday October 2, 6 pm
Call about special First Friday hours in the fall.

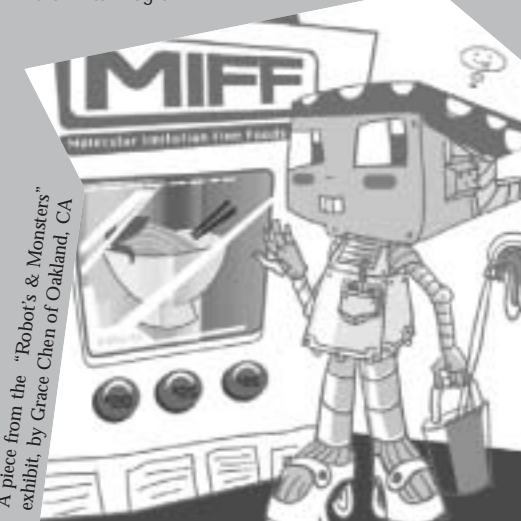
This exhibition explores the influence of Asian sci-fi comics, animation, and movie aesthetics on the artwork of Asian American artists from across the U.S., including Grace Chen, J Shih Chieh Huang, Jesse Olanday, Deth Sun, Clint Takeda, and more.

The Big Picture

January 16 - March 2004

Opening Reception: Friday, January 16, 7 pm
(as part of the teen showcase)

An exhibition of work by teen artists in our Youth Arts Workshop’s Big Picture project, co-sponsored by the City of Philadelphia Department of Recreation Mural Arts Program.



A piece from the “Robots & Monsters” exhibit, by Grace Chen of Oakland, CA

ASIAN ARTS INITIATIVE

1315 Cherry Street, 2nd Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19107

(215)557-0455

info@asianartsinitiative.org

Monday, Wednesday-Friday

10am-6pm

Tuesday

1pm-6pm

The Asian Arts Initiative is grounded in the belief that the arts can provide an important political and cultural voice for the Asian American communities in Philadelphia. We are a community arts center where artists and everyday people explore and express our diverse experiences as Asian Americans.

Visit Us!
www.asianartsinitiative.org

JOIN THE INITIATIVE!

Make an “early bird” gift to our next Membership Campaign now, and you’ll be entitled to benefits and discounts through June 2004! Plus, you help the Asian Arts Initiative continue to use the arts to build the voice of Philadelphia’s Asian American communities.

- \$1500
- \$1000
- \$500
- \$250
- \$150
- \$100
- \$50
- \$25

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Make checks payable to the Asian Arts Initiative.
Mail to: 1315 Cherry Street, 2nd Floor, Philadelphia, PA 19107

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News from the

ASIAN ARTS INITIATIVE

Fall 2003

FALL SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

This Fall, we have four new faces on our staff, and lots of exciting ideas and events to look forward to. Starting with the kick-off of our Rap Series on September 19 through our Teen Showcase in January, we’re in for some powerful performances from Asian American writers, dancers, and musicians—many focusing on themes that commemorate our 10-year history of programs!

Fall also brings new twists to the Youth Arts Workshop. Our annual Open House on September 25 will be another fun and creative Youth Arts Chillin’ (YAC) event produced by members of our Teen Leadership Council. September 28 through November 1, we’ll launch Explor Week—a week of free arts-based workshops designed to give youth an opportunity to get to know us, artists from our programs, and each other.



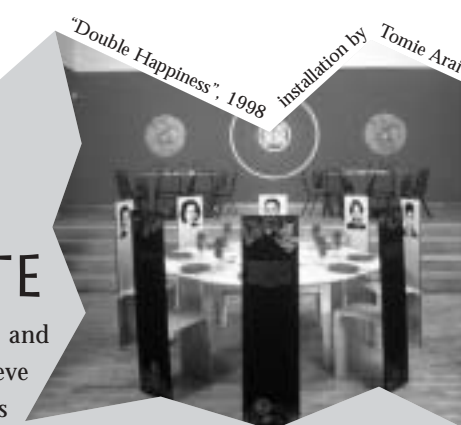
“Shades of Chinatown”, 2001-03 L.A. Mural Design by Steven Wong

Chinatown In/Flux is a community and visual arts project that the Initiative’s Gallery hopes to launch in 2005. Inspired by the stories shared by Chinatown workers in our Beyond Borders oral history project, we are planning to commission Asian American artists from around the country to further research and interpret the ever-changing dynamics of Philadelphia’s Chinatown community.

With the help of a planning grant from the Philadelphia Exhibitions Initiative (PEI), the Initiative invited seven Asian American visual artists to participate in a “visioning retreat” over Memorial Day weekend. Mei Ling Hom of Philadelphia; New York-based Tomie Arai, Skowmon Hastanan, Jihyun

Our Artists in Communities Training (ACT) offers a few new opportunities: a roundtable review of recent research on how “Culture Builds Communities”; and a “Day in the Life” visiting some of our favorite peers among Philadelphia’s finest community-based arts organizations, hearing about best practices and exciting new projects! The dates are still to be announced, so stay tuned for details!

As we gear up for these events, many more ideas continue to brew in the creative minds of our staff and volunteers. Be sure to keep your eye out for updates in our e-mails and website, and come by to see what’s new!



“Double Happiness”, 1998 installation by Tomie Arai

CHINATOWN IN/FLUX: AN UPDATE

Park, and Jean Shin; and Hirokazu Kosaka and Steve Wong from Los Angeles were introduced to Chinatown’s neighborhood, history, and active members of the community. Each artist gave a slide and video presentation about their artwork, and engaged in a community panel discussion that explored the possibilities and challenges of creating public art and installations in a community context.

Over the Summer, the seven artists have been developing specific proposals for visual art installations that they would like to create with or about the Chinatown community. As we work with them to hone their ideas, watch for updates and an invitation to participate in a community response session to further shape the In/Flux project!



“Chance City”, 2001 installation by Jean Shin



Th pinstriped rebel, of The First Ladies of DJ Collective

NEW FACES AT THE INITIATIVE...

MICHIKO HUNT OFFICE MANAGER

I work on the daily operations of the Initiative's office, which includes everything from ordering supplies, coordinating the organizational calendar, and overseeing the production of our newsletter. I also support the annual Membership Campaign effort and Banquet, and will help coordinate volunteers.

What is your sign?

Aries, in the year of the Dragon.

What makes you laugh?

True and honest observations, people falling (you know you think it's funny too), my three best friends, and George Dubya's presidency (I laugh because otherwise, I'd cry).

Most desired superpower

After much discussion with Omar and Dennis, I've decided that flying would be the best (although I'm still partial to being invisible).

Reason for joining the Initiative

I believe that creative expression is a basic human right, and that all people should have access to the arts, outlets for their own creativity, and a place where their unique voice can be heard. I am inspired to be working for an organization that shares those beliefs and works to make those things possible.

RANA SINDHIKARA ARTISTS IN COMMUNITIES TRAINING (ACT) COORDINATOR

Through the ACT Program, we provide artists with unique professional development opportunities to acquire the critical facilitation and pedagogical skills needed to lead effective and

F. OMAR TELAN PUBLIC PROGRAMS ASSOCIATE

Most notably, I am the curator of the Rap Series, new webmaster, and now responsible for starting a series of workshops to give art-making opportunities to our public.

What's your "theme song"?

That's a tough one... here's a list of 3... "Sensitive Artist" by King Missile, "Catch" by The Cure, "Our Lies" by Rasputina

What is your favorite color?

Black, the color of my pain. Goth black. So black you have to say it twice. Black black.

Favorite movie

Currently "Queen of the Damned"... the best comedy I've ever seen...

Favorite guilty pleasure

Hilariously bad movies (see favorite movie).

What makes you laugh?

Aside from bad movies?

Reason for joining the Initiative

Aside from the highly lucrative and glamorous not-for-profit lifestyle?

What artist or art form has had the biggest impact on you?

I'd like to say poetry; but, in reality, it's television.

DENNIS CHIUTEN DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATE

I am responsible for the Initiative's fundraising efforts, including grant writing and management, special events like the Banquet, and the annual Membership drive.

Most embarrassing moment

When I was a teenager my ball bounced into our seldom-used pool. I leaned over the edge to retrieve it, and disturbed a nest of wasps that was living underneath the rim of the pool. They promptly attached themselves to my head and ankles, and I grabbed the ball and ran, screaming, towards the house. Along the way, I stepped right in a pile of dog surprise that my dog, Hobbes, had left right in the middle of the yard... so I continued hobbling towards the house as I tried to scrape the surprise off my shoes on the run. My neighbors saw the whole thing from their yard.

Most desired superpower

The ability to fly (quickly).

Favorite guilty pleasure

Wearing a shirt with a Chinese character on it, when I don't know what the character means.

Reason for joining the Initiative

My girlfriend (Hanalei Ramos), a performance poet who's been involved in a lot of the Initiative's programs over the past few years. We were in a long distance relationship (Philly-LA) for a year and a half, and when she introduced me to the organization, it seemed like the perfect opportunity for me to fulfill my long-held dream of being involved in the Asian American arts movement despite my utter lack of creativity.

rewarding arts workshops in diverse community-based settings.

What is your sign?

Gemini, in the year of the Horse.

What artist or art form has had the biggest impact on you?

Photography/photographic Images. In every way, from initial composition to final output, B/W to alternative processes to digital projections.

What 3 things would you want on a desert island?

My family, SX70 Polaroid w/10000+ pks film, all my photo albums/pictures.

Most desired superpower

To understand/speak/read/write any language, and be able to go everywhere/anywhere, communicating freely with all people.

What are you most excited about in the upcoming year?

Seeing ACT grow in multiple areas and helping to make it happen. Also, to spending time with, and learning from, the wonderful staff at the Initiative.



Detail of "Momentum" installation by Jeff Cylkowski

Asian Arts Initiative staff: (l-r) Sean, Dennis, Gayle, Rana, Michi, Omar, & Kavita

SUMMER SNAPSHOTS

- Our Gallery reception for Jeff Cylkowski's *Momentum* installation, which doubled as the opening event for the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts' Preserving Diverse Cultures conference. A packed crowd of people from all over the state watched Jeff mix visual art with dance and spoken word.
- A fundraiser we hosted for the 2nd national Asian Pacific Islander American Spoken Word Summit. Curated by Yellow Rage, performers from Washington D.C. to Boston helped make it possible for members of our GenerAsian Next teen theater troupe to attend the conference in Chicago.
- The Open Space gathering hosted by Greater Philadelphia Cultural Alliance. The Cultural Alliance is an advocacy organization that provides services to arts and culture organizations throughout the Philadelphia region. Veterans of our staff got a chance to meet up with colleagues, while new staffers got a chance to introduce themselves to the Philadelphia community, plus learn an innovative technology for convening conferences!
- A tour of the Clay Studio, which serves the Philadelphia arts community with various ceramics classes, as well as a large gallery space. Our staff got a personalized tour of an exhibit of 22 contemporary Chinese ceramicists, plus an inside look at the facilities and a history of this organization which has made its home in Old City for over a decade.
- An ice cream and water ice party to celebrate the completion of the neighborhood mural our Youth Arts Workshop teens created through the Big Picture project sponsored by the City of Philadelphia's Mural Arts Program. If you're on Carpenter between 9th and 10th, take a look to see the fruits of their labor. Special thanks to the Anastasi family for their help and support.
- A staff exchange with the Art Sanctuary. Located in North Philadelphia, the Art Sanctuary works with the African American community through programs very similar to what we offer to the Asian American community. We hope that this first visit is the beginning of an ongoing relationship that enables us to collaborate and open up dialogue between our communities.



Big Picture Mural Project participants in front of the completed mural at 9th & Carpenter

Big Picture Mural Project participants with the Washington Avenue Neighborhood mural design

CONGRATULATIONS ROKO & ANULA!

We proudly announce that two longtime members of the Asian Arts Initiative family, Anula Shetty and Roko Kawai, are the new recipients of prestigious artist fellowships!

We have known Anula since 1995, when we first featured her short films as part of our multidisciplinary Rap Series. Since then, Anula has completed our Artists in Communities Training (ACT) program, where she honed some of the facilitation skills that she now puts to use as a teaching artist in our Youth Arts Workshop. This June, Anula won an Independence Foundation Fellowship in the Arts, and will now be able to pursue a personal project: completing the script for her full-length feature film *Junk Mail*, which tells the story of a 22-year-old immigrant Indian woman searching for love and political voice in America.

Roko was a founding Board Member, and has served on our staff as Grants Manager for the past year. A dancer and choreographer who has performed at venues throughout Philadelphia, New York, and as far away as New Zealand, Roko was awarded a Pew Fellowship in the Arts that will support her continued study of Japanese classical dance over the next two years. Roko is currently participating in the Asian Pacific Performance Exchange (APPEX) Project in Bali and Hawaii, and will be returning to Philadelphia this fall for performances at the Painted Bride Art Center and at the Asian Arts Initiative's October Rap Series!

IN MEMORY OF ALBERT ISA

With sadness, we commemorate the passing of Albert S. Isa. Al was the father of our Executive Director, Gayle Isa, and a great supporter who made many contributions to the Initiative—including several staff appreciation dinners, multiple Memberships, a recent used car donation, and two cross-country trips to attend our Annual Banquet and Auction! As a self-employed accountant and entrepreneur, he took pride in his daughter's role in founding the Initiative, and in the recognition the organization has received for its excellent fiscal management. He was a family storyteller, an avid fan of theater and visual art, and quite probably a closet artist himself.

His wife Hazel Isa and daughters Gayle and Michelle Isa have made a \$1,000 gift to the Asian Arts Initiative in his memory. We extend our sympathies and our thanks to the Isa family. To Al, we promise to keep up the good work that made you so proud!

The late Albert S. Isa, Asian Arts Initiative champion and supporter

STAFF

Dennis Chiuten, *Development Associate*
Kavita Goyal, *Youth Arts Workshop Coordinator*
Michiko Hunt, *Office Manager*
Gayle Isa, *Executive Director*
Roko Kawai, *Grants Manager*
Magda Martinez, *ACT Program Facilitator*
Susan Oh, *Office Assistant*
Rana Sindhikara, *ACT Program Coordinator*
Sean Stoops, *Gallery Coordinator*
Omar Telan, *Public Programs Associate*

YOUTH ARTS WORKSHOP ARTISTS

Issac Lin, *Big Picture Mural Project*
Anula Shetty, *Life Stories Video Project*
Catzie Vilayphonh, *GenerAsian Next Theater Troupe*

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