

MATTHEW HILTON

DE LA ESPADA



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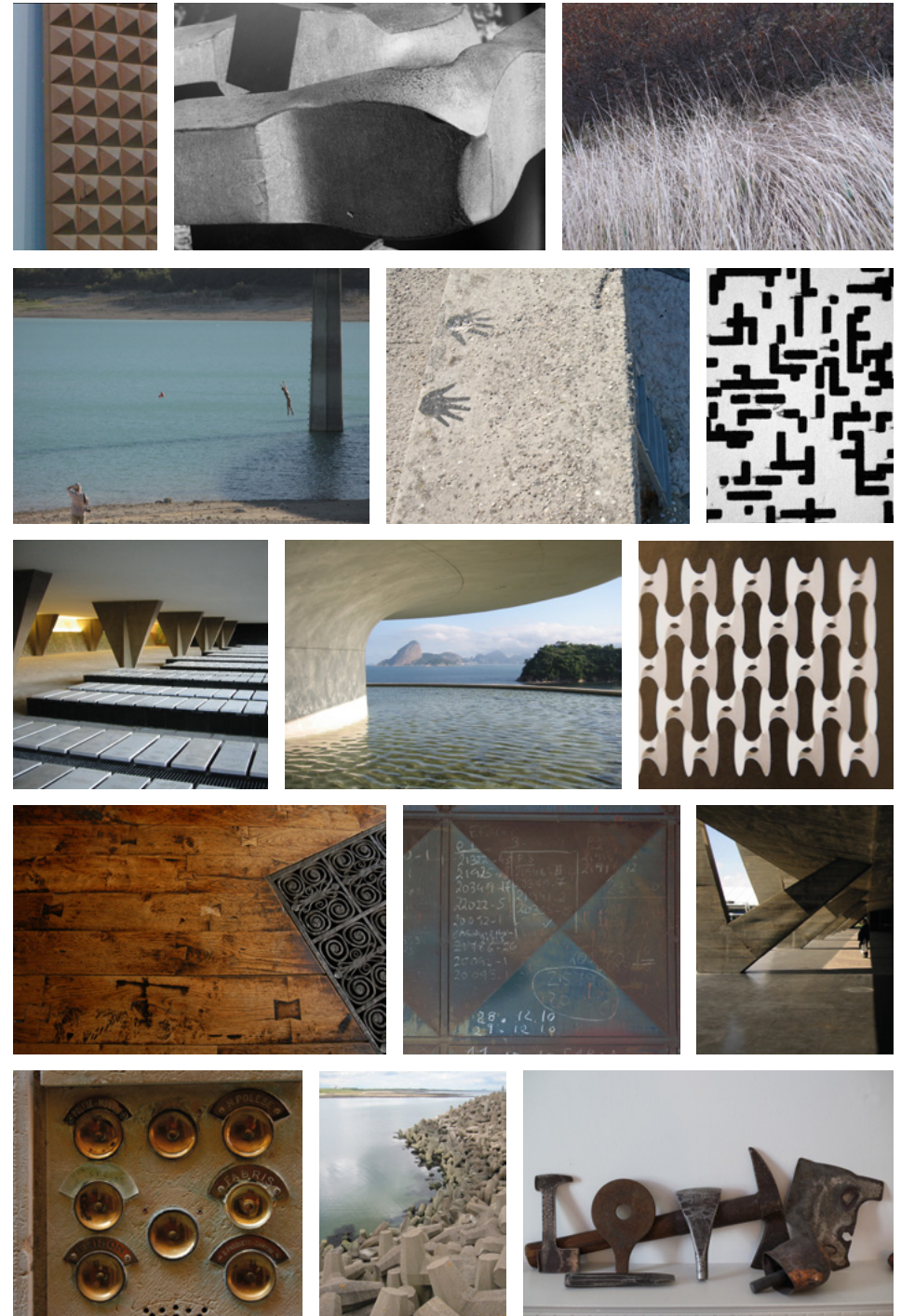
Matthew Hilton is an esteemed British designer whose eponymous product line expresses the technical knowledge and clarity of vision gained over three decades in the industry.

Utilising robust materials that improve with the mark of age, Matthew Hilton creates timelessly beautiful, exceedingly functional products that are rigorously engineered. Every view of a design is valued equally, every aspect carefully considered, allowing for a sense of appreciation over time as new details are discovered.

De La Espada works closely with Matthew Hilton, realising the studio's creative vision through elegant materials, exquisite craftsmanship and meticulous detailing. At the De La Espada factory in Portugal, expert craftspeople optimise the beauty and integrity of every product.

MOODBOARD

Raised in the naval town of Portsmouth, where massive concrete structures line the edges of the sea, Matthew Hilton has an appreciation for paradox – weight and weightlessness, anthropomorphism and abstraction. He is also attracted to the mark of age on robust materials like metal, stone and wood. These influences and concepts reveal themselves in both Hilton's inspiration photography and his product design.







"I am drawn to things that appear very simple on the surface, but which have a palpable depth. Things that are very developed, well thought through. I seek these things in my own life, so this is what I endeavour to create when I design."

Matthew Hilton

Matthew Hilton enjoys constraints and structures, rising to challenges that can almost seem insurmountable. One of his most iconic designs, the Light Extending Table, arose from a self-imposed brief to achieve the seemingly impossible with the famously challenging material solid wood: an exceedingly visually light extending table with an internal storage compartment for the extension leaves. This table was three years in development, every aspect carefully engineered and refined.

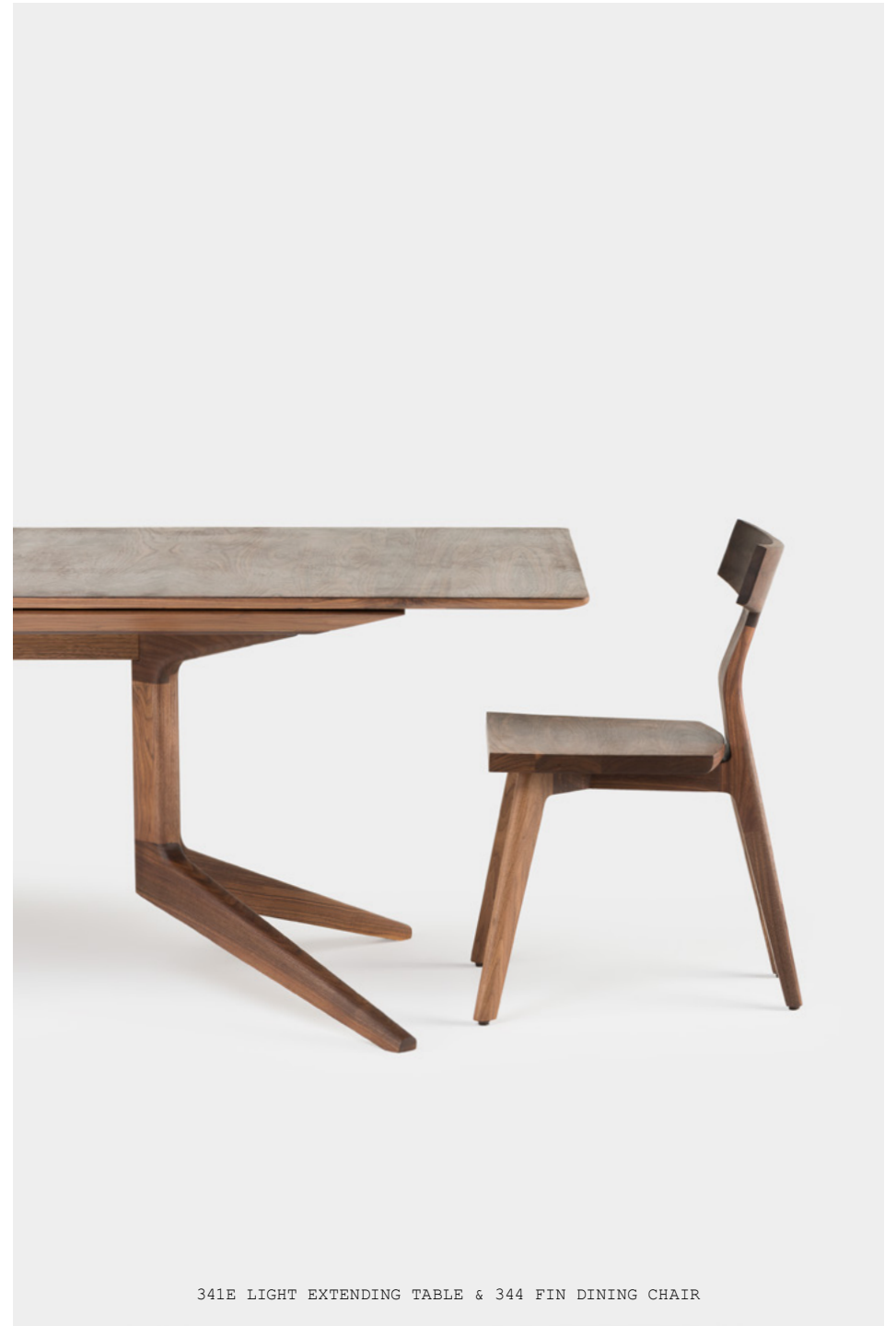


341E LIGHT EXTENDING TABLE

"For me the design process is important. I need some kind of structure to grapple with. Materials, manufacturing, trying to push the CNC machine, or the properties of timber. Producing something that is difficult to make, difficult to produce, difficult to design, brings much greater interest."

Matthew Hilton



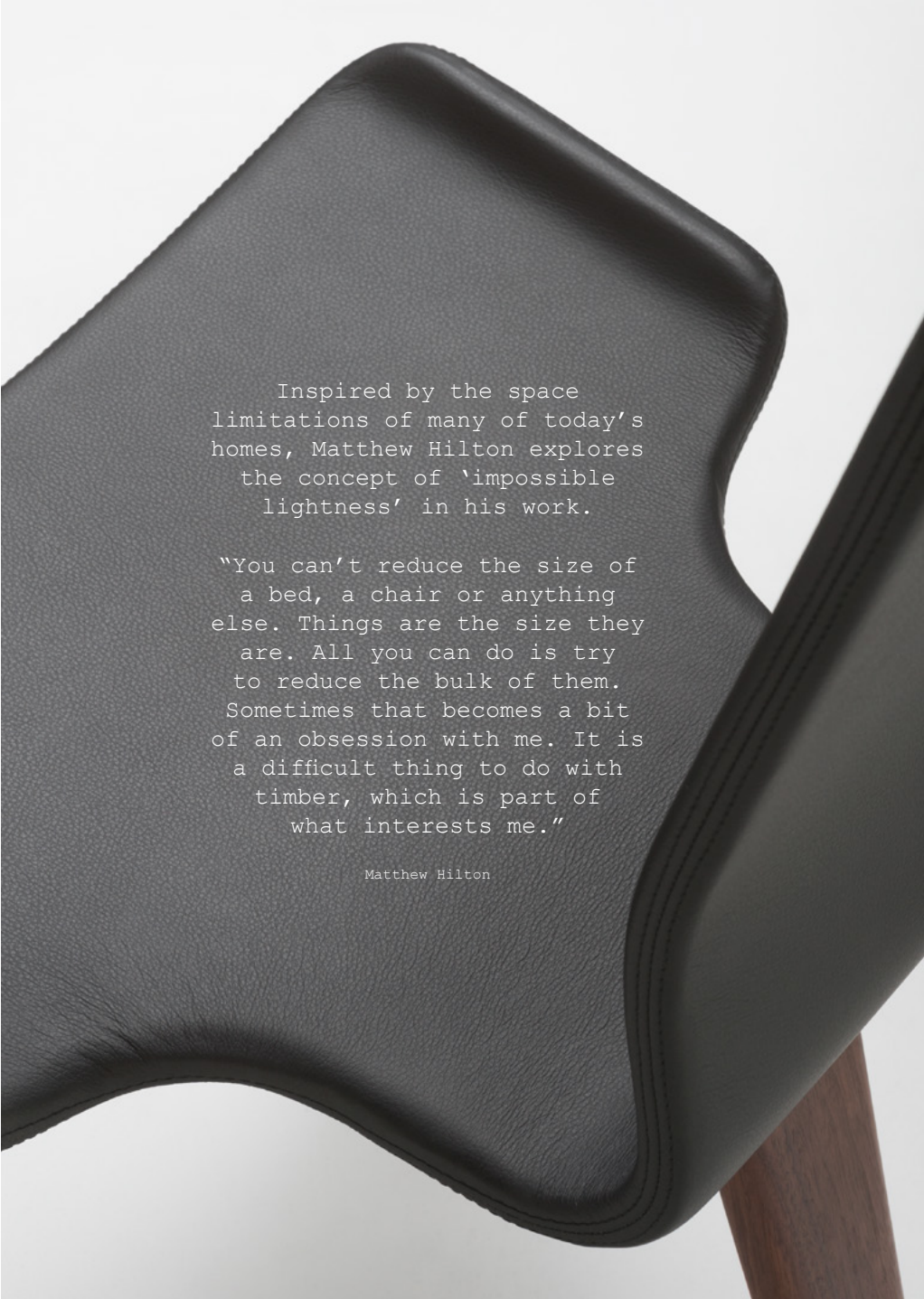


341E LIGHT EXTENDING TABLE & 344 FIN DINING CHAIR





348S UPHOLSTERED TAPAS CHAIR



Inspired by the space limitations of many of today's homes, Matthew Hilton explores the concept of 'impossible lightness' in his work.

"You can't reduce the size of a bed, a chair or anything else. Things are the size they are. All you can do is try to reduce the bulk of them. Sometimes that becomes a bit of an obsession with me. It is a difficult thing to do with timber, which is part of what interests me."

Matthew Hilton



340 LOW LOUNGE CHAIR

Hepburn Sofa is one of the products that explore the concept of impossible lightness. The sofa frame is built using narrow triangular sections, and the body is raised upon elegant solid wood legs with a simplicity of form that belies the complex woodworking. These elements add visual levity to the design, while allowing for the comfortable additions of generous seat and back cushions. Impossible lightness is also reflected in the design of Hepburn Bed and Light Table.



391 HEPBURN MODULAR SOFA CORNER UNIT



391 HEPBURN MODULAR SOFA CORNER UNIT WITH COFFEE TABLE





350FM HEPBURN FIXED SOFA 3-SEATER



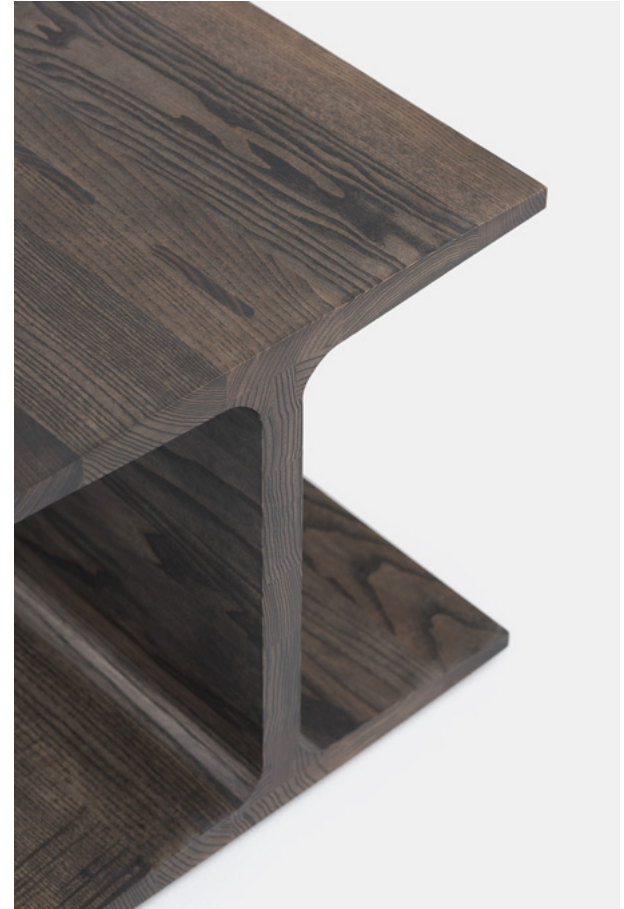
"I want objects to feel as if they
are not completely static, so they
have some kind of energy in them."

Matthew Hilton



351 HEPBURN BED WITH 351T HEPBURN SIDE TABLE





345 I-BEAM SIDE TABLE



Matthew Hilton approaches endurance in a holistic way, creating products that not only endure, but improve with age. Hardwearing materials including solid hardwood, cast iron and brass are used to ensure that the product becomes more beautiful with wear.

"Most other materials don't age as well, particularly modern materials. Wood, when it gets scratched and discoloured, I think it gets better and better."

Matthew Hilton



402R MCQUEEN BEDSIDE



400 MCQUEEN BED

"My work is not about styles, it's about
making real, functional, long-lasting,
beautiful things."

Matthew Hilton



401 MCQUEEN SOFA



365 ORSON DESK

Inspiration can come from anywhere, even music.

"My favourite music is that which I have owned for years, compositions that feel quiet, with complex rhythms and a very simple melody. The structure is complex but the final result sounds simple, while the longer the music is in your life, the more you discover."

Matthew Hilton

Different Trains was named after Steve Reich's contemporary composition of the same name. The sliding movement of the compact laminate doors on the cabinet facade have a visual rhythm that recalls the movement of sounds in the composition.



358LM DIFFERENT TRAINS CABINET WIDE - 2 TIER





359 'KIMBLE' WINDSOR CHAIR

The Windsor chairs – Kimble, Burnham, Ibstone, and Hastoe – are named after neighbouring villages of High Wycombe in Buckinghamshire, where the Windsor chair originated. The chairs, pared down and quietly modernised, use traditional Windsor chair making techniques in order to further the story, the evolution of the English Windsor chair. The contrast of the black walnut seat on this otherwise ash chair, attractively highlights the wedge tenon detail where the leg intersects with the top of the seat.








361 'IBSTONE' WINDSOR CHAIR

Hilton's interest in craft, both technological and traditional, is reflected in the detailing of his products, including the special wood joint he designed to harness the capabilities of CNC machinery. For Overton Table, the joint is added to every plank in the solid wood tabletop, creating a beautiful decorative detail, while allowing for greater table lengths, no longer bound by the height of the tree. The joinery is also used for products including Maia and Coniston Mirrors.



A photograph of a wooden shelf supported by a metal bracket. The shelf is made of light-colored wood with a visible grain. The bracket is a vertical metal piece that supports the shelf from underneath. The background is a plain, light gray color.

"If you live with something, you might pick it up and look at the bottom. So the bottom of it is equally important. Every aspect is important because it is something that is going to stay in your life."

Matthew Hilton



373 MATA



406 SAIA DINING CHAIR



385 MARY'S SIDE TABLE

INSPIRING BOOKS

"The books I have around me in my studio and at home are about the work of artists, architects and photographers who have inspired me or generally aligned with my way of seeing. The architecture of John Lautner, Luis Barragán and Geoffrey Bawa exhibits some magical quality, often either use of the indigenous building technique and styles or paradox of enormous weight in apparent weightless structure. The art and photography captures something raw, with minimal intervention or a great paring down to the essence: the sculpture of Brancusi and David Nash, Arte Povera, the drawings and paintings of Victor Pasmore and Picasso, the photography of Henri Cartier-Bresson and Harry Callahan."

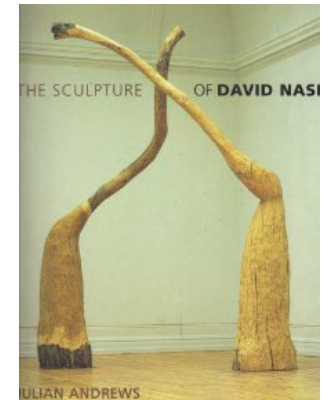
Matthew Hilton



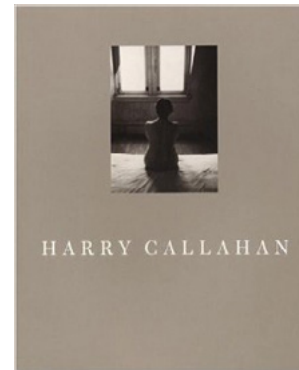
Luis Barragan:
The Architecture of Light,
Colour and Form



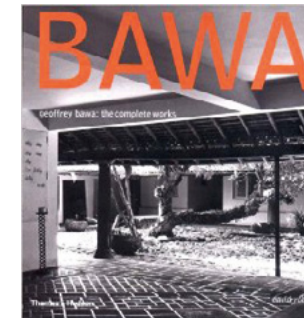
Between Earth and Heaven
The Architecture of John
Lautner



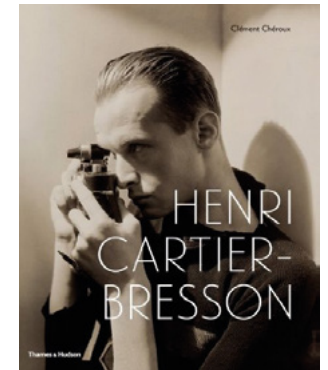
The Sculpture of
David Nash



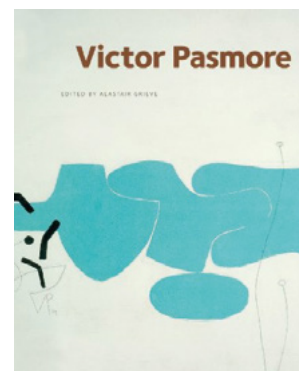
Harry Callahan



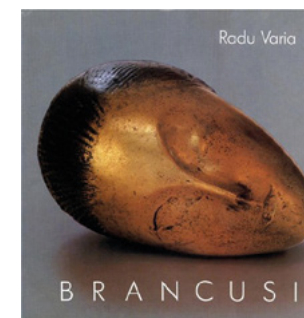
Geoffrey Bawa
The Complete Works



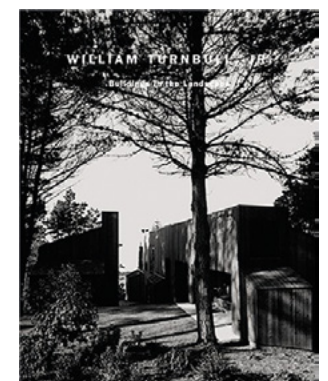
Henri Cartier-Bresson
Here and Now



Victor Pasmore



Brancusi
By Radu Varia



William Turnbull Jr.
Buildings in the Landscape

"There is something particular about De La Espada, people with expertise in handcraft, who understand wood, but now have this extra element of CNC precision. This is what allows me to make more challenging pieces out of timber."

Matthew Hilton

photography credit
Portrait courtesy of Matthew Hilton

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