BIRR THEATRE & ARTS CENTRE with JASANGO THEATRE present

Ireland's Playwriting Festival

ORIGINAL PLAYS WORKSHOPS PLAY ANALYSIS & TALK-BACK

LIVE EVENTS

ABBEY THEATRE JIM CULLETON PAT KINEVANE

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ONLINE EVENTS

THURS 12 - SUN 15 AUG 2021, BIRR, CO. OFFALY

Ocripts Ireland's Playwriting Festival

COVID-19: Places limited. Booking essential for **all** events. All events will take place in line with current government guidelines. See our website for further details.

Welcome to Scripts – Ireland's Playwriting Festival. Established in

2013, Scripts continues to create unique opportunities for playwrights, aspiring and established, to have their work developed and produced. The picturesque town of Birr, Co. Offaly, a haven of Georgian elegance and boutique chic, plays host to an ensemble of playwrights, producers, actors and directors, all discussing, presenting and producing riveting new works for stage.

Our innovative playwriting festival features a host of exciting events for lovers of theatre – those who want to create, perform and watch live new theatre in beautiful surroundings. We are thrilled to welcome you to our 8th outing of Scripts and trust you will enjoy every Festival moment!

Our selected writers are **Jason Kennealy** (Waterford), **Sheila Forsey** (Wexford), **Seán Denyer** (Dublin). They will journey to Birr for 7 days of mentorship with Eugene O'Brien. All three plays will then be performed as rehearsed readings with professional actors at our headline event at Birr Theatre & Arts Centre on Sunday 15 August, 3pm. The winning play will be chosen by our very distinguished panel!

Angela, Lisa, Emma, Eugene, Ciara & Rebecca **The Scripts Team**

AT A GLANCE

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THURSDAY 12 AUGUST

8pm LIVE PERFORMANCE 5 Exhale! Playreading and mental health discussion 5

FRIDAY 13 AUGUST

8pm LIVE PERFORMANCE Heaven by Eugene O'Brien

SATURDAY 14 AUGUST

I 1am LIVE WELLNESS WORKSHOP Celebrating Lughnasa with Mari Kennedy
2pm LIVE WORKSHOP Just Between You, Me & The Lamp Post with Jesse Weaver
3pm LIVE PERFORMANCE Before written and performed by Pat Kinevane

SUNDAY 15 AUGUST

11am LIVE WORKSHOP	3
Framing the Drama David Horan	
3pm LIVE PERFORMANCE	8
Nurtured New Works – Festival Finale	

ONLINE EVENTS ONLINE PERFORMANCE

My Connection is Unstable by Lesley Conroy IRISH PREMIERE OF FLASHPOINT

A provocative, genre-busting new audio drama by Kerric Harvey, directed by the late George B. Miller and produced by Selkie Theatre.

Available to view on **www.scriptsireland.com** during the festival

LIVE WORKSHOPS

CELEBRATING LUGHNASA

Indigenous Celtic wisdom as a resource for these times with Mari Kennedy

The indigenous wisdom and mythology of this land hold potent medicine to help us navigate these intense and disorienting times. To mark the harvest festival of Lughnasa join Mari in a two-hour interactive workshop that will explore some of the rich gifts of the Celtic tradition. Focusing on the Celtic Wheel, which is a map of the creative cycle, we will learn how we can use it to make sense and reframe the crisis and so resource us to live more creatively and wisely. Further information www.marikennedy.com.

Birr Festivals Geodome / Saturday 14 August / 11am–1pm / \in 10

MARI KENNEDY is a mindfulness,

yoga and embodiment teacher, women's leadership coach, Celtic wisdom holder and Integral Facilitator. In her work she weaves ancient wisdom practices of the Celtic tradition, mindfulness, selfcompassion with contemporary developmental psychology and neuroscience.

JUST BETWEEN YOU, ME & THE LAMP POST



in association with The Abbey Theatre Building dialogue from the world around you with **Jesse Weaver**

Taking in the open air and looking for the unexpected in familiar settings, this workshop will look at writing rich and active dialogue from observing the dynamic relationships between places and objects. Dress for the weather and be ready to do a little bit of walking and writing! This three-hour workshop is facilitated by the Abbey Theatre's Jesse Weaver and is open to anyone interested in exploring how the tension between places and objects could inspire spoken dialogue between very distinct voices.

Birr Castle Demesne / Saturday 14 August / 2-5pm / Free event - open to all on a first come, first served basis.



FRAMING THE DRAMA

With David Horan

David Horan will lead a playwriting workshop encouraging participants to take full advantage of all the tools of dramatic writing. Using examples and short exercises, over three hours this workshop will look at how you reveal your story and how dramatic structure works, before honing in on dramatic action and dialogue. David is the Artistic Director of Bewley's Café Theatre in Dublin where he is leading **PERCOLATE**, a new development programme for playwrights which draws support from a panel of expert voices. He is also a freelance director and an award winning writer. See further information about David in 'Judging Panel' section.

Birr Festivals Geodome / Sunday 15 August / 11am–1pm / €15

WELLNESS



This year we received an outpouring of plays to do with mental health. Characters struggling to be heard and seen. Under pressure, and overwhelmed, we saw the stressors of this past year reflected in the submitted works. This raises the bigger question of how are we taking care of each other and ourselves amidst the ongoing time of uncertainty and fear? As we look towards making healing a priority, **the events below are a way for us to give back**. Let's think about taking care of each other, talking about the issues that really matter and brightening someone's day.

🖤 CELEBRATING LUGHNASA

Indigenous Celtic wisdom as a resource for these times with Mari Kennedy.

EXHALE Presented by Scripts.

Readings of three plays with topical themes and social issues, followed by discussion led by: Clinical Psychologist Dr. Malie Coyne.

WY CONNECTION IS UNSTABLE

by Lesley Conroy. Online performance.

ONLINE

Irish Premiere of

FLASHPOINT

A provocative, genre-busting new audio drama by Kerric Harvey, directed by the late George B. Miller and produced by Selkie Theatre.

A trio of radio news professionals find themselves at unexpected odds with each other and themselves about the best way to report the January 6, 2021 assault on the U.S. Capitol. Personal relationships unravel and the viability of democracy itself comes into question as folks who should be allies wind up fighting about how to tell "the truth" of this incomprehensibly violent event... and the role of journalism in this American meltdown.

POSTCARD POETRY PROJECT by Sorcha Ní Chróinín

Surprise a friend or loved one with a mystery postcard in the post, an uplifting random occurrence during these times of worry. We will combine excerpts from poems with beautiful postcard imagery to create a moment of joy when they come through the letterbox. We provide the postcard, poetry and even the postage! All you have to do is add the address and pop it in a postbox, or find one of our festival postboxes at one of our events and we'll post it for you. Anonymity is encouraged to create a true moment of wonder and mystery for the recipient. Happy posting!



LIVE PERFORMANCE



Readings of three plays with topical themes and social issues followed by discussion lead by Clinical Psychologist Dr Malie Coyne.

It Was All For Nothing by Grace Collender follows a young girl who has yearned for the love of everyone around her and goes through extreme measures to get it. But it all comes crashing down when the pandemic strikes. **Same Difference** by Ciara Cassoni is a play about a slowly changing relationship, from light into darkness and the strength to emerge from the dark place and begin again. Stars in Their Eyes by Shawna Casey deals with siblings coping with 2020 blues in a rural town on the west coast of Ireland while also exploring what it means to be gay in Ireland. Come hear readings of these three impactful plays and ioin us for an open discussion to talk about how these plays relate to the world around us today. How do we talk about these issues, and how can we begin to heal from our traumas? Allowing theatre to bring us into the world of others creates an opportunity for extreme empathy, and a chance to talk about the things that truly make us tick, light us up, and break us down.

Suitable for young people age 16+ and their parents and any adult with a thirst for theatre, wellness and topical issues

Birr Theatre & Arts Centre / Thursday 12 August / 8pm / €12

ONLINE

MY CONNECTION IS UNSTABLE

Lesley Conroy in association with Scripts presents

A modern-day Shirley Valentine, Sinéad finds respite in the driveway of her suburban home. In the peaceful cocoon of the family car she slips into a meditation of her current situation. By being all things to everyone, has she lost sight of who she is? Relating the carnage of kids' birthday parties and work training days, images of a time when she burned brightly through the streets of her teenage years break through and rekindle her connection to who she really is.



DR. MALIE COYNE is a Clinical Psychologist, Author, and Adjunct Psychology Lecturer at the National University of Ireland Galway who sits on the Mental Health Advisory Panel for the A Lust for Life charity. Malie released her best-selling book Love in, Love out: A compassionate approach to parenting your anxious

child with Harper Collins Ireland in July 2020. With her considerable experience of working with clients throughout the lifespan, Malie is fast becoming one of the leading voices in compassionate self-care in Ireland. Through her advocacy work, public speaking and print, radio and television contributions, Malie shines a light on mental health issues and promotes meaningful wellbeing. Malie lives in Galway with her husband and two little ladies. For more of her work, see www.drmaliecoyne.ie or follow Malie on Twitter and Instagram (@maliecoyne) or Facebook (Dr. Malie Coyne).



ALAN KING Alan King of Youth Theatre Ireland joins as a guest director and panelist for this exciting event. A professional arts worker for 30 years, Alan's career has spanned acting, producing, directing, group facilitation and project managing a variety of youth led

and professional projects. In his role as Youth Theatre Officer, he supports the sustained artistic development of youth theatres through the development of resources, training, support and advice. He leads the highly successful and innovative Young Critics, curates Playshare, a collection of plays suitable for youth theatre production and produced the National Youth Theatre from 2015–2020.

A filmed monologue offering a candid look at the challenges beneath the surface of modern living and a reminder to hold tightly to what's important.

CAST/CREATIVE TEAM CREDITS:

Written, performed and co-directed by Lesley Conroy with the support of Cork Midsummer's Festival, Jane Anne Rothwell Award and Adam & Ed Creative Ltd. Script development by Aoife Spillane-Hinks, Stewart Roche, Jed Murray and Adam O'Keeffe. Co-directed and produced by Adam O'Keeffe.

PHOTOGRAPHER PETER HOULIHAN COPYRIGHT @LESLEY CONROY

Watch anytime from August 12th–15th on www.scriptsireland.com Running time: Approx 14 mins FREE ONLINE EVENT

Directed during lockdown via Zoom, the cast features Pete Sanchez, Kate Scuffle, and Daniel Neusom. Produced in collaboration with students from the George Washington University School of Media & Public Affairs. The broadcast is followed by a post-play conversation about the double-edged roles of journalism and the media in shaping our understanding of events like January 6. Joining Dr. Kerric Harvey is special guest Arun Chaudhary, an American political operative who worked on Barack Obama's and Bernie Sanders' presidential campaigns. His book, **First Cameraman: Documenting the Obama Presidency in Real Time**, was published in 2012.

Listen anytime from August 12th–15th on www.scriptsireland.com Running time: 35mins | FREE ONLINE EVENT

LIVE PERFORMANCE



ANDREW BENNETT is a theatre. television and film actor. Based in Dublin, he is particularly associated with theatre companies Corn Exchange and Pan Pan. His work in the Abbey Theatre has included **The** Marriage of Figaro, Tartuffe, Lolita, Tarry Flynn, The House, Translations and most recently The Fall of the Second Republic. Film and television work includes Your Bad Self, Garage, The Stage and Black **47**. He has worked in Irish. French and German. His Beckett work includes What Where, A Piece of Monologue, Happy Days, Waiting For Godot, with Pan Pan, Embers, All That Fall, Cascando and Endgame.



REHEARSED READING & TALKBACK SESSION

Written by Eugene O'Brien Directed by Jim Culleton

DERBHLE CROTTY has been an actor for almost 30 years. She is an associate of both the Royal Shakespeare Company and Druid. She has appeared numerous times at the Abbey, Gate, Druid, Gaiety, Everyman and Project. Title roles include Portia Coughlan, Katie Roche, The Mai, Henry IV, Juno and Miss Julie. She has twice won Best Actress at The Irish Times Theatre Awards for roles in The Three Sisters and Druidshakespeare, and received the Ian Charleston Award for her work in Little Eyolf. Forthcoming TV and film work includes The Bright Side, Mandrake, and Hidden Assets, Work over lockdowns include the film of

To The Lighthouse, live performance of The Great Hunger, and live stream of The Approach. LIVE PERFORMANCE

Fishamble Theatre



by Pat Kinevane

From the team that brought you Forgotten, Underneath and the Olivier Award-winning Silent, Before is a new play with much music, set in Clery's of Dublin, on the very day this iconic department store shuts - for good. Pontius is inside, trying to choose a gift for his estranged daughter, whom he hasn't seen for almost 20 years. He will meet her in an hour. This father's journey is both beautiful and strange, from the isolation of his Midlands home, to the madness of O'Connell Street. Some folk are impossible to buy for... Before was commissioned by Fishamble and has been in development with the support of the Arts Council, National Theatre Studio (London), Pavilion Theatre, the RTÉ Concert Orchestra, Georganne Aldrich Heller, Robert Leroy, and The Strollers Touring Network.

Birr Theatre & Arts Centre / Saturday 14 August / 8pm / ${\in}18$

Fishamble presents a work-in-progress reading of HEAVEN, a new play by Eugene O'Brien. 20 years after the premiere of his acclaimed play, EDEN, he returns to County Offaly, this time during the weekend of a local wedding. A couple, played by Andrew Bennett and Derbhle Crotty, are struggling to keep their marriage together. Perhaps attending a wedding will help, or it might raise questions that are too difficult to answer. Jim Culleton directs the reading of this poignant, funny, beautiful, new play full of humanity and truth. The reading is the very first time the play will be heard by an audience. It will be followed by a question and answer session with the team.

Fishamble is funded by the Arts Council, Dublin City Council, and Culture Ireland.

Birr Theatre & Arts Centre / Friday 13 August / 8pm / ${\in}15$

PAT KINEVANE is an actor and writer and winner if an Olivier Award for his one-man show **Silent**. He has worked in theatre, film, TV and radio for the past 30 years and during that time he worked extensively in the Abbey Theatre, Gate Theatre and with Druid, Fishamble and Passion Machine productions. In 2006 Pat decided to begin creating his own work and embarked on his solo theatre journey. Since then he has been regularly touring Ireland, the UK, Europe, Australia and the USA with his four international shows: **Forgotten**, **Silent**, **Underneath** and **Before**.



NURTURED NEW WORKS FESTIVAL FINALE

DIRECTED BY: Jim Culleton / MUSIC BY: Morgan Cooke

After a week of mentoring, editing and directing, the selected Scripts Playwrights' plays will go from page to stage, directed by Fishamble's Jim Culleton and performed in a stage reading by some of Ireland's leading actors. Delving into this year's theme, Emergence, these plays lead us to think about the unique story we each carry, and how we move forward once we finally come up for air.

Followed by a talkback session with the announcement of the overall winner by our esteemed judging panel, Jesse Weaver, David Horan and Eugene O'Brien.

Birr Theatre & Arts Centre | Sunday 15 August | 3pm | €15 Booking recommended - Limited seats available

COVID-19: Places limited. Booking essential for all events. All events will take place in line with current government guidelines. See our website for further details.

Course

THE PRIZE

with The Abbey Theatre

Tickets to a performance at

The Abbev Theatre

Scholarship: Fishamble Playwriting

Private Consultation & Script Analysis

THE ACTORS



GINA MOXLEY



CATHERINE WALSH



FIONN FOLEY



GERALDINE PLUNKETT

THE PLAYWRIGHTS

SEAN DENYER GHOST BITCH



Dublin's, SEÁN DENYER's writing to date, has focused on exploring queer lives in Ireland both past and present. Seán has numerous awards including: winner of the Hilton Edwards Award at the Dublin Gay Theatre Festival

2015; the National GALA Award for Arts and Literature in 2017; nominated for Best New Play at the Brighton Fringe in 2019: nominated for best new play in Brighton. Manchester and Prague Fringe Festivals, and subsequently won the 2020 National GALA award. Seán's short piece. Dear Ireland Part 2 was selected for production at The Abbey Theatre in 2020. In 2008, Seán, co-founded Acting Out (LGBTQ + community theatre group based in the Outhouse in Dublin).

SHEILA FORSEY THE BLUE HILL



Wexford based SHEILA FORSEY. an Irish Times best-selling author, is new to playwriting. A deep interest in Ireland's intricate and complex history of the last century has inspired her to write historical fiction. Her fourth

novel is due for publication this year with Poolbeg Press. She is a graduate in creative writing from Maynooth University. Her play **Teddy**, had a recorded staged reading under the direction of Ben Barnes. She is the tutor in creative writing for Gorey Adult Education.

JASON KENNEALY



A playwright and screenwriter from Tramore, Co. Waterford, JASON KENNEALY's first short film. Stewsday, was screened at the Richard Harris International Film Festival, and Waterford Film Festival. His first full-length play Wild Atlantic Wake received

a staged-reading at Knockanstockan 2019. Jason won Short Story of the Year at the National Student Media Awards, 2019 and Best Short Script Denise at the 2016 Waterford Film Festival.

THE JUDGING PANEL



DAVID HORAN has directed Lisa Tierney-Keogh's play This Beautiful Village, which premiered to a sold out run in the Abbey Theatre, Dublin in 2019. His play Class, co-written and directed with Iseult Golden, won Best Theatre Script, ZeBBie

Awards from the Writers Guild of Ireland and an Edinburgh Fringe First Award. Other writing credits include Belonging to Laura, a contemporary film adaptation of Lady Windermere's Fan (Accomplice/TV3) and The Importance of Being Whatever, an adaption of Earnest (IFTA Winner 2012). David's directing credits include: These Halcyon Days (Edinburgh Fringe First Winner/DTF 2012) and Moment (Bush Theatre, London) both by Deirdre Kinahan. **Pineapple** by Philip McMahon (Calipo/DTF) and numerous directed new International writing including a selection of work at the Lir Academy.



EUGENE O'BRIEN is the award-winning writer of the play **Eden**, which went on to great acclaim including winning the Irish Times Theatre Award, the Stewart Parker Award and the Rooney Prize for Literature. Eugene also wrote **Pure Mule**, a six part

series for RTÉ and a two-part follow up **Pure Mule – The** Last Weekend. Other work includes The Nest. Sloth and Numb for RTÉ Radio Drama and an adaptation of Roddy Doyle's **Barrytown Trilogy** for BBC Radio Drama. Other theatre work includes Savoy, The Good House of Happiness and Eliza's Adventure in the Uncanny Valley both in collaboration with Pan Pan Theatre Company. Other work includes comedy film The Flag and co-writing credits on Black 47. Latest work is Mespil in the Dark, a four part web series also with Pan Pan. We here at Scripts are delighted to host the first public reading of Eugene's newest play, Heaven.



JESSE WEAVER is the Acting Dramaturg at the Abbey Theatre. He has worked in theatre in Ireland and the US as an actor. director, playwright and critic, and has taught performance, text analysis, and playwriting at University College Cork,

Trinity College and the University of Minnesota's Study Abroad programme. He received his PhD in Irish Theatre from University College Cork in 2011, where his research focus was on the role of the playwright in contemporary Irish theatre production.

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SCRIPTS & YOUTH THEATRE IRELAND COLLABORATION

Scripts is happy to announce a new youth initiative in collaboration with Youth Theatre Ireland. The project will offer three emerging young playwrights the opportunity to each work on writing a play throughout the course of a year, with the support of writing and dramaturgical professionals. The final plays will be presented as staged readings by Youth Theatre Ireland at Scripts 2022. The George B. Miller Award will be bestowed on the overall winning playwright. We are excited for this opportunity to give young people the skills and opportunities to write and produce new writing for the stage! More details to be announced soon.



GEORGE B. MILLER was a friend, colleague and mentor to Scripts. His passing leaves a palpable loss in the hearts of theatre makers on both sides of the Atlantic. To emulate and channel the ideals that characterised George's approach to new works, we are delighted to launch this award in his honour. The George B. Miller Award will offer emerging young playwrights the opportunity to have the experience that George created for countless playwrights in his lifetime; dramaturgical advice, a reading by actors, and a talkback session to explore the complexities of the themes and how they relate to the world around us. In recognition of George's ability to inspire, motivate and encourage young voices to find themselves through the process of bringing a script to life, we are partnering with Youth Theatre Ireland with this project who will work with three writers with one overall winner receiving the George B. Miller Award.



GEORGE B MILLER (1944-2021) worked in theatre, film, radio and television for almost six decades as an actor, director, playwright, designer, producer, news director, journalist and arts educator. When he died, he was the Artistic Director of Selkie Theatre (USA/Ireland) and

previously the Artistic Director of the award-winning Theatre Outlet outside of Philadelphia for 16 years.

A graduate of Rutgers and Princeton, he served on the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts (PCA), and was a Resident Artist with Lehigh University, the US National Parks Service, Birr Theatre & Arts Centre/Scripts Festival (Ireland), Mid-Atlantic Network of Youth Service Workers and the Playwrights Center of Minneapolis.

George with wife and producing partner Kate Scuffle divided their time between Ireland and the US and lived in

Connemara for several years. In Ireland, George taught, served as a Drama Facilitator and produced contemporary Irish/American works as Selkie Theatre and Selkie's WomensWorks Project, and co-created the Selkie Seisiúns play development series.

He directed many Irish premieres including Angela Ryan's **Til Kingdom Come** with Age Action Ireland, Pat Collin's **Goodwill** for the Galway Theatre Festival, Liam Heffron's **The Tinker's Blade** at An Taibhdhearc, Honor Molloy's **Crackskull Row** for Inishbofin Arts Festival, Kerric Harvey's **A Broken Moon at Midnight** at St. Nicholas Collegiate Church, and Honor Molloy & Bronagh Murphy's **Maiden Voyages** at Dublin's Liberty Hall.

With Jasango Theatre, he directed the popular touring productions of Joanna-Murray Smith's **Bombshells** and Geraldine Aron's **My Brilliant Divorce**. For the Galway Fringe Festival, he directed Angela Ryan's **For Penguin's Sake** (Jasango) and Mac Wellman's **Terminal Hip** (Selkie).



He also directed the premiere of the radio play **Meat & Blue WKD** for Scripts, the winner of a PPI Radio Drama Awards Silver Medal.

APS FROM THE PAS

George especially loved teaching and mentoring, encouraging and inspiring students and emerging artists. He was a PCA-rostered teaching artist who integrated history with visual and performing arts and often delighted students by leading the class as The Wizard of History (with Tardis), Leonardo Da Vinci, or Mark Twain. He created successful arts education & community outreach programs in the US, Italy and Ireland as well as playwriting development workshops and showcases.

Up until his last breath, George was still creating. At age 77, he was directing **FLASHPOINT** from his hospital bed. It was a special joy to him to be creating with and passing the baton to the next generation of change makers in the arts, government and journalism.

SPECIAL THANKS

Abbey Theatre; Sally O'Leary Offaly County Council Arts Officer; Brosna Press; Fishamble; The Stables; Spinners on Castle Street; Dooly's Hotel; Anne Coughlan; Mary O'Dwyer; Ger Nolan; Birr - LOETB; Shannon Bergin; Kate Scuffle (Selkie Theatre); Birr Theatre Front of House Team.

FESTIVAL TEAM

Angela Ryan Whyte, Lisa Daly, Emma Nee Haslam, Eugene O'Brien, Ciara Kelly, Rebecca Kelly



Since inception in 2013, Scripts has established collaborative links with key organisations including The Abbey Theatre, Fishamble Theatre, Listowel Writers Week, Irish Writers Centre, RTÉ Drama on One, Culture Night, #Waking The Feminists and lots more. As well as winning a PPI Radio Award for Drama with Midland 103, Scripts has created incomparable opportunities for playwrights, actors, directors and producers to continually strive for excellence in the craft of Playwriting and Drama. We look forward to continuing these relationships and exploring further friendships with like-minded lovers of new work.

COVID-19: Places limited. Booking essential for **all** events. All events will take place in line with current government guidelines. See our website for further details.



057 9122911 www.scriptsireland.com



MAKE A WEEKEND OF IT!

ONE-A-DAY €55

Thur: Exhale, 8pm Fri: Heaven, 8pm Sat: Before, 8pm Sun: Nurtured New Works, 3pm

> SCRIPTS SUNDAY €25 Framing the Drama Workshop, 11am Nurtured New Works, 3pm

SOULFUL SATURDAY €25 Celebrating Lughnasa, 11am Before, 8pm

To avail of the above discounts, the **FULL** package must be purchased at the one time.

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Birr Theatre

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