



(LYRCD 6013)

MISSA SOLEMNIS & Egmont Overture

Ludwig van Beethoven

AMA DEUS ENSEMBLE

Valentin Radu, Artistic Director and Conductor

Sarah Davis, Soprano

Jody Kidwell, Mezzo-Soprano

Timothy Bentch, Tenor

Ed Bara, Bass

PROGRAM NOTES:

EGMONT, OP. 84, is a set of incidental music pieces for the 1787 play of the same name by Goethe. It consists of an overture and nine separate subsequent pieces for soprano and full orchestra. Beethoven wrote it between October 1809 and June 1810, and it was premiered on 15 June 1810. The overture, powerful and expressive, is one of the last works of his middle period; it has become as famous a composition as the Coriolan Overture, and is in a similar style to the Fifth Symphony which he completed two years earlier.

When in 1809 the Burgtheater of Vienna asked Beethoven, a great admirer of Goethe, to compose incidental music for a revival of the play, he accepted with enthusiasm. It recalled themes close to his own political preoccupations, already expressed in his opera Leonore (renamed Fidelio, in the definitive 1814 version) and in his overture Coriolan (in 1807).

MISSA SOLEMNIS, OP. 123 “The Missa Solemnis is the greatest work I have composed so far.” Even allowing for the facts that Beethoven was telling this to a publisher and that in 1822 he had not yet composed the Ninth Symphony and the last string quartets, his declaration must be taken seriously nevertheless. The Mass is Beethoven’s largest and longest composition (not counting the opera *Fidelio*), and yet at times also one of his most intimate and personal. At the end of the Kyrie he wrote, “From the heart-may it go to the heart!” The Missa Solemnis’ gestation took more than four years and came at a crucial juncture in Beethoven’s career. As the aging and deaf composer increasingly withdrew from society, he created a musical testimony that is one of the supreme expressions of personal belief. It manifests the reconciliation that Beethoven sought between conventional Christian views,

Enlightenment, rationalism, Eastern philosophy, and other spiritual impulses, and also offers a comment on musical tradition and compositional technique. Beethoven merges features of the church Mass with those of the oratorio and music for the concert hall. (The length of the work alone virtually precludes its liturgical use.) Indeed Beethoven suggested that performances could be given as a “grand oratorio,” and the movements presented at the Vienna premiere in 1824 had to be billed as “three grand hymns” so as to bypass the censor’s ban on liturgical works at secular concerts. Beethoven even explored publication of the composition with German words so that it might appeal to Protestants.

The Missa Solemnis straddles the concert hall and church and, since its first performances, has been found more often in secular than in sacred settings. While we may never know the true nature of Beethoven’s religious and spiritual beliefs, the religion of art and its spiritual potential increasingly emerged as a new cultural force in Europe. As music historian Carl Dahlhaus remarked, “With the composition of a concert mass, the concert hall was transformed into a church, and the mass into a concert piece.” Although he was exposed to a great amount of religious music during his formative years in Bonn, and often participated as an organist in services, there is little indication that the mature Beethoven supported any organized religion or attended services. Unlike his greatest predecessors, Beethoven did not compose a large quantity of religious music, and what he did write came relatively late, when he was already in his mid-30s—the Gellert Lieder, Op. 48, the oratorio *Christ on the Mount of Olives*, Mass in C, and the Missa Solemnis.

Beethoven began work on the Mass in 1819, planning it for the grand ceremony in Cologne Cathedral at which Archduke Rudolph of Austria was to be installed as cardinal and archbishop. Rudolph (1788-1831), son of Emperor Leopold II, was Beethoven’s student, friend, and foremost patron, the dedicatee of nearly a dozen masterpieces. In April 1819, Pope Pius VII made him a Cardinal and in June announced that he would become Archbishop of Olmütz (now in the Czech Republic). The installation was set for March 9, 1820. In a letter of congratulations, Beethoven stated, “The day on which a High Mass composed by me will be performed during the ceremonies solemnized for Your Imperial Highness will be the most glorious day of my life; and God will enlighten me so that my poor talents may contribute to the glorification of that solemn day.”

But Beethoven had set himself an impossible deadline, especially as the scope of the work grew and other commitments and health problems distracted him. The Mass took some four years to complete. The first performance took place in St. Petersburg under the sponsorship of Beethoven’s Russian patron Prince Nikolai Galitzin.

The opening of the Mass can be seen as a quiet emblem of a major topic of the entire composition. The Kyrie is, indeed, the one conspicuously “normal” movement in the Missa Solemnis. Perfectly balanced in form and beautifully crafted in detail, it has none of the visionary experimentation of the later movements. In some places Beethoven’s approach to the Mass text is expansive, but at others he is concise, if not positively laconic. The most famous of these places is the section in the Credo starting at “Credo in Spiritum Sanctum,” during which several

important doctrinal items in the Christian's list of beliefs, running to 37 words, are rushed through in 22 bars of Allegro ma non troppo. Most of the words are sung only once, by a single voice in the choir. Meanwhile the other voices exclaim "Credo, credo" again and again. Sheer intensity of belief, Beethoven seems to be saying, outweighs belief in any particular proposition. In contrast the final five words of the Credo, "Et vitam venturi saeculi, Amen" are extended into an immense fugue lasting for five minutes. It is especially at the ends of the later movements that Beethoven gives his expansive tendencies their head. He may have felt that the many highly disruptive gestures earlier in the Credo required a broad stretch of fugal stability at the end. The same could be true of the equally long fugue at the end of the Gloria, "In gloria Dei Patris, Amen."

Another section of the Missa Solemnis that counts as relatively concise is the first part of the Sanctus. The opening "Sanctus, sanctus Dominus Deus Sabaoth" is set to two short polyphonic phrases in slow tempo; marked *Mit Andacht* (devoutly), this music bespeaks humility in face of the divine glory—in utter contrast to Bach's memorable vision of ranks of angels caroling and trumpeting around the throne of heaven. Jubilation waits for the "Pleni" and the first "Osanna", set to a total of three new polyphonic phrases in fast tempo.

Conciseness at the beginning of the Sanctus was designed to set off expansiveness at the movement's ending. After moving rapidly through the first three numbers, the music slows down into a purely orchestral passage, the mood and the low-pitched scoring of which (and even the initial motif) recall the Sanctus.

The Elevation of the Host occurs at exactly this point in the Mass. Closing our eyes as though in prayer, we can more easily imagine ourselves in a great cathedral, listening to the organist "preluding," than in a concert hall. Most extraordinary is the sudden evaporation of organ-like sounds, as a solo violin and two flutes strike a celestial bell-like sound in a very high register. They slowly wind downward as though performing a lengthy benediction. The chorus mutters the words "Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini" on a monotone, like a subdued litany. This gesture and the long violin solo that emerges from it have fueled more debate than any other feature in the entire Missa Solemnis. The high solo violin, some critics have complained, represents the Holy Spirit itself as naively as a fluttering dove in medieval paintings.

The guilt which is at the heart of the Agnus Dei prayer is conceived in personal terms; this movement is sung primarily by the soloists, not by the chorus. They sing unrelievedly in the minor mode – there is only one clear major mode sound in the whole six minutes. It is all deeply desolate, and desolate also is the stark musical form of the Agnus Dei as a whole. The prayer for divine mercy is a bleak and painful one to Beethoven, which cannot be developed, only repeated litany-fashion. Only when the prayer changes to ask for peace does the mood (and the mode) lighten. The long, extended Allegretto vivace "Dona nobis pacem" has something of the naïve, hopeful quality of the shepherd's song of thanks at the end of the "Pastoral" Symphony. Also it is a prayer, as Beethoven puts it, for the "outer as well as the inner peace". -- *Valentin Radu*.

TEXTS

ENGLISH TRANSLATION:

KYRIE

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will.

We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we adore Thee, we glorify Thee.

We give Thee thanks for Thy great glory.

O Lord God! O heavenly King!

O God, the Father Almighty! O Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son!

O Lord God! Lamb of God! Son of the Father!

O Thou, who takest away the sins of the world!

have mercy upon us; receive our prayer.

O Thou, who sittest at the right hand of the Father!

have mercy upon us.

For Thou alone art holy,

Thou alone art Lord, Thou alone art most high,

O Jesus Christ! together with the Holy Ghost,

in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

CREDO

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, and born of the Father before all ages.

God of Gods, Light of Light, true God of true God; begotten, not made; consubstantial to the Father;

by Whom all things were made.

Who for us men, and for our salvation, came down from heaven;

and became incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary; and was made man.

He was crucified for us; suffered under Pontius Pilate and was buried, And the third day He arose again according to the Scriptures. And ascended into Heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father.

And He is to come again, with glory, to judge both the living and the dead;

of whose Kingdom there shall be no end:

I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life,

Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son;

Who, together with the Father and the Son,

is adored and glorified,

Who spoke by the Prophets.

And I believe in one holy Catholic and Apostolic Church.

I confess one Baptism for the remission of sins.
And I expect for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

SANCTUS

Holy is the Lord God of hosts.
Heaven and earth are full of Thy Glory.
Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed is He who cometh in the name of the Lord!
Hosanna in the highest!

AGNUS DEI

Lamb of God, that takest away the sins of the world,
have mercy upon us.
grant us peace.

IN THE LATIN

KYRIE

Kyrie eleison.
Christe eleison.
Kyrie eleison.

GLORIA

Gloria in excelsis Deo, et in terra pax hominibus bonae
voluntatis.
Laudamus te, benedicimus te, adoramus te,
glorificamus te.
Gratias agimus tibi propter magnam gloriam tuam.
Domine Deus, Rex coelestis!
Deus Pater omnipotens! Domine, Fili unigenite,
Jesu Christe!
Domine Deus! Agnus Dei! Filius Patris!
Qui tollis peccata mundi!
miserere nobis; suscipe deprecationem nostram.
Qui sedes ad dexteram Patris,
miserere nobis.
Quoniam tu solus sanctus,
tu solus Dominus, tu solus altissimus, Jesu Christe!
cum Sancto Spiritu
in gloria Dei Patris. Amen.

CREDO

Credo in unum Deum, patrem omnipotentem, factorem
coeli et terrae, visibilium omnium et invisibilium. Credo in

unum Dominium Jesum Christum, Filium Dei unigenitum.
Et ex Patre natum ante omnia saecula. Deum de Deo,
Lumen de Lumine, Deum verum de Deo vero. Genitum,
non factum, consubstantialem Patri:
per quem omnia facta sunt.
Qui propter nos homines, et propter nostram salutem,
descendit de coelis.

Et incarnatus est de Spiritu Sancto
ex Maria Virgine, et homo factus est.
Crucifixus etiam pro nobis; sub Pontio Pilato,
passus et sepultus est; et resurrexit tertia die,
secundum Scripturas.
Et ascendit in coelum, sedet ad dexteram Patris.
Et iterum venturus est cum gloria
judicare vivos et mortuos;
cujus regni non erit finis.
Credo in Spiritum Sanctum,
Dominum et vivificantem:
qui ex Patre Filioque procedit;
qui cum Patre et Filio simul adoratur et con glorificatur;
qui locutus est per prophetas.
Credo in unam sanctam Catholicam
et Apostolicam Ecclesiam.
Confiteor unum Baptisma in remissionem peccatorum.
Et expecto resurrectionem mortuorum,
et vitam venturi saeculi. Amen.

SANCTUS

Sanctus Dominus, Deus Sabaoth.
Pleni sunt coeli et terra gloria tua.
Osanna in excelsis!
Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini!
Osanna in excelsis!

AGNUS DEI

Agnus Dei, qui tollis peccata mundi,
miserere nobis.
Dona nobis pacem.

VALENTINE RADU

Valentin Radu, Founder, Artistic Director and Conductor of the Ama Deus Ensemble and Camerata Ama Deus Chamber Orchestra and Vox Renaissance Consort, has led numerous orchestras and vocal ensembles in Europe and the U.S., including the Hungarian National Philharmonic Bucharest, Arad, Oradea Philharmonics, the Budapest Chamber Orchestra and the Romania National Radio Orchestra. In 1996 he conducted the Bucharest Philharmonic in Handel's Messiah, and In 1997 led the Romanian National Radio Orchestra in Handel's Acis and Galatea (both English

language premieres). He has conducted the Ama Deus Ensemble in various programs ranging from motets and madrigals to authentically-staged Renaissance operas performed on original instruments. Since 1997, he has led the Ama Deus Ensemble and Maestro Dan Grigore, legendary Romanian pianist, in their annual Viennese Gala concerts in Philadelphia and the Ama Deus Ensemble in its yearly Good Friday performances at Cathedral Basilica of SS Peter and Paul and the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts, in Philadelphia.

Valentin Radu and the Ama Deus Ensemble have recorded for a number of labels, featuring such masterpieces as the Mozart Requiem, Purcell's Dido and Aeneas, Verdi Requiem and Beethoven Ninth for Lyric Chord; Handel's Messiah, Acis and Galatea, Water Music and Royal Fireworks, Vivaldi's Gloria and Magnificat and J.S. Bach's B Minor Mass and Magnificat. Their "... conductor Valentin Radu approached the work with an awareness of the tone painting, the drama and even theatricality of the writing... He built relationships to challenge the mind and ear." THE PHILADELPHIA INQUIRER "Volcanic... A fine connoisseur of the Baroque." DIE PRESSE, Vienna "Radu conducted his singers with a sure hand..." THE NEW YORK TIMES

DISCOGRAPHY

The Ama Deus discography also includes: A Baroque Christmas, A European Christmas, A Renaissance Noel on the PolyGram label, and Glad Tidings, released on both the Warner label and Sony Classics. Born in Romania, Valentin Radu began his music studies at age four. At six he made his first concert debut. In 1973, at 16, he won the prestigious Rome Piano Competition, and in 1979, the Saarbrücken Organ Competition. In 1980, he won the silver medal (gold was not awarded!) at the Bach International Competition in Leipzig. Maestro Radu holds Doctoral and Masters degrees from the Juilliard School and a Bachelor of Music degree from the Bucharest Academy of Music. In 1976, he founded and conducted Juvenes Musici, a chamber orchestra under the auspices of the Bucharest Philharmonic. In 1980 he founded "The Juilliard Bach Players" chamber orchestra and initiated the "Bach at Juilliard" concert series at New York's Lincoln Center. In 1984 Valentin Radu was invited to inaugurate and later (in 1985) make the first and only LP solo recording on the newly re-built organ of the Imperial Chapel of Schonbrunn Palace in Vienna. The original instrument, built in 1721, was the one on which Mozart himself performed during his 12 years as Vienna's Court Musician. In addition to being a classical music scholar and artist, Valentin Radu is equally accomplished in jazz performance as a conductor and a solo performer. In December 1998, he conducted the 97-member Bucharest Philharmonic in a Gershwin Centennial Gala concert, featuring the Rhapsody in Blue (Dan Grigore, soloist), An American in Paris, and Porgy and Bess. In November 1999, Radu conducted the Arad Philharmonic in a centennial concert featuring works by Duke Ellington and George Gershwin. Since May 2000, Maestro Radu has conducted extraordinary jazz concerts in Bucharest, with his "Sound" jazz group, featuring singer Teodora Enache and Romanian jazz legend Johnny Raducanu. In May 1999, Radu participated in the historic visit to Romania of Pope John Paul II. In September 2004, he was invited to be the sole performer at a special U.N. gala in New York honoring the President of Romania. In December 1997, Radu was awarded the Golden Apple by New York City Mayor Rudolph Giuliani. In February 1999, the Romanian Music Critics' Association named him "1998 Musician of the Year." In April of 2003, Radu was bestowed the title of Honorary Citizen of the City of Bucharest by the mayor of his native town, who is presently Romania's President.

On December 20, 2005, Valentin Radu received the highest civil award of Romania: The Grand Officer of the Order of Cultural Merit (Romanian equivalent of The French Legion of Honor or British Knighthood), in recognition of his life achievement in the arts and his efforts as "Cultural Ambassador" of Romania. Radu became the seventh, and youngest, recipient of this most prestigious award in the history of Romania.

Sarah Davis, soprano. A native Texan, Ms. Davis made her Carnegie Hall debut in January at the Winner's Recital of the Barry Alexander International Vocal Competition. She has performed the following roles: Nannetta, Anne Trulove, Echo in *Ariadne auf Naxos* and the title role in Massenet's *Cendrillon*. Her oratorio performances include: Bach *Magnificat*, Poulenc *Gloria*, Vivaldi *Gloria*, Mendelssohn *St. Paul*, and Fauré *Requiem*. Recent appearances with the Ama Deus Ensemble include 2008 Kimmel Center performances of Bach's B Minor Mass, Beethoven Ninth Symphony, *The Ruin of Athens* and *Missa Solemnis*. She is an avid song and Lieder performer, having participated in Songfest in Malibu, CA for three summers, working with Graham Johnson and the American composers Jake Heggie, John Harbison and Ricky Ian Gordon. Ms. Davis gave a duo song recital at the Kennedy Center's Terrace Theater, premiered Harbison's aria for soprano and piano *Vocalism*, and recently participated in the Art Song Festival at Baldwin-Wallace College with Warren Jones and Stephanie Blythe. Ms. Davis sang in Romania at the Hariclea Darclée Festival with soprano Mariana Nicolesco. She received her Masters of Music from the Peabody Conservatory and a BM from Trinity University in San Antonio. Jody Kidwell, mezzo-soprano, is a frequent guest soloist with the Ama Deus Ensemble in Mozart's *Coronation Mass* and *Requiem*, and most recently the Bach B Minor Mass and Beethoven's *Missa Solemnis* at the Kimmel Center. A winner in the third Luciano Pavarotti Competition, she was chosen by him to appear in *Luisa Miller*, filmed by PBS. Menotti directed her in his *The Saint of Bleeker Street*. As *Zulma* in Opera Company of Philadelphia's *L'Italiana in Algeri*, Ms. Kidwell was heard and seen on WHYY'S Philadelphia Performs series. Other roles include *Carmen*, *Isabella* in *L'Italiana*, *Olga* in *Eugene Onegin*, and *Maddalena* in *Rigoletto*. Equally at home on the concert stage, Ms. Kidwell has performed with Peter Nero and the Philly Pops at the Academy of Music, Philadelphia Orchestra at The Mann Music Center, North Carolina Symphony, Las Vegas Philharmonic, National Symphonies of Bogota, Colombia and San Jose, Costa Rica. Ms. Kidwell sang Mrs. McLean in Opera Company of Philadelphia's *Susannah* and last reprised the role with Opera Columbus. Other performances include Handel's *Messiah* and Beethoven Mass in C with the Ama Deus Ensemble, and the Verdi *Requiem* at Carnegie Hall. Ms. Kidwell recently sang the role of Mrs. Peachum in *The Threepenny Opera* with Opera Columbus.

Timothy Bentsch, tenor, developed a significant career in Hungary appearing with most of the leading opera houses and orchestras. At the Hungarian State Opera he premiered new productions of *Don Giovanni*, *Abduction*, and *L'infedelta delusa* and sang leading Mozart, Donizetti and Monteverdi tenor roles. His opera performances have taken him to many other countries including tours of the Netherlands, the UK, Italy, Germany and France. In November 2006 he was featured as special guest in the Mozart Festival of the Hungarian State Opera in Budapest performing *Titus*, *Belmonte*, and *Don Ottavio*. In symphonic repertoire, he has performed all the standard repertoire from Renaissance and Baroque to the large works of Mahler and Verdi. Highlights have included the Evangelists in the Bach Passions, Mahler's 8th Symphony which he recorded for Naxos, and *The Dream of Gerontius* by Elgar. He has sung under the baton of many celebrated maestros, with the orchestras of Lille, Strasbourg, Avignon, Saint Petersburg, Sofia, Warsaw, the Israeli Chamber Orchestra, and the Ama Deus Ensemble and appears regularly with the Hungarian National Philharmonic. He sang opposite Julianne Baird in Ama Deus Ensemble's Lyrichord acclaimed recording of Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*.

Ed Bara, bass, has performed in fourteen countries in venues including Saint Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna, The National Cathedral in Washington D.C., Carnegie Hall and Radio City Music Hall in New York City, and the Basilica of SS Peter and Paul, The Academy of Music, and with the Ama Deus Ensemble at The Kimmel Center, Philadelphia. Mr. Bara's opera highlights include principal bass roles in *Don Giovanni*, *La bohème*, *The Tales of Hoffmann*, *Rigoletto* and *Pirates of Penzance*. He has been heard on the musical theater stage in *Oliver!*, *Camelot*, *Two by Two*, among many others, totaling over seventy roles of opera, theater, musical theater, and oratorio. His

solo concert and oratorio performances have been called “...dark, rich, expressive singing...” and “powerful, but with enough grace as to understand every word.” The bass-baritone’s recordings with the Ama Deus Ensemble include the Bach B Minor Mass, Mozart Requiem, Verdi Requiem and Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony (for Lyrichord), Handel Messiah, and now the Beethoven Missa Solemnis. With his wife Jennifer, he is co-founder and director of an early music performing ensemble specializing in feasts of the Renaissance. AMA DEUS ENSEMBLE
Valentin Radu, Artistic Director and Conductor

CHORUS:

SOPRANO: Laura Colleton, Kristen Conrad, Kimberly Cooper,
Tatyana Galitskaya, Jeanne Guerin, Jennifer Graf, Allison Hirshmann, Darlene Kelsey, Bridget Libert, Susan Mattison, Susan Miller, Emily Phelan, Pam Phelan, Andrea Smith, Clara Thorne, Adeline Tompkins

ALTO: Lois Babbitt, Claudia Becker, Bronwyn Fix-Keller, MaryAnn Landmesser, Betty Prescod, Tatyana Rashkovsky, Barbara Rawls, BrendaRose Simkin, Tommie Borton Warder, Ruth Williams

TENOR: Peter de Mets, Jerel Frey, Michael Go, Frank Henzel, Dennis Kalup, Paul Marchesano,
Douglas Rowland, Joseph Sohler, Franklin Zigman

BASS: Gerald Escovitz, Brian Middleton, Charles Riale, Richard Shapp, Roberto Termine, Evan Thomas, John Wright, Matthew Zimnoch, Stephen Zimnoch

ORCHESTRA:

VIOLIN I: Thomas DiSarlo, Concertmaster and solo violin (Benedictus),
Thomas Jackson, Inna Nederozov, Lawrence Major, Cathleen Jeffcoat

VIOLIN II: Robert Spates, Sergei Nuissl, Lauren Alter, Eliza Cho

VIOLA: Patricio Diaz, Jennifer Myer, Mihaela Matei

CELLO: Anthony Pirolo, Jie Jin

BASS: Marc Seidenberg, Joanne Bates

FLUTE: Edward Schultz, Nicole Lambert

OBOE: John Symer, Corinna Symer

CLARINET: Terry Guidetti, Rie Suzuki

BASSOON: Norman Spielberg, Robert Grossman

CONTRABASSOON: Louis Nolemi

HORN: Paul Rosenberg, Todd Williams, Jason Ayoub, James Hines

TRUMPET: Elin Frazier, Daniel Orlock

TROMBONE: Brian Pastor, Michael Purdy, David Cianci

TIMPANI: Randall Rudolph

Sarah Davis Jody Kidwell

TRACKS;

1 Egmont Overture, Op. 84A (8:12)

Missa Solemnis, Op.123

2 Kyrie eleison (3:16)

3 Christe eleison (1:36)

4 Kyrie eleison (3:25)

5 Gloria in excelsis (2:46)

6 Gratias agimus tibi (2:15)

7 Qui tollis peccata mundi (5:04)
8 Quoniam tu solis sanctus (6:19)
9 Credo in unum deum (3:20)
10 Et incarnatus est (2:11)
11 Crucifixus etiam pro nobis (3:04)
12 Et resurrexit tertiam die (2:28)
13 Et vitam venturi (6:00)
14 Sanctus (3:30)
15 Benedictus (11:12)
16 Agnus Dei (6:00)
17 Dona nobis pacem (7:59)
Total Time: 78:50

CREDITS:

John Ostendorf, Producer

Stephen J. Epstein, Recording Engineer

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