



Doubling
the number
of women
directing
scripted TV
in Canada

WOMEN IN VIEW





Our Government believes that Canada's diversity is a source of strength that should be celebrated and shared. I applaud the work of Women in View and initiatives

like 2xMore for striving to improve gender equity in Canadian screen-based media—not just to reflect our country better, but also to showcase the tremendous depth and breadth of Canadian women directors.

The Honourable Mélanie Joly
Minister of Canadian Heritage



We all benefit when women's voices are heard—whether it's in Parliament, at the boardroom table, in our own communities, or in the media. This project by Women in View has given Canadians the opportunity to experience and learn from the unique perspectives of several talented women directors.

Their participation in this project is an important step toward shifting the workplace culture in the television industry to promote the hiring of more women in Canadian media production. The ongoing work of these—and future women directors—will continue to enrich Canadian culture for many years to come.

The Honourable Patty Hajdu, P.C., M.P.
Minister of Status of Women





On track and ahead of schedule

Women In View launched 2xMore at the CMPA's *Prime Time in Ottawa 2016* with a bold commitment: to double the number of women directing scripted TV by 2018. One year in, we're thrilled to report we're on track and ahead of schedule!

Sponsored by Status of Women Canada in partnership with an exceptional group of companies, agencies and open-hearted individuals throughout the industry, 2xMore has helped propel several talented, experienced directors into episodic TV.

You'll meet some of them in the following pages, like Mars Horodyski who started on *Odd Squad*, and was immediately hired on three more episodes for *Sinking Ship* Entertainment. Mars' success was repeated by Lara Azzopardi, Zoe Robyn, Heather Hawthorn-Doyle, Sherren Lee, and Nimisha Mukerji. The initiative was given a huge boost by CBC's commitment to increase the women directors on the series it commissions. Before long CBC's *Heartland* reached out to acclaimed stunt coordinator, Alison Reid.

In fact, 2xMore helped create a domino-effect. The stellar panel selecting the second round of 2xMore candidates—director Norma Bailey, Shaftesbury VP Julie Lacey, CBC Kids' executive Marie McCann, and Marney Malabar, director of Kids TV for TVO—were blown away by the calibre of the candidates. Recommendations and hires followed.

"We asked ourselves why directors with such talent and experience weren't already working. And of course, that's the issue at the heart of this initiative." — **Marney Malabar**

A few forward-looking production companies have embraced the idea of gender equity in Canada's mediascape. We're looking forward to working with more motivated leaders to expand the horizons of television, and to make the stories we tell more creative and Canadian than ever.

Rina Fraticelli
Executive Director, Women in View

It takes an industry to shift a culture

We've been energized by the commitment of our partners in 2xMore. Our partners have gone above and beyond in creating an industry-wide momentum.

Beyond advancing several individual careers, they've helped us connect with stakeholders across the country through public discussions, workshops and master classes. You'll see more of these special events continuing in year two of 2xMore.

Sinking Ship Entertainment

Sinking Ship Entertainment is a multiple Emmy award-winning production and distribution company specializing in live-action-CG blended series. The company has produced over 500 hours of content including the hit series *Annedroids*, *Dino Dan*, and *Odd Squad*.

In 2016, executive producers Christin Simms and J.J. Johnson made a concerted effort to increase

gender diversity on their shows. With the help of some enlightened match-making from the Directors Guild of Canada, Sinking Ship teamed up with Women In View to develop a startlingly simple but radically effective model to make that happen.

Through 2xMore, six directors came on to shadow and then direct Sinking Ship shows. The pilot ensured that the shadowing stage and directing gig are linked. This connection helps offset a producer's sense of risk at bringing someone new onto their team, while giving the new director the time to get up to speed with the style, pace and protocols of a fast-paced episodic set.

"We started off small and scratched our way up, so we know how hard it can be to break in, but gender equality is long, long overdue. We're in a position now where we can help." —J.J. Johnson

CBC

Heather Conway, executive vice-president, English Services, CBC, and a member of the 2xMore Advisory Group, publicly committed the Corporation to hiring women directors on at least 50 percent of episodes on upcoming seasons of *Murdoch Mysteries*, *Heartland*, *This Life*, *Baroness Von Sketch Show* and *Workin' Moms*.

CBC's *Heartland* took advantage of 2xMore to welcome director Alison Reid to the set for several days before returning to direct her own episode.

"I'm proud that CBC, in partnership with our producers, is the first Canadian broadcaster to take a proactive step forward to increase the number of women directing scripted television." —Heather Conway

Directors Guild of Canada

The DGC has been behind 2xMore from the get-go, bringing Sinking Ship Entertainment and Women in View together to develop this unique pilot.



The DGC's Catherine Middleton convened a stellar "think tank" of B.C.-based women directors to ground the program in the lived experiences of women working in the industry. Ontario DGC Director's Rep Warren P. Sonoda kicked off 2xMore's first director mentorship program on Sinking Ship's *Odd Squad*.

"Working on this has been a pleasure and privilege. I hope more productions participate in this extraordinary program. There's amazing talent on its way and graduates of 2xMore will be at the forefront of it." —Warren P. Sonoda



Mars Horodyski: 2xMore's first director becomes program mentor

Mars Horodyski “pleasantly pestered” producer Christin Simms at Sinking Ship Entertainment for months, hoping for a shot to direct one of the company’s spectacularly successful kids’ shows. The company, meanwhile, was working behind the scenes with the Directors Guild of Canada and Women in View to make it happen.

“2xMore is an incredibly sustainable model for women helping women and I love the idea of giving back.”

Finally, with support from 2xMore, Mars was brought in to shadow director Warren P. Sonoda in preparation for directing her own episode of the Emmy Award-winning series *Odd Squad*. Sinking Ship loved her work and immediately hired Horodyski to direct more episodes of *Dino Dana*, and act as mentor for the next shift of 2xMore directors. “2xMore is an incredibly sustainable model for women helping women and I love the idea of

giving back.” Horodyski emphasizes that she “approached it as a peer. All of these women are impressive directors in their own right.”

Horodyski herself has over a decade of directing and producing experience. Awarded the 2015 Canadian Comedy Award for Best Directing in a Feature Film for *Ben’s at Home* (which she directed, co-wrote and produced), her résumé includes commercials, music videos, the BBC/DHX series *The Next Step*, hit web series *Carmilla* and *Murdoch Mysteries* digital content. With the 2xMore credits under her belt, she was quickly invited to direct more TV, including several episodes of *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*. “I can’t say enough about how great the Sinking Ship team has been. Their shows have a lot of action and VFX—we were using a crane every other day. Getting that FX experience can be hard, especially for women. But now we all have action and VFX on our reels.”

MARS HORODYSKI

“We were using a crane every other day. Getting that FX experience can be hard, especially for women. But now we all have action and VFX on our reels.”





Alison Reid jumps at the opportunity to direct on CBC's *Heartland*

Veteran stuntwoman and stunt coordinator Alison Reid had racked up some 300 film and TV credits, including many as a second-unit director, before she turned to directing in 2006. The following year, she won a Crystal Award presented by the Directors Guild of Canada for best emerging director.

"I'd spent a lot of time on set, working closely with actors, directors, the camera department," she says, "so I was pretty well positioned to move into directing."

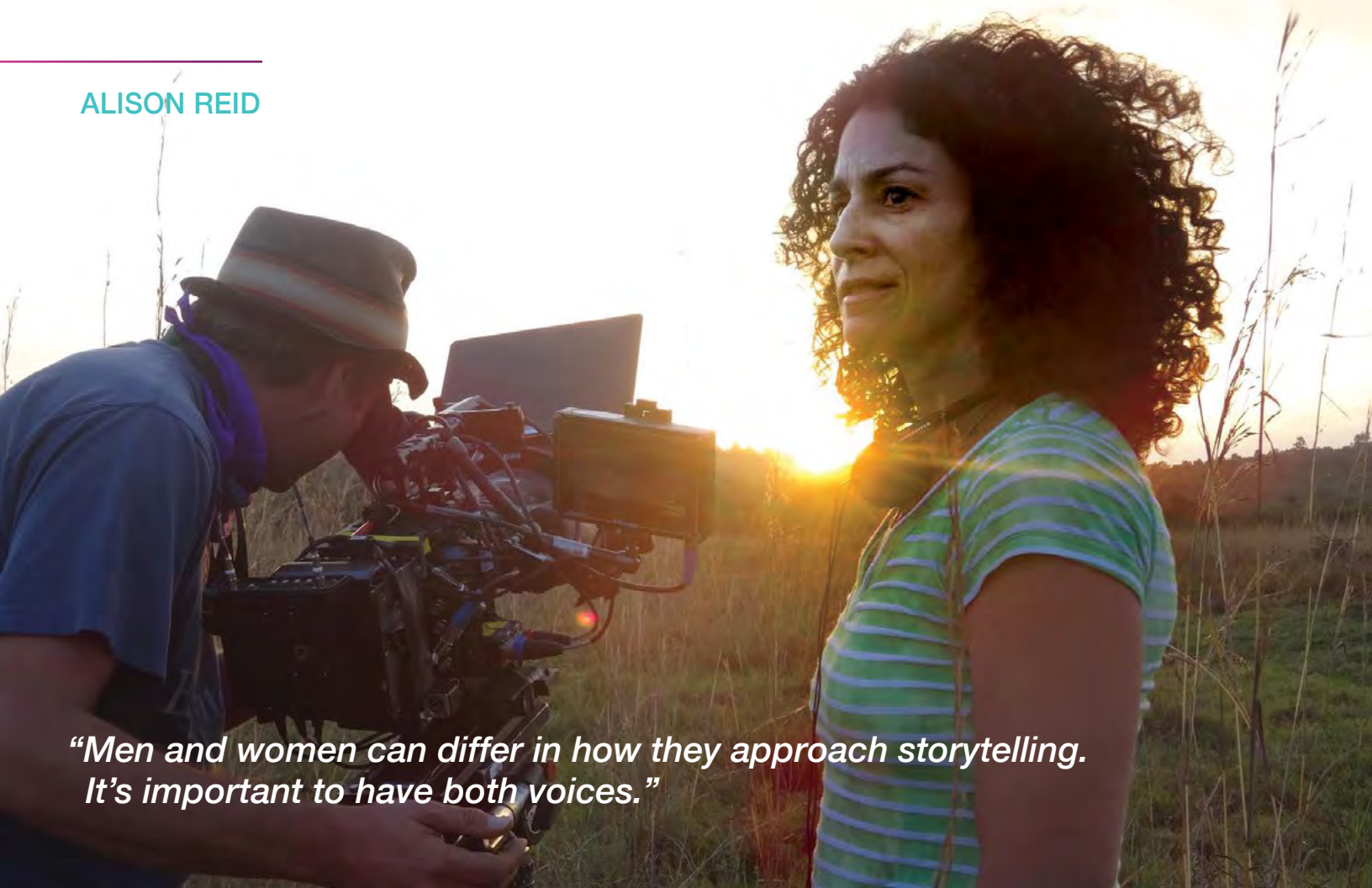
"I let people know I wanted to move into directing, but I wasn't getting any traction."

Following her feature film debut with *The Baby Formula* in 2008, she set her sights on directing dramatic TV as well as movies, but it took eight more years to break in. "I let people know I wanted to move into episodic, but I wasn't getting any traction," she says.

Finally, in 2016, when CBC executive Helen Asimakis mentioned there was an opportunity at *Heartland*, Reid pounced. She called executive producer Jamie Paul Rock. "He knew I had experience, and he thought I'd be a great fit." Rock set up a meeting with *Heartland* showrunner Heather Conkie, then contacted Women in View for support. 2xMore allowed Alison to fly from her native Toronto to the *Heartland* set near Calgary. "I spent time shadowing director Dean Bennett, got the lay of the land, saw the sets, met the 1st AD, and the actors." She returned to direct her own episode. Along the way, she also picked up a credit helming an episode of *Saving Hope* for CTV, where she's been stunt coordinating and directing second unit for years.

Reid has two films in development, the feature thriller *Sensation* and a documentary, *Smitten By Giraffes*, and is eager to direct more TV as well.

ALISON REID

A man wearing a hat and a blue shirt is operating a professional video camera. He is positioned on the left side of the frame, looking through the viewfinder. The camera is mounted on a tripod and has various attachments, including a laptop screen and a monitor. A woman with curly hair, wearing a green and white striped shirt, is standing on the right side of the frame, looking towards the camera. The background is a field of tall grass with a bright sunset or sunrise in the distance, creating a warm, golden light. The overall scene suggests a documentary or film production in a natural setting.

*“Men and women can differ in how they approach storytelling.
It’s important to have both voices.”*



Heather Hawthorn-Doyle leaps from factual to scripted drama

Heather has produced or directed over 1,000 episodes of TV, including CTV's *The Vicki Gabereau Show*, HGTV's *She's Crafty* and *Pure Design*, W Network's *Smart Cookies*, and CBC's *Make Some Noise* (winner of the \$50,000 Shaw Rocket Prize, Gemini for best Youth series and the NHK Japan Prize).

"I can't talk highly enough about the 2xMore/Sinking Ship pilot. It's the hands-on experience that makes all the difference. It gets you in the door."

"It was a conscious decision to do factual and unscripted for the first part of my career," she says. "It allowed me to be a mom." Now with two sons grown and launched, her focus is on directing scripted drama. With two episodes of *Some Assembly Required* on her CV, she shadowed for

four weeks on Disney XD's teen action-adventure show *Mech-X4* through a program sponsored by CMPA-BC, Disney and Omnicore Entertainment. There, one of the producers told her about 2xMore, and, once selected, Heather flew from Vancouver to Toronto to take part.

Heather spent over three weeks working with Sinking Ship, shadowing Mars Horodyski, then directing an episode of *Dino Dana*. "We talked about the work, but also about managing family, having kids. The world is changing. Both men and women want that balance now because they know it can make you more creative."

She says the mindset at Sinking Ship is "phenomenal. The crew welcomed us with open arms and J.J. Johnson and Christin Simms are so open. They just want good people."

A group of people are gathered under a black tarp on what appears to be a film set. In the foreground, a woman with curly hair, wearing a pink jacket, a white baseball cap, and large headphones, is looking towards the left. Behind her, a man in a black shirt stands with his arms crossed. To the left, two women are looking at a smartphone held by one of them. Another woman stands behind them, looking on. The background shows a green lawn and trees. The scene is lit with natural light, and the overall atmosphere is that of a professional production environment.

HEATHER HAWTHORN-DOYLE

“You walk through that door, and they refer to you as the director. Not the trainee. Not the shadow. The director. That’s a strong word.”



“Change is hard,” says **Lara Azzopardi**, “2xMore is important.”

After making an award-winning short (*I Am an Apartment Building*) and directing numerous commercials, as well as writing and producing for television for over five years, Lara Azzopardi was still having trouble breaking into TV as a director. So, working with the producers at Fresh TV, she created and was showrunner on her own series, the teen drama *Backstage*. She had just wrapped the series' 30th episode for Family Channel when the 2xMore opportunity opened up.

She leapt at it, shadowing director Stephen Reynolds, then directing her own episode of the kids' show *Odd Squad* for Sinking Ship Entertainment.

“2xMore is phenomenal, and so, so important,” she says. “Meeting the crew, who were so supportive, meeting other women in the program — it was a great experience.”

As the daughter of veteran director Mario Azzopardi, she says, “I grew up in TV.” She laughs and adds, “I basically shadowed my father my whole life.” And she's also well aware of how difficult it can be to change the system.

“After being a showrunner on *Backstage*, I understand the obstacles. We used a group of directors—including two women—on our first season, and there was no reason not to use the same ones for the next season. Why try someone new when they did such a great job?” That's why initiatives like 2xMore are so important, she says.

“If you don't have a mandate, you're naturally going to find more male directors are available. You have to actively look for women. But it's so important to include those voices, and a program like this makes it a lot easier.”

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a dark jacket, is smiling and looking down at something in her hands. She is standing on a film set. In the background, there are various pieces of equipment, including a camera on a tripod and a monitor displaying a scene. A man with a beard and a cap is also visible in the background. The lighting is dim, with some colored lights (green and purple) visible. The overall atmosphere is professional and creative.

LARA AZZOPARDI

“Meeting the crew, who were so supportive, meeting other women in the program— it was a great experience.”



Acclaimed filmmaker **Nimisha Mukerji** takes on television

With 10 years' experience, Nimisha has won accolades as director of the CBC feature doc *65_RedRoses*, chosen for OWN's Documentary Club, distributed by PBS International, and acquired by Netflix and Hulu. Her doc *Blood Relative* for Knowledge Network won awards at festivals and three Canadian Screen Award nominations. She was shadowing on Omni's teen series *Mech-X4* for Disney, where EP Brian Hamilton encouraged her to apply to 2xMore which led to directing *Mech-X4*.

"I don't think enough credit is given to the men who are helping to push for more women in the industry," she says. "Brian and others like Kaare Andrews and Zach Lipovsky working with Omni have been super supportive."

She didn't take the 2xMore opportunity lightly, she says. "I knew a lot of qualified directors had applied. There are so many women who are ready, and there just aren't enough initiatives like this."

Nimisha was blown away when she arrived on Sinking Ship Entertainment's set to shadow 2xMore alum director Mars Horodyski and then direct her own episode of the Amazon Studios/TVO series *Dino Dana*. "Working on *Dino Dana* ... being able to come at it as a female director, and being told that's an asset, was so wonderful for me."

An added bonus was working with VFX. "Being able to show I've worked with VFX and action is something I'll definitely be able to use." But the main things, she says, is "the confidence that comes with this program—being able to now say 'I'm a television director'."

"It was awesome to be working with female writers, a female director, executive producer Christin Simms, on a show about a little girl who's really smart and loves dinosaurs."

NIMISHA MUKERJI



"There are so many women who are ready, and there just aren't enough initiatives like this."



Sherren Lee was thrilled with the trust in her capabilities

Award-winning director Sherren Lee had her first short film screened at TIFF, won more awards with a web series, and was thrilled when she was chosen for the second round of 2xMore.

“Working on *Dino Dana* was great,” she says. Not only did she appreciate the upbeat workplace atmosphere and universal support, she says, but also the amount of trust in her professional capabilities. “No producer had ever asked me to shoot a scene in one shot,” she says, “but I got to do three oners in my episode. *Sinking Ship* never seemed to doubt that I would be able to do it.”

The company aims high for creativity, she says. “They’re really trying to push boundaries and make a really cool show.” Just as important was their attitude of inclusion.

“There were so many women on the crew, we were kind of cheering each other on.”

Shop talk amongst the women on set included plenty of discussion about the example set by Jill Soloway and how she approaches directing from a female perspective on *Transparent*.

“It’s important for women to be supportive of each other, and it says so much about *Sinking Ship* as a company that they’ve embraced this initiative.”

Mars Horodyski, who was the first director to participate in 2xMore, mentored Lee along with the other participants in the second round. “It was so incredible to have a female role model like that,” says Lee. “Mars was so open, and so completely candid about her own successes and failures. Everyone there was so supportive.”

A woman with long dark hair, wearing a black tank top and white shorts, is in the foreground. She has large black headphones on her head and is holding a black walkie-talkie to her mouth. She is looking towards the right. Next to her is an older man with a white beard and a white fedora-style hat. He is wearing a grey and white checkered shirt and blue denim shorts. He has his hand near his face, holding a pair of glasses. In the background, there are several other people sitting on the grass. One person is wearing a blue cap and a black shirt with "SHORELINE SWIMSTY CREW" written on it. Another person is wearing a green headband and glasses. The background is filled with lush green trees and foliage. The lighting suggests it's daytime, with some shadows on the ground.

SHERREN LEE

"No producer had ever asked me to shoot a scene in one shot. Sinking Ship asked me to try it, and never seemed to doubt that I would be able to do it."



Zoe Robyn champions the creative power of femininity

Multi-talented Zoe Robyn is a staff writer on *Hawaii Five-0* as well as an experienced director of digital series *MsLabelled* and *V Morgan* for Smokebomb. She became the youngest full director member of the Director's Guild of Canada after helming original web content and second unit for Syfy's *HELIX*.

But it was through 2xMore that she finally got her first TV episode credit, on Sinking Ship's *Odd Squad*.

"I met director Warren Sonoda while working in Toronto for Shaftesbury and he encouraged me to take advantage of the program," says Zoe.

One aspect of the show she wasn't expecting, she says, was how many visual effects there were. "We did a lot of green screen for my episode and at first I was worried about focusing too much on that instead of story."

In fact, she says, the process had the opposite effect. "During prep, I got so involved in the details,

I ended up talking to everyone and getting an incredible amount of thinking and planning covered beforehand. By the time I got to set, I was able to fully concentrate on the actors."

Her experience reminded her of director Jill Soloway's approach on *Transparent*, she says.

"Jill Soloway talks about things that I felt weren't allowed before, but that we can talk about now—how women and aspects of femininity that used to be seen as negative can actually be a strength. The same attitude was welcomed at Sinking Ship."

Most importantly, the experience significantly raised her profile as a director.

A woman with long brown hair, wearing a light pink shirt, is seated at a workbench in a workshop or studio. She is looking off-camera to her right with a thoughtful expression, holding a pen in her right hand. The background is filled with various pieces of equipment, including a large monitor on a stand, cables, and other people working in the background. The lighting is soft and focused on the woman.

ZOE ROBYN

*“How much visibility
I got afterward
is a real tribute
to 2xMore.
The experience
was invaluable.”*

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How can your production do 2xMore? Easy.

We all know TV is a high-speed, high-cost enterprise that is understandably extremely risk-averse—which means a lot of us to stick to what we're used to—who we know and what has worked in the past.

But imagine lowering the risk and enhancing your production with twice the talent, diversity, creativity, and originality. That's where 2xMore comes in.

HOW DOES 2xMORE WORK?

The key to 2xMore is linking shadowing to directing.

You've got a talented woman director in your sights, but you're not sure how to bring her into your fast-moving schedule. 2xMore can make it happen, smoothly, creatively, and productively for all concerned.

The requirements of each set are different. 2xMore is tailored to your production, your pace, your schedule.

We can offer support to match your needs. Options like honoraria and travel subsidies for women directors new to your production.

The tools are here. Turn your best intentions into reality. Talk to us.

Contact **2xMore** at info@womeninview.ca or **416-304-9398**



WOMEN IN VIEW

Founded in 2010, Women in View is a national not-for-profit organization dedicated to strengthening gender and racial diversity in Canadian media. We do this through a range of initiatives that aim to generate awareness, promote talent and spark dialogue across the full spectrum of production, policy and artistic arenas.

Since 2012, our annual *On Screen* reports have documented the representation of women in key creative positions in publicly-funded film and television. Upcoming projects include the *Five in Focus* awards promoting women directors; and *Real Media Réel*, a bilingual media diversity toolkit.

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*Imagine your production
with twice the talent,
diversity, creativity, energy
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2xMore comes in.*



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