



THE ROYAL CANADIAN
COLLEGE OF ORGANISTS

**Vancouver Centre
Newsletter**



*Autumn Edition
October, 2018*



- 2 President's Message
- 3 Calgary, July 2-5 Spirit Wind Organ Festival reminiscences
- 8 Bouncy Castle Organ Extravaganza
- 10 Review of Benjamin Cornelius-Bates' Sonata No. 1
- 11 Organ Spotlight - Canadian Memorial United Church
- 13 Upcoming Concerts
- 15 In Memoriam - Memorial Concert Honouring Ellen Wang
- 16 Useful Information

President's Message

With the new year comes a new leadership team for the RCCO Vancouver Centre. We are grateful for the years contributed by Frank Ezinga and Haruyo Abrahamson, and now welcome new energy into the Centre executive.

Angelique Po and our former Regional Director Sam Balden have joined the executive, Angelique as Secretary and Sam as a Member at large. Michael Molnar continues as Centre President, Tamar Genossar as Treasurer, and Michael Dirk will serve as Vice President in addition to occupying the newly created position of Education Officer. Susan Ohannesian becomes Centre Membership Coordinator, and Rachel Alflatt and Marianne Huestis continue to serve as Members at large.

Michael Molnar

★ Calgary, July 2-5 Spirit Wind Organ Festival reminiscences

By Susan Ohannesian

After church and lunch on Canada Day, Sunday, July 1, my son drove me to the airport and I flew to Calgary for the Organ Festival which started the next day. It was a beautiful afternoon and I was fortunate to have a window seat and be able to enjoy the views across BC, over the Rockies and into Alberta.

July 2 was Welcome Day starting at Knox United Church, the festival headquarters, and I arrived in the morning to pick up my registration package, enjoy coffee and a muffin and chat with organists from across the country. At noon I went downstairs to the gym where the Kids & Keys Camp was putting together the OrgelKidsCAN kit under the direction of camp leaders Anna Judkins and Janet Weaver, project manager and chair of the OrgelKidsCAN Project Committee Rick St. Germain, and Létourneau Artistic Director Andrew Forrest. The enthusiasm of the leaders, the excitement of the children and the intricacy and beauty of the kit made it a fascinating camp to observe.

In the mid afternoon I walked with others to Central United Church (Casavant Opus 970 1922,1981) for the Student Academy Recital where we heard seven young performers play a variety of music from Sweelinck to Bédard. Angelique Po, from Vancouver and our current centre secretary, gave a well prepared and very musical performance of the Partita on *Herzlich tut mich erfreuen* by Gerhard Krapf.

Then we had another short walk to the Cathedral Church of the Redeemer (Casavant Opus 381 1909,1937,2001) to hear Vespers sung by the cathedral choir directed by Neil Cockburn. The choir sang the Magnificat from William Byrd's "Great Service", the Lord's Prayer by Rimsky-Korsakov, Antiphon by Philip Moore and *Benedicamus Domino* by William Byrd. Neil Cockburn played *Blithely Breezing Along* from *Baronian Suite* by Stephen Paulus for the prelude, and *Toccata, Fugue and Hymn on Ave Maris Stella* by Flor Peeters for the postlude. The choir was excellent and the organ playing, as usual from Neil Cockburn, was exciting. I noticed that the prelude, *Blithely Breezing Along*, fitted well with the theme of the festival, Spirit Wind.

After dinner we all went back to Knox United Church (Casavant Opus 529 1913, Opus 2336 1956,2001) for a concert by Ryan Jackson, 2008 winner of the Godfrey Hewitt Scholarship as well as numerous prestigious competitions. It was a stunning program of J. S. Bach, Healey Willan, Charles Tournemire, Calvin Hampton, Eric Robertson and, commissioned for this festival, *Mountain and Plain* by Zachary Wadsworth (b.1983). I really enjoyed hearing a mixture of old and new works for the organ.

July 3 was a whole day at Knox United Church starting, of course, with coffee and a muffin at the Festival Coffee House followed by a workshop. I had chosen *Reclaiming Hildegard*,

One Neume at a Time, presented by Janet Youngdahl, whom I remembered from the Medieval Ensemble Sequentia and who used to teach and perform at the Vancouver Early Music Festival in the 1970s and 1980s. We sat in a circle and Janet explained the highly ornate neumes: virgo, puncti, quilisma and more, demonstrated them, and invited us to sing along, reading the neumes, breathing life into them aided by members of her six voice women's choir Sweet Breath.



Knox United Church

After the workshop I attended the RCCO Annual General Meeting. There were the usual reports, election of officers, presentation of finances and budget etc., all carefully following Roberts Rules of Order. Fortunately there was also some lively discussion about OrgelKidsCAN and membership issues.

In the early afternoon there were two more short workshops, Busy Fingers Don't have to Equate to Busy Mind, presented by Margaret Miyagashima, which explored the use of meditation and relaxation techniques to help focus the mind, and Nutrition and Health for the Musician, presented by Lucie Jones, which was more about keeping our bodies and brains in shape for the physical and mental demands of performing.

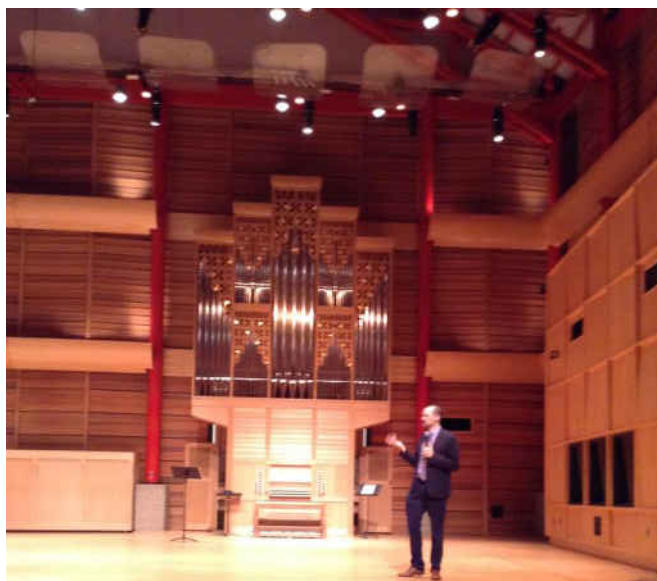
We then went to the sanctuary for a short concert by Sweet Breath, the early music ensemble directed by Janet Youngdahl. It was a delightful program rooted in medieval text and chant, which moved from works by Hildegard von Bingen through Duruflé and Poulenc to Buffy Sainte Marie and contemporary settings of Rumi.

For the late afternoon we traipsed back downstairs for another workshop and I had chosen Playing with Ease Using the Alexander Technique. presented by Tim Pyper, who used verbal cues as well as gentle hands-on guidance to help us all find greater efficiency and freedom in our playing. With all these workshops I attended about keeping the body and mind in shape, I guess I'm showing my age ;)

The fabulous evening concert featured Paul Halley, accompanied by his son Nick Halley, percussionist and keyboardist, and Chellan Hoffman, organist and music director at Knox United. Traditional works for organ by Bach, Mendelssohn, Franck, Langlais and Howells, performed by Paul Halley, were interspersed with six of his own compositions featuring Paul Halley on piano, Chellan Hoffman on organ, and Nick Halley on percussion and harpsichord. Their combined talents thrilled us all. I could show my age again and say that I remember the year 1977 when Paul Halley was music director and organist at Christ Church Cathedral in Victoria and appointed to the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York City. Does anyone else remember Night Watch, the vinyl recording of his organ improvisations for the late night meditation program for teens in the early 1980s?

After spending the whole of Tuesday at Knox United, Wednesday, July 4 was a bus day to five venues. We started at the University of Calgary, Rozsa Centre in the Eckhardt-Grammatté Hall, which houses the Ahrend Organ (Leer, Germany 2006). There Neil Cockburn gave an interesting and informative lecture/demonstration of the construction and tuning system of this North German Baroque style organ, which was followed by a recital on the instrument by Dr. Wendy Markosky. Her program, Pleasure and Treasure, Baroque and Beyond, featured the music of Scheidt, Buxtehude, Lübeck, Hayes and Bach and then jumped to Hugo Distler (1908-1942) to show off the delicious sounds on the Ahrend Organ.

Speaking of delicious, the next concert, Food for the Soul, at the Cathedral Church of the Redeemer, was presented by Valerie Hall, organist and Kerry-Anne Kutz, soprano, and featured a Canadian menu of music by Jeffrey Enns, Nicholas Fairbanks, Rachel Laurin, Robert Ursan, David McIntyre and Denis Bédard. Valerie Hall and Kerry-Anne Kutz are inveterate and engaging performers who use humour as well as their talents to draw the audience in. The Sex Lives of Vegetables with texts by Lorna Crozier and music by Jeffrey Enns and The Creek Bistro



Ahrend Organ

Specials by David McIntyre had us all ROFLOL.

The beauty of Denis Bédard's Sept Vocalises had us happily pinned to our pews.

Yet another bus took us to Grace Presbyterian Church (Casavant 1930,1965,1984,2001) for the College Convocation. Tim Pyper, the convocation organist, brilliantly performed an extended prelude of music by Gerald Bales, David Conte, Derek Holman and an interesting new work Light Through a Stained Glass Window by Garrett Krause. The processional and

recessional music were Finale Jubilante by Healey Willan and, appropriately, Cortège Académique by Ernest Macmillan.

There was another bus provided to Christ Church Elbow Park (Gabriel Kney Opus 57,1978) and I figured from the GPS on my phone that it was just a half hour walk from Grace Presbyterian. Two others, both from Calgary, agreed to walk with me and led the way. After a pleasant walk to Elbow Park I discovered an outdoor labyrinth at the church and I had time to walk it before going into the church for Evensong. The excellent choir, directed by Margaret Newman, organist and director of music sang Versicles and Responses by Paul Halley, Evening Service in G by Francis Jackson and Ubi Caritas by Imant Ramnish.

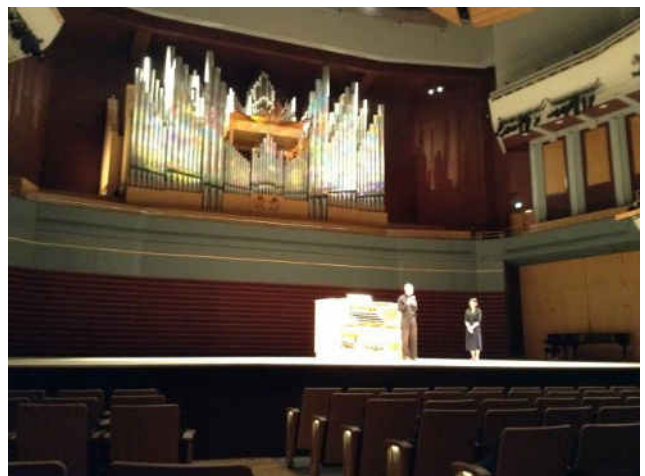


Grace Presbyterian Church

Assistant organist John Bouz, played the service music and a resounding postlude, Alleluia from Five Liturgical Inventions by Peter Togni. After Evensong we were treated to a Western BBQ outdoors and entertained by the Calgary Fiddlers, a group of young people who fiddled, sang and danced on the lawn while we lined up for our food.

A bus took us back to Knox United after the BBQ for the evening concert Missa Gaia (Earth Mass) composed in 1982 by Paul Winter, Jim Scott, Paul Halley, Oscar Castro-Neves and Kim Oler. Mel Kirby was the conductor of the Gaia Chorus, four vocal soloists, a ten piece band (including Paul Halley on piano and Chellan Hoffman on organ), the audience and taped sounds of an arctic tundra wolf and a humpbacked whale. The church was packed and everyone joined in the spirit of this multi movement work that is at times meditative and at times thrilling.

July 5, the final day of the Spirit Wind Festival was spent at Jack Singer Concert Hall with its amazing Carthy Organ (Casavant Opus 3263,1986). I participated in the workshop Drum Circle: Promoting Collaboration led by Roger Duncan of The One World Drum Company. It was a great way to start the day.



Jack Singer Concert Hall

After the workshops we all went into the hall to enjoy an eclectic and exciting organ recital called Firebird, performed by Jeremy Spurgeon.

His program included works of J S Bach, Francis Jackson, César Franck, Frank Bridge, Olivier Messiaen and, given the title of the program, the Berceuse and Finale from The Firebird by Igor Stravinsky.

There was a short break for lunch and then we went back to the hall for concert by Duo Majoya, Marnie Giesbrecht and Joachim Segger, who play a broad range of keyboard duet repertoire. Their concert was titled Under the Western Skies and they entertained us with a contemporary programmatic recital which included the world premiere of Wild Riders of Alberta by Cary Ratcliff and ended with the Final of the Duet Suite for Organ and Piano by Denis Bédard.

I skipped the tour of the National Music Centre and took the afternoon off to enjoy a little pre stampede street entertainment, relax and get ready for the Gala Dinner at Anatolia Turkish Restaurant. The food was excellent but the way it was served meant some at each table of six were finished their meal by the time others were just being served.

The restaurant was close to Jack Singer Hall so we all walked there for the Gala Concert performed by Neil Cockburn, singers Hannah Pagenkopf and Julie Crouch and the Calgary Organ Festival Ensemble. The first half of the concert was music of Handel, including the Organ Concerto Opus 7, No.1 in Bb Major. After the intermission we heard music of Couperin and Corrette and the program fittingly ended with a big organ work Fantasia and Toccata Opus 57 by C. V. Stanford.



I really enjoyed the festival and I especially appreciated the variety of music presented and the way the days were organized so there was only one day when buses were needed to get to the various venues. Sometimes organ festivals can be exhausting, and this one was well paced as well as being interesting, entertaining and at times exciting.

★ Bouncy Castle Organ Extravaganza

By Michael Park

On August 25, 2018, Holy Trinity Anglican Church was bustling with visitors to the Bouncy Castle Organ Extravaganza. Even if a bouncy castle wasn't enticing enough, people came in to see how it might be connected to a pipe organ. In the weeks leading up, three separate articles hit the pages of Vancouver's major newspapers. The city was abuzz with anticipation for a truly unique experience.

Upon arriving, guests were ushered to *Inflation Station*. Balloons, air pumps, and even an inflatable flamingo were some of the many air sources visitors used to power individual pipes. Young and old alike were delighted by the rich variety of sounds produced by the collection of wooden and metal pipes. A few metres away at *Mattress Land*, larger pipes were powered by guests bouncing (or napping) on single and double sized air mattresses.



The main attraction, of course, was the Bouncy Castle Organ.

While the bouncy castle was an irresistible draw for the youngest, many visitors chose to stay on solid ground.

Through a series of hoses and boxes connected by duct tape, excess air from the castle was routed through an organ chest with space for 12 pipes. Each pipe could be played, silenced, or even exchanged with nearly a hundred other pipes. There was an inspiring display of creativity as would-be organists experimented.

Some tried to play as many notes, and as quickly as they could. Others delighted in the simplicity of a single note on a single pipe.



The children in attendance never tired of the bouncing, the noisemaking, or the delightful balloon creations by Mr. Bubbles. Parents relished the opportunity to connect with neighbours and other families. Volunteers from Holy Trinity were at every station, helping people learn about how air powers pipes, and keeping the energy up with popcorn and cotton candy.

Naturally, the tours concluded at the heritage 1912 Casavant Pipe Organ, Op 485. Several members of the RCCO demonstrated how the instrument works. HT member Jeryl Taylor, Susan Ohannesian, former HT organist Michael Dirk, and current music director, Michael Park all performed pieces, answered questions, and gave tour groups a hands-on experience.

By all measures, the event was an incredible success. In just 4 hours, more than 300 people visited Holy Trinity, and \$1,200 was raised for the church's organ restoration fund. In the end, the Bouncy Castle Organ Extravaganza was an uplifting way to spend an otherwise dreary Saturday. More than just a reprieve from the rain, the event was able to provide a truly unique and valuable cultural experience for the community.

★ Review of Benjamin Cornelius-Bates' Sonata No. 1

Many of you will remember Ben as an active RCCO Vancouver Centre member when he lived here for a few years until 2007.

"Many wonderful pieces have been commissioned for our 2018 Convention, and I am excited about each of them! In particular, I can't wait for everyone to hear and fall in love with Benjamin Cornelius-Bates' "Sonata No. 1." We came to know of Ben's works during the Greater Kansas City AGO's 75th anniversary composition competition; the piece he created for that competition was exciting and interesting, but also not super difficult--that's a tough balance to strike.

Therefore, for our convention, we asked Ben to compose a piece specifically intended for the intermediate performer - be that a young organ major or a part-time church musician. He has

composed a four-movement work that contains toccata figures, soaring melodies, and intelligent registration suggestions that will work on nearly any instrument. The Sonata as a whole will make a wonderful recital piece, and the individual movements are sure to find their way into church organists' voluntary libraries world-wide. I have had this piece in my office since the summer of 2017, and have found it particularly torturous that it cannot be played (in public) until the premiere at the convention. You better believe I'll be playing this piece in church on July 8, 2018." --John Deahl, KC AGO convention committee.



★ Organ Spotlight - Canadian Memorial United Church

By Rachel Alflatt



This church was dedicated in 1928 as a national peace memorial to those who served and died during the first World War, and has always been a United Church. The organ was also built that year by Casavant Frères, using funds provided by Americans (including wealthy philanthropist John D. Rockefeller, Jr.), in memory of the 1500 US soldiers who had joined the Canadian Expeditionary Force and perished during the war.

The organ console was replaced, and a few ranks of pipes added, by Hill, Norman and Beard in 1960, but further repairs were soon required and in 1971 Casavant rebuilt the organ, including a new console, and changed the organ's voicing from romantic to neo-classic.

There will be an opportunity to hear this instrument in concert very soon, as Calgary organist Neil Cockburn will perform at CMUC on Friday October 19 (see "Upcoming Concerts and Events" for more details).



Casavant Freres: Opus 1269 – 1928-1971

Swell

(Enclosed)	8'
Gedackt	8'
Salizional	8'
Vox Coelestis	4'
Prinzival	4'
Nachthorn	2'
Bach Flöte	2'
Mixtur III	16'
Fagott	8'
Trompete	4'
Oboe	
Tremulant	

Choir (Enclosed)

Holtz Gedackt	8'
Gemshorn	4'
Nasat	2 $\frac{2}{3}$ '
Klein Prinzival	2'
*Terz	1 $\frac{3}{5}$ '
*Sifflöte	1'
Zimbel III	$\frac{1}{3}$ '
Clarinet	8'
Tremulant	
*Prepared for	

Couplers

Swell to Great
Choir to Great
Swell to Choir
Great to Pedal
Swell to Pedal
Choir to Pedal

Great

Quintaden	16'
Prinzival	8'
Rohr Flöte	8'
Oktav	4'
Spitz Flöte	4'
Oktav	2'
Mixtur IV	1 $\frac{1}{3}$ '
Trompete	8'
Chimes	

Pedal

Subbass	16'
Quintaden (Gt)	16'
Prinzival	16'
Oktav	8'
Gedackt	8'
Pommer	4'
Oktav	2'
Mixtur III	16'
Posaune	8'
Trompete	4'
Schalmei	

Pistons

General – 6 (toe)
Great – 5 (thumb)
Swell – 5 (thumb)
Choir – 5 (thumb)
Pedal – 5 (thumb)
Swell to Great - reversible (thumb)
Choir to Great - reversible (toe & thumb)
Great to Pedal - reversible (toe & thumb)
Swell to Pedal - reversible (toe & thumb)
Choir to Pedal - reversible (toe & thumb)
Full Organ – reversible (toe)
Set & Cancel (thumb)
Crescendo Pedal

★ Upcoming Concerts

Saturday, October 13, 7:30pm, Trinity Christian Reformed Church, Abbotsford
For people in the Fraser Valley: Aart Bijkerk, organist at the Free Reformed Church in Abbotsford, in concert. Works by Dutch, Canadian, German and French composers. No admission fee, a collection will be taken.

Friday, October 19, 7:30pm, Canadian Memorial United Church
Organist Neil Cockburn (Calgary).
90th Anniversary Celebration for CMUC and the memorial organ. Works by Handel, Bach, Böhm, Mendelssohn, Ropartz, Bolcom, Bales, Hampton, Locklair, Coates.
By donation, suggested amount \$20

Saturday, October 20, 2pm – 4pm, Carillon Music, 7050 King George Blvd, Surrey
Workshop with Edward Norman: Playing electronic/digital organs effectively, with particular focus on improving hymn playing. A special opportunity for pianists and organists in Vancouver to encounter a wide variety of electronic instruments and learn how to better understand and navigate the technology.
RCCO members and CMSI alumni, free entry. Non members, \$20.

Friday, October 26, 7:30pm, St. Andrew's Wesley United Church
RCCO Halloween Concert
An evening of spooky music by various ghosts and ghouls! And again this year, a silent movie accompanied live by Edward Norman: Laurel and Hardy's hilarious "Habeas Corpus".
Free admission, donations accepted.

Sunday, October 28, 3:00pm, St. John's Shaughnessy Anglican Church
Choral Evensong celebrating the Hallman organ's 50th anniversary
Choirmaster Ann Chen, Organist Michael Dirk, choral works by Healey Willan (1880-1968) and festal organ voluntaries.

Monday, October 29, 7pm, St. Andrew's Wesley United Church
The French Symphonic Organ: Darryl Nixon in Concert
Symphonies 1 & 2, Op. 13, by Charles-Marie Widor
Entrance by donation.

Saturday, November 3, 2:00pm, St. Mark's Evangelical Lutheran Church
Organist Edward Norman and soprano Maria Koebisch
Works by Handel, Buxtehude, Bach, Mozart, Gardonyi, Göttsche, Mushel.
By donation.

A two-part concert event, with organist Marc D'Anjou (Quebec City Cathedral Basilica):

1) Sunday, November 4, 3:00pm, Pacific Spirit United Church (formerly Ryerson)

A unique programme in which the audience will take part in choosing the pieces Marc will perform! Tickets \$15 general, \$10 students, available at the door.

2) Friday, November 9, 8:00pm, Holy Rosary Cathedral

The liturgical year in music: Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, and Pentecost. Featuring works by Buxtehude, Bach, Bédard, Guilmant, Widor, Vierne, and Duruflé.

Tickets \$20 adult, \$15 student/senior.

Monday, November 12, 7pm, St. Andrew's Wesley United Church

The French Symphonic Organ: Darryl Nixon in Concert

Symphonies 3 & 4, Op. 13, by Charles-Marie Widor

Entrance by donation.

Friday, November 30, 7:30pm, Holy Rosary Cathedral

Sacred Music for Advent

Performed by the Cathedral's own musicians: organist Denis Bédard and the Cathedral Choir, assistant organist Catherine Walsh and the Holy Rosary Women's Choir, the Contemporary Choir with director Chito Lacsina, and the Spanish Mass Choir.

Free admission, donations accepted.

★ In Memoriam - Memorial Concert Honouring Ellen Wang

By Rachel Alflatt

On August 25, 2017, Vancouver lost one of its most talented organists and accompanists, Ay Laung (Ellen) Wang. On the first anniversary of her death, nine choirs with over 200 members in all, several organists and pianists, a string quartet, and an audience of more than 350, gathered for a memorial concert at First Baptist Church in downtown Vancouver, where Ellen had played for more than 20 years.



The programme included a wide range of styles, from Mozart to contemporary music, performed by choirs Ellen had accompanied, including Choir Leoni, members of the Vancouver Bach Choir, the TWU Masterworks Chorus, and various Taiwanese choirs. Richard Elliott, principal organist at the Salt Lake City Mormon Tabernacle, flew to Vancouver for the occasion and premiered his “Toccata on Kelvingrove”, which he had started to write at Ellen’s request (they had become friends after she visited Salt Lake City and asked to try out the organ), but finished composing in her memory.

All these people had been touched by Ellen in some way, whether because she had accompanied their choir or been their teacher, their concert partner, or their friend. This memorial concert, with everything from moving and reflective music to rousing hymn singing by everyone present, was a fitting tribute to Ellen, and a reflection of her sparkling, out-going, and generous personality.

★ Useful Information

Vancouver Centre Teachers List:

Rachel ALFLATT (Queens Avenue United Church, New Westminster)

Phone number: 604 322 5995

Email: cheldar@cheldar.com

Frank EZINGA (Canadian Reformed Church, Langley)

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Vancouver Centre Executive 2018-2019

President	Michael Molnar
Vice-president	Michael Dirk
Secretary	Angelique Po
Treasurer	Tamar Genossar
Education Officer	Michael Dirk
Centre Membership Coordinator	Susan Ohannesian
Member	Marianne Huestis
Member	Sam Balden
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