

The
New York
Society
Library

Events

LATE FALL 2012

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All areas except the circulation area close 15 minutes prior to the building closing time.

Mon | Wed | Fri
9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Tues | Thurs
9:00 AM - 7:00 PM

Sat
9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Sun
1:00 PM - 5:00 PM

**ABOUT
THE LIBRARY**

Welcome to the Library

Founded in 1754, we are the city's oldest library and one of only sixteen membership libraries in the country. We are open to all for reading, reference, and selected events, with circulation and other services by subscription.

LIBRARY WEBSITE

www.nysoclib.org

NYSL WRITERS BLOG

www.tinyurl.com/nyslblog

FACEBOOK

www.facebook.com/nysoclib

TWITTER

www.twitter.com/nysoclib

Our general collection of approximately 300,000 volumes has particular strengths in biography, literature, and New York City history and culture. The membership has included many notable authors past and present, such as Washington Irving, John James Audubon, Herman Melville, Willa Cather, Lillian Hellman, and W.H. Auden.

Further information on the Library's history, building, services, and policies is available at the reference desk on the first floor or on our website.

Membership

If you would like to become a member of the Library, please pick up a membership application at the reference desk or see www.nysoclib.org/application.html.

Support the Library

The New York Society Library has benefited through the years from those who care deeply about our organization. Contributions are essential to support our daily operations and to make events possible. All gifts are tax-deductible and can be made by check, credit card, or in appreciated securities. For more information about supporting the Library, please visit www.nysoclib.org/donations.html or contact the Development Office at 212-288-6900 x214. Thank you for your support!

THIS YEAR'S EVENTS AND FEATURES NEWSLETTERS ARE GENEROUSLY UNDERWRITTEN BY ADA PELUSO AND ROMANO I. PELUSO IN MEMORY OF ASSUNTA SOMMELLA AND IGNAZIO PELUSO.

The Wharton Salon

The Inner House

As part of our continuing celebration of the 150th birthday of Edith Wharton, the Library is proud to present *The Inner House*. A vivid account of Wharton's public and private life, it is adapted by Dennis Krausnick from her 1934 autobiography, *A Backward Glance*, and her private letters and poems. This production by The Wharton Salon is directed by Normi Noël and stars Tod Randolph as Wharton. It played to sold-out audiences at Edith Wharton's home, The Mount, in August 2012.

"It's fitting to celebrate Wharton's birthday with an appearance from Wharton herself," says Producing Artistic Director Catherine Taylor-Williams. "We're also very excited to perform in another beautiful building from Wharton's time."

The Inner House covers Wharton at five years old taking a walk with her father down "the old Fifth Avenue" in New York City, her earliest years of "making up" that sowed the seeds of her later writing career, her unpreparedness for marriage to Teddy Wharton, days at The Mount, unhappiness and divorce, her later affair with Morton Fullerton, her journey abroad, assistance to France in World War I, and loving descriptions of her close friends and mentors Henry James, Walter Berry, and Bernard Berenson.

The Wharton Salon is a professional theater company that performs the stories of novelist Edith Wharton and her contemporaries in site-specific locations, offering a unique intimacy between author, actor, and audience, and drawing connections between literature, architecture, and nature. Cast bios, video, performance archives, and photos can be found at www.whartonsalon.org.

THIS EVENT IS GENEROUSLY SUPPORTED BY THE ESTATE OF
MARIAN O. NAUMBURG.

Kevin Sprague



OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Sunday, December 2

3:00 PM

Members' Room

With advance
registration: \$20

At the door: \$25

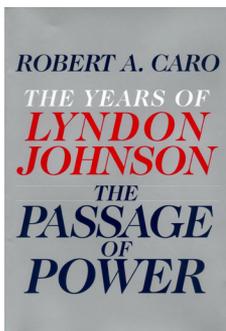
Above: Tod Randolph
with Richard Jackson and
Edith Wharton;
Randolph as Wharton

AUTHOR
SERIES

Robert A. Caro

The Years of Lyndon Johnson: The Passage of Power

Knopf, May 2012



OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Wednesday, December 5

6:30 PM

Wallace Hall
at the Church of
St. Ignatius Loyola,
980 Park Avenue
at 84th Street

Please note that
Wallace Hall is not
wheelchair accessible.

With advance
registration: \$10

At the door: \$15

Book Four of Robert A. Caro's monumental *The Years of Lyndon Johnson* displays all the narrative energy and illuminating insight that led the *Times* of London to acclaim it as "one of the truly great political biographies of the modern age. A masterpiece."

The Passage of Power follows Lyndon Johnson through both the most frustrating and most triumphant periods of his career—1958 to 1964. It is a time that would see him trade the extraordinary power he had created for himself as Senate Majority Leader for the wretched powerlessness of a Vice President in an administration that disdained and distrusted him. But it was, as well, the time in which the presidency, the goal he had always pursued, would be thrust upon him in a moment. Despite unprecedented obstacles, the political genius with which Johnson had ruled the Senate enabled him to make the presidency wholly his own.

In its exploration of this pivotal period in Johnson's life—and in the life of the nation—*The Passage of Power* confirms Nicholas von Hoffman's verdict that "Caro has changed the art of political biography."

For his biographies of Robert Moses and Lyndon Johnson, **Robert A. Caro** has twice won the Pulitzer Prize for Biography, twice won the National Book Critics Circle Award for Best Nonfiction Book of the Year, and has also won virtually every other major literary honor, including the National Book Award, the Gold Medal in Biography from the American Academy of Arts and Letters, and the Francis Parkman Prize, awarded by the Society of American Historians to the book that best "exemplifies the union of the historian and the artist." In 2010, he received the National Humanities Medal from President Obama.

THE AUTHOR SERIES IS CO-SPONSORED BY WNET/THIRTEEN NEW YORK.

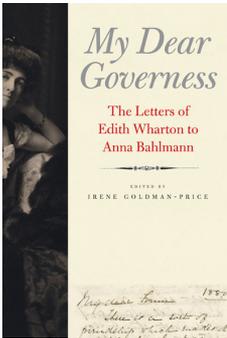
SPECIAL
PRESENTATION

Irene Goldman-Price

Edith Wharton and Anna Bahlmann: A Pupil and Her Teacher



An exciting archive came to auction in 2009: the papers and personal effects of Anna Catherine Bahlmann (1849–1916), a governess and companion to several prominent American families. Among the collection were one hundred thirty-five letters from her most famous pupil, Edith Newbold Jones, later the great American novelist Edith Wharton. Remarkably, until then, just three letters from Wharton's childhood and early adulthood were thought to survive. Bahlmann, who would become Wharton's literary secretary and confidante, emerges in the letters as a major influence, closely guiding her precocious young student's readings, translations, and personal writing. Their correspondence reveals Wharton's maturing sensibility and vocation and includes details of her life that challenge long-held assumptions about her formative years. It was published as *My Dear Governess: The Letters of Edith Wharton to Anna Bahlmann* (Yale University Press, June 2012), edited by Irene Goldman-Price.



In this special event with slides, Dr. Goldman-Price will focus on the education of girls in Gilded Age New York, as shown in Anna Bahlmann's correspondence with her upper-class students. Many of their families, included the young Edith Jones's, were also patrons of the Library.

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Thursday, December 6

Refreshments 6:00 PM

Presentation 6:30 PM

Members' Room

With advance
registration: \$10

At the door: \$15

Irene Goldman-Price has taught literature and women's studies at Ball State University and Penn State University. She serves on the editorial board of the *Edith Wharton Review* and on the Board of Trustees of The Mount, Edith Wharton's house museum in Massachusetts. In 2010–2011 she was a visiting fellow at Yale University's Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, where the Wharton letters are held.

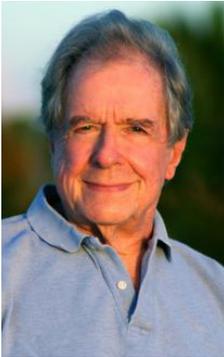
THIS EVENT IS PRESENTED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE MOUNT. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE VISIT EDITHWHARTON.ORG.

LECTURE

Charles Rowan Beye

My Husband and My Wives: A Gay Man's Odyssey

Farrar, Straus & Giroux, October 2012



In 2008, Charles Rowan Beye married his longtime partner Richard at a chapel on the edge of the Harvard University campus, where he had received his Ph.D. in classical philology nearly fifty years earlier. The path he took to get to that point—his third wedding—had nearly as many ups and downs as the great works of classical literature he studied throughout his professional career.

The ordeal of remaining true to what his libido told him was right, in the midst of a disapproving and sometimes hostile society, is one side of his story. Another is the impulsive decision he made as a young adult to marry a woman who fascinated him. Beye found himself suddenly a husband, a widower, a groom for a second time, and, finally, the father of four children and grandfather of six. Along the way, he authored numerous well-regarded scholarly works in his field, taught at institutions like Yale, Stanford, and Boston University, and never abandoned his involvement with men. When one of those relationships proved long-lasting, an extraordinary happy conclusion resulted.

In *My Husband and My Wives*, Beye tells this deeply personal story with a winning mix of humor, intelligence, and honesty and provides an important and fascinating testimony to the evolution of social mores and gay life in this country. This wonderfully original, challenging, life- and love-affirming account could only have been written by the unconventional man who lived through it all.

Charles Rowan Beye is a retired professor of Ancient Greek. His books include *Odysseus: A Life* and *Ancient Epic Poetry: Homer, Apollonius, Virgil with a Chapter on the Gilgamesh Poems*.



**MY HUSBAND
AND MY WIVES**
~~~~~  
A GAY MAN'S ODYSSEY  
~~~~~  
CHARLES ROWAN BEYE

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Thursday, November 8

6:30 PM

Members' Room

With advance
registration: **\$10**

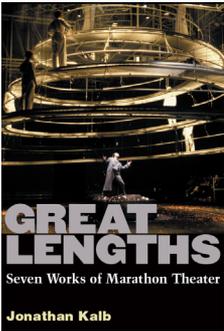
At the door: **\$15**

LECTURE

Jonathan Kalb

Great Lengths: Seven Works of Marathon Theater

University of Michigan Press, October 2011



OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Monday, November 12

6:30 PM

Members' Room

With advance
registration: **\$10**

At the door: **\$15**

Why do some dramatic creations extend to five hours or more, and how does their extreme length help them accomplish extraordinarily ambitious aims? In *Great Lengths*, theater critic and scholar Jonathan Kalb addresses this and other questions through a close look at seven internationally prominent theater productions, including Tony Kushner's *Angels in America*, Robert Wilson's *Einstein on the Beach* (recently revived at BAM), and the Royal Shakespeare Company's *Nicholas Nickleby*. Kalb reconstructs each work, re-creating the experience of seeing it while at the same time explaining how it maintained attention and interest over so many hours, and then expanding in scope to embrace a wider view and ask broader questions.

Great Lengths offers a remarkable panorama of the surprisingly broad field of contemporary marathon theater—an art form that diverse audiences of savvy, screen-weaned spectators continue to seek out for increasingly rare experiences of awe, transcendence, and sustained immersion during an attention-challenged, media-saturated era. It was given the George Freedley Memorial Award by the Theatre Library Association as one of the best performing arts book of 2012.

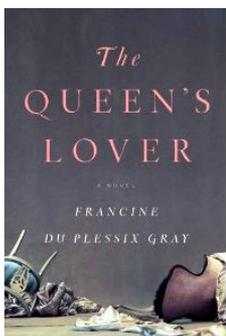
Jonathan Kalb is a theater critic and scholar whose work has appeared in the *Village Voice* and the *New York Times*. He is Professor in the Department of Theater at Hunter College, City University of New York, and the author of *Beckett in Performance* and *The Theater of Heiner Müller*.

LECTURE

Francine du Plessix Gray

The Queen's Lover

Penguin Press, June 2012



OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Wednesday,
November 14

6:30 pm

Members' Room

With advance
registration: \$10

At the door: \$15

Francine du Plessix Gray's beautifully realized historical novel reveals the untold love story between Marie Antoinette and Swedish aristocrat Count Axel Von Fersen. Their first electric encounter at a masked ball, when they are both nineteen, launches a love affair that will span the course of the French Revolution.

After fighting with French troops for American independence, Fersen returns to find France in upheaval. When the Revolution greatly impedes the freedom of Louis XVI and his family, Fersen tries to help them escape France. The failed attempt worsens the captivity of the king and queen, who will both be executed in 1793.

Grieving his lost love as he returns to his homeland, Fersen begins to sense the effect of the French Revolution even in his native Sweden. Failing to realize that centuries of tradition have waned, he loses his life at the hands of a savage mob that views him as a pivotal member of the ruling class. His fate is symbolic of the violent speed with which the events of the eighteenth century transformed European culture. "A feat of research and imagination," as the *Wall Street Journal* described it, *The Queen's Lover* offers a fresh vision of the French Revolution and of the French royal family as told through the love story that was at its center. The *Washington Post* called it "spellbinding."

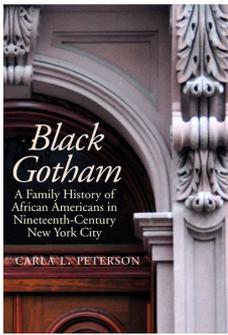
Francine du Plessix Gray has been a frequent contributor to *The New Yorker* and is the author of numerous books of fiction and nonfiction, including *Simone Weil*, *At Home with the Marquis de Sade*, *Rage and Fire*, *Lovers and Tyrants*, *Soviet Women*, and, more recently, *Them: A Memoir of Parents*, which won a National Book Critics' Circle award.

LECTURE

Carla L. Peterson

Black Gotham: A Family History of African Americans in Nineteenth-Century New York City

Yale University Press, February 2012



OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Wednesday,
November 28

6:30 PM

Members' Room

With advance
registration: \$10

At the door: \$15

Part detective tale, part social and cultural narrative, *Black Gotham* is Carla Peterson's riveting account of her quest to reconstruct the lives of her nineteenth-century ancestors. As she shares their stories and those of their friends, neighbors, and business associates, she illuminates the greater history of African-American elites in New York City. *Black Gotham* challenges many of the accepted truths about African-American history, including the assumptions that all nineteenth-century black Americans were enslaved people, that New York prior to the Civil War was a place of freedom, and that a black elite was a twentieth-century innovation.

Beginning her story in the 1820s, Peterson focuses on the pupils of the Mulberry Street School, the graduates of which went on to become eminent African-American leaders. She traces their political activities as well as their many achievements in trade, business, and the professions against the backdrop of the expansion of scientific racism, the trauma of the Civil War draft riots, and the rise of Jim Crow. Told in a vivid, fast-paced style, *Black Gotham* is an important account of the rarely acknowledged achievements of nineteenth-century African Americans and brings to the forefront a vital yet forgotten part of American history and culture.

Black Gotham was the winner of the Library's 2011 New York City Book Award for History.

Carla L. Peterson received her Ph.D. from Yale and is professor of English at the University of Maryland, College Park. She is the author of *"Doers of the Word": African-American Women Speakers and Writers in the North, 1830-1880*.

LECTURE

Simon Winchester

Skulls: An Exploration of Alan Dudley's Curious Collection

Black Dog & Leventhal, October 2012

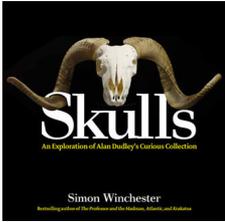
Skulls is a spellbinding exploration of more than 300 different animal skulls—amphibians, birds, fish, mammals, and reptiles—written by *New York Times* bestselling author Simon Winchester.

Winchester tells the rich and fascinating story of skulls, both human and animal, from every perspective imaginable: historical, biographical, cultural, and iconographic. Presenting details about the parts of the skull (including the cranium, the mandible, the shape and positioning of the eye sockets, and species-specific features like horns, teeth, beaks, and bills), information about the science and pseudoscience of skulls, and a look at skulls in religion, art, and popular culture, his stories and information are riveting and enlightening.

At the center of *Skulls* is a never-before-seen visual array of the skulls of more than 300 animals that walk, swim, and fly. The skulls are from the collection of Alan Dudley, a British collector and owner of what is probably the largest and most complete private collection of skulls in the world. In this event, Winchester will use slides to present and describe these stunning images.

Simon Winchester is the bestselling author of *The Professor and the Madman*, *The Map that Changed the World*, *Krakatoa, A Crack in the Edge of the World* and more than a dozen other books. His work has appeared in *Conde Nast Traveler*, *Smithsonian*, *National Geographic* and elsewhere. Winchester was made Officer of the Order of British Empire (OBE) by HM The Queen in 2006.

Setsuko Winchester



OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Tuesday, December 11

6:30 PM

Members' Room

With advance registration: \$10

At the door: \$15

BOOK SALE



OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Saturday, December 1

9:00 AM-2:00 PM

Reference Room

Free of charge

Holiday Book Sale

Hidden treasures, beautiful display volumes, fun reads, and gifts can be found at the Library's holiday book sale. The Library offers withdrawn duplicate titles and donation copies at very reasonable prices. Members and their guests are encouraged to bring a bag and come to browse and buy. No registration or entry fee is required.

Please direct any questions to Head of Circulation Patrick Rayner (212-288-6900 x210) or Circulation Assistant Marie Honan (212-288-6900 x217).

CHILDREN'S EVENT



Elizabeth Winthrop Becoming a Writer

Author Elizabeth Winthrop tells aspiring writers, "By the time you are twelve years old, you'll have all the memories you need to write a hundred books." She herself is the author of the classic *The Castle in the Attic* and more than sixty other books for children and adults, including *Counting on Grace* and a new picture book, *Maia and the Monster Baby*. She is the winner of the Dorothy Canfield Fisher Award, the PEN Syndicated Fiction Award, and the Jane Addams Peace Prize Honor Book, among many other awards and honors. In this presentation, Ms. Winthrop will talk about the creative process, answering the age-old question of where she gets her ideas. A selection of her books will be available for sale and autographing.

FOR MEMBERS
AND THEIR GUESTS

Friday, November 9

4:00 PM

Members' Room

\$5 per person
payable at the door

For second grade
and older



FOR MEMBERS ONLY

Tuesday, November 13

10:00 AM

Whitridge Room

Free of charge

Registration required

Daytime Talk Series

“Knock, knock. Who’s there?”:

The Discovery and Development of Fictional Characters
with Hilma Wolitzer

Hilma Wolitzer likes to read and write character-driven novels. In this talk on the craft of writing, she will discuss how characters are found and how they evolve, in her own work and in others’.

Hilma Wolitzer is an award-winning writer and teacher and the author of nine books of fiction, four books for young readers, and the essential writer’s guide *The Company of Writers: Fiction Workshops and Thoughts on the Writing Life*. Her most recent novel, *An Available Man*, displays her extraordinary gift for character with Edward Schuyler, the grieving widower who finds love later in life despite the comical intervention of his well-meaning friends and family.

Daytime Talk Series

Writing for Magazines

with Lucy Kaylin

What kinds of content are magazines looking for? How can you get the attention of magazine editors? A veteran magazine editor will join us to talk about how to identify potential topics, pitch your work, or submit articles or essays for consideration, and to discuss what to do once your work is accepted or rejected.

Lucy Kaylin is currently the Deputy Editor at *O, The Oprah Magazine*, winner of last year’s National Magazine Award for General Excellence. She has worked as a writer and editor at *Vogue*, *GQ*, and *Marie Claire*. She is also the author of the books *For the Love of God*, about the decline of Catholic nuns in America, and *The Perfect Stranger*, about the complicated relationship between mothers and nannies.

THE WRITING LIFE EVENTS IN 2012 ARE GENEROUSLY UNDERWRITTEN
BY JENNY LAWRENCE.

THE WRITING LIFE



FOR MEMBERS ONLY

EVENT REMINDER

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Wednesday, October 31

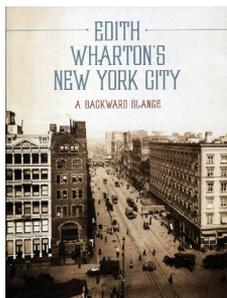
6:30 pm

Members' Room

With advance
registration: \$10

At the door: \$15

EXHIBITION LAST CHANCE



Ongoing Writing Groups

The Library hosts monthly writing groups for fiction, non-fiction, memoir, poetry, and children's/young adult writers. Interested Library members must contact Carolyn Waters at cwaters@nysoclib.org to inquire about space availability and other requirements.

Victoria Nelson

Gothicka: Vampire Heroes, Human Gods, and the New Supernatural

Harvard University Press, 2012

The Gothic, Romanticism's gritty older sibling, has flourished in myriad permutations since the eighteenth century. In *Gothicka*, Victoria Nelson identifies the revolutionary turn it has taken in the twenty-first, studying the complex arena of contemporary Gothic subgenres in novels, films, and graphic novels, in particular Stephenie Meyer's enormously popular *Twilight* series. This special Halloween event for adults will also feature a display of eighteenth-century Gothic novels from the Library's Hammond Collection, which Ms. Nelson consulted in her research.

Edith Wharton's New York City: A Backward Glance

The Library's most popular exhibition to date will close December 31 to make way for a new exhibition, which will be announced in January.

Nineteenth-century New York City inspired Wharton's great novels and short stories, from *The House of Mirth* to *The Age of Innocence*. *Edith Wharton's New York City* showcases family photographs from various collections and books by Wharton.

THIS EXHIBITION IS GENEROUSLY FUNDED IN PART BY THE ACHELIS FOUNDATION
AND DEBORAH S. PEASE.

CALENDAR

Registration is required for all events.
Please see individual listings for details on times, format, and location.

of Spaces X Cost =

_____ \$20 _____

_____ \$10 _____

_____ \$10 _____

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_____ \$10 _____

_____ \$10 _____

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_____ FREE _____

_____ FREE _____

SPECIAL EVENTS

Performance: *The Inner House*, Sunday, December 2

Author Series: Robert Caro on *The Passage of Power*,
Wednesday, December 5

Irene Goldman-Price on *My Dear Governess*, Thursday, December 6

LECTURES

Victoria Nelson on *Gothicka*, Wednesday, October 31

Charles Rowan Beye on *My Husband and My Wives*, Thursday, November 8

Jonathan Kalb on *Great Lengths*, Monday, November 12

Francine du Plessix Gray on *The Queen's Lover*, Wednesday, November 14

Carla L. Peterson on *Black Gotham*, Wednesday, November 28

Simon Winchester on *Skulls*, Tuesday, December 11

THE WRITING LIFE

Daytime Talk Series: "Knock, knock. Who's there?," Tuesday, November 13

Daytime Talk Series: Writing for Magazines, Tuesday, December 11

CHILDREN'S EVENT

Elizabeth Winthrop on *Becoming a Writer*, Friday, November 9

_____ **Total**

My Check is Enclosed Membership Name _____

Charge My Credit Card

Phone _____

Email _____

Credit Card Number _____

Expiration Date _____

REGISTRATION INSTRUCTIONS



Registration is required for all events. Please see individual listings for details on times, format, and location.

No refunds are given for canceled registrations.

The house opens for each event thirty minutes before the stated start time.

Registrants are asked not to arrive for check-in prior to that time.

A seat cannot be guaranteed after an event has begun.

Space is limited. Early registration by phone or email is recommended.

By Phone

ADULT EVENTS

Call the Events Office at 212-288-6900 x230.

By Email

ADULT EVENTS

Send a detailed message including your membership name or full name, the events of your interest, and the number in your party to kfricas@nysoclib.org.

Online for Members or Nonmembers

ADULT EVENTS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC

Go to www.brownpapertickets.com, search for the event of your interest, and follow the onscreen instructions.

Online for Members With a Barcode*

ADULT EVENTS

Go to www.nysoclib.org/events_registration.html and follow the onscreen instructions.

*To obtain your barcode, email systems@nysoclib.org.

By Mail

ADULT EVENTS

Complete the order form with your membership name or full name and charge information, or enclose a check payable to The New York Society Library. Mail the order form and payment to:

Events, The New York Society Library,
53 East 79th Street
New York, NY 10075
or fax to 212-744-5832.

For All Children's Events

Call the Children's Library at 212-288-6900 x234 or e-mail children@nysoclib.org.

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