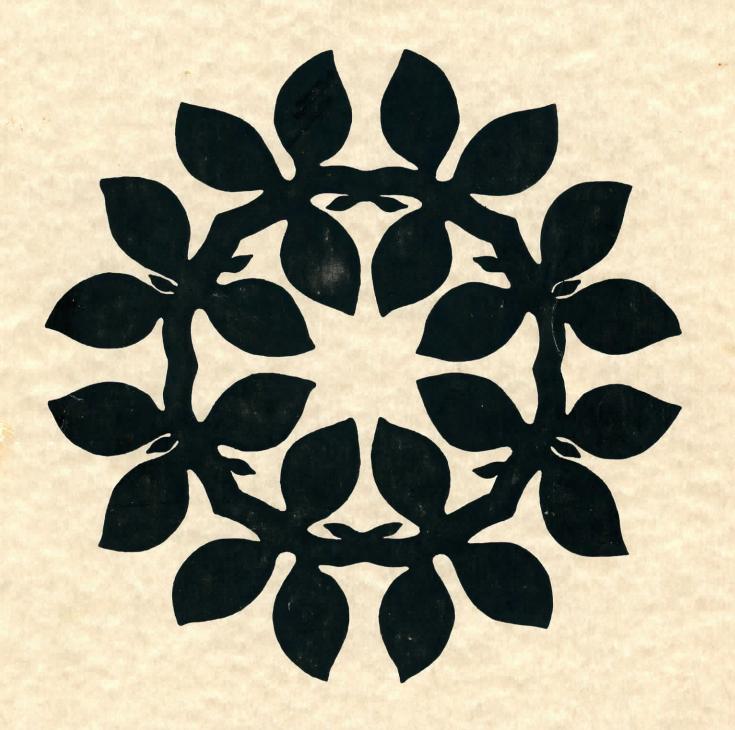
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#### AN INTERVIEW WITH: LEINA'ALA KALAMA HEINE-Her Love Affair with Hula

by Alfred Kula Abiva

As a dancer she is the consumate artist, relying not on the techiniques of mimicry to tell her stories, but on a collected energy that begins deep within her soul. "When I dance a song about love, I am in love, " says Leina'ala Kalama Heine, kumu hula, dancer extraordinaire, speaking about the magic that she weaves onstage. Her ability to create images and stir emotions within her audience comes from years of arduous training with some of the best teachers that the field has to offer.

Leina'ala recounts an immediate love affair with the hula that began when her mother took her and her sisters to the YMCA on Fort Street to be instructed by Ruby Ahakuelo. "My teacher was "the" instructor at the time. Everyone wanted to learn from her....she was a strong teacher who helped give me a firm basis for hula movements. I was only rthree years old then, but as a child I knew that I was destined to become the teacher and the dancer."

'Ala as she is affectionately called, has gone through many intructors over the years, each, as she remembers instilling their own philosophies of life and the dance. One of them, the well-known Tom Hiona, gave her sporadic instructions on the ancient art form. "Tom was a moody sort of person. He would give classes to the neighborhood kids whenever he felt like it. And when he did, we never knew what to expect. He was amazing in that he could feel things before they He was kapu (a person would happen.

dedicated to the gods and bound by the rites and regimen of the old Hawaiian religion).

Another teacher, Joseph Kahaulelio helped to clarify 'Ala's purpose in the dance. "I can recall him (Kahaulelio) saying to me "remember this and remember that always, when you are performing and dancing, you do it because you want to, not because you must do it. If is a must it simply does not become an enjoy-ment anymore." Asked if there was anytime onstage that she felt that she did not want to be there. "Never, you see, the want is mine." With this thought, Joe has helped me see where I am coming from.

Each master imparted in Leina'ala a portion of the knowledge and wisdom that has been carefully handed down over the years to only a chosen few. additional training from Leilani and Puanani Alama, and Louise Kaleiki, 'Ala has become aware of the mannerisms and protocol that may mean nothing to the untrained eye, but are vital in performing the functions of a kumu hula. "I let go of nothing that has been thought to me. There will come a time when I will remember something done that will assist me in what I will need to do. It is a matter of doing the right thing at the right time."

The early seventies took Leina'ala into the sphere of the renowned kumu hula Ma'iki Aiu Lake, who had gathered under her tutelage several already well-known artists. As in the fashion of

historical times, Ma'iki handpicked these people, subjugated them to the rigors of training with the ultimate object of creating teachers not only adept in the physicality of movement but also with a solid understanding of what they were doing. After several years of training with Ma'iki, 'Ala received her kihei (togalike garment which is a symbol of hula authority) in a private ceremony at Kaimu Beach on the Island of Hawai'i.

The stringent requirements of the training process were at times in direct conflict with her ability to deal with everyday problems. Because the hula, at many points deal with a past which we understand little about, there was often a confusion about the priorities in 'Ala's life. "When you shake up these things from the past, the gods become very jealous for you. They become posessive and want you just for themselves. take you away from the other things that I couldn't let that happen to you are. me."

These problems posed as obstacles for 'Ala and her hula brothers and sisters, but were in a way a built-in part of the process of becoming a kumu hula (dance "I had family problems, master). problems with my husband...I got sick,' she said. "Ma'iki was preparing us for the future burdens that we were to carry. You see, the young kumu hulas are all at the threshold of life. We have only tasted its begining. She was preparing us for the joys we are to receive and the dark moments that are inevitable...I' learned a lot about how to be strong from that woman.

The spirituality of the hula as 'Ala speaks of attributes itself to its own religious origin. Fraught with the severity of restrictions and rites, the hula, at one time, was reserved for a privileged few and then only as a means of communicating with the gods. Through the ages it has become a medium of an oral tradition.

Although the kapu system along

with the religion that supported its enforcement is no more, there according to 'Ala several young persons trying to adhere to the old ways. "There are two ways of the dance, the hula kapu (sacred and restricted) and the hula noa (free of restrictions), the latter of which I am of. We do not sit before a kuahu (altar) and make daily sacrifices. That belongs to the past and although I respect and understand that, I am a Christian My attitude stems from person. Christian viewpoint. This is a result of the time and era that we live in. am a product of it. I am aware that there are persons who are into the hula kapu. That is not where I am at."

In the context of a spiritual awakening, Leina'ala cites God as a primary motivating force in her life. Within the past five years she has become physically, mentally and spiritually aware of herself and her surroundings, not unlike the perspective of existence that "The talent that I her ancestors held. have is not my own. I believer that I am an instrument of God. I am only a means through which his goodness flows and branches out to touch others. And that is why teaching is so important to me. gives me the opportunity to share with the young people of Hawaii what I have come to realize."

About ten years ago, the dance phenomena helped to spur on a "cultural consciousness" in the Islands. Hawaiians, especially the young turned away from a former indifference about their heritage as more sources of information became available. It became an "in" thing to dance the hula. Hundreds flocked to the various halaus (schools) that began springing up everywhere.

Although hula remains an in-vogue topic among certain circles, the overall hysteria has subsided. "Hula is going underground. It is now experiencing a natural evolution of movement. Popularity is waning because with so many halaus around, it is no longer ans exclusive thing. When something is no

longer rare it loses that special interest."

So, for yourself, where does the hula go from here?

"I'll continue what I've been doing all along. I'll sit with my mentor, Auntie Vickie I'I Rodrigues to further my knowledge. As for my own halau--the girls that I train are not trained to be dancers. They are trained to be teachers, because one day I will not be here and it will be their turn to pass on the knowledge that came to me by way of teachers. It is a matter of wanting to do this and the ability to weather adversity make them achieve will that continuity."

In a final moment of reflection, 'Ala describes herself. There is an exuberance in her expression that makes one doubt little her ability to weave enchantment. She repeats the question posed. "Is hula my whole life?" There is a pause. Her hands clasped together, she glances up-ward, "No, just a part of it. I love hula like I love my husband and my children. It is all part of life. And it is with life that I am most in love with."

(This article was first printed in the 1980 issue of the Aloha Times.)

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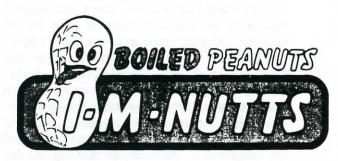


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-<u>Tahiti Fete</u> sponsored by Na Kupuna O Na Aloha Pumehana at Lanikuhonua. March 18. Crafts, Food, and Dance Competition.

<u>-The Merrie Monarch Festival</u> - Hilo, Hawai'i. Hula Competition April 20-22.

<u>-Hula Pā Kahi</u> – Solo Hula Competition at Maui Inter-Continental Hotel. April 30.

-Hawai'i Secondary Schools Hula Kahiko Competition sponosored by the Kalihi-Palama Culture & Arts Society Inc. May 13, at King Intermediate School.

-<u>21st. Annual King Kamehameha Hula & Chant</u> <u>Competition</u> at the Neal S. Blaisdell Center Arena. June 23-24.

-Moanalua Gardens Foundation presents the Annual Prince Lot Hula Festival, at Moanalua Gardens on July 15.



-Queen Lili'uokalani Keiki Hula Competition at the Neal S. Blaisdell Center Arena. Sponsored by the Kalihi-Palama Culture & Arts Society Inc. on August 3,4,and 5th.

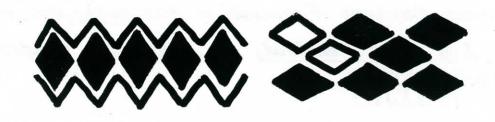
<u>-E Hula Mau,</u> Los Angeles, California. September 1, 2,3, and 4th.

-<u>11th Annual Kaua'i Mokihana Festival.</u> Na Kane Hula Competition, September 30.

-Aloha Dalire's Tahiti Fete, September 1 and 2nd. Miss Tahiti Competition on Friday, and Polynesian Dance Competition on Saturday.

-<u>15th Annual Iā 'Oe E Ka Lā Hula Festival,</u> Pleasanton, California. November 3-5.

-<u>E Ho'i Mai I Ka Piko Hula.</u> On the second weekend of November, at the Neal S. Blaisdell Center Arena.



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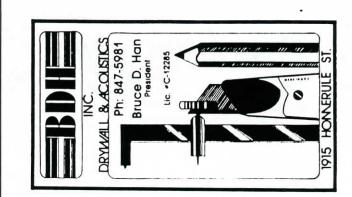
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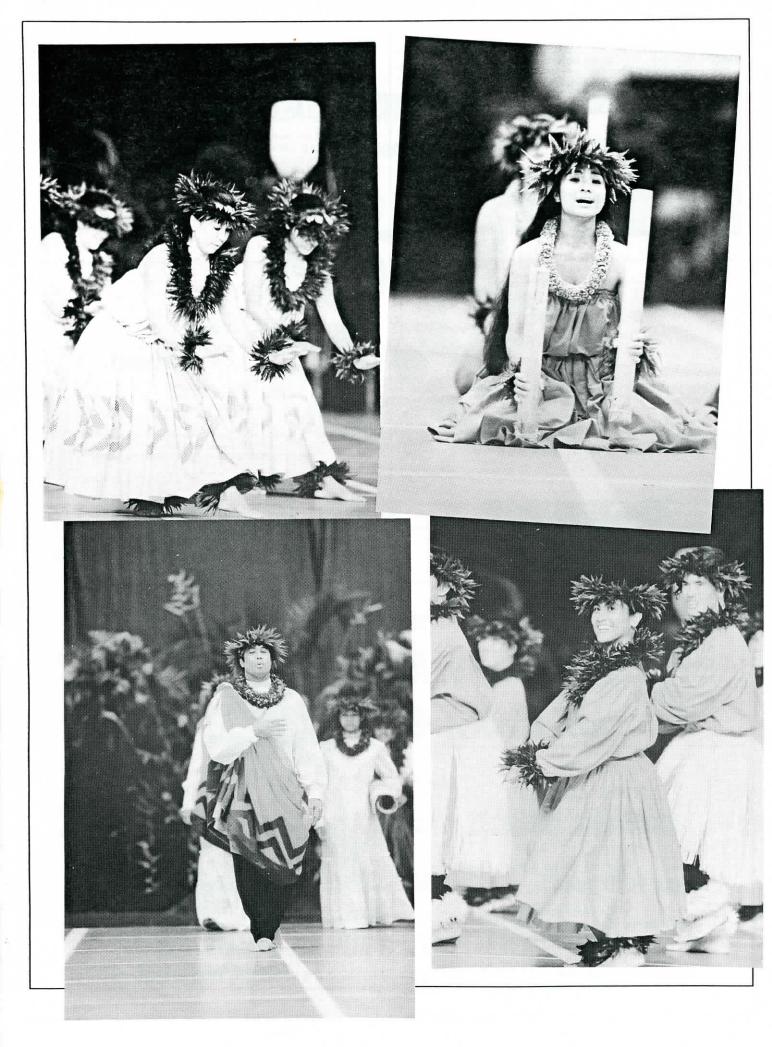


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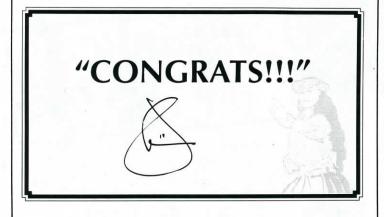
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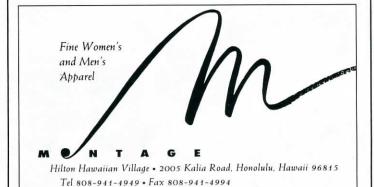
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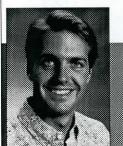


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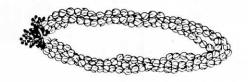
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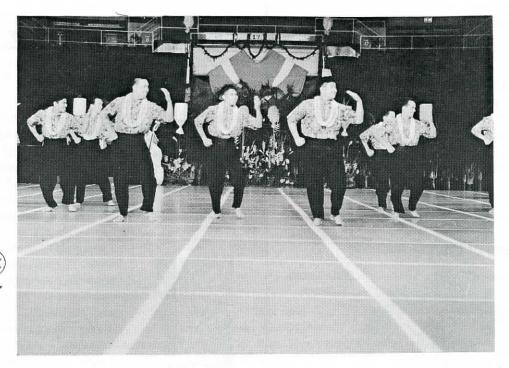
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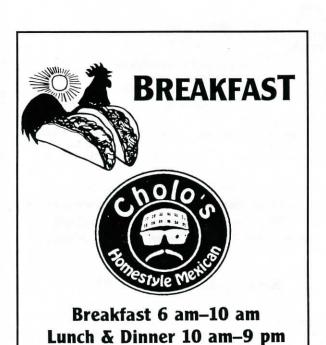
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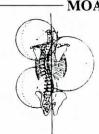
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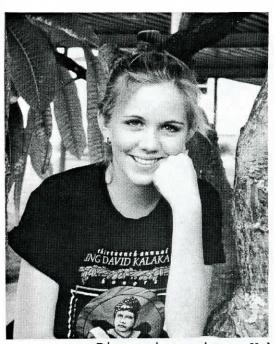
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## Some enchanted evening



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Katherine Inglis August 30, 1993 English

#### Keiki Hula Competition

Ring, ring, ring. Wake up! It all began August 6th at 9:08 in the morning. I was awakened by the ringing of the alarm clock and the commotion outside of my bedroom door. I slowly nudged myself out of bed and dragged myself into the living room. "Katherine, are you excited?", my mom asked. "About what?", I replied. She thought I was joking, but I really wasn't. Then the light struck and it dawned on me. Today was Keiki Hula!

Keiki Hula is a yearly competition which takes a lot of practice and hard work. Today was actually the day I was to perform with my Hula Sisters before hundreds of people. How could I have forgotten. As each minute passed, I started to face reality and I became more and more nervous. Butterflies swarmed in the pit of my stomach as I stared into space worrying about the evening performance.

Finally, there was only an hour left before it was time to leave for Blaisdell. My mom nearly lost her mind. There were so many little things to do in such a little bit of time. After all the confusion of ironing, packing up, and dressing we were in the car and on our way to the Neal Blaisdell arena.

"Here we are in front of the Box Office waiting for our Kumu to arrive with our backstage passes... 10 minutes, 15 minutes. When is he going to get here?", I thought, as I rapidly nibbled on my fingernails. A deep voice from behind shattered my thoughts. "Are you girls ready?" It was Kumu, at last. We followed him as we made our way to the dressing rooms, with costumes, boxes, and accessories falling out of our arms.

In the dressing room everyone, including myself was frolicking around while Kumu paced nervously back and forth. About one-half hour later it was time to get dressed and our mothers were nowhere to found, so we had two of our Hula Brothers help us dress. It wasn't too bad until it came to tying. I was tied so tight, I couldn't breathe. It was like I had been punched in the stomach fifty times.

Once we were dressed, we all sat in a circle to discuss the chant, hear some last minute advice from our Kumu, and pray. One of Kumu's helpers, David, tried to make us forget our nervousness by telling us to picture the audience naked. We burst into hysterics and tears started rolling down my cheeks. In the middle of our laughter, a man peeked in and told us we were on next. "This is it girls."

Suddenly it became quiet, as we all scampered in line behind the stage. I trembled with fear as they called our halau, "Kealakapawa". With a frozen look on my face I walked up the ramp and stood there like a vegetable, until I heard my Kumu's voice chanting "Olu ho'i kamakani ka'ili aloha". Then I remembered why I was up there. I thought about the Hawaiian Heritage and that I was dancing in memory of Queen Liliuokalani. This, with my love for Hawaii and for the Hula, made me overcome the stage fright. The frozen face thawed out into a big smile and I danced with all my heart. Goosebumbs appeared all over my skin just thinking about all the aloha. I left the stage with a feeling of exhilaration as the applause was ringing in my ears.

# YOU, II ONLY See it on...

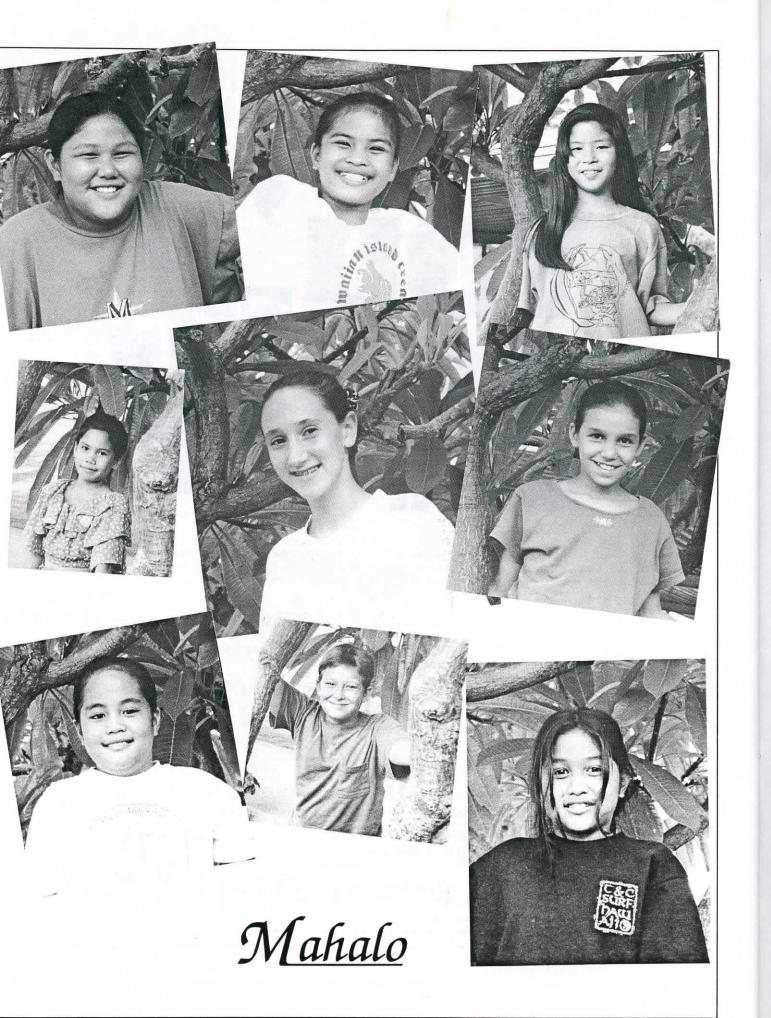


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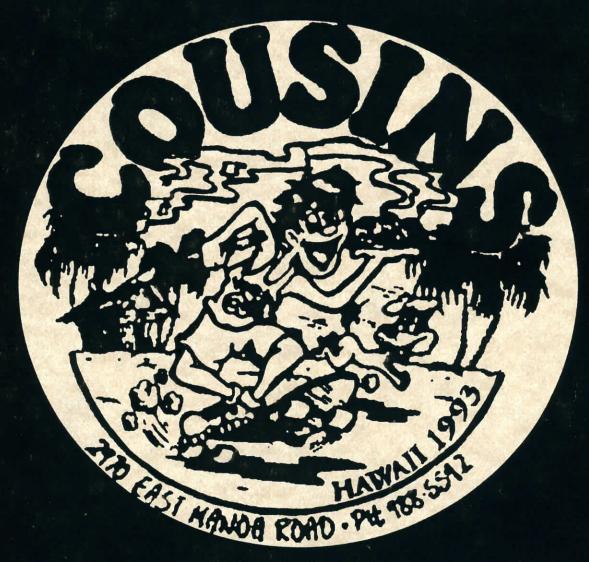
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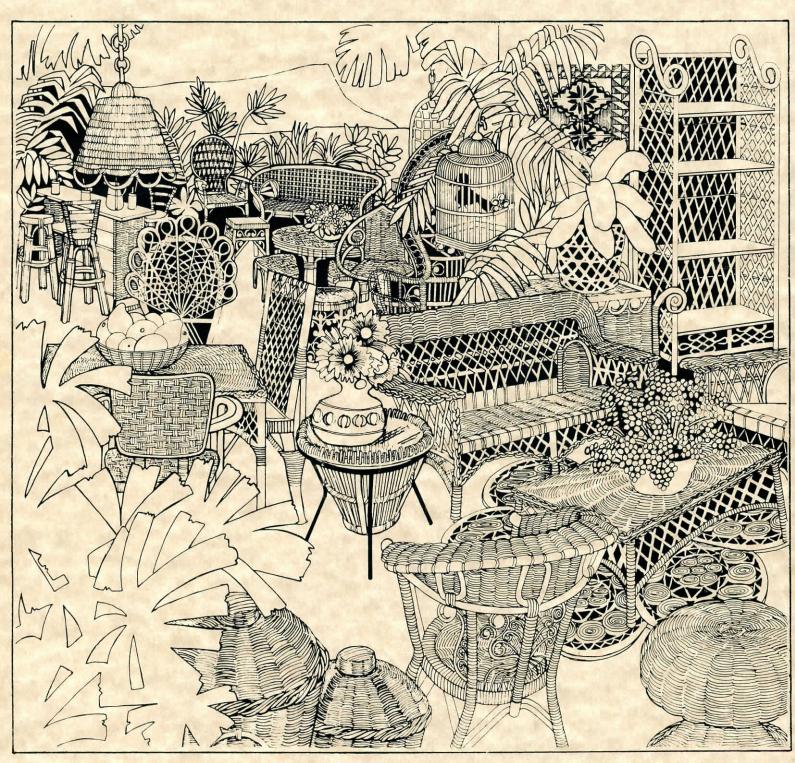


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