

KURT WEILL NEWSLETTER

Volume 10, Number 1

Spring 1992



Lotte Lenya, 1981. Photo by Ted Mitchell.

Guy Stern commemorates the 10th anniversary of Lotte Lenya's death (27 November 1981) with a discussion of Lenya's interpretation of Brecht's plays. Page 6.

Christopher Hailey reviews recent books by Alexander Ringer and Jost Hermand. Page 16.

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Britten-Weill Festival at Aldeburgh

The Aldeburgh Festival of Music and the Arts is planning a Britten-Weill Festival, 22-26 October 1992. According to a preliminary program, conductor Andrew Davis and the BBC Symphony Orchestra will open the festival in a concert that includes the Paul Bunyan overture and Sinfonia da Requiem by Britten, and Weill's Violin Concerto and Symphony no. 2.

The next four days offer a concert of chamber music featuring Lucy Shelton, soprano, the Britten-Pears Ensemble, and the Borodin String Quartet; an open forum discussion; "Showtime with Benjamin Britten and Kurt Weill" with soloists Angelina Réaux and HK Gruber; and singers from the Britten-Pears School performing *The Threepenny Opera* and *Happy End Songspiel*, accompanied by the Britten-Pears Orchestra, Stuart Bedford, conductor. The BBC will broadcast the orchestra concert and the "Showtime" event.

For more information, contact Aldeburgh Festival of Music and the Arts, Aldeburgh Foundation, High Street, Aldeburgh, Suffolk IP15 5AX, Great Britain.

Stuttgart Mahagonny Opens to Rousing Ovations

The 22 March 1992 premiere of *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny* at the Stuttgart Staatstheater elicited 30 minutes of boisterous ovations for the cast, director Ruth Berghaus, and conductor Markus Stenz. Gerhard R. Koch summarized the evening in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine* as a "thundering, unequivocal success. The City-of-Sharks-Opera is more timely than ever. Over and above the considerable 'show-biz' qualities, this performance demonstrated cogent musical values. [It was] a truly magnificent evening of opera." [Photo, page 4].

Weill Studien

A collection of essays on Weill emanating from the 1990 International Kurt Weill Symposium in Duisburg, Germany is to be published in Fall 1992. This hard cover edition, *A Stranger Here Myself: Kurt Weill Studien*, will be printed by the Olms-Verlag as a yearbook of the Salomon Ludwig Steinheim Institut für deutsch-jüdische Geschichte. The essays will be published in their original languages, German or English. Horst Edler of the Steinheim Institut and Kim H. Kowalke of the Kurt Weill Foundation are co-editors.

The essays comprise: "Fragwürdiges in der deutschen Rezeption," by Stephen Hinton; "Formerly German: Kurt Weill in America," by Kim H. Kowalke; "Fremd bin ich eingezogen": Anmerkungen zu einer geteilten Biographie," by Joachim Lucchesi; "Der literarisch-kulturelle Horizont des

jungen Weills: Eine Analyse seiner ungedruckten frühen Briefe," by Guy Stern; "Von der Provinz in die Stadt: Die frühe musikalische Ausbildung Kurt Weills," by Tamara Levitz; "Der Jasager: Weill's Composition Lesson," by Ian Kemp; "Elemente romantischer Tradition im Musiktheater Kurt Weills—Überlegungen zur Nebelszene der *Bürgschaft*," by Andreas Hauff; The *Bürgschaft* Debate and the Timeliness of the Untimely," by David Drew; "Musical Language and Formal Design in the Symphonies of Kurt Weill," by Robert Bailey; "I Cannot/Will Not Sing the Old Songs Now": Some Observations on Weill's Adaptation of Popular Song Forms," by Michael Morley; "Pscosi per musica: Re-examining *Lady in the Dark*," by Bruce McClung; "Der 'alien American' Kurt Weill und seine Aktivitäten für den War Effort der USA 1940-1945," by Jürgen Schebera; "The Enigma of Kurt Weill's *Whitman Songs*," by Jürgen Thym; "Propaganda der Trauer: Kurt Weills *Whitman-Songs*," by Werner Grünzweig; "A Kurt Weill Bibliography," by David Farneth.

Love Life Recording Cancelled

Peter Alward, Vice-President, Artists & Repertoire, EMI has informed the Kurt Weill Foundation that EMI Classics was forced to cancel its complete recording of *Love Life*, planned for late 1992. Alward cited the recession as a factor.

Die Dreigroschenoper

The Week in Germany, published by the German Information Center, reported in its 7 February 1992 issue that more theatergoers attended performances of *Die Dreigroschenoper* during the 1990-91 season than any other work on the German Stage. *Die Dreigroschenoper* welcomed 267,670 patrons in 491 performances, while Rudyard Kipling's *Jungle Book* received 199,980 in 487 performances, and Volker Ludwig's *Linie 1* 151,939 in 343. These statistics were collected by the office of "Statistik des Deutschen Bühnenvereins" in Cologne.

German-Language Brochure

A comprehensive guide to the programs and research facilities of the Kurt Weill Foundation is now available in German. It includes information on the Foundation's publications and grants program as well as the Weill-Lenya Research Center. Copies of this brochure may be obtained by contacting the Foundation at the address, phone number, or telefax listed below.

One Touch of Venus

The 1991-92 season of the Discovering Lost Musicals series, under the direction of Ian Marshall Fisher at the Theatre Mu-

seum in Covent Garden, London, culminated with concert performances of Weill-Lerner's *Love Life*. Plans for the 1992-93 season include concert performances of *One Touch of Venus* on 16, 23, 30 August and 6 September. The series, having played before SRO crowds, has outgrown its venue and moves to the Barbican next season to accommodate audience demand. The other musicals planned for the 1992-93 season are *By Jupiter*, *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*, *Jubilee*, and *Do I Hear a Waltz?*

Newsletter Indexed in Music Index and CD Digest

The contents of the *Kurt Weill Newsletter* will be indexed in *Music Index* beginning with the 1990 issues. The *Music Index* covers more than 350 publications from

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The Newsletter is published to provide an open forum wherein interested readers may express a variety of ideas and opinions. The opinions expressed do not necessarily represent the publisher's official viewpoint. The editor encourages the submission of articles, reviews, and news items for inclusion in future issues. The submission deadline for the next issue is 1 August 1992.

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twenty countries. The printed index is available at most libraries. Chadwyck-Healy has recently released a CD-ROM edition of the Index, cumulative from 1981 through 1988 and updated annually.

Reviews of compact discs which appear in the *Newsletter* are indexed in *CD Review Digest*. The publication includes bibliographic information as well as brief excerpts from reviews that appear in thirty-three music periodicals. Entries for recordings of Weill's music are found in both parts of the digest: "Classical" and "Jazz, Popular, etc."

Berlin im Licht

Berlin im Licht (Largo 5114) claimed one of the top spots in contributing editor Erik Levi's 1991 "Picks of the Year" in the British *CD Review* (December 1991/January 1992). In explaining his selection of this collection of lesser-known Weill songs and instrumental pieces, Levi wrote "the performances here are absolutely scintillating with the individual voice of the composer HK Gruber bringing tremendous personality and zest to the proceedings." This CD is now available in record stores throughout the United States or directly from Qualiton Imports, 24-02 40th Avenue, Long Island City, NY 11101; phone (718) 937-8515; fax (718) 729-3239.

1000 Makers of the Twentieth Century

"1000 Makers of the Twentieth Century," a multi-installment list of individuals who have shaped the modern world published in the *London Sunday Times Magazine*, cited Kurt Weill for "his desire to bring opera out of its plush romanticism phase, to make it sharp, socially aggressive, and didactic." The list included notables from all walks of life, from Alice Walker to Kurt Weill.

Brook House For Sale

Weill's and Lenya's New City residence, Brook House, is on the market. After Lenya's death, the West Branch Conservation Association assumed control of some of the surrounding property, and the executors of Lenya's estate sold the ca. 1880 house (1880 sq. ft.) and carriage house (1650 sq. ft.) along with 5.5 acres of land. The Kurt Weill Foundation has provided a grant for the Conservation Association to erect a commemorative plaque to Weill and Lenya on the property. The real estate agent is Marcia B. Fisher, Baer & McIntosh Real Estate, (914) 358-9403.

1992 Grants Awarded

In December 1991, the Board of Trustees of the Kurt Weill Foundation for Music, Inc., approved the recommendations of the Independent Grants Advisory Panel to award the grants listed below:

Research

Pascal Huynh, Berlin. Research and travel grant to Paris to complete French translations and editorial work on a volume of Weill's writings.

Robert Moody, Greenville, SC. Research and travel grant to London to act as a consultant and assistant conductor for the English National Opera revival of *Street Scene*.

Publication Assistance

Atay Citron, El Cerrito, CA. Subvention to support *Remember Us: The Anti-Nazi Spectacles of American Jews* by Atay Citron, to be published by Indiana University Press.

Performance

American Symphony Orchestra, New York, NY. Concert performance of a suite adapted from *Railroads on Parade*.

Boston Lyric Opera, Boston, MA. *Lost in the Stars*.

Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA. *Street Scene*.

Curtis Institute of Music, Philadelphia, PA. *Mahagonny Songspiel*.

Dessoff Choirs, New York, NY. Concert performance of the "Columbus Sequence" from *Where Do We Go From Here?*

Light Opera Works, Evanston, IL. *Knickerbocker Holiday*.

Milwaukee Symphony, Milwaukee, WI. *Symphony no. 2*.

Mount Vernon Chamber Orchestra, Mount Vernon, VA. *The Seven Deadly Sins*.

Musikcollegium Winterthur, Winterthur, Switzerland. *Symphony no. 2, Concerto for violin and wind instruments, op. 12, Four Walt Whitman Songs* (for voice and orchestra).

New Orchestra of Westchester, Purchase, NY. "Cry, the Beloved Country," Concert Suite from *Lost in the Stars*.

Riverside Choral Society, New York, NY. *Berliner Requiem, Kiddush*.

Wesleyan University, Middletown, CT. *The Seven Deadly Sins, Marie Galante Concert Suite, Kleine Dreigroschenmusik*.

Recording and TV/Film

Orchestra of St. Luke's, New York, NY. Subvention to support the complete recording of *Lost in the Stars*.

Atay Citron, El Cerrito, CA. Subvention to support music costs of television/film documentary entitled *Remember Us: The Anti-Nazi Spectacles of American Jews*.

LETTERS

To the Editor:

Has anyone ever pointed out to your readers that the Weill-Deval "Le grand Lustacru" from *Marie Galante* may have been inspired by another song with the same title, "Le grand Lustukru" by Théodore Botrel?

Théodore Botrel (b. Dinan 1868; d. Port-Blanc 1925) launched his career as a singer and actor in Montmartre. He wrote hundreds of songs about Brittany and Vendée, but many Bretons have denounced his ultra-reactionary themes and his postcard-like representations of the region. Nevertheless, his songs are still popular in Brittany and in the rest of France; some are even mistaken as folksongs: "La Faimpolaise," "Kenavo," "Fleur de blé noir," "Jésus chez les Bretons," "Le petit Grégoire," "Le mouchoir de Cholet," and "Lilas Blanc," to name a few.

Botrel credits his song as being "collected [*recueilli*] from an old air sung by Madame J. Collier." It was filed for copyright by SACEM on 9 June 1900 and is published by Edition Fortin, 4, cité Chaptal, Paris 75009.

HELENE HAZERA

Paris

Ms. Hazera has donated a copy of the song to the Weill-Lenya Research Center.

To the Editor:

Prompted by seeing the address for the Algi-Seifenfabrik on a new bottle of shower gel, I wrote to the company to see if anyone there knew about the history of Weill's "Algi-Song." [See David Drew's *Handbook*, p. 129 and his notes for the recording on Largo 5114.] M. Färber confirmed to me that Algi soap came on the market in 1918. It was well known throughout Germany and especially popular with Berlin's bourgeoisie, whom Weill wanted to satirize with his song. Apparently Weill wrote the text independently and did not base it on any pre-existing advertisement. The company could not tell me if it had any contact with Weill, because all of its pre-1945 documents had been lost.

JOACHIM LUCCHESI

Berlin

Not much is known about the "Algi-Song," and references to it in documents held by the Weill-Lenya Research Center are oblique or speculative. Letters from 1918 in the Hans and Rita Weill Collection show that Weill's brother Hans wanted to be involved in selling a new soap product, apparently manufactured by a Mr. Potzernheim, but no reference is made to "Algi." The only likely reference in Weill's correspondence to this work is in an undated letter from Weill to Hans, probably from 1921: "Please give Rita my best regards and ask her whether she would be angry if the promised waltz would turn into a Foxtrot in modern style instead?"



Begbick (Reinhild Runkel), Fatty (Oskar Pürgstaller), Trinity Moses (Adalbert Waller), Jenny (Dagmar Pecková), Jim Mahoney (Gabriel Sadé), Alaska Wolf Joe (Karl-Friedrich Dürr), Jack (Michael Austin), and Bill (Mark Munkittrick) in the Staatstheater Stuttgart production of *Aufstieg und Fall der Stadt Mahagonny*. Photo: Abisag Tüllmann.

The Ice Cream Sextet in the English National Opera revival of *Street Scene*. Original production by David Pountney, revived by Nicolette Molnar, conducted by James Holmes. *Street Scene* is in repertory from 13 February through 19 March and is being filmed by the BBC for telecast in the UK. Photo: Michael le Poer Trench.



Study Group Convenes at International Musicological Society Meeting

A new study group, "Institutions for Historical Research in 20th-Century Music: Problems of Source Studies" convened for the first time at the 15th Congress of the International Musicological Society, April 1992 in Madrid. Ulrich Mosch and André Baltensperger of the Paul Sacher Stiftung, Basel, organized two sessions that included participants from eleven institutions: László Somfai, Bartók Archivum, Budapest; Regina Busch, Alban Berg Gesamtausgabe, Vienna; Mila de Santis, Fondo Dallapiccola, Florence; Myriam Chimènes, Oeuvres complètes Claude Debussy, Paris; Jorge de Persia, Archivo Manuel de Falla, Granada; Giseler Schubert, Paul Hindemith-Institut, Frankfurt; Susanne Shigihara, Max-Reger-Institut, Bonn; Ulrich Mosch and Robert Pienkowski, Paul Sacher Stiftung, Basel; Martina Sichardt, Arnold Schönberg Gesamtausgabe, Berlin, and David Farneth, Kurt Weill Foundation for Music, New York.

The papers addressed a number of topics related to source studies, including authorized versions vs. authentic variants, rough drafts as a guide to the creative process, arrangements, sketch studies, classification, and critical editions.

"Brecht Unbound" University of Delaware

Hans-Peter Breuer coordinated an ambitious international symposium organized by various departments of the University of Delaware and the University's Professional Theatre Training Program. "Brecht Unbound" comprised six sessions, each featuring a keynote speaker and papers by 2-4 other presenters. Guy Stern, a Trustee of the Kurt Weill Foundation for Music and Distinguished Professor at Wayne State University, gave the keynote address "Lenya's Creative Interpretation of Brecht" for the session "Brecht and Musical Aesthetics." [An excerpt from Stern's lecture is reprinted in this issue.] The other sessions were built around the topics: "Brecht's Theater and Politics," "Brecht in Four Germanys," "Brecht and Theatrical Traditions," "Brecht as Literary Figure," and "Brecht and Women." The conference papers will be published by the University of Delaware Press.

To supplement the scholarly sessions, the Music Department presented an evening of music by Weill and songs set to Brecht

texts by Ricky Gordon, and the University's Professional Theatre Training Program presented an impressive staging of *Caucasian Chalk Circle* in a translation by Ralph Manheim with music by Paul Dessau. Dr. Heinz-Uwe Haus, who began a three-year guest professorship at the university in 1990, directed the production.

"Germany and the New World" at Amherst

The University of Massachusetts at Amherst in collaboration with the Goethe House, Boston will host the conference "Germany and the New World: Cultural Exchanges with Latin America and the Caribbean" from 23 to 25 April 1992 at the Campus Center, University of Massachusetts. The 18th Amherst Colloquium will consider a range of topics, including the treatment of Latin American/Caribbean revolutions in German literature, the depiction of Latin America, Cuba, and the Caribbean in German post-war literature and film, the reception of Latin American literature in Germany, German authors in Latin America, and Latin American influences on music and art. Mario R. Mercado, Associate Editor of this newsletter, will present a paper, "Kurt Weill and the Tango."

The German filmmaker Jeanine Meerapfel will appear as a special guest at the conference and will introduce screenings of two of her films: the documentary film *Desembarcos/Es gibt kein Vergessen/When Memory Speaks* and the feature film *La Amiga*, starring Liv Ullmann and Cipe Lincovsky, winner of a 1989 Bundesfilmpreis.

For additional information, contact the Department of Germanic Languages and Literature, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, Herter Hall, Amherst, MA 01003; tel. (413) 545-2350/545-6686; fax (413) 545-6137.

Actors Theatre of Louisville Classics in Context Festival

Carmen-Maja Antoni and Hans-Peter Reinecke, two experienced members of the Berliner Ensemble, presented eight Weill songs in the course of a cabaret entitled "Love and Revolution" on 19 and 21 October 1991, as part of the Actors Theatre of Louisville's Classics in Context Festival. It was decidedly the high point in a multimedia weekend devoted to an exploration

of the performing arts during the Weimar Republic.

Miss Antoni and Mr. Reinecke disproved whatever one may have heard concerning a decline in standards at the theater Brecht founded in 1949 after his return to East Berlin. These two highly disciplined actors wielded the didactic sledgehammer of an all-Brecht program with a masterfully informal and understated precision that delivered wit and pathos along with political instruction, exemplifying the principle of ease ["Leichtigkeit"] for which Brecht himself as a director was known to strive. They were ably accompanied on the piano by their Berliner Ensemble colleague Karl-Heinz Nehring.

All eight Weill songs, six from *Threepenny Opera* and two from *Happy End*, were musically familiar, but the text to the score of the "Solomon Song" was neither from the script of *Threepenny Opera* nor from *Mother Courage*, but rather a melange of autobiographical quips by Brecht ending with a mock tribute to the politically ignorant. There were songs by six other composers, including Hanns Eisler, Mr. Nehring, and two by Brecht himself. The songs were punctuated by well-paced readings of Brecht verses and aphorisms, the most memorable of which may have been the paradoxical lines of the poem "Everything changes" ["Alles wandelt sich"].

The Festival's events included another musical presentation, namely a screening of Walter Ruttmann's 1927 documentary film "Berlin: Symphony of a City," complete with a live piano accompaniment played by Louisville jazz pianist Stephen Crews.

In addition to the musical highlights mentioned, the weekend offered several exhibitions, lectures by John Willett and Dr. Heinz-Uwe Haus, two colloquia on the state of the theater in Germany today, and a performance of Ödön von Horváth's *Tales from the Vienna Woods*, directed by Mladen Kisilov. One of the two colloquia focussed on the plight of the Berliner Ensemble since reunification and consisted of a question-and-answer session between the audience and Miss Antoni and Mr. Reinecke. One had the feeling in the course of the exchange that these two actors, like so many highly qualified professionals in the performing arts in the former German Democratic Republic, are struggling with the contradictions brought about by reunification.

GRANT GUIDELINES

Types of Grants

The Kurt Weill Foundation for Music, Inc. is a non-profit corporation which promotes public understanding and appreciation of the musical works by Kurt Weill. To this end, the Foundation solicits proposals from individuals and non-profit organizations for funding of projects related to the perpetuation of Kurt Weill's artistic legacy. For the 1993 funding period, the Foundation is accepting proposals in one or more of the following categories:

- Research Grants
- Publication Assistance
- Dissertation Fellowships
- Travel Grants
- Professional Performance and Production Grants
- College and University Performance and Production Grants
- Recording Projects
- Broadcasts

Funding Period

To be eligible for funding, the project must be initiated during 1993 or the 1993-1994 academic year or cultural season.

Description of Categories

Research and Travel Grants. In this category funding may be requested to support specific research expenses. Applicants must be pursuing a topic directly related to Kurt Weill and/or Lotte Lenya and must submit a detailed outline of the proposed project. Travel grants should be requested to reimburse reasonable travel expenses to locations of primary source material.

Publication Assistance. Funding in this category may be requested to assist in expenses related to preparing manuscripts for publication in a recognized scholarly medium. Funds may be requested for, but not limited to, editing, indexing, design, and reproduction fees.

Dissertation Fellowships. Ph.D. candidates may apply for dissertation fellowships to assist in research activities. The application must include a copy of the dissertation proposal and two letters of recommendation, one of which is from the faculty advisor.

Professional and Regional Performance and Production Grants. Proposals from professional and regional opera companies, theater companies, and concert groups should demonstrate that requested funds will be used to improve the musical qualities of the performance. Examples of recommended requests include funds for soloists, orchestra fees, and extra rehearsals. There is no restriction on the amount requested.

College and University Performance and Production Grants:

Stage Works. The Foundation will award up to ten grants, maximum \$3,000 each, to colleges and universities in support of general production expenses for performances

of Kurt Weill's stage works. Awards will be based on the work to be performed, geographic distribution, and the musical excellence demonstrated by the application. All works must be presented in fully staged versions using Weill's original orchestrations. Productions of *The Threepenny Opera* are not eligible for funding. In general, performances of *Mahagonny Songspiel* receive low priority for funding.

Concert Works. Assistance for performances of concert works is available in grants of up to \$1,500 to cover expenses including but not limited to increased rehearsal time, guest artist fees, and promotion.

Recording Projects. Proposals requesting funds for artist and musician fees, rehearsal expenses, and mastertape production expenses will be eligible. Priority will be given to works which have not yet been recorded in their original form. Only projects with a commitment from a record company are eligible, and all financial arrangements with the recording company must be disclosed.

Broadcasts. The Foundation welcomes proposals from producers and non-profit broadcasters to support post-production costs for special programs which feature primarily Kurt Weill and his music. A complete summary of the project must be submitted along with evidence of commitment for broadcast.

Funding Priorities

For the current granting period, fully staged productions of *Der Zar lässt sich fotografieren* and *Der Protagonist* will be especially privileged in evaluation of funding priorities.

1. Research proposals should demonstrate the promise of publishable results.

2. Performance proposals that demonstrate musical excellence and authenticity are encouraged.

3. For stage productions, performances of complete works in their original versions receive priority. Newly compiled properties that simply use Weill's songs are not eligible for funding.

4. Proposals for local productions or performances should demonstrate a previous record of artistic excellence, evidence of community support, and a potential for influence beyond the immediate area.

5. Stock and amateur productions of *The Threepenny Opera* are not eligible for funding.

6. While performances of *Kleine Dreigroschenmusik* are normally not eligible for funding, programs of larger scope including *Kleine Dreigroschenmusik* as well as other Weill works may be funded.

7. Proposals for script translations and musical adaptations are not eligible for funding.

8. Proposals where the music serves an incidental or background function will not be considered. For example, proposals which feature the use of the music to support a new dramatic property, or function as background usage in films, video, etc. are not eligible for funding.

9. In general, the Foundation does not consider proposals for retroactive funding.

Evaluation Procedures

After applications have been reviewed by the Foundation's staff, additional supporting materials (including recordings, recommendations, and samples of previous work) may be requested for consideration by the Advisory Panel on Grant Evaluations, which will make recommendations to the Board of Trustees. The Advisory Panel on Grant Applications shall be composed of independent, prominent members from the musical, theatrical, and scholarly communities. Grants will be awarded on an objective and non-discriminatory basis. Grantee selection criteria will include:

1. Relevance and value of the project to the Foundation's purposes;

2. Quality of the project;

3. Evidence of the applicant's potential, motivation, and ability to carry out the project successfully;

4. Evidence of the applicant's prior record of achievement in the field covered by the project.

Applicants will be informed of awards by 1 February 1993.

Application Information

Applications for the 1993 awards must be received by 1 November 1992 and should contain the following information:

1. A detailed description of the project, along with the cover sheet provided.

2. An up-to-date curriculum vita or resume for individuals, or a profile of purposes, activities, and past achievements (including a list of references), for organizations.

3. A detailed and itemized budget showing entire project expenses and income, including income anticipated from other funding sources.

4. Performance Grant Fact Sheet (if applying for a performance grant).

5. Research proposals must specify other grants applied for and the date of determination for each. Applicants must notify the Foundation if other grants are awarded.

All applications and correspondence should be addressed to:

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