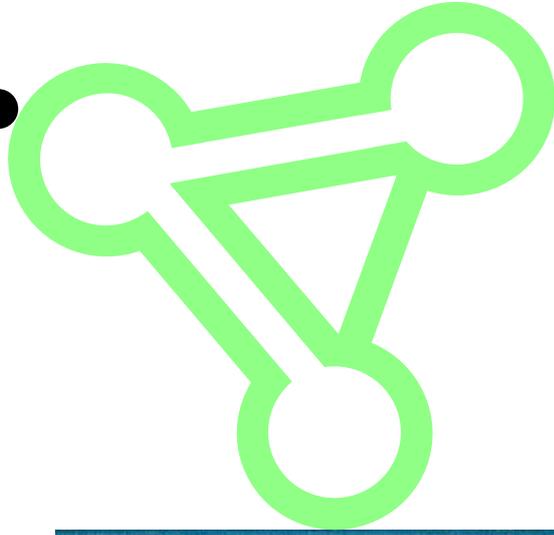


eadc.



Exhibition

Camille Graeser
Devenir un artiste concret



●
Espace de l'Art Concret
Centre d'art contemporain

● d'intérêt national
● Donation Albers-Honegger
Château de Mouans
06370 Mouans-Sartoux
+33 (0)4 93 75 71 50
espacedelartconcret.fr

12.03 → 12.06.2022

Press release

eac. Devenir un artiste concret

Camille Graeser

12th march • 12th june 2022
Opening Saturday 12th march at 11am.

Office of the scientific commissioner: Vera Hausdorff

Associate curator: Alexandra Deslys & Claire Spada

Gallery of the castle

Artists: **Jean Arp, Willi Baumeister, Max Bill, Walter Bodmer, Lanfranco Bombelli, Heinrich Eichmann, Robert S. Gessner, Fritz Glarner, Emmy et Camille Graeser, Adolf Hölzel, Max Huber, Verena Loewensberg, Richard Paul Lohse, Bruno Munari, Gerrit T. Rietveld, Oskar Schlemmer, Marcel Wyss**

Exhibition in partnership with

Haus Konstruktiv in Zurich (Switzerland), Museum of Fine Arts La Chaux-de-Fonds (Switzerland), and the Museum of Budapest (Hungry)

A unique place in France dedicated to concrete art, it seemed necessary for our institution to celebrate the founding role of Camille Graeser in the development and dissemination of this movement in Europe.

By hosting the exhibition Camille Graeser, Devenir un artiste concret in spring 2022, the eac. will offer for the first time a monographic exhibition dedicated to the artist in a French public institution.

Born at the end of the 19th century, Camille Graeser began his artistic training at the same time as the artistic avant-garde of modernity was born. He became one of the first Swiss non-figurative painters. Elder of the famous group "Zurich Concrets", he developed a particular approach to concrete art that favoured musical rhythm and a certain poetic sense.

Keen to inscribe his collection in the history of concrete art, Gottfried Honegger acquired a work by this pioneer of Swiss concrete art as early as 1956. In the canvas *Musikale Valenz*, Camille Graeser develops a geometric abstraction initiated by rhumb line. This term borrowed from the mathematical field, spherical trigonometry, designates Graeser's break with the traditional representation of imitation in a desire for self-referential painting. This liberation of substance and form sets up a pictorial system in search of the absolute.

The exhibition will show the evolution of Camille Graeser's work from the first figurative drawings to the latest radical and perfectly emblematic works of concrete art.

The themes discussed will show the importance of certain themes such as the human figure or music. The itinerary will also highlight the artistic and friendly ties that Camille Graeser has established throughout his career with the European avant-garde (Surrealism, Allianz, De Stijl, the Zurich Concrets).

The exhibition will allow us to grasp all the facets of the artist's work, joining the principle dear to concrete art of integrating art into everyday life. A presentation of drawings, archival documents and pieces of furniture will testify to Camille Graeser's contribution to design and interior architecture in the 20th century.

The works presented will mainly come from the Camille Graeser estate, complemented by other private collections or public institutions.

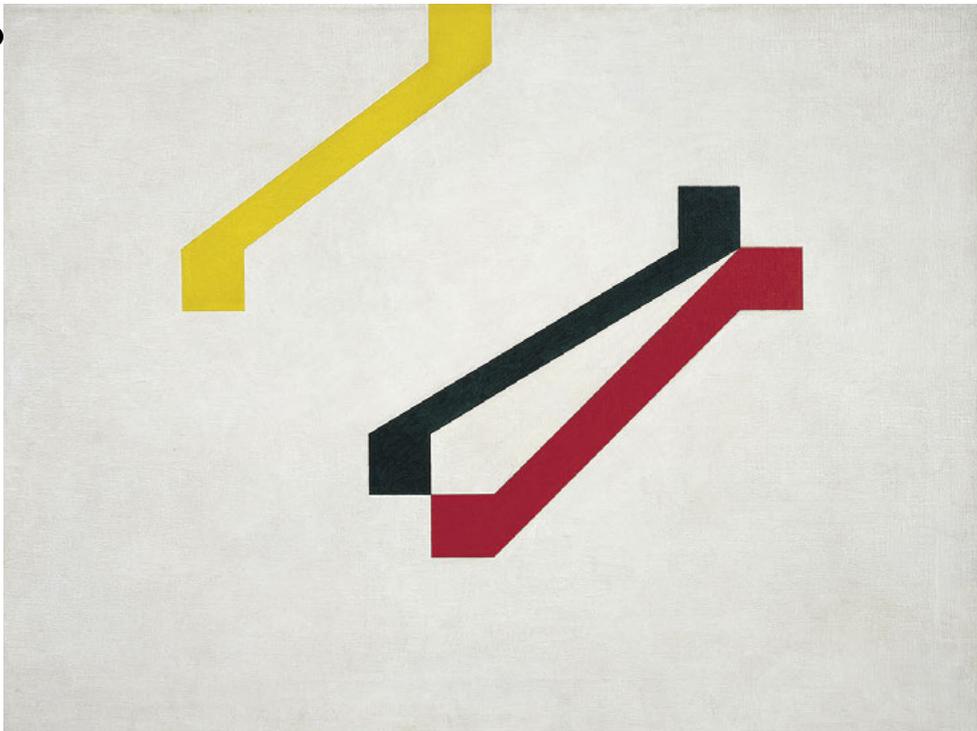
Catalogue

Camille Graeser, devenir un artiste concret

In conjunction with the exhibition, a catalogue was published by the Camille Graeser Foundation, Zurich Wienand

verlag : 468 pages

French – English – German editions



Camille Graeser, Musikale Valenz, 1950

oil on canvas 54,5 x 72,5 cm

Inv FNAC 02-1224. Centre national des arts plastiques
 Donation Albers-Honegger – Espace de l'Art Concret
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Camille Graeser, Gelb - schwarz - volumen 11:1, 1978

acrylic on canvas 120 x 120 cm

Inv B1978.7. Camille Graeser Foundation, Zurich
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Camille Graeser, Untitled, 1919

Coloured crayon on grey cardboard 50 x 35 cm

Inv Z1919.4. Camille Graeser Foundation, Zurich
 © photo all rights reserved © Adagp, Paris 2022

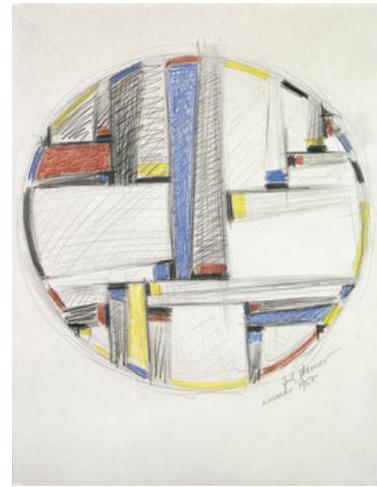
eac. Other artists presented at the exhibition



Max Bill, *Zwei Zonen - Dunkel und Hell*, 1970

oil on canvas 100×100 cm

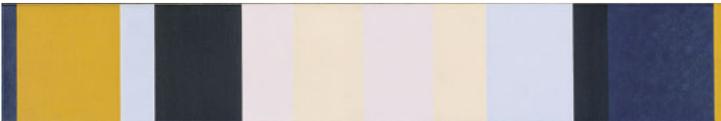
Inv FNAC 02-1130. Centre national des arts plastiques
Donation Albers-Honegger — Espace de l'Art Concret
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Fritz Glarner, *Tondo*, 1965

coloured pencil on paper 65×50 cm

Inv FNAC 02-1221. Centre national des arts plastiques
Donation Albers-Honegger — Espace de l'Art Concret
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Richard-Paul Lohse, *Sechs ineinandergehende gleiche Gruppen*, 1950/61

oil on canvas 20×120 cm

Inv FNAC 02-1273. Centre national des arts plastiques
Donation Albers-Honegger — Espace de l'Art Concret
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Verena Loewensberg, *Untitled*, 1968

oil on canvas 71×141 cm

Private collection, Switzerland
© photo all rights reserved © Adagp, Paris 2022



**Camille Graeser dans son atelier de Stuttgart,
Landhausstrasse 10**

photographie 1952
Fondation Camille Graeser, Zurich
© all rights reserved

With Max Bill, Verena Loewensberg et Richard Paul Lohse, Camille Graeser is the leading exponent of Zurich's concrete art.

He studied at the Kunstgewerbeschule in Stuttgart in 1913, then, like Willi Baumeister and Oskar Schlemmer, he was a pupil of Adolf Hölzel at the Stuttgart Academy in 1915. He then became an interior designer in Berlin, then moved to Stuttgart, remaining a member of the German Werkbund. At the same time, he will begin his pictorial work in the direction of cubo-futurism.

He met Herwarth Walden in Berlin, exhibited at the Sturm, then had his first solo exhibition in 1918 in Stuttgart. From 1922 onwards, his works were non-figurative: these geometric shapes could be compared with works by Walter Dexel and Willi Baumeister at the same time.

As a member of the Werkbund and as an interior designer, he took part in the exhibition *The Form Without Ornament*, held in Stuttgart in 1924.

He then went to Paris for the International Exhibition of Decorative Arts and in 1927, after meeting Mies van der Rohe, went to the Werkbund exhibition on Housing presented in Stuttgart: he designed one of the apartments in Mies van der Rohe's building.

Graeser left Germany in 1933, abandoning all his paintings, only a few drawings were preserved, as well as a few photographic documents. He moved to Zurich and painting soon took precedence over his other activity.

He joined the Allianz association in 1937 and practised non-figurative art with a geometric tendency, in which he sought to justify the shapes and colours he used: he was then integrated into the Swiss avant-garde art scene. His work, very varied, can be divided into several periods.

In the first one, a motif often remained on a background, but after 1945 Graeser was mainly concerned with the problems of surface and quantity.

The painting is always considered in the strict sense, that is to say, as a two-dimensional surface to be structured. The shapes are arranged inside and their colour cannot be dissociated from their surface.

Graeser, who usually uses primary colours as well as black and white, will move his shapes, usually squares and their multiples, by rotation, translation or permutation, and thus will try to translate problems related to the occupation of the pictorial field and its limits. The main aspects considered by him – balance, equality, but also horizontal, vertical and oblique – lead to a research into quantity problems and, in particular, into colour equivalences.

Serge Lemoine
Pour un art concret – juillet 2000

Parcours de Camille Graeser

1892

Birth of Camille Graeser

27th of February in Carouge near Geneva (Switzerland)

1898

He moved to Stuttgart, Germany, after his father died.

1907

Apprenticeship as a carpenter.

1911

Graduate studies at the Royal School of Applied Arts in Stuttgart where he trained as a furniture and interior design manufacturer.

1915

Attends Adolf Hölzel's lectures on the harmony of colours and composition, which will strongly influence him.

1917

Opening of his own studio for interior design, graphic design and design in Stuttgart.

1919

Private drawing course with Adolf Hölzel.

1928 — 1932

Design of several interior fittings.
Camille Graeser is now one of Stuttgart's leading interior designers.

1933

Due to the threatening political situation, he fled Stuttgart and moved to Zurich, Switzerland. Graeser found a job with interior designer Robert Hartung.

1936

Marriage to Emmy Rauch. Moving into a studio apartment of two rooms that Graeser furnishes with his own creations.

1937

More and more definitive orientation towards painting.

Realization of his first concrete oil paintings.

Joined the Allianz group, the association of Swiss modern artists.

1943 — 1945

From 1943, he participated in several group exhibitions of the Allianz group.

1946 — 1951

First participation in exhibitions abroad (Italy, France, USA).

1949

First solo exhibition abroad, in Milan.

Graeser is now one of Switzerland's most influential concrete artists.

1980

Died from a long illness on 21st of February in the canton of Zurich.

1981

Creation of the Camille Graeser Foundation in Zurich.

eac. The Donation Albers-Honegger



The Donation Albers-Honegger, a collection unique in France, is classified as a National Treasure. More than 700 works from multiple currents of geometric abstraction are made available to the public. This rich resource encourages a continual dialogue between works from many different horizons, between different theoretical propositions, and specific sociological and political contexts.

The Donation Albers-Honegger brings together works given to the French state by Gottfried Honegger and Sybil Albers with the donations of Aurelie Nemours, Gilbert Brownstone, and a number of other artists. The entire collection is included in the inventory of the Centre National des Arts Plastiques and permanently housed at the Espace de l'Art Concret. While the heart of the collection is built around the works of renowned members of the Concret Art movement, both Swiss (Max Bill, Richard Paul Lohse, Camille Graeser, Gottfried Honegger) and French (Bernard Aubertin, Jean-François Dubreuil, François Morellet, Aurelie Nemours), the collectors situated the ensemble in the long history of European abstract art since 1900. Thus Art Concret is thus seen prefigured in the works of Augusto Giacometti and Georges Vantongerloo, or those of Sonia Delaunay and František Kupka. Faithful to the universal spirit of Art Concret, the collectors did not limit themselves to purely geometric works. They enlarged the scope of their collection by including remarkable and sometimes surprising works that can claim a link to this historical movement in a manner that makes it a work of art in and of itself.

It seems evident today that the important figures of Minimalism or Conceptual Art would be included in the permanent collection (Joseph Beuys, Daniel Buren, Alan Charlton, Richard Long, Helmut Federle, Imi Knoebel, Olivier Mosset, Bernard Venet, Franz Erhard Walther from Europe or Carl Andre, Robert Barry, Dan Flavin, Donald Judd, Joseph Kosuth, Richard Serra from the United States). It is less evident that artists linked to Arte Povera (Manzoni), Support-Surface (Claude Viallat) or New Realism (Tinguely) should appear there also. It is testimony to the two collectors' visionary spirit that they chose to examine the rigorous principals of concrete art as they have been explored in the most radical movements of the twentieth century.

This independent, almost impertinent, vision underlies the entire collection. Its historical impact is enlarged by the unexpected new territories it explores. The collection is also the fruit of a story: that of Gottfried Honegger, a Swiss artist who himself set off to conquer the language of geometric abstraction at the beginning of the 1950s, and that of Sybil Albers, his companion. Zurich, Paris, and New York were the first steps along the way of this long journey. Encounters and friendships unfold discreetly as one discovers the collection.



The Campbell Soup can, dedicated by Andy Warhol, works by Sam Francis and Kimber Smith serve as reminders of Gottfried Honegger's unwavering bonds with the United States. Works by César and Yves Klein testify to privileged relationships with French artists. Sybil Albers and Gottfried Honegger were always receptive to contemporary work, collecting pieces by young artists and non-traditional art forms. Works by Raphaël Julliard and Dominique Dehais echo the serial aspect of Art Concret as well as the social implications of an artist's work. Cedric Tessière's « skin paintings » and paintings made with chewing gum by Dominique Figarella



demand consideration of an artist's use of materials and the pictorial gesture itself. Works by Laurent Saksik bring larger format works into the collection and consider art as installation.

Finally, Sybil Albers and Gottfried Honegger have brought together an exceptional ensemble of modern design, notably chairs (Paimo armchair by Alvar Aalto, Wassily armchair by Marcel Breuer, Wiggle side chair by Frank O. Gehry, Panton chair by Verner Panton...) which exemplifies the democratization of art so important to the founders of Art Concret, and to the collective and social implications of the movement.

A complete data base of all works in the Donation Albers-Honegger can be found on the website of the Centre national des Arts plastiques:

<http://www.cnap.fr/collection-en-ligne/>
(search words: Donation Albers-Honegger)

eac. A unique site; an artistic and social project based on the encounter and dialogue with Art Concret, contemporary creation and the public



+ 20 000 visitors a year

Founded in 1990, the Espace de l'Art Concret is a contemporary art center with a collection of abstract art unique in France, the Donation Albers-Honegger.

The cultural and educational mission of eac. is threefold:

- **The conservation and valorization** of the Albers-Honegger collection ;
- **Research**, centered around temporary exhibitions and artist residencies which develop links between works in the collection and contemporary creation ;
- **Education**, with the goal of raising awareness about today's art through the action of the Pedagogical Studios.

The primary mission of the eac. is to make contemporary art accessible to the largest possible public. Art education has always been at the heart of the mission, and an entire building is devoted to studios designed to welcome school groups, beginning with preschoolers. Because of the outstanding reputation of its educational program, eac. is recognized and supported by the Ministère de la Culture, the Direction Régionale des Affaires Culturelles Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, the city of Mouans-Sartoux, the Conseil Régional Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, and the Département des Alpes-Maritimes. En 2008 the eac. received the « Prix Européen du Projet Culturel » awarded by the Fondation Européenne de la Culture « Pro Europa », for its art education program.

In 2020, l'Espace de l'Art Concret received the label « Contemporary art center of National Interest » by the Ministère de la culture.

eac. The Espace de l'Art Concret, a contemporary art center endowed with a collection of abstract art unique in France, the Donation Albers-Honegger

The eac. was born of an encounter between two collectors, Sybil Albers and Gottfried Honegger, and the mayor of Mouans-Sartoux, André Aschieri. Sybil Albers and Gottfried Honegger wanted to make their collection accessible to the public. At first they lent their collection to the city of Mouans-Sartoux.

In 2000, as the eac. celebrated its tenth anniversary, Sybil Albers and Gottfried Honegger donated their collection to the French state, with two conditions: first, that this unique ensemble be permanently shown in a building specifically built for it in the park surrounding the Château de Mouans, and secondly that a cohesive intellectual project around Art Concret and contemporary art be maintained.

Since then, other complementary donations have enriched Sybil Albers and Gottfried Honegger's original collection: those of Aurelie Nemours, and Gilbert and Catherine Brownstone.

The new building destined to house the permanent collection was designed by the Swiss architects Gigon and Guyer. It was inaugurated June 26, 2004.

An excerpt from *Une utopie réalisée*, an interview with Gottfried Honegger by Dominique Boudou, *Pour un art concret*, Isthme Éditions/Centre national des Arts plastiques

DB: Why the name « Espace de l'Art Concret » ?

GH: [...] For us, it is a place of encounters, a place for discussion, a place where we have didactic exhibitions through which we try to help children, and adults as well, understand the art of our time. It is an active place, a place of Aufklärung (education, awareness raising), a diverse place, comprising a natural park, a fifteenth century castle, a building which houses the Donation Albers-Honegger, educational studios for children, and the Children's Préau where they can show their work. We want to invite today's world which is passive, silent, and resigned, to become active, responsible, and creative.

eac. Since its creation in 1990, the eac. has collaborated with numerous museums and art spaces, and has received the support of numerous patrons and institutions.

The reputation of the Espace de l'Art Concret has made it possible to be recognized and supported by the Ministère de la Culture, the Direction Régionale des Affaires Culturelles Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, the city of Mouans-Sartoux, the Conseil Régional Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur and the Département des Alpes-Maritimes. En 2008, the eac. received the «Prix européen du Projet Culturel» awarded by the Fondation Européenne de la Culture «Pro Europa», for its art education program.

Institutions muséales Paris et sa région

- Centre national des arts plastiques, Paris
- Centre Pompidou, Paris
- Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris
- Musée du Louvre, Paris
- Institut du monde arabe, Paris
- MAC/VAL, Musée d'art contemporain du Val-de-Marne
- Musée national Picasso-Paris

Institutions muséales en région

- Musée des Tissus – Musée des Arts décoratifs de Lyon
- Musée d'art moderne et d'art contemporain, Strasbourg
- Le Carré d'art, Nîmes
- Musée de Grenoble
- Le Consortium, Dijon
- FRAC Basse-Normandie
- FRAC Bourgogne
- FRAC Bretagne
- FRAC Franche-Comté
- FRAC Languedoc Roussillon
- FRAC Midi-Pyrénées
- FRAC PACA
- FRAC Poitou-Charente
- Musée Picasso, Antibes
- Musée National Fernand Léger, Biot
- MAMAC, Nice
- Villa Arson, Nice
- Musée des Arts Asiatiques, Nice
- Centre International d'Art Contemporain, Carros

Institutions muséales à l'étranger

- Mamco, Genève (Suisse)
- Musée d'art et d'histoire, Genève (Suisse)
- Fonds Municipal d'Art Contemporain, Genève (Suisse)
- Fonds Cantonal d'Art Contemporain, Genève (Suisse)

- Musée d'Ixelles, Ixelles (Belgique)
- La Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, Direction du Patrimoine culturel, Pôle Valorisation (Belgique)
- Musée Sztuki, Lodz (Pologne)
- Museum Kampa, Prague (République Tchèque)
- Wilhem Mack Museum, Ludwigshafen am Rhein (Allemagne)

Mécènes et institutions privées

- Archives Klein, Paris (France)
- Fondation Maeght, Saint-Paul de Vence (France)
- Fondation Gaston Bertrand, Bruxelles (Belgique)
- Fondation Walter & Nicole Leblanc, Bruxelles (Belgique)
- La Callewaert-Vanlangendonck Collection, Anvers (Belgique)
- Proximus Art collection, Bruxelles (Belgique)
- Deutsche Bank AG, Frankfurt am Main (Allemagne)
- Banque Cantonale Vaudoise, Lausanne (Suisse)
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- Banque nationale de Belgique, Bruxelles (Belgique)
- Fondation Pro-Helvetia pour la Culture (Suisse)
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- Centre Wallonie-Bruxelles, Paris (France)
- Mécènes du Sud, Marseille (France)

L'Espace de l'Art Concret — centre d'art contemporain d'intérêt national

Soutenu
par



L'Espace de l'Art Concret, un centre d'art doté d'une collection unique en France, la Donation Albers-Honegger inscrite sur l'inventaire du



Centre national des arts plastiques

et déposée à l'Espace de l'Art Concret.

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fondation suisse pour la culture

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Espace de l'Art Concret
Centre d'art contemporain d'intérêt national

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1^{er} octobre au 30 juin
du mercredi au dimanche, 13h — 18h

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tous les jours, 11h — 19h

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- Teachers and students (not part of Académie Nice)
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- Groups (of 10 or more peoples)

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Highway A8, exit 42: direction Grasse > exit
Mouans-Sartoux

By train

Line Cannes-Grasse, station Mouans-Sartoux
(15 mn by foot)

By bus

Line n°600 (Grasse-Cannes, station Mouans-Sartoux)
n°650 (Mouans-Sartoux-Mougins-Sophia Antipolis)
n°530 (Grasse-Sophia Antipolis station Mouans-Sartoux)
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