

STAR-POST (MUSIC)

ARTS EDUCATION AND THE COMMUNITY: BRIEF NOTES FROM AEC-APSMER 2013

The Arts Education Conference (AEC) was held on 17 & 18 July at the Republic Polytechnic, in conjunction with the 9th Asia-Pacific Symposium of Music Education Research (APSMER). It was an extremely fruitful time for the fraternity of Music, Art, Dance and Drama educators who came together to engage in generative conversations, to share their research findings and to explore pedagogical innovations that they can take back to their classrooms.

In his opening address, Education Minister Mr Heng Swee Keat talked about how powerful the arts can be in engaging students and helping them develop 21st Century Competencies. He stressed the importance of the work at STAR in nurturing a culture of teacher-led excellence. Music teachers have the opportunity to upgrade their skills in various Milestone Programmes such as the Music Teachers Practitioner Programme (MTPP), leading to the Advanced Diploma in Primary Music Education (in collaboration with NIE). In addition, Music teachers can look forward to more resources and support to help them deliver engaging, student-centric lessons in the classroom. (Do read the rest of Minister's speech by accessing this [link](#).)

After the opening address, we were treated to insightful keynotes by our distinguished speakers. Professor A. Lin Goodwin from Columbia University, USA shared about how as teachers in the 21st century, we need to embrace uncertainties, to awaken our imaginations and to envision future possibilities. Following that, Cultural Medallion recipient Mr Dick Lee gave a vivid account of how he managed to overcome various obstacles in his life to develop his identity as a Singaporean music composer and performer. Professor Lucy Green, Institute of Education, London, UK, then challenged our mental models of how teachers can best effect deep learning within students, showing that students are able to learn collaboratively through the informal approach.

The biggest satisfaction for us was seeing our music teachers rising up magnificently to the occasion. On this international stage, our teachers distinguished themselves with performances, presented papers, conducted workshops and held panel discussions on innovative pedagogy. Other teachers who participated in the conference, too, were able to engage in pedagogical discussions, meeting over lunch and tea, and forming new support networks.

In addition, the teachers and school leaders who hosted the international delegates in their schools, have left a positive impression of our arts education efforts. for our international guests! Through all these dynamic exchanges, we believe that our fraternity of music teachers will continue to grow from strength to strength!

Thank you all for your wonderful contributions in one way or another towards this successful conference!



WHAT OUR TEACHERS HAVE LEARNT FROM THE ARTS EDUCATION CONFERENCE

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It is important for us as music teachers to continue honing our craft. I really enjoyed the experience of going back to our roots, performing a medley of Singapore songs at the conference with my fellow music teacher colleagues. This was also emphasised in Mr Dick Lee's keynote address where he reminded us about the importance of having a Singaporean music identity. He has certainly left a legacy for us to develop Singaporean music in Singapore!



ESTHER JAMES
New Town Secondary School

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DARREN SANDOSHAM
St. Stephen's School

“

The conference has helped to reaffirm in me the social role that the arts has in fostering community spirit. I have also been reminded of the importance of being a reflective educator as we journey with our students in this field of the arts.

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“

I felt a connection with what Mr Dick Lee shared in his keynote address, about how he managed to overcome all the obstacles to find success as a Singaporean composer and performer. It is important for us as teachers to nurture this core value of perseverance in our students, such that they would not give up easily when they are faced with difficulties in life.



SIM YEOW CHUAN
Boon Lay Secondary School

”



ALAN TAN
Wellington Primary School

“

I've learnt that student-centred pedagogy is important. The teacher should not be talking all the time during lessons, but students should be given the opportunity to experience and respond while they are actively participating in music learning activities. In this way, students can have greater ownership of their own learning.

”

“

I thought that Lucy Green's keynote address was very interesting. She showed how informal music could be done at a Primary and Secondary school level. It was amazing to hear how students could learn so effectively without using scores and how quickly they picked up music using the informal method of learning.



CHIA HUIEN
Fajar Secondary School

”



MD DZUHRI JUNIWAN
Corporation Primary School

“

I just attended Lucy Green's aural learning workshop. I am looking forward to trying out some of her ideas with my Primary 6 pop band students. Compared to the formal approach, I believe that the students would be able to learn more songs, and to be more musically aware of not only their own part, but of what the rest of the band members are playing.

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OUTSTANDING EDUCATOR-IN-RESIDENCE (O E I R) P R O G R A M M E

As we continue to build towards a deeper understanding of how we teach and learn music, STAR is committed to develop a plethora of masterclasses, signature seminars, lectures and generative discussions that are meaningful. The focus lies in the key areas of knowing who we are as music educators, what we understand of our teaching methods and how we go about making our metacognitive processes visible in teaching. This shift in focus to meaning making reminds us firstly our role and identity as music teachers; and more significantly how as adult learners we often need to reframe our thinking as we shift towards new ideas and musicking. Music making in our classrooms can be dynamic, life-giving and energising. Essentially, the creative act of teaching and learning music takes us back to habits of mind to extend our imagination, to plan and execute with intent, and design with an end in mind. What more can we then ask for as teacher educators when abstract music concepts can be made simple for our students' understanding and enjoyment; and when music becomes part of the quality of life we add to living.

In July, STAR was pleased to welcome our three Outstanding Educators-in-Residence: Associate Professor Hong Xiangtang (USA), Ms Mari Kirstiina Koistinen (Finland) and Ms Alice Leung Mei Fai (Hong Kong, China).

The objectives of the OEIR programme are to:

- » enhance the integration of knowledge into practice;
- » increase the capacity of educators to work collaboratively in the provision of high quality education programmes and innovative curriculum design for our teachers;
- » enrich the application of knowledge by providing opportunities for classroom research, practice, and consultation which lead to positive outcomes for the teaching fraternity and for students, as opposed to pure academic research and discussions; and
- » forge sustained partnerships with international educators to give them a better understanding and appreciation of Singapore's education system, thereby improving STAR's standing in the international landscape.

Ms Alice Leung has been working with us to promote the effective use of ICT to teach music composition. ICT has unlocked many possibilities in the general music classroom, and has made music composition accessible and achievable by all students. STAR will be looking to help teachers grow in this area, so do contact us (by emailing: Lennie_Chua@moe.gov.sg) to register your interest!

A/P Hong and Ms Koistinen have been working with our teachers to promote effective vocal pedagogy through "The Singing Classroom Project," to encourage more singing in our music classrooms. We believe that this is important because our voice is an amazing instrument that:

- » is unique to each of us;
- » is free of charge;
- » we carry with us wherever we go;
- » is able to directly communicate meaning through the singing of text.

Therefore, as music teachers, we need to teach our students to use this special instrument effectively. Do look out for our next edition of STAR-Post where we will be sharing more about "The Singing Classroom Project."



**Associate Professor
Hong Xiangtang**



Ms Mari Kirstiina Koistinen



Ms Alice Leung Mei Fai

MY JOURNEY IN DEVELOPING A CREATIVE MUSIC CURRICULUM USING ICT

An Interview with Ms Alice Leung

Ms Leung holds a Master of Arts in Music from the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and is the Head of Music at the Yan Chai Hospital Law Chan Chor Si College in Hong Kong. She is an expert in the use of Information Technology (IT) to teach music composition skills to general music students. She was awarded the “Chief Executive Award for Teaching Excellence” in 2007 for her work in this field. During the Arts Education Conference, we managed to catch Ms Leung for a chat on how she developed her ICT music teaching approaches.



When and why did you start using ICT to teach music composition?

I started more than 13 years ago. At that time, I was teaching in a special education school where the students had difficulties in reading and writing. I introduced ICT music composition to them as I wanted to build in them a sense of achievement. Music composition is a creative process, and when you have a creative process there is no perfect right or wrong. Students were encouraged to express themselves through composition and they grew in confidence as we celebrated their success. This is why I believe in teaching creative composition.

How does the use of ICT make the teaching of music composition easier?

In those days, most students did not have access to a musical instrument. They could perhaps improvise a tune or two, but would find it difficult to transcribe the melody they have created into musical notation. Sometimes, students had good musical ideas and were able to sing them out, but without notation, the ideas would disappear quickly without a trace.

Now, by using music notation or sequencing software, it is much easier for the students to record their musical ideas. This approach also enables students to learn both aurally and visually. They are able to hear the music being played back, and to visually follow the musical contours on the piano roll or staff notation.

In addition, with ICT it is now much easier to modify and amend the compositions. In the past, with only pencil and manuscript paper, there was no such thing as the “copy and paste” function- the only way was to “copy and copy!”

Did you face any challenges in learning to use the ICT software effectively to teach music?

Yes, I faced a lot of difficulties.

I have a colleague who is an ICT teacher. He plays the guitar in a band and is very musical, but has never received formal

music training. He helped me to figure out how to use the ICT music software to teach musical composition more effectively. He would also remind me to stop using so many technical terms, but rather to express the music concepts in words that the students understand.

As a music teacher, we have been very well-trained in our craft, and our thinking is very different from that of our students. It is not easy for us to think from the perspective of a general music student.

How did the school support you in developing this programme?

My school and my principal have given me a lot of encouragement and support. Without this support, I would not have been able to work out a creative curriculum. They have provided an ICT music lab with workstations and software, and engaged IT support staff to help with technical issues. I always encourage my students to put up performances of their compositions at school events, to show appreciation to the school for its support.

How does the ICT music composition module help students in their personal lives?

I believe that everyone can compose using ICT, although not everyone will be a professional musician or composer.

However, once you have a creative mind, you can transfer it to all other areas of life.

Arts education in general is also very important in developing one’s character.

In life, we have to face so many challenges and problems. If you enjoy music and the arts, then your life will be more balanced. When you are down, music can refresh your soul!

In our next edition of STAR-Post, we will share about how A/P Hong and Ms Koistinen have been working with some of our music teachers to encourage the greater use of singing and the teaching of good vocal techniques in our music classrooms. So stay tuned!

THOUGHTS FROM A MASTER PEDAGOGUE

John R. Stevenson • Co-founder and co-director of the *Institute for Jaques-Dalcroze Education*

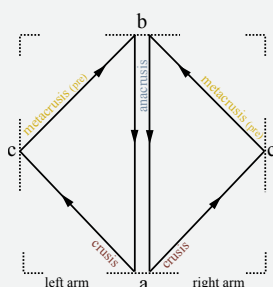


John R. Stevenson (Jack), co-founder and co-director of the Institute for Jaques-Dalcroze Education presents his thoughts in the following article - *The Crusis Lifts: An Experience in Simple and Compound Meter*. In this second part of three instalments, Stevenson discusses arm beat patterns for meters with three, four, and five or more beats.

Three Beats

As discussed in the previous issue, there can be no crusis without an anacrusis therefore, every meter must have at least two or more beats. It is a simple law of classical mechanics¹ which states, every action requires an equal and opposite reaction. The crusis reacts and the anacrusis responds. However, even though there can be no measure containing only one beat physically, they do exist theoretically. Usually, a passage of single-beat measures are instinctively grouped into larger measures. Carl Schroeder in the same text mentioned earlier discusses the one beat measure.

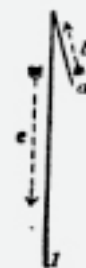
"There are also pieces in which the whole bar is comprised into one beat; — down beats exclusively. Of this sort are Waltzes and Scherzi in 3/4 or 3/8, likewise alla Breve, 2/4, and 6/8 time when very rapid...and in many cases it would be better to take two bars [or more] as one."²



Meters that have three beats contain a metacrusis that lies between the crusis and the anacrusis. Study the drawing above. Follow the arrows, and notice how the arms will now move from point **a** to point **c** then to point **b**, and finally back to point **a**. Point **c** is known as the metacrusis that follows the crusis, but more importantly it comes before point **b**. Even in the earliest text on conducting the movement from point **c** to point **b** is considered to be a preparatory gesture. Therefore, it is called the pre-anacrusis metacrusis. It is the beat that will always precede the anacrusis beat.

"To ensure this the conductor, instead of beginning straight away with the baton upon the very beat which commences the piece, takes care to precede it with a slight preparatory movement... For a piece starting with a full bar, the right arm is raised high enough to form an obtuse angle, yet permitting a slight upward movement to be made before the down beat."³

Look again at the drawing to the right and notice that the points are not equidistant. The crusis and metacrusis beats traverse the space in a 45° angle, which gives each half the distance of the anacrusis beat. The diagram is a perfect example of three different types of gestures that are out of balance. The anacrusis beat must descend at a faster rate of speed than the two other beats ascend.



Go back to the full-body squat as described earlier. Now the upward movement will consume both the crusis beat and the metacrusis beats. They must now ascend in the same space which the anacrusis beat descends. Therefore, the lift will have more resistance or force because the time has doubled, but the distance between points **a** and **b** remains the same. The anacrusis gesture will seem to be even more of a release or repose.

Now, do the same movement using only the arms and hands. This time, move the arms from the crusis point diagonally to the metacrusis point, and again diagonally to the anacrusis point, then fall freely toward the crusis point where they will rebound outward again toward the metacrusis. Maintain the same sense of buoyancy up from your heels. The arms should always move in consort with the torso; the torso should always move in consort with the knees and, the knees should always move in consort with the heels.

Four Beats

Meters with four beats contain two metacrusis lying between the crusis and anacrusis. By studying the new drawing it becomes apparent which beat has been inserted. The new metacrusis beat follows the crusis beat. The order will be the same for every arm beat pattern greater than three beats. For this reason, it is called the post-crusis metacrusis.

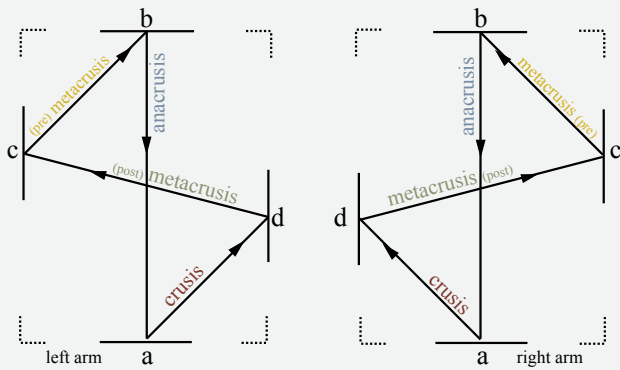
Since the time between the crusis and anacrusis further increases, and the space between them has not, the resistance between the crusis launch and the anacrusis fall is even greater when compared with the resistance in the three meter.

1. Newton's third law of physics: When one body exerts a force on a second body, the second body simultaneously exerts a force equal in magnitude and opposite in direction to that of the first body.
2. Schroeder, Carl, *Handbook of Conducting*. trans. J. Matthews (London: Augner, LTD, 1889) pg. 10.
3. Schroeder, Carl, *Handbook of Conducting*. trans. J. Matthews (London: Augner, LTD, 1889) pg. 3,4.

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THOUGHTS FROM A MASTER PEDAGOGUE

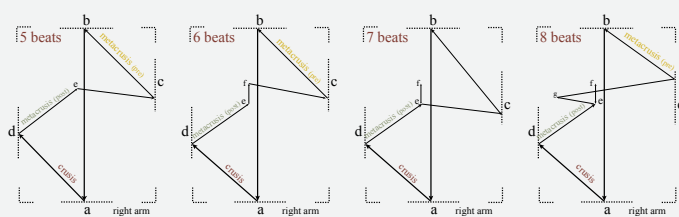
John R. Stevenson • Co-founder and co-director of the *Institute for Jaques-Dalcroze Education*



Return to the squat exercise, and then perform the four-beat gestures as illustrated above. The arms and hands will readily experience how dramatically the degree of resistance changes. Notice how each beat continually rises through the space against gravity and with resistance. Then, notice how the anacrusic gesture is the only one that moves with gravity and therefore, has the least resistance.

There is one more observation. Notice the length of the post-crusic metacrusic beat. Because it is nearly twice the distance of the crusic or pre-anacrusic metacrusis beats it must have less resistance so that it reaches its goal within the same amount of time. Therefore, when gesturing through the arm beat pattern the body will sense a stress-release-stress-release pattern. However, the first stress (crusic) is greater than the second (pre-anacrusic metacrusis), and the first release (post-crusic metacrusis) is less than the second (anacrusis).

Five and More Beats

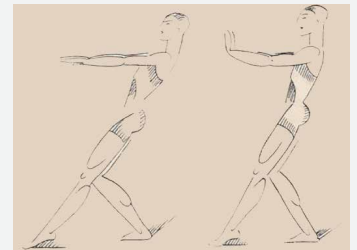


The above drawings are the original arm beat patterns as designed by Jaques-Dalcroze. Points **e**, **f**, and **g** are all out in front of the body just above the transverse plane. They are each called a mitte-metacrusis.⁴ Look carefully at each pattern and notice that there are three beats that use the same trajectory. The crusic, post-crusic metacrusis, and the pre-anacrusic metacrusis all use the same paths. The second gesture always follows the crusic gesture, and the penultimate gesture always precedes the anacrusic gesture.

To move from point **e** to point **f** as in the 6-beat pattern the hand is moved up at the wrist as depicted in the Paul

Thevanas drawing of les gests. Then in the 7-beat pattern the movement from point **f** returns to point **e** before moving on to point **c**. The order of movement would be from **a** to **d**, then on to **e**, **f**, **e**, then to **c**, **b**, and back to **a**. The 8-beat pattern includes point **g**. The order of the movement pattern is **a** to **d**, then on to **e**, **f**, **e**, **g**, then on to **c**, **b**, then back to **a**.

For many Dalcrozians these patterns are merely a part of history, and have no useful role in modern eurhythmics and solfège teaching. Obviously, they are not useful as conducting patterns, particularly since many points take place in front of the body making them difficult to be seen by an ensemble. However, they are most useful as arm beat patterns. They are very handy when conducting subdivisions or when working with compound and complex⁵ meters that move at a slow tempo.



How Measures Develop



It should be noted that the beats are not identified with numbers. Instead, the beats are given names like crusic, metacrusis, and anacrusis. Numbering beats gives the impression that beats are added to the ends of meters as depicted in the left left side of the above chart. This frame of mind will cause students to perform each meter the same way, and dismisses the possibility that each beat has its own unique temperament and personality. Conversely, when using labels for beats as in the right side of the above chart it becomes apparent that the anacrusic personality is always at the end of each measure and the pre-anacrusic metacrusis is always immediately before it. It is just as easy to speak a meter of four by saying "curse, meta, meta, ana" as counting 1, 2, 3, 4.

In the next issue of STAR-Post (Music), Stevenson will share about the arm and body swing patterns in compound meter.

4. mitte, German for middle, center, mid-stream.

5. Time signatures that do not fit into duple or triple categories like meters with a 5, 7, 10 and 11 beat pattern.

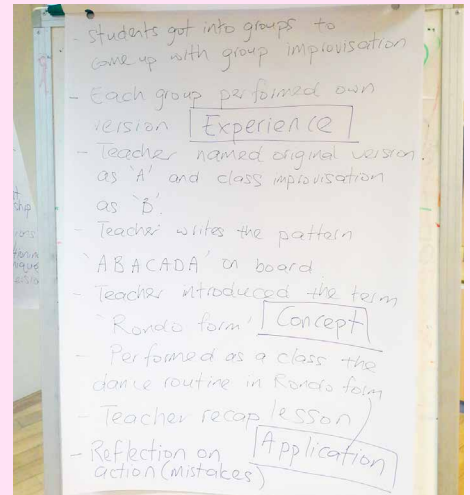
WHAT'S ON AT STAR



Our Primary and Secondary School STAR Champions have been very active last month, planning and conducting workshops for the teachers from their clusters, and promoting the use of student-centric principles within music lessons.



We believe that by incorporating these principles, our music lessons would become more engaging, and musical concepts will be more deeply ingrained in our students through the experience of active music making.



WHAT'S ON AT STAR



The 5th intake of the Music Teachers Practitioner Programme (MTPP) is on-going, with teachers being equipped with a myriad of skills and practices that they can implement in their music lessons.

The MTPP is a key upskilling programme for untrained Primary School music teachers. This will lead to the Advanced Diploma programme at the National Institute of Education, fully qualifying them as CS1 trained music teachers.

We will be accepting nominations for the 6th MTPP intake (January – May 2014) this month, through your principals. We hope to have you on-board!



P R O G R A M M E S

Milestone Programmes

Key mandatory programmes at key stages of the teaching career to achieve professional renewal, reinvention and positive transformation in teaching beliefs and practices.

TITLE OF PROGRAMMES	DETAILS	PARTICIPANTS
STAR Beginning Teacher Support Programme (Music) - Secondary	19 August 2013 3:00pm to 6:00pm STAR Blk K Level 3	All Secondary School Music Beginning Teachers
STAR Beginning Teacher Support Programme (Music) - Primary	20 August 2013 3:00pm to 6:00pm STAR Blk K Level 3	All Primary School Music Beginning Teachers
Orff Workshop *Limited Places Left!	28 October to 1 November 2013	CS1 and 2 Music Secondary teachers
Kodaly Workshop *Fully Subscribed!	28 October to 1 November 2013	CS1, 2 and 3 Music Primary or Secondary teachers

Upskilling Programmes

Programmes to help teachers become qualified music teachers or upgrade teachers in preparation for taking on additional responsibilities.

TITLE OF PROGRAMMES	DETAILS	PARTICIPANTS
Music Teachers Practitioner Programme – 6th Intake *New Intake! Applications to open in August. Email invitations will be sent to Primary School Principals.	January to May 2013	Primary Music Teachers (By school nomination)

Pedagogy Implementation

Programmes to develop teacher-leaders' pedagogical leadership.

TITLE OF PROGRAMMES	DETAILS	PARTICIPANTS
The Singing Classroom Project (Pilot)	July to August 2013 Various schools	Primary and Secondary Teachers (By invitation)

Supporting Programmes

Programmes to provide new areas of learning and broaden perspectives.

TITLE OF PROGRAMMES	DETAILS	PARTICIPANTS
Composing with World Music In this practical and hands-on workshop teachers will learn how to introduce their pupils to a wide range of musical styles from around the globe and guide them through the inspiring process of creating their own original musical compositions. Please email Lennie.Chua@moe.gov.sg for more details	22 Oct 2013 3:00pm to 6:00pm STAR	CS1, 2 & 3 Music Primary & Secondary Teachers

Communities of Practice (CoP)

Programmes that are premised on collaboration and sharing to collectively improve music skills and/or teaching practices.

NAME OF COP	DETAILS	CONTACT
Teachers' Choir	Every Tuesday 4:00 to 6:00pm, Blk K Level 3 STAR Recital Studio	* We welcome all teachers and Allied Educators to participate in the CoPs. Please contact our Programme Executive Ms Tan Bee Ngoh (Tan_Bee_Ngoh@moe.gov.sg) for details.
Javanese Gamelan Ensemble	Every Thursday 4:00 to 6:00pm, Blk K Level 2 STAR Gamelan Studio	
Teachers' Chamber Orchestra *New!	Every Friday 3:00 to 5:30pm, Blk K Level 1 STAR Music Workshop	

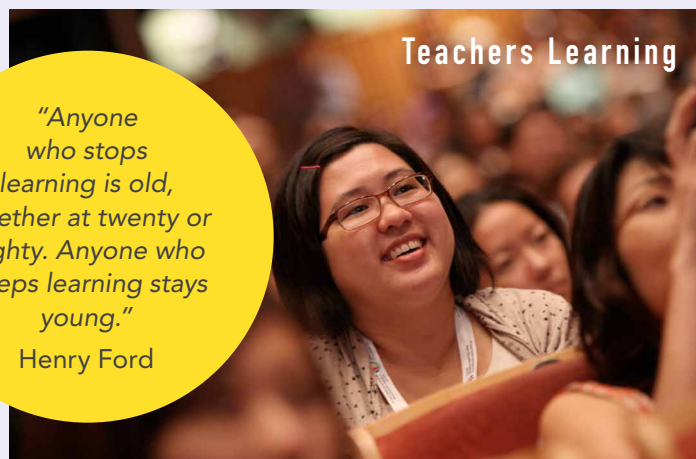
SNAPSHOTS FROM THE AEC



Teachers Learning

"Anyone who stops learning is old, whether at twenty or eighty. Anyone who keeps learning stays young."

Henry Ford



Teachers Presenting

"In learning you will teach, and in teaching you will learn."

Phil Collins



Teachers Performing

"To live is to be musical, starting with the blood dancing in your veins. Everything living has a rhythm. Do you feel your music?"

Michael Jackson



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