

**UHI** | NORTH, WEST AND HEBRIDES  
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# BA Applied Music Showcase

An Lanntair Stornoway April, 2024



A week of performance  
events celebrating  
**BA (Hons) Applied Music**

[nwh.uhi.ac.uk](http://nwh.uhi.ac.uk)



Fàilte – It gives me great pleasure to share our concert programme introducing our BA (Hons) Applied Music students who have

travelled to the Isle of Lewis from across the UK for a week of assessments at An Lanntair in Stornoway.

**Anna-Wendy Stevenson**  
**Programme Leader BA Applied Music**

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## BA Applied Music Showcase

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Now in its second decade, our award-winning BA (Hons) Applied Music is the first degree programme in the UK to deliver a combination of online and face to face activity enabling a flexibility where students can access the course from their local communities.

We have a diverse and dynamic student cohort; from school leavers to professionals and invite students from all musical backgrounds -from classical to rock to traditional.

Our awards including the 2021 Collaborative Award in Teaching Excellence and four consecutive 100% scores in the National Student Survey are testament to this. The impact of the Applied Music programme is evident with so many graduates successfully employed in music and arts across Scotland; self-employed performers gracing international stages, community musicians and trustees and CEO's of organisations with important roles for the future of culture in Scotland.

We continue to innovate and are responsive to the demands and opportunities in the music business.

### Highlights 2023/24

This year we have had an incredible response both from students and from industry to the integration into the degree of a new module in Music Sync and Placement, (getting your music into film and TV) designed by our alumnus Barry Nisbet and endorsed by industry experts Scoredraw music and Xponorth.

In February we launched our 3rd Far Flung Collective album of new music inspired by the Dorset Coast. This was created entirely online, over 3 years in collaboration with our partner of 13 years -Soundstorm Music Education Agency. They are fantastic professional musicians and award-winning education providers and our Far Flung Collective recording project has been funded through Arts Council England.



A photograph of a young woman with long blonde hair, wearing a black t-shirt, sitting in a field of purple heather. She is holding a black dog with a red collar and a set of bagpipes. In the background, there are rolling hills and mountains under a blue sky with scattered white clouds.

# Chloe Steele

## UHI Alumni of the year 2023

Born and raised in South Uist, Chloe is the first person from the Outer Hebrides to graduate with the full honours degree in applied music, studying from home. She is dedicated to her community, has taught music to many youngsters on the island and established performance opportunities with her Kildonan Ceilidhs.

She recorded her latest album at Cnoc Soilleir in South Uist, bringing together and showcasing members of her community in an intergenerational project dedicated to the memory of her fiancé's late father.

Launched in November 2023, with proceeds going to Western Isles Cancer Care, Chloe is a fantastic example of the reach, value, inspiration and impact that studying with UHI can offer.

We will present Chloe Steele with her award as 2023 UHI alumni of the year on Tuesday 23rd April at An Lanntair to launch our concert programme.

# Performances

## Welcome Ceilidh:

**Stornoway Town Hall Monday 22nd April 8pm**

2 hours of dancing, meet and greet. Delivered by the UHI Applied Music Ceilidh band.

## Honours Performances:

The Stornoway Applied Music Showcase is a celebration of student achievements during the academic year. It is a particularly momentous occasion for our honours students who choose performance as their final project. They must perform their own concert, bringing with them other collaborators and musicians from within Applied Music and or their own communities across Scotland. We would like to extend a special welcome to these external collaborators.

In the following pages you will see our honours student's concert programme titles and some context for their study and musical life.

Examples amongst them include composer and trumpet player **Marit Schöpel** came from Germany to study in Uist to be immersed in the rich Gaelic culture. Joined by alumni, Marit will perform a set inspired by the landscape of her home.

Meanwhile, **Mark Robinson** from Morayshire will perform a set of Blues on harmonica including his own compositions.

**Scott Cowie** from Airdrie will perform solo a set developed on the theme of 7 stages of grief.

**Daniel Castro** from Madrid will perform on fiddle a set of folk music from the Celtic nations.

**Rebecca Shillan** from Stirling will perform a set of self-penned songs which explore the LGBTQ+ perspective of love, media and education.

Not every honours student chooses to submit a performance or composition for their final project. This year singer and workshop-leader, **Christian Cooper** from Aberdeenshire has developed a series of workshops to help foster self-assurance in youngsters and promote a positive postpartum recovery experience for new mums through imaginative musical activities. Christian will deliver a workshop to illustrate her approaches 'COME WITH ME, UNDER THE SEA...An insight into teaching Creative Music to babies and toddlers to illustrate her approaches'

Public are welcome to attend An Lanntair Performances.

## Final Honours Recital Running Order

|                 |                      |     |
|-----------------|----------------------|-----|
| Marit Schöpel   | Tuesday 23rd April   | 8pm |
| Mark Robinson   | Tuesday 23rd April   | 9pm |
| Rebecca Shillan | Wednesday 24th April | 1pm |
| Daniel Castro   | Wednesday 24th April | 8pm |
| Scott Cowie     | Wednesday 24th April | 9pm |

# Gala Concert



**Thursday 25th April 7.30pm**

A multi-genre feast of music showcasing the talent from the University of the Highlands and Islands BA (Hons) Applied Music degree. Pipes, fiddles, singer songwriters and Jazz.

This award-winning degree includes many musicians who have become recognized in the music industry. Students have travelled from Orkney, Glasgow, Sutherland and the South of England to perform here tonight.



# BA Applied Music Showcase

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## Marit Schöpel

### 'Landscape Echoes: Past and Present Harmonies of Anglia'

A program that travels through the landscape of the peninsula Anglia in the North of Germany and its musical traditions and new compositions in a span of a day.

Marit (trumpet, voice, and double bass) is joined on stage by Sheena Peteranna on flute and whistle, Emilia Marienfeld on piano and fiddle, and Paul Campbell on guitar, creating together with field and video recordings of the landscape an ambient journey through her home region.

**Performance:** Tuesday 23rd April, 8pm, An Lanntair



## Rebecca Shillan

### 'Sad Rainbow Songs'

Join me in the Sad Rainbow Club for a journey through a modern LGBTQ+ perspective of love, media and education. Bringing together an intriguing variety of genres - from piano ballads to dance, rock and opera - this performance tells the poignant, but inspirational towards the end, story of my project character, Sad Rainbow Girl.

**Performance:** Wednesday 24th April, 1pm, An Lanntair



## Mark Robinson

### 'Should I play the Blues?'

No Black, No white...Just the Blues or Blues is Black Music?

Does an old white man from Cleethorpes have any right to play the emotion loaded music from the American deep south, a genre forged in slavery? And is he too old to start doing it professionally? Come and join me on a journey into music, maturity and morality.

**Performance:** Tuesday 23rd April, 9pm, An Lanntair

## Daniel Castro

### 'An evening of folk music from the Celtic nations'

Join me for a journey from Galicia and Asturias to Brittany, Scotland, Shetland all the way to Cape Breton Island, drawing lines by sea and land. A curated program including traditional material and contemporary compositions arranged for the fiddle.

**Performance:** Wednesday 24th April, 8pm, An Lanntair



# BA Applied Music Showcase

## Scott Cowie

### 'The Seven Stages'

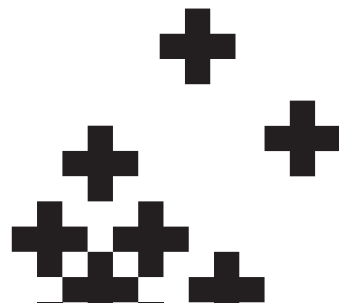
I have put together seven pieces of music to represent each of the '7 stages of grief.' I heard the phrase around 4 years ago, and became very interested in the deep emotions behind each stage and thought that capturing this in a musical context would be very interesting.

**Performance:** Wednesday 24th April, 9pm, An Lanntair



## Christian Cooper

Fostering self-assurance in youngsters and promoting a positive postpartum recovery experience for new mums through imaginative musical activities.



### Marit Schöpel

#### Where are you from?

I am from the region of Anglia on the East coast in the North of Germany.

#### What instruments do you play?

I play trumpet, sing, and play double-bass as well.

#### What or who inspired you to start playing?

I grew up singing with my family so always had a connection to music. My first instrument is not trumpet but classical guitar. When I was 12, I started going to the brass class and decided to play trumpet instead of guitar. On my trumpet journey, I encountered problems with my vocal cords which is why I started playing double bass to be able to make music and also trained my voice professionally.

#### What does your musical practice look like?

I mostly play traditional/folk music which surprises people. I play gigs with my band *An Carra* and write my own music. I am often inspired by the nature and landscape that surrounds me. While I am on walks, I take my field recorder and record what I hear. To me, musical practice does not only count as playing, improvising, and writing but also listening to others and what surrounds us.

#### What do you love about music and being a musician?

Music for me is a connection with others, myself, and the space. I love that a flow can be created where just music exists, that is special. Music allows me to be creative but also to learn and grow as a human being. As a musician, you meet so

many people at many different places. The chance to connect with them and see us all coming together is what I enjoy the most.

#### What drew you to applied music?

I always felt that a lot of music degrees push competition and try to create standardised musicians. When I came across the applied music course, I was astonished by the collaboration, the diversity of musical genres, and the encouragement to find our own musical voice.

#### What have been your musical highlights of your career?

Going two years in a row on tour in Germany with my all-female band *An Carra* as well as playing at the FolkBaltica Festival and Tonder Festival with another ensemble and meeting loads of lovely musicians.

#### What has been the best experience/ what did you learn most about on the course?

As cheesy as it might sound, I learned to trust the journey. Setting goals and plans is obviously important. However, what you learn additionally on the way to them is often even more fulfilling and helpful than the actual goals.

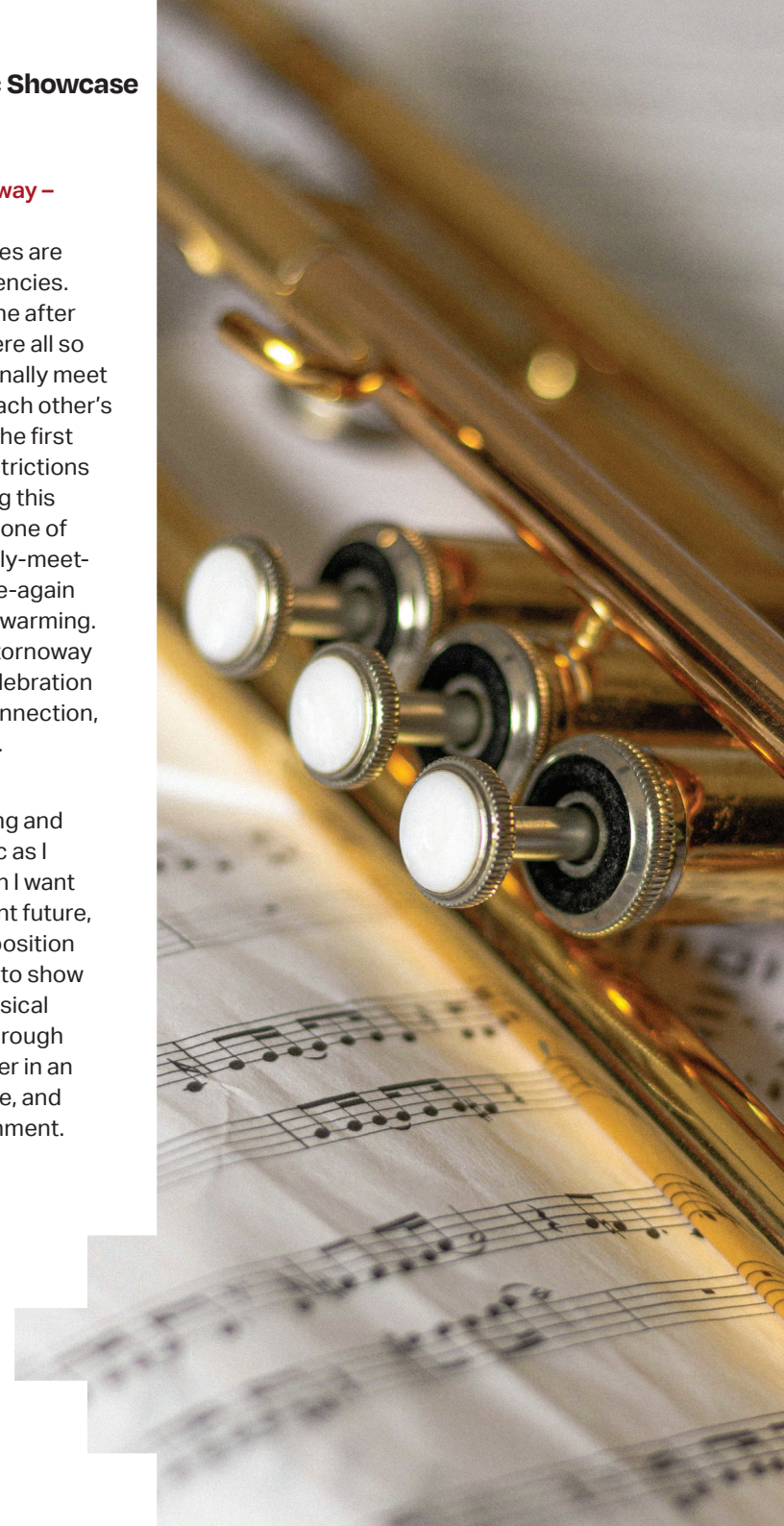
The best experience was that music does not have to be a competition. Everyone can come together and respect each other's strengths and weaknesses for a wonderful collaboration. I learned that we can decide whether we create and understand music as a competition or as a collaboration. And with my experience in this course, I will always choose collaboration.

#### What will you take away – favourite memory?

My favourite memories are the Stornoway residencies. Especially the first one after Covid in 2022. We were all so happy to be able to finally meet in person and hear each other's music. It was one of the first weeks that Covid restrictions were lifted and having this special residency as one of the first we-can-finally-meet-humans-face-to-face-again events was so heart-warming. The whole week in Stornoway always feels like a celebration of our course, our connection, and music in general.

#### Future aspirations:

I want to keep creating and writing my own music as I have new ideas which I want to follow. In the distant future, I'd like to teach composition and creativity. I want to show more people that musical growth thrives not through competition but rather in an encouraging, creative, and collaborative environment.



## Mark Robinson

### Where are you from?

Burghead, on the Moray Coast.

### What instruments do you play?

Harmonica is my first instrument and I also play guitar.

### What or who inspired you to start playing?

Listening to Muddy Waters and his band play The Blues as a boy captured something inside me that has never let go.

### What does your musical practice look like?

Currently I am following two pathways. Firstly, I am a private tutor teaching harmonica one-to-one in the local area, which has been the easiest one to establish during my degree course. Secondly, I am pushing myself forward as blues musician, both as an artist in my own right as well as guesting in local Rhythm & Blues Bands.

### What do you love about music and being a musician?

This may be a cliché, but the one thing I love about music is how it can bring people together, no matter their background or ethnicity, you don't even have to speak the same language! I have witnessed a lot of hatred and division in this world, as well as its consequences, but no matter where I went, music never failed to bring people together. Becoming a full-time musician after leaving the armed forces in 2016 is a major career change for me, and so I am still finding my feet. However, what I've loved so far is being able to bring a smile to someone's face.

### What drew you to applied music?

I had heard good things about the degree course from various musicians I knew locally, but the main factor for me was the unique flexibility of the learning environment. The ability to both study and connect with others on the course, either physically or digitally, is the perfect balance for me. It is no underestimation for me to say that had this course not existed, there is no way in the world I would have been able to study music to this level.

### What have been your musical highlights of your career?

Though short, one thing that never gets old is seeing the smile on the face of a student when they achieve what they have been working towards.

### What has been the best experience/ what did you learn most about on the course?

The one thing I will never forget is how welcoming both the lecturers and the other students have been. I have come from a very different background musically than literally all the other students, certainly had far less experience, and felt very much out of my depth. Yet from the first day of the course, I have always been made to feel that none of that mattered, I was there on my own merits and I always had something of value to contribute.

### What will you take away – favourite memory?

A feeling of belonging.

### Future aspirations:

To spread the gospel according to The Blues.

## Rebecca Shillan

### Where are you from?

I'm from Stirling and currently living in Alness.

### What instruments do you play?

I sing and play keyboard.

### What or who inspired you to start playing?

When I was little, I used to love singing along when my dad played his acoustic guitar, but I ended up taking up the keyboard at school because the strings always hurt my fingers. The music classroom was always a safe place in among the sensory overload I used to struggle with.

### What does your musical practice look like?

I am currently playing solo gigs around Inverness, including places like the Beaufort Hotel and Victorian Market Hall; I always mix my original songs with a variety of covers from artists like KT Tunstall, Adele, Billie Eilish and Twenty One Pilots. I have also been involved in charity gigs such as the Foodbank Fringe and a Ukraine fundraising gig at the Market Bar.

### What do you love about music and being a musician?

I love the ability music gives me to express myself and meet other like-minded people. It was also the one thing at school I was really good at!

### What drew you to applied music?

I was studying HNC Popular Music at Perth College UHI before I moved up to Alness, and I wanted to learn more about self-promotion and music production.



### What have been your musical highlights of your career?

Playing solo at the Victorian Market Hall last Christmas Eve, and supporting Lucid Liars and Distance Between Us at the Commercial Hotel in Alness.

### What has been the best experience/ what did you learn most about on the course?

The best experience has definitely been the end-of-year residencies in Stornoway, and I learned most about finding songwriting inspiration in every single little thing around me.

### What will you take away – favourite memory?

My favourite memory of this course is going along to the folk session nights and getting to perform with everyone in Stornoway.

### Future aspirations:

Releasing 'Sad Rainbow Songs' as a self-produced album on streaming platforms, and playing in more live music venues around Scotland.

## Daniel Castro

### Where are you from?

I'm originally from Madrid, Spain

### What instruments do you play?

Fiddle, piano and guitar.

### What or who inspired you to start playing?

I don't know.

### What does your musical practice look like?

I love folk music. I perform traditional, contemporary and original melodies in the style of places like Scotland, Ireland, Scandinavia and Spain. As a composer, I write and produce original music for film, media and for my own project releases/performances. I also work as an educator and provide individual tuition on fiddle, piano, music theory and composition.

### What do you love about music and being a musician?

I love the freedom of being yourself and of expressing things with sound.

### What drew you to applied music?

An interest in folk music, music technology and Scotland

### What have been your musical highlights of your career?

I've played three times at Celtic Connections and released an album with the Far Flung Collective

### What has been the best experience/ what did you learn most about on the course?

Through this course I've been to different places in Scotland, saw rural landscapes and met people outside the course, and

that is given me a wider sense of the culture and life here. I'm grateful for that.

### What will you take away – favourite memory?

Waiting for the ferry to Stornoway at the Ullapool pier

### Future aspirations:

To work as a full time composer and performer and collaborate in exciting projects.

## Scott Cowie

### Where are you from?

Airdrie in Scotland.

### What instruments do you play?

I play drums, guitar and piano.

### What or who inspired you to start playing?

My Dad and The Beatles (Not the same act). I love the Sensational Alex Harvey Band, Stevie Wonder, Tommy Emmanuel, The Sex Pistols and my favourite artist is Kaki King.

### What does your musical practice look like?

I am mainly a drummer and I have gigged since a really young age. I have drummed for lots of different bands/artists in different styles. I have toured and recorded for many years. I play guitar as well when called upon and can play enough piano to get by.

As well as performing mainly as a drummer, I gig occasionally as a singer songwriter, composing my own material.

### What do you love about music and being a musician?

It's a brilliant way of collaborating with like minded individuals. I love the thought of generally progressing as a musician and drawing inspiration from those who do it best, the likes of Kaki King, Steve Gadd and Tommy Emmanuel. It's a brilliant way of just forgetting about everything else and just bettering yourself musically.

### What drew you to applied music?

The course has a good reputation and is very flexible if you have commitments. The freedom when it comes to being creative in the project work was very appealing. It enables you to be expressive and lecturers are always on hand to help provide guidance.

### What have been your musical highlights of your career?

Simply just being involved in music for a while now. Getting the chances to record albums, play abroad and work with others. During lockdown, I started a project called the Twisted Beatles in which a group of friends and I performed twisted versions of Beatles songs and uploaded lockdown style music videos. After lockdown, we put together a full live set and sold out the Cavern in Liverpool. This was the first time we had all played there and it was great to start something from nothing and take it to that stage.

### What has been the best experience/ what did you learn most about on the course?

I think the best is yet to come with the final performance but the excitement and anticipation for that is great. Putting together the set continues to be a great

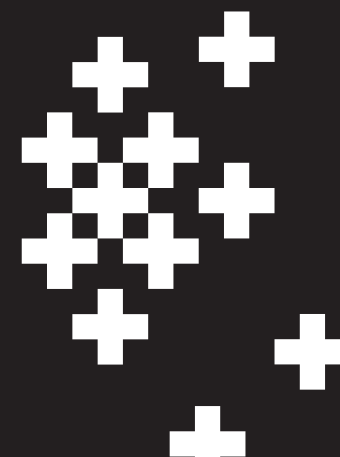
experience and I am really enjoying it as it's very creatively fulfilling. My work commitments don't allow me to attend the classes but I always look forward to watching them back and participating in every way I can.

### What will you take away – favourite memory?

Hopefully the final performance and there will be many elements I will take away including just learning to better myself everyday as a musician. Also, if I am successful in passing, that there should be no excuse being able to commit to something regardless of having a full time job, being a parent and so on. It's really helped me manage my time and inspire me to be better with the help from the tutors.

### Future aspirations:

To continue to get better and be the best possible musician I can be. Possibly take on the masters at some stage.



### Christian Cooper

#### Where are you from?

I am from Aberdeen.

#### What instruments do you play?

I have been a singer for over thirty years in bands of various genres i.e. jazz, pop, rock, soul and trad. I have basic guitar and piano skills.

#### What or who inspired you to start playing?

Vinyl records were always played by my grandparents and parents. This encouraged a love of music during my informative years. I didn't find out I could sing until my early twenties.

#### What does your musical practice look like?

I sing in various bands so there is a lot of practicing by myself whereby I work on timing, phrasing, and lyrical content at home. I also like tinkering with guitar and piano and writing songs. My passion is working with children in creative music as it inspires youngsters and creates a warm bond between child and parent.

#### What do you love about music and being a musician?

I love that it doesn't feel like work, music builds great relationships in a band - people working towards the same goal. Making music never feels like a chore, it only brings joy. It's teamwork that makes the dream work!

#### What drew you to applied music?

I had already completed four years of music at North East Scotland College so Applied Music at UHI seemed like a natural progression to complete my studies.

#### What have been your musical highlights of your career?

Quite simply being able to sing with audiences appreciating me. Singing isn't something I knew I could do as a youngster, so it's been a thrill ever since to be able to participate in so many different bands and choirs of various genres.

#### What has been the best experience/ what did you learn most about on the course?

UHI residencies in Stornoway and Inverness have been fabulous due to meeting my peers face-to-face. I particularly enjoy our discussions as we come from various backgrounds with different goals and aims for the future.

#### What will you take away – favourite memory?

A random memory is being "conched" in Stornoway by a fellow student who took us on a sound walk. Sounds ridiculous but it was a fascinating experience whereby the conch blowing and environmental sounds were music to our ears.

#### Future aspirations:

I would like to continue singing in all genres as it is exciting and fulfilling. I also want to write fun children's music books in order to continue working with children in a fun and inspiring way.



## UHI Student Development Fund:

Many of the BA Applied Music students included in this brochure have received support during their studies from the Student Development Fund which only exists thanks to the kind support of donors. If you are interested in supporting future Applied Music students with a one-off or monthly donation you can [donate online here](#) or contact [development@uhi.ac.uk](mailto:development@uhi.ac.uk). We value every donation we receive to help ensure our students have the best experience possible.

The Uist Music Scholarship supports students to relocate to the islands with a £1K grant.

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## Contact

For more information about this

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