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Mahuru / September 2025

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From the Chair

Tēnā tātou katoa – Welcome to this edition of Must.

September saw our AGM and Hui being held in Ōtautahi / Christchurch. For those who attended in person and online, I trust you enjoyed the conversations and reconnection across our community.

Our thanks to our Executive Officer Sarah Cole and the Southern Music Therapy team for their efforts and support in running this event.



At a personal level it was pleasing to see the passing of our new Constitution at the AGM following a number of consultations and a lot of hard work particularly by Barbara Lewis, our thanks Barbara. We are now moving through the reregistration process, which we are required to complete by April 2026.

As was announced at the AGM, we are sad to announce that our EO Sarah Cole is leaving us for her next adventure. Sarah has made a great contribution to Music Therapy NZ in her almost two years with us and we wish her all the very best. Sarah's last day with us will be 22 October.

We have commenced advertising for a new Executive Officer but there will be a gap before whomever we appoint can take up the reins. We are currently working through how we cover the period, but the reality is some things will go unattended for a few weeks. We seek your understanding in this window.

We hope you enjoy this edition of MusT.

Ngā mihi nui
Stephen Guerin
Chair, MThNZ

President's Annual Report

Tēnā tātou katoa

I would like to make mention of Lynn Humphries who passed this year. With fond memories I also acknowledge the exciting MThNZ 50th and MMusTher 20th celebrations this time last year.

Congratulations to all who have continued to contribute and spread this positive energy over the past year by presenting and sharing their music therapy research and practice, and have worked within one of our portfolio groups.



Following the momentum of the conference, and our strategic planning day in November last year, regional hui presentations happened. We are grateful to the J R McKenzie Trust for funding these important collaborative conversations within regional communities.

As President of MThNZ, it continues to be an honour and privilege to advocate for and support the wonderful work our registered music therapists carry out with enthusiasm within our communities across Aotearoa. Congratulations to you all for promoting music therapy as a profession every time you have conversations about your practice with others outside of your practice. This includes the therapists who receive Project Grants Group (PGG) funding to extend their practice in some way. In particular, trialling pilot programmes in new contexts, where as a result there is the potential for a permanent position to be established. If you are planning to celebrate any of your successes with an event, please let me know as I may be able to attend and support you in some way. Such occasions provide wonderful opportunities to profile and advocate for music therapy in your wider community. A special thank you to those who took part in our Music Therapy Week to raise awareness and promote music therapy through a wide range of mainstream and social media coverage.

With the purpose of further raising the professional status, recognition and access to funding for our New Zealand Registered Music Therapists, advocacy work by many has continued through attending meetings, online conversations, podcasts, seminars, workshops and sending submissions in response to government proposals. In addition to Allied Health

Aotearoa New Zealand (AHANZ) submissions about the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance (HPCA) Act review and self-regulated professions, our responses to other government sector proposed changes have included Disability Services; Social Investment and Communities; and Amplify the Ministry of Arts and Heritage Aotearoa Creative and Cultural Strategy for 2024–2030. With a new focus on supporting improved health outcomes, rehabilitation, reducing reoffending in the justice system, developing research programmes to strengthen the evidence base for the creative and cultural sectors, and investing in maximum impact projects we need to keep abreast of what this means for our practicing music therapists. A letter was also sent to Immigration New Zealand lobbying for qualified New Zealand Registered Music Therapists to be on the Green List. With many financial, work pressures and constant change being experienced and reported across the health, education and other related sectors, it is very important that we work collectively together in these environments.

My representative role on the MMusTher Advisory Panel enables our organisation to keep abreast with developments for the students completing this programme at Victoria University NZSM (refer to separate report for details). Progress over the last year of a second music therapy course at another university is promising and I thank the group who continue to participate in an advisory capacity in meetings about the development of this programme. The Committee on University Academic Programmes (CUAP) process has recently been successfully completed and more details will be announced soon.

In closing, I again thank and congratulate our Chair Stephen Guerin for his wisdom and business acumen that enormously adds a valuable perspective to MThNZ. His capabilities are many as are the voluntary hours he continues to give to leading our Council on your behalf.

He aroha whakato, he aroha puta mai.

If kindness is sown, then kindness you shall receive.

Linda Webb MNZM

President, MThNZ

Reminders and Key Dates

- PGG funding round open – closes 1 October 2025
- December MusT deadline is 25 November 2025
- NZ Music Therapy Registration Board applications for new registrations and renewal of annual practising certificates close on 1 March 2026
- MThNZ membership annual renewals are due by 31 March 2026
- MThNZ conference Auckland, September 2026 – final dates to be confirmed

Council News

Strategic Planning update from Stephen Guerin Chair MThNZ

Our recent hui in Ōtautahi / Christchurch included a session on MThNZ's updated strategic plan, following a workshop in November 2024 and a series of regional and online forums earlier this year funded with the support of the J R McKenzie Trust. A key area of discussion is if there should be a separate organisation to run the professional services required by Music Therapists, versus the charitable functions which must be retained due to significant tax

implications. MThNZ as it stands today is a registered charity and is limited by law as to the professional services it provides.

Notwithstanding that legal challenge, there are pros and cons with either option members choose to go. This was the key feature of this respectful discussion of both sides of this debate. No firm decision was made and Council was tasked with preparing a 'white paper', setting out the issues for all members, to assist further understanding and dialogue.



Image shows a group of participants at Music Therapy New Zealand's AGM and Annual Hui 2025, wearing brightly coloured clothes smiling and some are waving.

MThNZ honoured on Te Omanga Hospice Recognition Wall

Music Therapy New Zealand was honoured recently at Te Omanga Hospice at a celebration for their Recognition Wall.

The McKenzie Music Therapy Hospice Fund supports the provision of music therapy at Te Omanga. Read on for an article by Music Therapist Keryn Squires, in this edition of MusT.



From left: Rachel Nankivell from Te Omanga Hospice and Rachel Austin, MThNZ Council beside Te Omanga's Recognition Wall.

Certificates of Appreciation presented at AGM 2025

Jennifer Glover
Nominated by Neil Jourdan
Seconded by Barbara Lewis

Jen has been a vital member of the music therapy community in Aotearoa, New Zealand for many years. In her role as the Clinical Director of Raukauri Music Therapy Centre she supported the use of their facilities for conferences and hui's. She has served on the Registration board since 2018 and has been the chair of the board since June 2023. She has been involved on the MThNZ Council for a number of working groups and projects, such as the

MThNZ Membership Working Group and more recently on the HPCA Act review group.

Rani Allan

Nominated by Alison Talmage

Seconded by Associate Professor Sarah Hoskyns

Rani is an experienced music therapist who has developed a successful business, Music for Life, that provides an excellent service in the Wellington area and employs several music therapists. Her work has recently been celebrated by Hutt City Council's recognition of the Pita-One Harmony Singers for people living with dementia. Rani actively advocates for music therapy through her role as Music Therapy New Zealand's representative for AHANZ (Allied Health Aotearoa New Zealand). She has also supported the wider community through a series of workshops from a music therapy lens for Orff New Zealand Aotearoa (ONZA) and Music Education New Zealand Aotearoa (MENZA). We enthusiastically commend Rani for a MThNZ Certificate of Appreciation.

Dr Carolyn Ayson Shaw

Nominated by Alison Talmage

Seconded by Emily Langlois Hunt

Carolyn is an experienced music therapist, supervisor, researcher, lecturer, and author. She has influenced thinking and discourse in and beyond Aotearoa through inspiring conference keynotes (AMTA, Melbourne, 2022; WCMT, Vancouver, 2023; MThNZ, Wellington, 2024), sole- and co-authored international journal articles (AJMT, 2022; Music Therapy Perspectives, 2022; Voices, 2022, 2025), and book chapters (in Only Connects, 2017; others in press). In her work, presentations, and publications Carolyn models and advocates for collaborative and inclusive post-ableist practices and ways of being. As a NZSM lecturer, Carolyn contributes directly to future of the profession and to music therapists' research skills. As a member of Music Therapy New Zealand, Carolyn is a past member of Council and a member of the Journal Advisory Group. We warmly commend Carolyn for a Music Therapy New Zealand Certificate of Appreciation.

Rachel Austin

Nominated by Linda Webb MNZM

Seconded by Barbara Lewis

Rachel Austin has made significant contributions to Music Therapy New Zealand since graduating with a Master of Music Therapy from Victoria University of Wellington in 2020 and in the same year being elected to Council. In 2021 she became chair of the Project Grants Group (PGG), and in 2022 became part of the Secretariat. In all her roles she brings thoughtful and well considered views and opinions and contributes enthusiastically and with good knowledge to all discussions. Her participation in the governance of MThNZ has been exemplary.

Taking on the role of chair of PGG came at a time of several resignations and she took on this role and recruited new members to PGG. She has led this group ably and provided new documentation, sought clarification from Council on funding amounts available and made this more consistent with agreed twice yearly funding allocations. Her role on Council includes active contributions to various working groups and for some years she was the student and new graduate liaison, and has recently led a group reviewing the 2024 survey of NZ RMThs, as well as an urgent working group to respond to the HPCA Act review questionnaire. She is currently working on a professional resource document to support members with legal, contractual, accounting and other requirements. She is a member of the te Tiriti o Waitangi Action group and in her Council role introduced and led waiata at Council meetings. Outside of

her governance roles Rachel is a regular contributor to conferences and hui and is an active member of the Wellington Regional Group.

Wairarapa Singing Group

Pip Algie

The music world recently farewelled ‘The Prince of Darkness’ Ozzy Osbourne from Black Sabbath, who passed away in July at age 76. In his later years, Ozzy lived with Parkinson’s disease, a progressive neurological condition that affects movement, coordination and the voice. Despite his diagnosis, he continued to perform, a reminder of the role music can play in preserving identity, connection with others, and dignity.

Since moving to the Wairarapa in 2018, I’ve led a weekly singing group for people living with Parkinson’s and other neurological conditions. These sessions provide a welcoming, therapeutic space where music supports wellbeing in purposeful ways. Our sessions are informed by ‘LSVT Loud’, which is a clinically researched voice therapy approach. Working in collaboration with a speech and language therapist at Wairarapa Hospital, key strategies are implemented to strengthen the voice, articulation and breathing. Thanks to the support of the St John’s Wairarapa Health Shuttle, our group remains accessible to those who don’t drive, helping reduce barriers and health inequities in our community.

Parkinson’s Wairarapa recognises the high value of having a music therapist facilitate this group. In planning and delivery, I remain mindful of cultural inclusiveness, incorporating waiata and drawing on bicultural practices. My role involves leading and observing on multiple levels, such as supporting musical engagement while attuning to the physical, emotional, and cultural needs of participants.



Image shows a painting by artist Douglas, a member of Wairarapa Singing Group, featuring a deep blue background, chairs and musical instruments

Pacing songs thoughtfully is key, as is selecting song keys that accommodate vocal changes, such as the lower pitch that can accompany Parkinson’s. Observation presents its own challenges; reading facial expressions is often more difficult due to symptoms like the “Parkinson’s mask.” Despite this, moments of connection emerge in other ways – through movement, eye contact, and musical responsiveness.

During the planning stages of this article, I reached out to one of our group members Douglas, to see if he’d be interested in creating a piece of artwork reflecting his experience of the singing group.

Douglas is not only a regular participant in our sessions, but also a visual artist who attends King Street Artworks – a local creative space in Masterton dedicated to supporting community mental health and wellbeing through art. His contribution adds a participant voice to this story, capturing visually what our group means to him.

Pip Algie, NZ RMTh

LOUD & PROUD:

Developing an inclusive band mentorship programme in Te Matau-a-Māui (Hawkes Bay)

Sinead Hegarty

Kia ora koutou e hoa mā

I want to share with you an inclusive community band mentorship programme called 'LOUD & PROUD' which was established in Te Matau-a-Māui (Hawkes Bay) in June 2024, thanks to Creative New Zealand's 'Creative Impact Fund'. LOUD & PROUD was created to enable the musical aspirations of the Disability community in Hawkes Bay. This programme is designed and run by a collaborative team made up of Adaptive Music Specialist; Campbell Burns, Local community musician and dancer; Nicolas Lopez, local rock musician; Richard Gannon, local music venue owners; JR and Lucy Rochester and myself local Music Therapist; Sinead Hegarty.

Every Tuesday, during term time, we host morning, afternoon and evening workshops in which around 45+ musicians attend band practice at the local music venue Paisley Stage. The group size ranges from 12-20 musicians per session. We use a strengths-based approach to incorporate the combined skills of what musicians enjoy about music (including the facilitators) to provide a range of options for participation. From working together performing a musician's favourite song, to being a supportive audience member and moshpit head banger.



Musicians who attend the afternoon LOUD & PROUD session gathering onstage for a group photo after band practice

Part of our LOUD & PROUD kaupapa is around celebrating and creating opportunities to perform throughout the year, we celebrate events like 'Aotearoa Music Month', 'Music Therapy Week', 'New Zealand Sign Language Week' and 'Māori Language Week' as well as putting on community performances for friends and whānau. These performances are well attended and often unlock new levels of pride and creative self-expression for musicians. Some events/workshops we have performed at and held have been:

- Our Local Fringe Festival: 'Fringe in the Stings'
- Community concert for 'International Day for Persons with Disabilities'
- LOUD & PROUD End of year concert at Paisley Stage
- LOUD & PROUD One year anniversary concert.
- LOUD & PROUD workshop supporting students from a specialist school to participate in our local Children's festival.
- There is so much to share but we will leave you with a quote from whānau of a musician who attends:

"Thank you Loud & Proud for giving [our son] a chance to sing on the mic, strum away on the ukulele, learn to tap away on the drums, share laughter and fun with friends (his only friends), a place to belong".

LOUD & PROUD is social justice in action, making space for Disabled musicians to be seen and heard in everyday places. Musical identities are developed and witnessed in the context of a community in which everyone belongs and is celebrated and affirmed for who they are. Everyone, no matter their role, is referred to and viewed as a musician when they attend LOUD & PROUD.

Mauri ora,
Sinead Hegarty NZ RMTh
LOUD & PROUD crew

Collaboration in the CeleBRation Choir

The [CeleBRation Choir](#) has been excited by the interdisciplinary opportunities offered by hosting both a music therapy student, Antonio Karam from the NZ School of Music, and a dance-movement therapy student, Naomi Gonzalez from the University of Auckland. The photo shows Antonio and Naomi co-leading a physical warm-up with the choir. Singing is an embodied process, involving body, breath and voice, so choir sessions begin with a welcome song followed by physical, oromotor, respiratory and vocal warm-ups, before singing and the ever important afternoon tea! The students have been well received by choir members and have established positive relationships with participants, the volunteer team and ourselves. As music therapists, we value the opportunity to support student learning and to explore new opportunities and ideas.



Naomi and Antonio in action, leading the CeleBRation Choir physical warm-up

We invited Antonio and Naomi to reflect on their experiences:

"In the Celebration Choir, our collaboration between music therapy and dance-movement therapy has been an exciting opportunity to share skills as student learners (both from Latin America) and to work under supervision within an established neuro-rehabilitation community. What has moved

me as a musician and music therapy student has been the collaboration between Naomi's movement guidance and the rhythms I can create on the drum. This interaction seems to open a space for authentic, non-verbal expression that can potentially arise from an innate relationship between the body and music."

(Antonio Karam, Master of Music Therapy Student, NZ School of Music | Te Kōkī, Te Herenga Waka | Victoria University of Wellington)

"Working alongside therapists from other disciplines has deeply enriched my journey as a dance-movement therapist. In my collaboration with a music therapy student, I have discovered new possibilities for connecting with clients. The presence of live music evokes sensations in the body that might not arise otherwise, and movement becomes a way to express what we feel when we hear the music. In turn, the movement shapes the music created by the music therapist, fostering a dynamic and unique exchange of experiences."

(Naomi Gonzalez, Master of Dance-Movement Therapy Student, Faculty of Arts, Waipapa Taumata Rau | The University of Auckland)

Many thanks to Associate Professor Sarah Hoskyns (NZSM), Jung-Hsu Wan (University of Auckland Dance Studies), and Professor Suzanne Purdy (University of Auckland; CeleBRation Choir Principal Investigator) for supporting these placements with the CeleBRation Choir.

Alison Talmage NZ RMTh and Jenny Gordon NZ RMTh

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Te Omanga Hospice

Supporting Rangatahi and Expanding Therapeutic Resources at Te Omanga Hospice

With the support of the McKenzie Music Therapy Hospice Fund, our Music Therapist, Keryn Squires, was able to offer two new initiatives aimed at enhancing patient and whānau wellbeing across our palliative care services.

Supporting Rangatahi Through Music Technology

With complementary funding from the Winton & Margaret Bear Trust, Keryn introduced digital tools including iPads, video-making equipment, and GarageBand into her sessions with rangatahi. These tools have opened up new opportunities for creative expression and legacy-making by allowing rangatahi to complete projects within sessions, rather than relying on tools at home and the support of whānau to do so afterwards. This has made the process more immediate, empowering, and emotionally safe, while also reflecting the communication styles and interests of young people. This strand of work continues to evolve, offering space for rangatahi to navigate their emotional journeys and create tangible memories for themselves and their whānau through music, video, photography, and sound.

Creating a Nature-Based Resource Kete

The second initiative focused on enhancing therapeutic experiences for patients who find peace and meaning in the natural world, particularly those no longer able to access outdoor spaces. In collaboration with our Spiritual Care Coordinator, Keryn developed a kete of sensory and sound-based resources, including CDs of native bird calls, ocean and stream sounds, chimes, rain sticks, and curated playlists.



A selection of nature books was also included, offering visual and poetic material to complement the soundscapes. These resources have been warmly received by patients and whānau in the Inpatient Unit and community.

Looking Ahead

We plan to expand this work in the coming year, including development of a 'nature map' of the hospice garden that highlights sensory features such as bird calls, butterfly-friendly plants, and rongoā plantings. We also hope to deepen our youth engagement work and further integrate music therapy into our bereavement and spiritual care pathways. We are grateful to Music Therapy New Zealand for enabling this growth. Their support helped us not only sustain core services but also explore new ways music therapy can respond to the emotional and spiritual needs of diverse patients and their whānau in hospice care.

Te Omanga Hospice

Student focus: Rachel France

Reflecting on placement experiences at Mahinawa Specialist School

Rachel France is in the last quarter of music therapy training at Te Herenga Waka, Victoria University of Wellington, where she is evolving her career as a performing musician and primary school teacher of music/singing and Te Reo Māori, to include music therapy practice. Rachel is really enjoying her final eight-month long placement at specialist school Mahinawa with experienced registered music therapists, Supervisor Megan Glass and Clinical Liaison Neil Jourdan.

Mahinawa Specialist School in Porirua has a commitment to providing a safe learning experience for children, and 'to provide opportunities for every child to grow, to be their best and to learn within a curriculum tailored to their needs'. Mahinawa school (previously Kapi Mana School) has employed music therapists since Megan joined the team in early 2006, and includes a therapist team alongside teaching staff.

Rachel has been especially interested to reflect on her journey and evolution from educator and teacher to music therapist, and she has relished learning with an experienced and creative therapy team.

Rachel says: "It has been an honour to collaborate with two very experienced music therapists on placement this year, in a sector where creative practitioners can often operate in isolation and work in multiple settings.



From left: Megan Glass RMTh and Rachel France (MTh Master's student on placement) collaborate during waiata group, singing and sharing actions with some combined satellite classes from Mahinawa

I think there is great value in dual training as a teacher and music therapist with the intention of supporting and uplifting the mana of our students through music. I am particularly learning from my mentors Megan and Neil about how to be a music therapist in an educational space, how to nurture the foundational skills of our students in a receptive and playful way, and to adapt and be fluid in our roles.”

Sarah Hoskyns, Ahonuku | Associate Professor
New Zealand School of Music | Te Kōkī
Victoria University of Wellington Te Herenga Waka

Congratulations to Music Therapist Rani Allan and the Pito-One Harmony Singers

**honoured at the Wellington Airport Regional Awards in the
Community Wellbeing category**



LOWER HUTT, NEW ZEALAND – August 7: HCC Civic Honours and WGTN Airport Awards August 7, 2025 in Lower Hutt, New Zealand. (Photo by Mark Tantrum/ marktantrum.com)

Nelson / Tasman update

Over the past 6 months, Emma Matthews has been preparing for a new Music Therapy venture in the Nelson/Tasman region. After several years running a successful consulting business and working in a specialist school setting, Emma has partnered with the Nelson Centre of Musical Arts (NCMA) to develop and open a pediatric music therapy clinic in 2026.



It has been a transformative year, with Emma obtaining a sabbatical from her salaried work to open the clinic, and through funding applications Emma has been fortunate to secure funding from the Lindgren Fund, and to meet with Peta Wellstead from Ronnie's Fund in July.

As those fellow therapists that have developed their own private business know, there is a LOT to do, but Emma is finding the process exciting and is looking forward to documenting the progress as she develops her business.

The Nest plans to open in mid-February 2026, with the space being refitted as a safe and engaging therapeutic space. In response to public voice, there will also be an outreach option available.

Alongside NCMA, Emma will be running the nest under the moniker Emma Makes Music, which compliments her therapeutic songwriting projects, and private work she undertakes across Te Taihū and online via streaming platforms. The Nest will be a clinical space for Tamariki to visit with their whānau. Details of Emma's work and The Nest can currently be found on www.emmamakesmusic.nz/ Emma is looking forward to continuing to build connections within the supportive and Nelson health, music and education community.

Music Therapy Research and Evidence-Based Practice Portfolio

The MThNZ Research Portfolio has been relaunched and renamed to encompass all forms of evidence supporting advocacy for music therapy.

The aims of this portfolio are:

To champion evidence-based music therapy practice

by valuing all forms of research and practice-based evidence for the efficacy of music therapy practice

To increase awareness of and access to research and publications

by highlighting local and international research in music therapy and related disciplines

To promote reflexive practice and practice-led research

by sharing and disseminating diverse approaches to practice and research

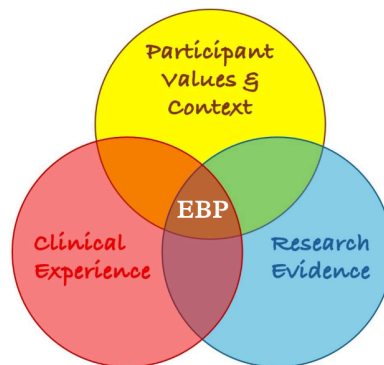
To foster networking and peer support

by providing information for music therapists, students, researchers, and service providers

Call for expressions of interest:

Please get in touch with [Alison Talmage](#) if you would like to be part of this special interest group, or if you have any other suggestions.

Alison Talmage
alison@musictherapy.org.nz



Global harmonies in Music Therapy



Earlier this year, RMTh May Clulee 吳美珠 visited Singapore and in the spirit of international collegiality, brought a copy of our book, *A History of Music Therapy New Zealand (1974–2023): Passionate People* (see below) as a gift from MThNZ for the Association for Music Therapy Singapore.

This was very gratefully received by President Xueli Tan on behalf of the Singapore Association. May reports that Singapore has just started their first local music therapy training course and the organisation is in the middle of setting up registration for music therapists.

Image shows May Clulee 吳美珠 (left) and President Xueli Tan of the Association for Music Therapy Singapore enjoying a meal together.

A History of Music Therapy New Zealand (1974–2023): Passionate People

Te Hitori o “Te Rōpū Puoro Whakaora o Aotearoa” (1974–2023):

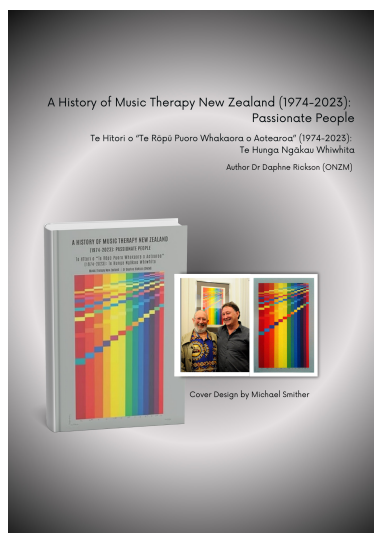
Te Hunga Ngākau Whiwhita

Copies are available from
the MThNZ office (at cost)
for \$50 which includes gst
and postage.

Contact:

info@musictherapy.org.nz

to advise how many copies
you would like. Books are
also available from
Barcelona Publishers and
Amazon.



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Ngā mihi mahana!



JR McKenzie
Trust





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