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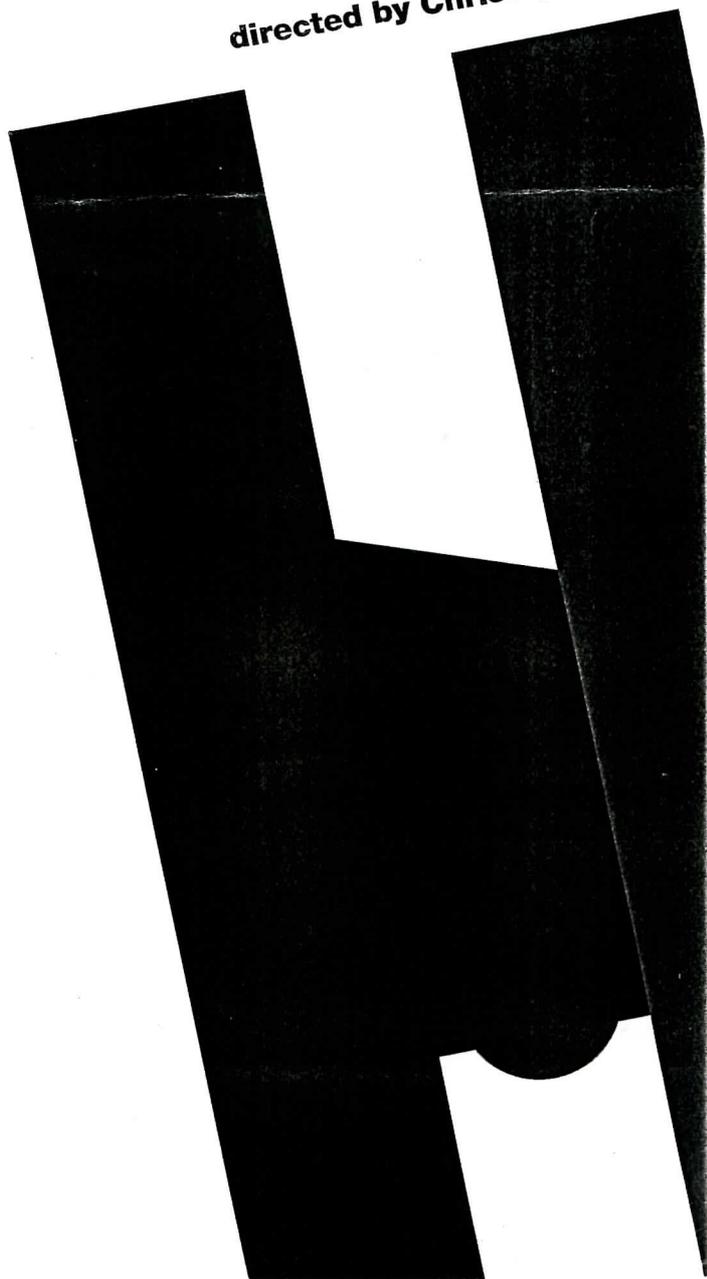
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**Youth  
Action  
Theatre**

*A Tale  
of Two  
Cities*

adapted by Mark Fitzgibbons  
directed by Christopher Ivey



# Director's Note



## Hampton Hill Playhouse

### Rules & Regulations

For reasons of safety, glassware must NOT be taken into any part of the auditorium.

Latecomers will be admitted at the first convenient moment provided that no interruption or distraction to the performers might be caused.

All gangways, passages and stairways must be kept free from obstruction. Persons are not permitted to sit or stand in any gangway.

Smoking is permitted solely in the downstairs foyer bar and no other part of the Playhouse.

The taking of photographs and the making of sound and/or video recordings in the auditorium is not permitted.

Please turn mobile phones off during the performance.

An induction loop system is installed in the Main Auditorium to assist those who use hearing aids with the relevant setting.

First Aid facilities at the Hampton Hill Playhouse are provided by members of the St. John's Ambulance.

My earliest recollection of the works of Charles Dickens was being given a comprehension test, whilst in primary school, on the graveyard scene at the beginning of *Great Expectations*. Thereafter I relied on television and film for an insight into Dickens. That changed on 5th November 1984 when I attended my first YAT production, Eric's working of *Nicholas Nickleby Part 1*. I was stunned I had always thought that amateur, when referring to theatre, meant poor quality, but that show was full of imagination, intelligent performances and technical ability, from that moment until now I have been a member of YAT and as a director I still hold that night as the yardstick by which I measure my own efforts.

As for Charles Dickens, at the prompting of an old friend I read *Little Dorrit* and discovered so much more than nice stories, here was a man at the forefront of social consciousness, mixing the war cry of reform with humour and tragedy so that the reader never felt they were being preached at. Whilst on holiday last year I read for the first time *A Tale of Two Cities* and on my return determined to track down a stage adaptation. Then when Eric, in his usual way, dangled the carrot of directing YAT again, I knew immediately that this was my chance to put on this fabulous story and hopefully recreate that night seventeen years ago when an intense young man found some purpose and direction for his energies.

Dickens regarded *A Tale of Two Cities* as his best work and I wouldn't argue with him. Written from the perspective of 100 years after the French revolution it allowed Dickens to draw many comparisons, ostensibly with England's own history and more subtly, with his own contemporary society. The play, likewise is set in the early Victorian period, when wayside inns performed re-workings of contemporary books as a way of attracting customers who would not necessarily attend the mainstream theatres. Dickens himself would tour throughout the country and give recitations of his work and would perform each character, perhaps that is why some of his peripheral characters can sometimes seem a little two dimensional, as the strain of performing just one role on the stage is telling enough. Indeed his poor health is often attributed to his remorseless work load and ethic. Whilst a child, Dickens father was sent to debtors prison and this seems to have both spurred him on, in order to avoid the same fate and motivated him to attack greed & hypocrisy whenever he could. His novels also, often feature a wrongly imprisoned person struggling for freedom or resigned to whatever cruelty fate or an ineffectual bureaucracy have dealt them. The novel is also highly critical of corporal and capital punishment, placing Dickens to the fore of yet another social reform issue.

Despite all this, Dickens is no new man, *A Tale of Two Cities* highlights the pedestals upon which Dickens placed the women in his life, no matter how briefly, and Lucie Manette is no exception. Dickens describes for us an impossible template for womanhood and perhaps it is for this reason that his own relationships struggled. Finally the story cleverly interweaves numerous strands, indeed Madam Defarge's own knitting pattern would seem simpler at first glance until the final picture is revealed in the closing chapters and we are left with one of the most famous closing lines in literature, I'm just glad it won't be me saying them.

Christopher Ivey, March 2002

# Cast Biographies

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**Michael Bishop**

This is my first performance with Youth Action Theatre. The group has helped me to develop my dramatic skills immensely and I love performing with them. I am studying GCSE drama at school and hope to do A level drama at college. My previous experience includes school plays and a small amount of television work. The thing I am enjoying most about playing the Marquis St. Evremonde is his pig like personality.

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**Catherine Burkill**

I am a first year science student at Richmond College and have done many previous performances at Hampton Hill Playhouse including *Gypsy* last November and two performances with Teddington Children's Theatre. Last year I played the lead in a charity performance of *Dick Whittington* and I have also done many performances with my secondary school, Waldergrave, including *Ragged Child*, *Honk* and *HMS Pinafore*.

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**Andrew Chamberlain**

I am seventeen years old and have been interested in drama ever since I was a child when I used to perform with my cousin. I have been studying drama for five years and have attended classes for a year now. I joined YAT about six months ago and this will be my first public performance, my past performances being solely for friends and family at school, drama class or at home.

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**Rory Cogger**

I am a GCSE student and have featured in school productions of *Grease* and *After Juliet* and YAT's production of *Amadeus*. I have been at YAT now for eight months and after getting to know the cast of this play, I can safely say they are not to be trusted. Yet they do make a good play. This is not your run of the mill production of Dickens, but we hope you like it anyway.

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**Robert Drummer**

I became a member of YAT last year and played the part of Orsini-Rosenburg in the production of *Amadeus*. My recent move from the Isle of Wight fuelled my quest for a local acting group, I found YAT. The ability to meet people who share the same appreciation of theatre is what creates the incredibly professional, yet friendly environment. Joining the group has created the opportunity for me to pursue my ambition to become a professional actor.

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# Cast Biographies

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**Tom Wright**

This is my second YAT play, the first being *Amadeus*, in which I played Friedrich the Venticello. I have also performed in *Martins Night* at the Kings Head, *A Midsummer's Night Dream* at the Orange Tree and *A Christmas Carol* at Collyer Hall Theatre. I have also written and appeared in a number of short pieces: *Estranging Rooms*, *Star Struck*, *Babies - a debate* and *Feasting off a two-headed cow*. I hope you agree with me that my beard makes me look dashing.

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**Mark Wren**

I have been attending YAT for over two years now. Productions I have performed in include *Bacchae*, *Madness of George III*, *Road* and *Amadaeus*, as Mozart. This will be my last play with YAT for the near future, however I can't see a future in which YAT doesn't play a part.

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**Tim Dance**

I am 18 years old and have studied drama at secondary school. I'm keeping my options open with the hope that I will find a niche in which I can base a career. I joined YAT on the recommendation of Tom, who I've known for 14 years and who described how enjoyable it is. It is good to share common ground with people you've known so long. If I find out I'm as good as some people have said I am, I may even be the next Tom Cruise. Be positive.

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**Please note: There will be one interval of 15 minutes.  
There will be a small explosion at the end of Act Two.**

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**The cast and crew would like to thank and acknowledge the help and assistance given to them by:**

Jasper Littman, Ben Ramsey and Steve Broderick from Lyndon Scaffold, Julien Ducouret for his coaching of the French accent, World of Fantasy for loan of costumes, the 'Health and Safety People', Zoe and Hannah for putting Chris up and putting up with him! Pauline Donaghy for loan of the bench, Joanne Fuller for help with props. Bill Compton for sacrificing his Friday Night. Finally Eric Yardley for his usual support.

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## History & Information

Youth Action Theatre is dedicated to stimulating the love of drama and theatre through drama workshops and production experience in young people aged 15 to 25.

Other than age there is no restriction on membership. Whilst the work is thoroughly enjoyed a strict disciplined approach is maintained and dedication required to achieve the maximum possible professionalism and the highest standard in the final production.

Founded in 1970, YAT's first production in spring 1971 was the *Diary of Anne Frank*. Since then, it has presented more than 70 major productions of a full range of plays including classical, modern, progressive and musical.

Since 1981, YAT has taken a production abroad approximately once every two years. The first was *Godspell*, which was taken to Hamburg. Berlin has been visited 3 times (*Cabaret*, *Merrily we Roll Along & Pippin*) along with trips to Vienna (*Accrington Pals*), Leipzig (*The musical of Billy Liar*) and Kiev with the first ever amateur production of *Blood Brothers* (when still part of the Soviet Union).

The 1995 summer tour of *Cider with Rosie*, the 1996 summer tour of *Juno and the Paycock* and the 1998 summer tour of *Adam Bede* were all taken to the Eastern Connecticut State University, USA.

In the last few years YAT has performed several world premiere plays. All of these plays were written by YAT, the first was *Ghengis Khan- Child of a the Blue Wolf* written by David Wheatley, followed by *Briticanna* and *The Great Gatsby* both written by Colin Smith. We have also been honoured to perform two plays by Jimmy Chinn (of *Straight & Narrow* fame) namely *To the Island* and *Home Before Dark*.

After this production YAT will meet at it's regular workshop/ rehearsal space at Collis School Fairfax Rd, Teddington on Thursday 4th April at 7.30pm and every Monday and Thursday thereafter. Newcomers are more than welcome!

If you have any further questions on YAT or our forthcoming activities you can call Eric Yardley directly on **020 8979 7904**

Or alternatively, look us up on the internet at

[www.yat.org.uk](http://www.yat.org.uk)

or email us at

[backstage@yat.org.uk](mailto:backstage@yat.org.uk)

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<b>Banker 2/Marquis 2/ Butler/Guard/Joe/Banker</b>	David Hookings
<b>Charles Darnay</b>	Chris Murray
<b>Cruncher/Murdered Brother</b>	Nishantha Gunatunga
<b>Dr.Manette</b>	Tim Read
<b>Ernest Defarge</b>	Adam Green
<b>Gaspard</b>	Bjarn Lyskede
<b>Inn keeper/Maid/Gabelle/ Raped woman</b>	Cheryl Stockman
<b>Jacques 1/Peasant woman</b>	Trine Taraldsvik
<b>Jacques 2</b>	Eirin Taraldsvik
<b>Jacques 3/Coachman</b>	Robert Drummer
<b>Jarvis Lorry</b>	Scott O'Brien
<b>Judge/Refugee 1/ Mother</b>	Geraldine Taylor
<b>King of England</b>	Rory Cogger
<b>King of France</b>	Miles Orru
<b>Lucie Manette</b>	Alice Morgan
<b>Madam Defarge</b>	Becky Stoddart
<b>Marquis St.Evremonde</b>	Michael Bishop
<b>Miss Pross</b>	Bryony Meteyard
<b>Mr.Barsad</b>	Andrew Chamberlain
<b>Mr.Stryver</b>	Tom Wright
<b>Peasant</b>	Kate Burkill
<b>Prosecutor/Refugee2</b>	Sarah Stewart
<b>Queen of England</b>	Alana Huson
<b>Queen of France</b>	Zoe Michael
<b>Sidney Carton</b>	Mark Wren
<b>Vengeance</b>	Carol Summers
<b>Witness</b>	Freya Morrell

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<b>Director</b>	Christopher Ivey
<b>Assistant Director</b>	George Richmond Scott
<b>Fight Choreography</b>	David Wheatley
<b>Set Design</b>	Emma Donaghy
<b>Constructed by</b>	Lyndon Scaffold Ltd, Dennis Baker & John Ingledew
<b>Costumes</b>	Eileen Baker, Margaret Williams & Alison Barker
<b>Stage Manager</b>	Lisa Morrison
<b>Assistant Stage Manager</b>	Tim Dance
<b>Lighting</b>	David Buffham, Andy Vere & Sam Crook
<b>Sound</b>	Nick Rosser, Robin Nurse & Sam

# Cast Biographies

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## Becky Stoddart



As a new member of the company, my acting experience is limited to the plays I performed in School. I have been more involved in dance, having studied ballet and jazz most of my life, performing on stage in a variety of shows. The fine art course I am currently studying on is not an entirely separate pursuit to my enjoyment of appearing on stage; it is simply another means of self-expression. I am looking forward to future productions with YAT and the chance to perform a variety of roles.

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## Carol Summers



I am seventeen years old and about to start college in September. I have been in YAT for just under a year and have played parts in several small productions as well as one major production, *Amadeus*. It is my ambition to act professionally and also to teach drama at secondary school.

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## Trine Taraldsvik



My first play with YAT (my first play ever in fact, as drama is not a big thing in Norway) was *The Madness of George III* having just moved to the UK. This show is my fifth consecutive play with YAT and I enjoy them so much I'm always looking forward to the next one as the curtain comes down on the last night. Between shows I am busy with my BA studies in Interior Design at Kingston University and no that does not mean my ambition is to present "Changing Rooms".

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## Eirin Taraldsvik



I moved to England with my family about one and a half, two years ago. My sister, the other Norwegian one started YAT then and I joined a few months later. I enjoy it a lot having been in plays such as *Road* where I stuck my tongue out too the audience and *Amadeus* where I dropped a small cake onstage, but not on purpose. That's about it. If you want to know more about me, don't be afraid to ask.

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## Geraldine Taylor



I first became interested in drama at school and joined YAT to help develop my acting ability. I have been a member for nearly two years and have appeared in five plays, including Maxim Gorky's *Fragments from my Diary*, *The Madness of George III*, *Road*, and *Amadeus* and now *A Tale of Two Cities*. I am currently studying theatre, media, English and psychology at AS level in Gumley House sixth form. YAT has given me the opportunity to widen my acting experience and develop my confidence.

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# Cast Biographies

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## Adam Green



I have been a YAT member for nearly two years now and I class it as one of the best things I have ever done. I have been in various plays with YAT, such as *The Madness of George III*, *Road* and *Amadeus*. YAT is probably the only hobby I have and I enjoy being on stage and expressing myself to the best of my ability. YAT is also a friendly group to belong to and I hope to be here for a few years to come.

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## Nishantha Gunatunga



I have been in YAT for four months now and I am really enjoying it. I have learnt many things in drama and made many new friends. This is my first play in a theatre and I am really looking forward to it. I have been in plays before but only at school. It is my ambition to become a professional actor.

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## David Hookings



I have been in three YAT productions before this: *The Madness of George III*, *Road* & *Taking Breadth*. Since joining in the summer of 2000 I have also been in two school plays; *Our Day Out* & *Year 10 Are Animals*, I also had a cameo as Obi Kanobi in *Bugsy Malone*. I am a keen musician and play guitar for a band formed within YAT. I feel that the group is a great way for young adults to grow in confidence by interacting with each other.

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## Alana Huson



I am seventeen and am in my last year studying performing arts at Kingston College. I joined YAT last June because I wanted to further my acting experience before applying to drama schools later this year. What I found was an amazingly professional acting company but also a great group of people who have become close friends. I have previously been in *Amadeus* with YAT as well as *Grease*, *Stags and Hens*, *Macbeth* and *Find Me*.

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## Bjarne Lyshede



I joined YAT in September 2000. I was in *The Madness Of George III*, *Road* & *Taking Breath*. My best role so far was playing Jamie, a tree protector, in *Taking Breath*. I play bass guitar in the band formed at YAT and we are still waiting for our first gig. I came to England from Denmark, to study drama and music.

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# Cast Biographies

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## Bryony Meteyard



I am currently studying for my A Levels at Richmond College. I have performed in a number of productions including *Cats*, *Cabaret*, *Fear and Misery of the Third Reich* and *Blood Wedding*, as well as 'The Orb' at the Unicorn and Paul Robeson Theatres and 'Alladina and the Genie' at the Orange Tree. I have also been involved in devising and performing a show based on the life and works of Federico Garcia Lorca, performing in Tossa de Mar in Spain.

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## Zoe Michael



I joined YAT in the summer of 2001. This has given me a great opportunity to do what I have enjoyed doing from an early age, performing on stage. I was very pleased when I was given the lead female role of Constanza in the production of *Amadeus*; I performed this to the best of my ability and enjoyed working with the rest of the cast and crew on the production. I am happy to be back on stage again with my friends at YAT.

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## Alice Morgan



Acting has always been a big part of my life; I have been going to weekend stage schools since I was eight and am currently attending Italia Conti, concentrating on all aspects of the performing arts. I am also studying GCSE drama and will take theatre studies at A level. Professionally I have had a small part in *The Worst Witch*, a children's television programme. I joined YAT only two months ago and was extremely pleased and surprised to get the part of Lucie Manet.

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## Freya Morrell



This is my first performance with YAT, but I have worked with Chris, the director, before in *An Enemy of the People* for TTC. I have done many dance, dram and musicals at Hampton Hill Theatre School at the Playhouse. I am currently studying theatre studies AS level and am in *Two and Road* by Jim Cartwright at Richmond Upon Thames College.

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## Christopher Murray



I hail from the noble suburb of Hounslow and went to school in Twickenham. I joined YAT last year for my heroic debut in *Amadeus*. As a blindingly fantastic fellow I am currently on a year out from full time education and plan to spend some time out of the country pretty soon.

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# Cast Biographies

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## Scott O'Brien



I plummeted into acting at the age of nine. Thenceforth, it has been one play after another – as King George, Salieri, Cadmus et al. Looking at YAT now, it strikes me that: at nearly 10 years older than some of the cast; in realising that not one costume in the wardrobe fits the way it once did; upon considering the frequent decision of directors to place me in a wheelchair, it may soon be time to bow out, following in the footsteps of many old YATs by vowing never to come back! At least for a couple of weeks...

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## Miles Orru



I have been in YAT for almost three years, during which I have appeared in *The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*, *The Madness of George III*, *Road* and *Amadeus*. I am currently studying for a BTEC Diploma in drama at Richmond College and hope to go to Drama school or university. I have enjoyed every production that I have done with YAT and hope to do many more.

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## Tim Read



I joined YAT in the spring of 2000 and have been pretty much a constant member since. My first role was as a messenger in *The Bacchae* and it has been upwards and onwards ever since. Subsequent roles include: Dr. Warren in *The Madness of George III* and Jerry in *Road*. *A Tale of Two Cities* will be my last major YAT show before I go off to university to study politics.

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## Sarah Elaine Stewart



This is my second YAT performance since joining in June 2001, the first being *Amadeus*. I moved to this area two years ago from Kent to complete a dram degree at St. Mary's University, Strawberry Hill. I am currently in my second year and have just finished a production of *East Lynne*, playing Isabel Vane. After my degree, I hope to continue my studies with an MA in theatre arts.

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## Cheryl Stockman



I have been in YAT for just over two years now. During this time I have performed in various productions such as *The Bacchae*, *The Madness of George III*, *Road*, *Amadeus* and many smaller scale presentations. I am currently at Richmond Upon Thames College studying for my A levels and hope to carry on my studies at university.

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