



LSO

SHOSTAKOVICH

Sunday 24 June 2018
Barbican Hall

7-9.10pm

LSO SEASON CONCERT
SHOSTAKOVICH

Shostakovich Violin Concerto No 1
Interval
Shostakovich Symphony No 10 *

Gianandrea Noseda conductor
Nicola Benedetti violin

Generously supported by **Reignwood**

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* Symphony No 10 broadcast live on YouTube

 **YouTube**

Recorded for future broadcast on medici.tv

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Welcome



Welcome to the LSO for the final full orchestra concert in our 2017/18 season. It has been a landmark year for the Orchestra which began so memorably with the ten-day 'This is Rattle' festival launching the LSO's first season with its new Music Director. It also featured two centenary celebrations – François-Xavier Roth exploring Debussy and Marin Alsop conducting Bernstein – and included a brand new series of concerts, Half Six Fix, the first of which was with this evening's conductor Gianandrea Noseda, who has been LSO Principal Guest Conductor since 2016/17.

Gianandrea Noseda and the LSO have just returned from an extensive three-week tour to Thailand and China, taking in major cities including Bangkok, Shanghai, Shenzhen, Wuhan and Beijing among others where the LSO has been very warmly received.

Having performed Shostakovich Symphony No 10 in many of those locations, the work will form the second half of tonight's concert, and also part of Gianandrea Noseda's continuing survey of the Shostakovich symphonies which resumes next season on 1 November.

Beginning the concert this evening with Shostakovich's First Violin Concerto, it is a pleasure to welcome back violinist Nicola Benedetti, who has been a friend of the LSO for many years and who is as passionate about the importance of music education as we are. One of the Orchestra's leading education projects is LSO On Track which reaches thousands of young musicians in boroughs across East London every year; it celebrates its tenth anniversary with a special concert featuring current and past participants on 5 July here at the Barbican, alongside the LSO and Guildhall School musicians.

One of the LSO's core aims is to bring great music to as many people as possible, and tonight's performance is one of eight this season that is live streamed on YouTube for viewers around the world to see for free. It is also being filmed for medici.tv whom we are grateful for their continuing partnership.

The concert this evening is generously supported by LSO Principal Partner Reignwood, who have also sponsored the LSO's tour of China as part of a wider shared ambition to develop understanding and exchange between our two cultures. Tonight we welcome a group of Chinese musicians on an exchange, following a visit of some of the LSO's Panufnik composers to China during the tour. The Orchestra is indebted to Reignwood for its support.

I do hope you enjoy tonight's concert and would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your presence at concerts throughout the 2017/18 season. We wish you an enjoyable summer and look forward to welcoming you to the LSO again soon.

Kathryn McDowell CBE DL
Managing Director

LSO News

TATE MODERN & BMW CLASSICS

On Saturday 30 June the Orchestra will perform in the vast chamber of Tate Modern's Turbine Hall as Sir Simon Rattle conducts Stockhausen's multi-orchestra masterpiece *Gruppen*; followed by BMW Classics in Trafalgar Square on Sunday 1 July.

FOND FAREWELLS

This evening's performance will be the final concert for two distinguished LSO Members – LSO Principal Trombone Dudley Bright who became a full LSO Member in 2001, and LSO Trumpet Gerald Ruddock who joined in 1997 and was LSO Vice-Chairman for a number of years. We wish them well.

THIS IS RATTLE WINS RPS AWARD

The LSO has been awarded the Royal Philharmonic Society's Music Award in the Concert Series and Festivals category for September's 'This is Rattle' celebrations.

WELCOME TO TONIGHT'S GROUPS

Tonight we are delighted to welcome our group bookers from Gerrards Cross Community Association, Hertford U3A and Adele Friedland & Friends.



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Dmitri Shostakovich in Profile 1906–75 / by Andrew Stewart



After early piano lessons with his mother, Shostakovich enrolled at the Petrograd Conservatory in 1919. He supplemented his family's meagre income from his earnings as a cinema pianist, but progressed to become a composer and concert pianist following the critical success of his First Symphony in 1926 and an 'honourable mention' in the 1927 Chopin International Piano Competition in Warsaw. Over the next decade he embraced the ideal of composing for Soviet society, and his Second Symphony was dedicated to the October Revolution of 1917.



Shostakovich announced his Fifth Symphony of 1937 as 'a Soviet artist's practical creative reply to just criticism'. A year before its premiere he had drawn a stinging attack from the official Soviet mouthpiece *Pravda*, in an article headed 'Muddle instead of music', in which Shostakovich's initially successful opera *Lady Macbeth of the Mtsensk District* was condemned for its extreme modernism. 'It is leftist bedlam instead of human music,' the article claimed. When the Fifth Symphony was premiered in Leningrad, the composer's reputation and career were rescued. Acclaim came not only from the Russian audience, who gave the work a reported 40-minute ovation, but also from musicians and critics overseas.

With the outbreak of war against Nazi Germany in June 1941, Shostakovich began to compose and arrange pieces to boost public morale. He lived through the first months of the German siege of Leningrad, serving in the auxiliary fire service.

—
'If they cut off both hands,
I will compose music anyway
holding the pen in my teeth.'

Shostakovich writing in 1936

—
In July he began work on the first three movements of his Seventh Symphony, completing the defiant finale after his evacuation in October and dedicating the score to the city. A micro-filmed copy was despatched by way of Teheran and an American warship to the US, where it was broadcast by the NBC Symphony Orchestra and Toscanini. In 1943 Shostakovich completed his Eighth Symphony, its emotionally shattering music compared by one critic to Picasso's *Guernica*.

In 1948 Shostakovich and other leading composers, Prokofiev among them, were forced by the Soviet cultural commissar, Andrei Zhdanov, to concede that their

work represented 'most strikingly the formalistic perversions and anti-democratic tendencies in music', a crippling blow to Shostakovich's artistic freedom that was healed only after the death of Stalin in 1953. Shostakovich answered his critics later that year with the powerful Tenth Symphony, in which he portrays 'human emotions and passions', rather than the collective dogma of Communism. A few years before the completion of his final and bleak Fifteenth String Quartet, Shostakovich suffered his second heart attack and the onset of severe arthritis. Many of his final works – in particular the penultimate symphony (No 14) – are preoccupied with the subject of death. □



Dmitri Shostakovich Violin Concerto No 1 in A minor Op 77/99

1948, rev 1955 / note by Andrew Huth

- 1 **Nocturne: Moderato**
- 2 **Scherzo: Allegro**
- 3 **Passacaglia: Andante**
- 4 **Burlesque: Allegro con brio – Presto**

Nicola Benedetti violin

By his early 40s, Shostakovich had produced a huge amount of music in almost every form: operas, ballets, symphonies, chamber music, and several scores for the theatre and cinema. His only concerto, however, was the light (though wonderful and funny) Concerto for Piano, Trumpet and Strings of 1933. Wasn't it now time to follow his distinguished colleagues Prokofiev, Myaskovsky and Khachaturian with a violin concerto? Some prompting may have come from the great violinist David Oistrakh, whom he had known as a friend and chamber music partner for over a decade.

The Violin Concerto was completed in March 1948, but had to wait seven and a half years before it was performed. The reason, as so often with Shostakovich, was closely bound up with Soviet musical politics. While he was in the middle of composing the finale, there came the infamous resolution from the Central Committee of the Communist Party

censoring a number of composers, Shostakovich chief among them, for such crimes as 'formalist perversions' and 'anti-democratic tendencies'. These accusations were nonsense, but it was Stalin's nonsense and the composers in question had no choice but to bow their heads and do as they were told.

Shostakovich was dismissed from his teaching posts at the Leningrad and Moscow Conservatoires, and for the next five years presented himself in public as the author of much bland and politically acceptable music. But at the same time he also wrote more personal and challenging works, putting them aside for better times. As well as the Violin Concerto, they included the Fourth and Fifth String Quartets, the song cycle *From Jewish Folk Poetry* and the Tenth Symphony.

These works became known to the public only after Stalin's death in 1953, the Violin Concerto last of all. Already familiar to friends and fellow musicians from the composer's run-throughs at the piano, it was premiered in Leningrad in October 1955 and then four months later in Moscow, conducted by Evgeny Mravinsky and played by Oistrakh, its dedicatee. Shostakovich was delighted by the performances, and later

dedicated to Oistrakh both his Second Violin Concerto (1967) and Violin Sonata (1968). The movement titles might at first suggest something like a series of loosely connected character pieces, but in fact this is one of Shostakovich's most tightly and symphonically organised scores.

NOCTURNE

The Nocturne gives the impression of being the most free of the four movements, a long and eloquent meditation for the violin, rising and falling in great arches of melody. The orchestra functions as accompaniment to the soloist, providing a background of brooding anxiety. Much of this movement's power derives from its measured pace and rhythm, the overall restraint producing an effect of great intensity.

SCHERZO & PASSACAGLIA

Restraint is thrown aside in the following Scherzo, a remorseless nightmare of activity that hurtles onwards in a wild, frantic dance. One of the many ideas that appear in its course is the four-note DSCH motive (D, E-flat, C, B-natural in German musical notation) that the composer used as his own musical signature; another provides the basis of the third movement, a 17-bar

theme given out initially by cellos and basses, and then repeated a further eight times. This Passacaglia recalls something of the brooding intensity of the first movement, though it is more sectional in construction and therefore offers a greater variety of expression and gesture.

BURLESQUE

A solo cadenza, of mounting tension and fearsome technical difficulty, spills into the finale, which Shostakovich originally intended to be launched by the soloist. He changed his mind, scoring it instead for the full orchestra, when Oistrakh begged for a moment of respite 'so at least I can wipe the sweat off my brow'. This finale, recalling the wild energy of the Scherzo, makes no concessions to Soviet orthodoxy or to the demands for optimism at all costs, and puts the seal on one of Shostakovich's most powerful and personal works. □

Interval – 20 minutes

There are bars on all levels of the Concert Hall; ice cream can be bought at the stands on Stalls and Circle level. Visit the Barbican Shop on Level -1 to see our new range of Gifts and Accessories.

Dmitri Shostakovich Symphony No 10 in E minor Op 93 1953 / note by Andrew Huth

- 1 **Moderato**
- 2 **Allegro**
- 3 **Allegretto**
- 4 **Andante – Allegro**

 hostakovich's Tenth Symphony appeared eight years after its predecessor, the impertinent Ninth, and, significantly, it was his first major work to appear after the death of Stalin. This momentous event occurred on 5 March 1953 (ironically, on the same day that Sergei Prokofiev died). The Symphony was completed six months later in October 1953, although there is evidence that it may have been planned and some of it composed during 1951, or even earlier – that is, in the aftermath of the notorious 1948 attack on so many Soviet composers, and on Shostakovich in particular. During his years of virtual disgrace, Shostakovich withheld many important new pieces and produced instead film music and official patriotic works, as well as such 'abstract' and 'private' works as the 24 Preludes and Fugues for piano.

A new symphony from Shostakovich was bound to be considered a major event in Russian music, and the Tenth proved to be his first work in many years that could be described as both sincere and aimed at the

widest audience. It was certainly a huge public success, and Soviet listeners clearly heard a truth in the music that needed to be expressed. Soviet officialdom demanded orthodoxy and optimism in the arts. But optimism was the last thing on anyone's mind in mid-1953. With the death of their Great Leader and Teacher, Russians naturally reflected on the horrors they had suffered over the past 20 years, and wondered what the future could hold for them. There may have been some feelings of hope, but it is unlikely that Shostakovich shared them: the Tenth Symphony suggests an overriding mood of uncertainty and fear in the shadow of power.

—
'In this work I wanted to convey human feelings and passions.'
—

The composer's own comments on his symphony verge on the absurd. Before its first performance under conductor Yevgeny Mravinsky in Leningrad on 17 December 1953 he confessed that, 'Again I have been unable to write a real sonata allegro' (the first movement was never intended as an allegro; and it is certainly one of his very finest sonata structures).

He reproached himself for having written the symphony in too much of a hurry, and for the fact that the movement lengths were all wrong and out of proportion. Later, when the Composers' Union organised a discussion about the piece, he humbly acknowledged criticism and came out with such meaningless statements as, 'In this work I wanted to convey human feelings and passions'. These banalities seem to have performed their function in deflecting criticism of a more insightful and dangerous kind.

Treating Shostakovich's music simply as a coded message to be deciphered, as some of the more extreme recent writing on the composer tends to do, ignores how music communicates, and it also devalues the music by ignoring its capacity for ambiguity, paradox and contradiction. That said, there are a number of references and quotations in the Tenth Symphony which point towards the composer's private intentions.

The clearest of them, which first appears in the third movement, is the four-note motive D, E-flat, C, B-natural, the musical signature Shostakovich derived from the German spelling of his own name and its musical notation: **DSCH** ▷. The first movement contains a reference to the

second of his *Four Pushkin Monologues*, composed in 1952, at the setting of the words 'What does my name mean to you?'

The five-note horn call heard twelve times in the third movement, always at the same pitch and often unaccompanied, represents another name cyphered into musical notation: that of [Elmira Nazirova](#) ▷, a young pianist and composer from Azerbaijan with whom Shostakovich was involved at the time. Finally, the last movement's coda echoes the bogus triumphalism of the second of the [Two Krylov Fables](#) ▷, which Shostakovich set to music in 1922, at the prophetic words 'God save us from such judges', as the cloth-eared ass recommends the nightingale to take musical lessons from the cockerel.

For its breadth of vision, variety of ideas and directness of effect, the Tenth was immediately hailed as Shostakovich's finest symphonic work to date. As almost always in Shostakovich, the basic material is simple and clear, and so is the traditional four-movement symphonic form. The variety emerges from a very obvious symphonic unity: the first three movements, for example, all begin with the same three-note rising figure, which in its turn is closely related to the DSCH monogram.

FIRST MOVEMENT

In the first movement, the outlines of a Classical sonata form are used as a means of articulating a symphonic drama which unfolds in a span of well over 20 minutes, all within the same basic tempo. This breadth of scale allows climaxes of enormous power to arise organically from the basically subdued lyrical background. It also allows the material to appear many-sided: the very simplicity of the tonal language means that only slight inflections are necessary to change the shape or meaning of an idea in the course of the dramatic argument.

was Shostakovich, whose DSCH monogram emerges in the third movement as a jerky puppet-like figure, standing out forlorn in contrast to the 'Elmira' horn call and references to the hushed coda of the first movement.

FINALE

The Andante opening to the finale sums up the brooding, oppressed aspects of the Symphony. Its material reappears in the following Allegro section, where it is associated with the DSCH motive; and although a cheerful finale was an obligatory ending to a Soviet symphony, there are deliberate irrationalities and oddities here.

—
The Tenth Symphony suggests an overriding mood of uncertainty and fear in the shadow of power ...
—

SECOND AND THIRD MOVEMENTS

The second movement is short, loud, intense and immensely powerful. It has been plausibly claimed that this is a musical portrait of Stalin himself, or at least the aspect of Stalin that enthralled millions. One person obviously not enthralled or seduced by this image of unbridled power

Although the purpose of a symphonic finale should be to resolve all tensions, this finale actually increases them, especially after the recall of the brutality of the second movement and the final insistence on the DSCH monogram. □

▷ SHOSTAKOVICH'S DSCH MONOGRAM

Shostakovich's musical monogram DSCH (D, E-flat, C, B-natural in German notation) is a recurring theme across his works. It refers to the German spelling of his name: Dmitri Schostakowitsch.

▷ ELMIRA'S MOTIF



The notes of the 'Elmira' motif (E-A-E-D-A) spell out 'E La Mi Re A' in a combination of French and German notation.

She kept the musical cypher a secret until 1990, when she disclosed a letter Shostakovich had written to her to musicologist Nelly Kavetz.

▷ TWO FABLES BY KRYLOV

The 18th-century writer Ivan Krylov wrote poetic versions of *Aesop's Fables*, well known to all Russian children. Shostakovich, who set two of the poems to music at only 15 years old, would have known the words by heart. The first fable contrasts the lazy but beautiful dragonfly with the hard-working ant; the second compares the braying of a donkey to the song of a nightingale.

SPEED READ

Shostakovich's Tenth Symphony, premiered in December 1953, was the composer's first major work to appear after Stalin died in March the same year. With hindsight, we know that Stalin's passing heralded a period of relief from oppression and horror for the Soviet people. However, the spirit of the time was hardly celebratory and only tentatively hopeful – a mood captured by this symphony, which is at times contemplative, violent, uncertain, and at once undoubtedly sincere. It is also a highly personal work, evident most clearly at the climax of the third movement, which is boldly emblazoned with Shostakovich's DSCH musical monogram.

PROGRAMME NOTE WRITERS

Andrew Huth is a musician, writer and translator who writes extensively on French, Russian and Eastern European music.

Andrew Stewart is a freelance music journalist and writer. He was the author of *The LSO at 90*, and contributes to a wide variety of specialist classical music publications.

Gianandrea Noseda conductor



Gianandrea Noseda is widely recognised as one of the leading conductors of his generation. In January 2016 he was named as the seventh Music Director of the National Symphony Orchestra (US), beginning his four-year term at the start of the 2017/18 season with an opening night gala celebrating Leonard Bernstein's centenary.

Noseda serves as Principal Guest Conductor of the London Symphony Orchestra and the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra, Principal Conductor of the Orquestra de Cadaqués, and Artistic Director of the Stresa Festival in Italy. From 2007 until 2018 Noseda served as Music Director of the Teatro Regio Torino where he ushered in a transformative era for the company, reflected in wide international acclaim for its productions, tours, recordings, and film projects.

The 2017/18 season marked the beginning of his tenure as Music Director of the National Symphony Orchestra and included weeks with the Israel Philharmonic, Orchestre de Paris and New York Philharmonic. He also joined the LSO on a tour of Far East Asia. At the end of May, he led his first symphonic programme with the Met Orchestra at Carnegie Hall.

Noseda works with the leading opera houses and orchestras in the world, including the Cleveland Orchestra, La Scala, Munich and New York Philharmonics, NHK Symphony, Orchestra dell'Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia, Philadelphia Orchestra, the Royal Opera House (Covent Garden), Vienna Symphony Orchestra and Zurich Opera. In 2015 he made his debut with the Berlin Philharmonic, the same year he made his Salzburg Festival debut leading the Vienna Philharmonic in a performance of Verdi's *Il trovatore*, as well as conducting a gala celebrating Plácido Domingo's relationship with the festival.

Gianandrea Noseda has a cherished relationship with the Metropolitan Opera dating back to 2002. During the 2016/17 season he conducted a new production of Gounod's *Romeo and Juliet*, which received its premiere at the New Year's Eve Gala. He also led a critically acclaimed new production of Bizet's *The Pearl Fishers*, which received its premiere at a New Year's Eve Gala in 2015. His widely praised 2014 interpretation of Borodin's *Prince Igor*, directed by Dmitri Tcherniakov, is available on DVD from Deutsche Grammophon.

Noseda's intense recording activity accounts for more than 50 CDs, many of which have been celebrated by critics and received awards. His *Musica Italiana* project, which he began more than ten years ago, chronicles under-appreciated Italian repertoire of the 20th century and has brought many lost masterpieces to light. Conducting the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra and the Orchestra Teatro Regio Torino, he has also recorded opera albums with celebrated vocalists such as Ildebrando d'Arcangelo, Rolando Villazón, Anna Netrebko and Diana Damrau. The critics have received both of his LSO Live recordings featuring Britten's *War Requiem* and Verdi's *Requiem* with huge acclaim.

A native of Milan, Noseda is Cavaliere Ufficiale al Merito della Repubblica Italiana, marking his contribution to the artistic life of Italy. In 2015, he was honoured as *Musical America's* Conductor of the Year, and was named the 2016 International Opera Awards Conductor of the Year. In December 2016 he was honoured to conduct the Nobel Prize Concert in Stockholm. In February 2018 he was appointed Accademico of Santa Cecilia. □

Nicola Benedetti violin



Nicola Benedetti is one of the most sought-after violinists of her generation. Her ability to captivate audiences with her innate musicianship and dynamic presence, coupled with her wide appeal as a high-profile advocate for classical music, has made her one of the most influential classical artists of today.

With concerto performances at the heart of her career, Nicola is in much demand with major orchestras and conductors across the globe. Conductors with whom she has worked include Vladimir Ashkenazy, Jiří Bělohlávek, Stéphane Denève, James Gaffigan, Valery Gergiev, Alan Gilbert, Jakub Hrůša, Kirill Karabits, Kristjan Järvi, Vladimir Jurowski, Zubin Mehta, Peter Oundjian, Vasily Petrenko, Donald Runnicles, Krzysztof Urbanski, Juraj Valčuha, Edo de Waart, Pinchas Zukerman and Jaap van Zweden.

Nicola enjoys working with the highest level of orchestras including collaborations with the London Symphony Orchestra, the London and New York Philharmonic Orchestras, National Symphony Orchestra of Washington DC, Orchestra of the Mariinsky Theatre, Leipzig Gewandhausorchester, Camerata Salzburg, Czech Philharmonic, Los Angeles Philharmonic, and the San Francisco and Chicago Symphonies.

Summer 2017 saw Nicola make her debut at the Gstaad Menuhin Festival with Antonio Pappano and the Orchestra dell' Accademia Nazionale di Santa Cecilia. She returned to the BBC Proms with Thomas Søndergård and the BBC National Orchestra of Wales, and to the Edinburgh International Festival with Iván Fischer and the Budapest Festival Orchestra. The season has also seen debuts with the Orchestre de Paris and collaborations with the Deutsches Symphonie-Orchester Berlin, Philadelphia Orchestra, City of Birmingham Symphony, Royal Scottish National Orchestra, Bremen Philharmonic, Warsaw Philharmonic, Dallas Symphony, Atlanta Symphony, New World Symphony and Baltimore Symphony with Marin Alsop.

With her regular duo partner pianist Alexei Grynuk, Nicola frequently performs recitals in the world's leading concert halls and festivals, with most recent highlights including the Wigmore Hall, Concertgebouw Amsterdam, Utrecht, Rome, Copenhagen, Dortmund, Ludwigshafen, Bielefeld and Kiel. Nicola is also a devoted chamber musician and collaborates with cellist Leonard Elschenbroich and pianist Alexei Grynuk, who have been performing as a trio since 2008. Recent performances include London's Cadogan Hall, Amsterdam Concertgebouw, Birmingham Symphony Hall,

Edinburgh Festival, Glasgow Royal Concert Hall, Frankfurt Alte Oper and LSO St Luke's among others. Spring 2018 saw the trio's welcome return to North America with performances in Boston and Vancouver.

Fiercely committed to music education and to developing young talent, Nicola has formed associations with schools, music colleges and local authorities. In 2010, she became Sistema Scotland's official musical 'Big Sister' for the Big Noise project, a music initiative partnered with Venezuela's El Sistema (Fundación Musical Simón Bolívar). As a board member and teacher, Nicola embraces her position of role model to encourage young people to take up music, and she continues to spread this message in school visits and masterclasses around the world.

In addition, Nicola developed her own education and outreach initiative The Benedetti Sessions giving hundreds of aspiring young string players the opportunity to rehearse, undertake and observe masterclasses, culminating in a performance alongside Nicola. She has presented The Benedetti Sessions at the Royal Albert Hall, Cheltenham Festival and Royal Concert Hall Glasgow, and has plans to develop this on an international scale. □

SHOS TAKOVICH

'Gianandrea Nosedà let
the music tell its own story.'

The Times on Nosedà's Shostakovich

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Jonathan Lipton

Trumpets

Philip Cobb

David Elton

Gerald Ruddock

Niall Keatley

Trombones

Dudley Bright

Rebecca Smith

Emma Bassett

Bass Trombone

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Gianandrea Noseda's 2018/19 concert series
with the **London Symphony Orchestra**

'As artists, we can bring people together by showing
how many influences our roots have on music.'

James MacMillan Trombone Concerto
Shostakovich Symphony No 4
1 November 2018

James MacMillan All the Hills and Vales Along
Shostakovich Symphony No 4
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16 June 2019

HALF SIX FIX
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27 March 2019

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