

# THINKING CAP THEATRE



MAR 22-APR 3, 2024

# THE TAMING OF THE SHREW



a play by William Shakespeare | adapted & directed by Nicole Stodard

THINKING CAP  
THEATRE  
PRESENTS

# THE TAMING OF THE SHREW

## THE PRODUCTION TEAM

Director.....	Nicole Stodard*
Dramaturg.....	Meredith Bartmon
Stage Manager.....	Laurie Tanner
Board Op & Assistant Stage Manager.....	Pablo De Pablo
Set & Prop Designer.....	Alyiece Moretto-Watkins
Costume Designer.....	Nicole Stodard
Sound Designers.....	Bree-Anna Obst & Nicole Stodard
Projection Designer.....	Bree-Anna Obst
Lighting Designer.....	Bree-Anna Obst
Production Assistants.....	Timothy S. Dickey



\*The Director is a Member of the  
**STAGE DIRECTORS AND CHOREOGRAPHERS  
SOCIETY**, a national theatrical labor union.

## THE CAST (In Alphabetical Order)

Robert Ayala.....	Player Two, Hostess, Hortensio, Biondello, Curtis
Beverly Blanchette.....	Hostess, Baptista, Widow
Randy Coleman.....	Player One, Grumio, Merchant
Cameron Holder.....	Lord, Tranio, Tailor
Melissa Ann Hubicsak.....	Bianca
Noah Levine.....	Petruchio/Katherina
Phillip Andrew Santiago.....	Lucentio
Bill Schwartz**.....	Christopher Sly
Pete Rogan**.....	Gremio, Vincentio
Karen Stephens**.....	Katherina/Petruchio



\*\**Appearing through an Agreement between Thinking Cap Theatre and Actors' Equity Association, the Union of Professional Actors and Stage Managers in the United States*

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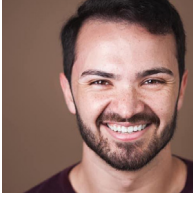
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# MEET THE CAST



## **ROBERT AYALA AS PLAYER TWO, HOSTESS, HORTENSIO, BIONDELLO, CURTIS**

Robert is very excited to be part of this amazing production! A Miami native, his recent shows include “Legally Blonde (male swing), “Donna Summer National Tour” (Giorgio) and “On Your Feet!” (Ensemble/Phil u/s). He would like to thank his mother and father, who are constantly supporting him through all of his passion projects, and for attending every performance. Instagram: [\\_robertayala](#)



## **BEVERLY BLANCHETTE AS HOSTESS, BAPTISTA, WIDOW**

Beverly Blanchette thanks everyone at Thinking Cap for bringing her back after Last Summer at Bluefish Cove and Dance Nation. Other fave roles were in Noises Off (Delray Beach Playhouse), Boca and Between Riverside & Crazy (Gable Stage), Helen on Wheels and Off Balance (Empire Stage), When Monica Met Hillary—US (Miami New Drama), and Vincent River (Ground Up & Rising). Screen credits include Across the Rails, The Single's Guidebook, Tycoon, Nailed It!, King Dyslexia, and countless commercials. She retired her long career as a public school Theatre Educator (Theatre Dean, Dreyfoos School of Arts) to hone acting/directing skills at Shakespeare's Globe, Juilliard, & Burt Reynolds' master acting class. Inducted into Educational Theatre Association's Hall of Fame, she's a preeminent educator/director/acting coach (nick-named “Shakesbev”) holding an MFA from FAU and BA from FSU. More info: [www. BeverlyBlanchette.com](http://www.BeverlyBlanchette.com).



## **RANDY COLEMAN AS PLAYER ONE, GRUMIO, MERCHANT**

Randy Coleman was born in Greenville, Ms. and raised in Fort Lauderdale, Fl. He first touched the stage at the age of ten and with a big move from a small town to a big city changed his life course at a young age. Now back on track, Randy has graced many stages in productions such as “Diamond in the Rough” written by Bonnie Scott. “The Brothers Size” Directed by Zaylin Yates and TM Pride and most recently “Clyde's” written by Lynn Nottage and directed by Stuart Meltzer. In his downtime Randy enjoys fine dining and family time.



## **CAMERON HOLDER AS LORD, TRANIO, TAILOR**

Cameron Holder is a local Miami artist and is delighted to be in his debut performance with Thinking Cap Theatre. A graduate from FIU with his BFA in Theatre Performance he has always been passionate about acting and is living out his dream. Shakespeare plays hold a special place in his heart, and he is excited to bring this production to life. His most recent projects are Arthur & Friends Make a Musical and Christiana Lysistrata. He has worked on many other projects such as Romeo & Juliet, Avenue Q, Eurydice, Stuart Little, Rocky Horror, A Christmas Carol, Charlotte's Web and many more. He would like to thank his friends, boyfriend, and family for supporting his art, thank you to Thinking Cap for giving me this wonderful opportunity and thank you to the community for keeping live theatre electrifying.



## **MELISSA ANN HUBICSAK AS BIANCA**

Melissa Ann Hubicsak is a first generation Cuban American Actor and Creatrix with a BFA in performance from FIU. She is thrilled to be making her official Thinking Cap Theatre debut alongside this incredible cast and reuniting again with director Nicole Stodard! Melissa's recent acclaims include starring in Richard Blanco & Vanessa Garcia's Miami premiere of Sweet Goats & Blueberry Señoritas (Actors' Playhouse) and a 2023 Carbonell Award nomination for her role in Last Summer at Bluefish Cove (Ronnie Larsen Presents/Woman of Wilton). Other stage credits include: The Busy Bees Great Adventure (Adrienne Arshet Center) and Edna in the immersive sensation, The Amparo Experience, celebrated as “Miami's Hottest Ticket” by People en Español (Broadway Factor/Bacardi). She would like to thank her familia for their unwavering love & support. IG: [@Melissa\\_Ann\\_Hubicsak](#)

# MEET THE CAST



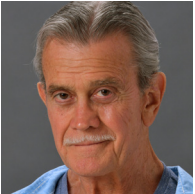
## NOAH LEVINE AS PETRUCHIO/KATHERINA

Noah Levine is a proud company member of TCT who is fired up to be marking his ninth full production with the company! Thanks as always to Nicole & Bree and every-one else who make TCT such a fantastic place to be. Other regional credits include: Actor's Playhouse, Boca Stage, City Theatre, Delray Beach Playhouse, Island City Stage, New City Players, Slow Burn, StoryMakers, Theatre Lab, West Boca Theatre Company. He received his BA in Theatre Performance from Florida Atlantic University in 2004. He lives in Deerfield with his lovely wife Cally, award-winning elementary educator and massage therapist (yes, for both), and their cute little 5-year-old son, Miles.



## PHILLIP ANDREW SANTIAGO AS LUCENTIO

Phillip is excited to be working with Think Cap again. Still a Nuyorican at heart, he is proud to be a part of the S. FL Theatre Community, where he's had the pleasure of performing in: One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest (JCAT), Sweat (Main Street Players), O Christmas Tree! (Thinking Cap), Mlrima's Tale (Zoetic Stage), Miami Motel Stories: MiMo, & North Beach (Juggerknot Theatre Co.), One Man, Two Guvnors, Havana Music Hall, & Evita (Actors' Playhouse), Gloria (Gablestage), City Shorts 2022 & Summer Shorts 2017 (City Theatre). He thanks the cast & crew of Taming of the Shrew for their work and talent. "I love you Roxanne!" Acts 17:28.



## BILL SCHWARTZ\*\* AS CHRISTOPHER SLY

Bill thanks Nicole for this wonderful opportunity! He is grateful to be part of this extraordinary company mounting one of "The Bard's" classics. Bill's theatre career has scanned several decades. He has worked at New Theatre, GableStage, Zoetic Stage, Island City Stage, Florida Stage, Boca Theatre Company, Artistic Vibes, The Hollywood Playhouse, The Coconut Grove Playhouse, The Asolo Touring Theatre, NYC Stage-works, Vinette Caroll's Urban Arts Corp in NYC, and the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. Bill also performs in his one person, three puppet, autobiographical, dark comedy, "The Naked Ventriloquist." ( For inquiries please contact [crittersbill@aol.com](mailto:crittersbill@aol.com))



## PETE ROGAN\*\* AS GREMIO, VINCENTIO

Pete (he/him) is thrilled to be making his Thinking Cap debut and is grateful to Nicole and the company for the opportunity. Pete is the company dramaturg at Mad Cat Theatre Company, where he curated the Banned New play reading series and most recently appeared in Václav Havel's AUDIENCE. He holds a BFA in Acting/Directing from FAU and an MFA in Performance Pedagogy from Texas Tech University, where he created The Theatrebrau System, a holistic actor training protocol and the rehearsal system used by Chicago's Dirt City Collective. He is also the founding artistic director of The Tattered Remnants Theatre Company.



## KAREN STEPHENS\*\* AS KATHERINA/PETRUCHIO

Karen Stephens last appeared with Thinking Cap as Winnie in HAPPY DAYS and Lady Bracknell in THE IMPORTANCE OF BEING EARNEST. Her most recent South Florida appearance was in Palm Beach Dramaworks' THE CANCELLATION OF LAUREN FEIN and Zoetic Stage's CLYDE'S. Prior to that, she graced the boards in Boca Stage's TIME ALONE and Theatre Lab's DOROTHY'S DICTIONARY. A multiple Carbonell nominee, Karen was awarded the Best Actress award for Zoetic Stage's, FEAR UP HARSH. She is the recipient of several Silver Palm Awards, as well as being a long-time member of Actor's Equity Association and SAG-AFTRA.

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OR THE WOMAN'S PRIZE  
by John Fletcher

A RESPONSE TO SHAKESPEARE'S  
THE TAMING OF THE SHREW

A PLAY READING

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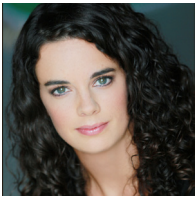
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# MEET THE CREATIVE TEAM



## **NICOLE STODARD - DIRECTOR | COSTUME & SOUND DESIGNER** **THINKING CAP THEATRE ARTISTIC DIRECTOR**

Nicole Stodard, Ph.D., is a stage director, designer, educator, and writer. A Full Member of SDC, the Society of Stage Directors and Choreographers, Nicole has directed and designed more than 50 productions. Distinctions include South Florida Carbonell Nominations for Best Director, Best Sound Design, and Best Costume Design; two Silver Palm Awards for Best Direction; and three NEW TIMES "Best Director" Awards. In addition to serving as Artistic Director of TCT, Nicole serves alongside Ronnie Larsen as Co-Artistic Director of WOW, Women of Wilton, a new entity of POW, Plays of Wilton. Nicole's most recent directing and design credits include *108 Waverly Place* by Dan Clancy (POW), *Last Summer at Bluefish Cove* by Jane Chambers (WOW), and *The Importance of Being Oscar* by Michael MacLiammoir (TCT). *Tango Palace* marks Stodard's third time directing a Fornes Play; other works include *Fefu and Her Friends* (2022) and *Mud* (2016). Stodard is a member of the Fornes Institute, an organization dedicated to preserving Fornes' legacy. She recently contributed a chapter on sexuality in Fornes's life and work to a forthcoming book that will be published by Cambridge University in 2024. In addition to working in theatre, Stodard is as an adjunct professor in the Department of Communications, Media, and the Arts at Nova Southeastern University. [NicoleStodard.com](http://NicoleStodard.com). She thanks her resilient TCT team and the Broward Center staff for their support on *The Taming of the Shrew*.



## **BREE-ANNA OBST - LIGHTING, SOUND & PROJECTION DESIGNER** **THINKING CAP THEATRE MANAGING DIRECTOR**

Bree-Anna, an Australian native, has performed on some of the world's leading stages including Shakespeare's Globe (London, UK), The Lincoln Center (New York, USA), The New Victory Theatre (New York, USA), The Kennedy Center (Washington, USA), and Hi Seoul Festival (Korea). Bree-Anna was appointed to the role of Managing Director for TCT in 2019. Her work with the company began in April 2018 as an ensemble member in *The Emperor of the Moon*. Since then she has worn many other hats with TCT; a seasoned designer, in addition to a performer, Bree-Anna has also collaborated on TCT productions *I'm Coming*, *Happy Days*, *Laced*, *Fefu* and her *Friends*, *The Importance of Being Oscar* and *O Christmas Tree* as a lighting, sound, video editor and projection designer. Bree-Anna's local theater credits include *Eva* in *Last Summer at Bluefish Cove* (Women of Wilton), *Oscar* in *The Importance of Being Oscar* (Thinking Cap theatre) *Connie* in *Dance Nation* (Thinking Cap Theatre) *Cordelia/Fool* in *King Lear* (Thinking Cap Theatre), *Clown* in *The Emperor of the Moon* (Thinking Cap Theatre), *Feste* in *Twelfth Night* (New City Players), *Amy* in *Soundbite: South Beach* (The Project [theatre]), *Puck* in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Shakespeare Miami), and *Juliet* in *Romeo and Juliet* (Shakespeare Miami). Bree-Anna also manages and directs the Miami Children's Museum's Theater Troupe, which received the South Florida Theatre League's 2019 "Remy Award for Outstanding Contribution to Children's Theatre."



## **MEREDITH BARTMON - DRAMATURG**

Meredith Bartmon (she/hers) is a dramaturg based in South Florida. She specializes in new play development, with over 50 works having utilized her dramaturgy. Credits include Urbanite Theatre, PDP Miami, Palm Beach Dramaworks, FIU's The Greenhouse, FAU Theatre Lab and various playwrights. She is also a massive Shakespeare nerd. Most recently, she has spent the 22/23 season as part of the Literary and Casting department at the Asolo Repertory Theatre in Sarasota. Meredith is a member of Literary Managers and Dramaturgs of the Americas (Florida VP), Actors Equity Association and UK Equity. [www.MeredithBartmon.com](http://www.MeredithBartmon.com)



## **LAURIE TANNER - STAGE MANAGER**

Laurie is thrilled for this second opportunity to stage manage for Thinking Cap Theatre, in *Taming of the Shrew*. A South Florida actor, playwright, producer, and stage manager, recently she was seen as Violet Jenkins in *Second Chance*, and Claribel Cone in *The Equivalent of Sensation*, original plays by local playwrights. She appeared in *Measure for Measure* with the Palm Beach Shakespeare Festival in June-July 2023. She was seen as Elizabeth in the ARTiculating Change/Miami Live Arts production of *Prelude to 2100*, and at Island City Stage in *Suddenly Last Summer*. Previous credits include various roles in *The Short and Short of It* at Fantasy Theatre Factory, *Titania/Hippolyta* in South Florida ShakesTroupe's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Maria* in *Twelfth Night*, and the *Nurse* *Romeo and Juliet*. She is grateful to her family for their heartfelt support.



## ALYIECE MORETTO-WATKINS - SET DESIGNER

A South Florida native, Alyiece has worked as a Scenic Artist and Scenic Designer for local professional and educational venues since 2009. In 2016, she became the Resident Scenic Designer for Thinking Cap Theatre. Her most recent set design credits include *All In The Timing* for American Heritage School and *The Berlin Diaries* for Theatre Lab. Alyiece is a Technical Theatre Faculty member at American Heritage Schools where she teaches Scenic Painting, Scenic Design, Stage Management, and Publicity for Theatre.



## PABLO DE PABLO - ASM & BOARD OPERATOR

Pablo De Pablo is a Cuban-American actor and graduate from the University of Florida's New World School of the Arts College(BFA 23') in Miami, Florida. Born in Cuba and raised in Miami, Pablo is bilingual(Spanish); and is a classically trained non-equity actor currently based in South Florida. Pablo is excited to be contributing to Thinking Cap Theatre's production of "The Taming of The Shrew". He was last seen in the Miami One Acts (M1A) Winter Session, as well as in Fantasy Theatre Factory's "Gordon Gumshoe, Fairytale Detective", "Scrooge! A Fractured Christmas Carol" and "The Adventures of The Three Mess-Keteers". He also had his professional theatre debut last year as 'Martini' in JCAT Miami's production of "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest". You can connect with Pablo on Instagram: @\_pablodepablo Or through his website: [pablodepabloactor.com](http://pablodepabloactor.com)

# ABOUT THINKING CAP THEATRE

Founded in Fort Lauderdale, FL, in 2010, Thinking Cap Theatre (TCT) is a professional, non-profit company that champions equality and theatrical experimentation and strives for excellence on and offstage. TCT is devoted to staging thought-provoking, socially-conscious, formally innovative theatre and to gender and sexual parity in programming. TCT also presents community-based programs such as documentary theatre projects, play readings, and playwriting workshops. Across all programming, TCT strives to reflect and serve our diverse society.

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hosted by Nicole Stodard PhD





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# ABOUT THINKING CAP THEATRE'S THE TAMING OF THE SHREW

## A 'SHREW' FOR MODERN TIMES AT THINKING CAP THEATRE

*A review by Aaron Krause, Theatrical Musings*



Thinking Cap Theatre (TCT) deftly brings William Shakespeare's early comedy, *The Taming of the Shrew* (written between 1590 and 1592), into the 21st century with its solid professional production. It runs through April 3 in Ft. Lauderdale. Specifically, the venue is Broward Center for the Performing Arts' intimate Abdo New River Room.

Certainly, the professional, nonprofit company's imaginative, playful, accessible, and believable mounting gives the show a satisfying ending. It is probably more palatable to most modern-day audiences than Shakespeare's sexist conclusion. In addition, TCT Artistic Director Nicole Stodard, who helmed the production and adapted the play (while keeping Shakespeare's language), gives outer frame play character Christopher Sly a stronger purpose for existing than the Bard did.

But more on that a bit later. First, some background may prove helpful for those who slept through Shakespeare (1564-1616) in high school English.

*The Taming of the Shrew* is one of Shakespeare's earliest and most popular comedies. One possible reason why is that directors often stage the relationship between Petruchio and Katherina as a lively battle of the sexes. Fortunately, that is the case with TCT's staging, although the battle looks more playful than physical. Indeed, you never worry that the actors playing these roles will, for instance, severely scratch each other or tear each other's hair out.

But before we see Kate or Petruchio, Shakespeare begins *The Taming of the Shrew* with an outer frame play. In the original one, Sly is an ignorant, drunken rustic. (cont.)



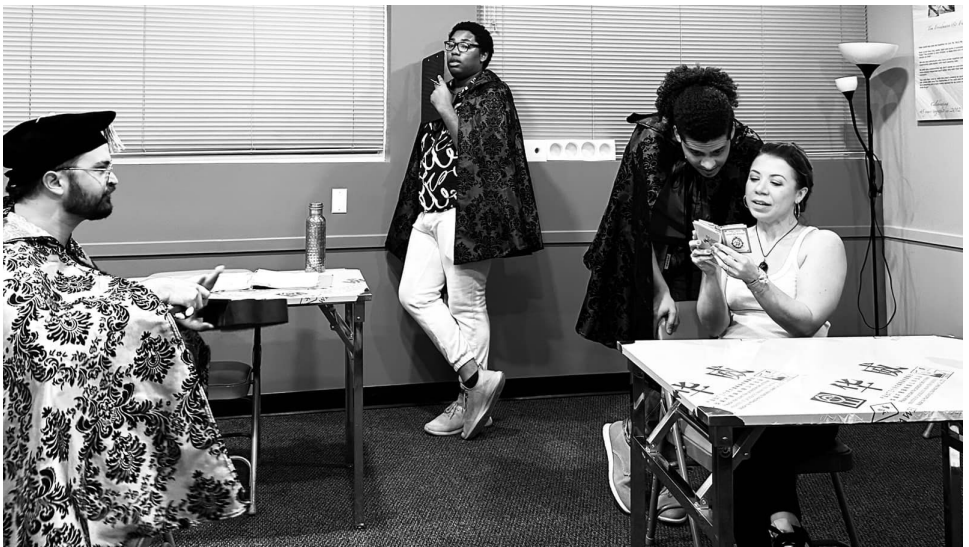
A group of aristocrats trick him into thinking he is rich. In Sly's inebriated state, he watches a play put on by a troupe of actors. The play is the one we are about to experience, *The Taming of the Shrew*.

You might wonder about the purpose for Shakespeare's outer frame play. But in TCT's production, the purpose is clearer. Instead of an ignorant rustic, in TCT's production, Sly is a company CEO. In addition to possessing a drinking problem, he may be a misogynist in need of sensitivity training. And, so, the company that he heads, Sly Enterprises, hires a troupe of actors to mount a production of *The Taming of the Shrew*. For the company's employees, the play is an exercise in Diversity, Equity & Inclusion training, so it's designed to benefit more people than CEO Sly. As part of the exercise, the company's employees portray the characters in *The Taming of the Shrew* while Sly observes.

At the start of the show, even before the outer frame play begins, the players whom Sly Enterprises hired advertise their services. Also, they explain that a button exists that employees can push in the event that a scene in *The Taming of the Shrew* makes them feel triggered or uncomfortable.

When someone pushes the button, a shift in power occurs. For example, someone pushes the button for the first time after the marriage of Kate and Petruchio. It directly follows Petruchio's famous speech during which he describes Kate as his "chattel," an object of possession. This is a last-straw moment for this production's Kate. Therefore, she presses the button. As a result, following intermission, a shift in power occurs. Specifically, the actors playing Kate and Petruchio in Act one have switched roles. This empowers Kate to walk in Petruchio's shoes, while the actor playing Petruchio is disempowered and therefore forced to play subservient Kate. But there's a problem. Namely, CEO Sly does not like this change. So, he pushes the button near the end of the play. This restores the actors portraying Kate and Petruchio to their original roles in act one.

The button also makes Katherina a stronger character by empowering her at the end. Many scholars and practitioners have criticized the play's ending. Frankly, they wished for a better ending for Katherina than the final subservient monologue she delivers. The monologue, which Kate delivers after she obeys Petruchio's command for her to instantly come to him, has presented modern-day directors with a challenge. In particular, how do they stage a play that ends with Katherina's advising other wives to, among other things, "place your hands below your husband's foot" if he should require it. (cont.)



There are theories about the intent behind the monologue. One says that Katherina is being sincere; Petruchio has, in fact, tamed her and she has become his subservient wife. Contrastingly, another theory holds that Katherina is being sarcastic; she doesn't mean a word of the monologue. In fact, she has duped Petruchio and others into thinking that he has tamed her.

Clearly, in TCT's production, Katherina doesn't mean what she says in the final monologue. Indeed, before the character (a strong Karen Stephens) delivers the speech, she huddles with a group of other women as though they are discussing strategy. Then, with her face betraying a cunning expression, she delivers the speech in an ironic tone. Following that, the character pushes the button, and by doing so, she avoids the traditional ending that Shakespeare wrote. (cont.)



Without a doubt, TCT's production is a feminist take on *Shrew*. And that is not surprising. According to its mission statement, TCT is a professional, non-profit company that "champions equality and theatrical experimentation and strives for excellence on and offstage. TCT is devoted to staging thought-provoking, socially-conscious, formally innovative theater and to gender and sexual parity in programming."

Overall, this production is solid. It invites audiences to ponder how gender and power operate in *The Taming of the Shrew* and how this compares to gender dynamics in 21st century workplaces. Also, the use of the "button" helps Katherina and Petruchio see things from each other's point of view. This humanizes them more.

There is much to like about *The Taming of the Shrew*. With its rich and witty imagery, energetic verbal exchanges, as well as puns, disguises, double entendres, and a playful, competitive aura, audience members are in for a comic treat that doesn't merely contain empty calories. The play, and this production of it, makes us think about gender and power dynamics in our own lives.

Shakespeare's keen insights into human nature, his complex characterizations, and his mastery of language make the Bard one of the world's best playwrights, if not the best. If you're new to the Bard's work, seeing a light, accessible play such as *The Taming of the Shrew* is a good starting point.





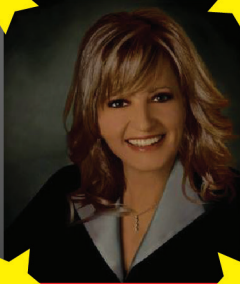
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