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Pictures at an Exhibition

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Berkeley Symphony 23/24 Season



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Message from the Music Director

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Thank you for joining us for the final concert of our 2024/25 season. I look forward to sharing this rich and colorful program with you!

I hope you will recognize Duke Ellington's great jazz standard, *Solitude*. Morton Gould's arrangement layers nuanced orchestral colors with rich harmonies for a truly stunning rendition. Jimmy López Bellido's *Aurora* Violin Concerto is a feast for the eyes and the ears. Performed here by our wonderful guest soloist Leticia Moreno, the radiant concerto pairs with a shimmering light show to paint a portrait of the Aurora Borealis. We will finish today's journey with Modest Musorgsky's wonderful *Pictures at an Exhibition*, orchestrated by Maurice Ravel.

We have such a fantastic and adventurous musical community here in Berkeley, who have been so supportive of our programs, so I want to dedicate this program to you. Thank you for sharing the afternoon with me, and for being a part of the Berkeley Symphony community.

—Joseph Young

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Today's Program

Joseph Young *Conductor*

Duke Ellington *Solitude* (arr. Morton Gould)

Jimmy López Bellido *Aurora* Concerto for Violin and Orchestra
(West Coast Premiere)

I. Equatorialis

II. Borealis

III. Australis

Leticia Moreno *violin*

Intermission

Modest Mussorgsky *Pictures at an Exhibition* (arr. Ravel)

Promenade—The Gnome
Promenade—The Old Castle
Promenade—Tuileries (Children's Quarrel after Games)
Bydlo (Cattle)
Promenade—Ballet of Unhatched Chicks
"Samuel" Goldenberg and "Schmuyle"
Promenade—Limoges. The Market (The Great News)
Catacombs (Roman Tomb)—With the Dead in a Dead
Language
The Hut on Hen's Legs (Baba Yaga)
The Bogatyr Gates (In the Capital in Kiev)

Today's concert is being recorded for broadcast on KALW 91.7 FM at a later date.

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Program Notes

Edward Kennedy “Duke” Ellington

Born on April 29, 1899, in Washington, D.C.; died on May 24, 1974, in New York City

Solitude

(arranged by Morton Gould)

Composed: 1934; arranged by Morton Gould in 1946

First recorded: on January 10, 1934, by Duke Ellington and His Orchestra for Victor Records in Chicago

Duration: c. 4 minutes

Scored for harp, celesta, and strings

“**W**e had arrived in a Chicago recording studio [in January 1934] . . . with three numbers ready and a fourth needed,” Duke Ellington recalled in *Music Is My Mistress*, his autobiography published in 1973. “The band ahead of us went into overtime, which gave me an opportunity to do my fourth number. So, standing up, leaning against the studio’s glass enclosure, I wrote the score of *Solitude* in twenty minutes.”

Thus was born one of Ellington’s most enduring compositions. “After we played and recorded it the first time,” he adds, “I noticed that everybody in the studio was moved emotionally. Even the engineer had a tear in his eye . . .”

Solitude, whose title was suggested on the spot by Ellington’s trumpeter Artie Whetsel, has inspired countless

interpretations as a jazz standard (including versions by Louis Armstrong, Billie Holiday, Aretha Franklin, and many other legends). Already later that year, they released a second recording for Brunswick Records that climbed to no. 2 on the charts in 1935. The lyrics that were later added are credited to Eddie DeLange, an American bandleader and lyricist, and Irving Mills, Ellington’s agent. Ellington himself did not record the vocal version until 1940 (featuring Ivie Anderson).

The astoundingly prolific Ellington was able to keep the music going despite the headwinds of these years of the Great Depression. But that backdrop is unmistakable in the melancholy tone that Ellington crystallizes so unforgettably (even though the early sheet music characterized the piece as a “fox trot”). Writes his late biographer Terry Teachout: “A *Mood Indigo*-style lament of hushed, almost hymnic solemnity, *Solitude* is also an example of Ellington’s unswerving determination to go his own musical way.”

What to listen for

The American musical polymath Morton Gould (1913-96) made the arrangement of *Solitude* that we hear for string orchestra, harp, and celesta for the Columbia Masterworks recording *String Time*, which was released in 1947 (it also included an arrangement of Ellington’s *Sophisticated Lady*).

Gould appends a brief, atmospheric introduction with harmonic side-steps



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before the ballad proper begins, which is echoed near the end as well. Muted strings and tremolos are used to vary the texture, adding a hint of Mahler and giving another perspective to Ellington's immortal song.

Jimmy López Bellido

Born: October 21, 1978; resides in Berkeley, California

Aurora

Concerto for Violin and Orchestra

Composed: 2017

First performance: May 3, 2019, with Leticia Moreno as the soloist and Andrés Orozco-Estrada leading the Houston Symphony Orchestra

This performance marks the West Coast premiere

Duration: c. 32 minutes

In addition to solo violin, scored for pairs of flutes (2nd doubling piccolo), oboes, clarinets, and bassoons; 4 horns; 2 trumpets; 3 trombones; tuba; timpani; 3 percussionists (glockenspiel, crash cymbals, splash cymbal, suspended cymbal, tam-tam, lion's roar, snare drum, whip, triangle, vibraphone, crotales, tom-toms, and bass drum); 3 "echo violins"; and strings

After spending a few years at the National Conservatory of Music in his native Lima, Jimmy López Bellido was persuaded by a friend who worked as a music critic to consider Finland among his options for continued study

abroad. The result was a seven-year period at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki—a period that transformed López's self-understanding as a composer. He moved to Berkeley in 2007 to earn his doctoral degree at the University of California and has been a prominent resident of the Bay Area since then. *Aurora* bears witness to the lasting impressions of his years in Finland.

López ranks among the most sought-after contemporary composers thanks to his skill as a storyteller who brilliantly wields musical colors and textures and who confidently works with large-scale forms. His symphonies and concertos take inspiration from such topics as Cervantes' final novel, the Andean condor, the sensation of fragrances, the Finnish national epic (the *Kalevala*), or, as with *Aurora*, the immersive, awesome power of nature itself.

The conductor Klaus Mäkelä has become a leading advocate, along with such figures as Andrés Orozco-Estrada, who commissioned *Aurora* during his tenure as music director of the Houston Symphony Orchestra. This was the first work López produced while serving a composer residency with that ensemble. Berkeley Symphony has commissioned López's orchestral work *Rise*, which it premiered in June 2022 in celebration of the orchestra's 50th-anniversary season.

The breadth of stylistic elements on which López draws points to a composer who—like Ellington—refuses easy categorization. Describing himself as “a hopeless idealist,” he remains committed to the larger-than-life experience that can be created by using the resources afforded by the symphony orchestra.

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Aurora is dedicated to Leticia Moreno, the soloist at the concerto's world premiere, "whose energy and excitement have been an enormous source of inspiration," according to the composer. Regarding his concept for *Aurora*, López recalls the lasting effects of witnessing "one of Nature's most spectacular displays" during the period when he lived in Finland: "the Aurora Borealis (Northern Lights). Produced by the clash of solar flares with Earth's atmosphere, the Auroras are not only a stunning visual spectacle but also a reminder that the planet we live in is constantly interacting with its neighboring celestial bodies."

López's violin concerto is not only inspired by this natural phenomenon "but takes this concept a step, or two, further," he writes. "Each of its three movements pays homage to a different kind of aurora: I. *Equatorialis*, II. *Borealis*, and III. *Australis*. The last two are observable phenomena on Earth, whereas the first is used to describe similar magnetic anomalies on other planets. The soloist stands metaphorically as

a witness to these phenomena, while the orchestra expands and amplifies [her] sounds and gestures."

What to listen for

Cast in three movements, *Aurora* invites the listener to undertake "a wondrous journey of light through sound," the composer writes. His commentary is as follows:

Equatorialis begins in a quasi-cadenza-like manner, with the violin commanding the stage as the orchestra follows, imitates, and develops its germinal gestures. As the soloist finds [her] pulse, so does the orchestra, eventually reaching several climactic points that sound familiar yet foreign with their arresting rhythms and plush orchestrations.

Borealis takes us to a place of ethereal quietude, beginning with the soloist, who is echoed by three additional violins placed strategically within the concert hall. Here, the orchestra transforms the waves of light into waves of sound,

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Australis begins menacingly in the lower regions of the orchestra, gradually growing, achieving full power, and leading to a relentless motif in the solo violin that is then echoed by different instrumental groups in the orchestra. Energy levels stay high all throughout, with tension constantly building up and being released only occasionally, thus placing enormous physical demands on the soloist.”

Modest Mussorgsky

Born on March 21, 1839, in Karevo, Russian Empire; died on March 28, 1881, in St. Petersburg

Pictures at an Exhibition

(arr. Ravel)

Composed: 1874; orchestrated in 1922 by Maurice Ravel

First performance: Ravel’s arrangement was premiered on October 19, 1922, in Paris, with Serge Koussevitzky conducting

Duration: c. 32 minutes

Scored for 3 flutes (3rd doubling piccolo), 3 oboes (3rd doubling English horn), 2 clarinets, bass clarinet, 2 bassoons, contrabassoon, alto saxophone, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, tuba, timpani, percussion, celesta, 2 harps and strings

Born into a land-owning family in 1839, Modest Mussorgsky died prematurely in 1881, left destitute by the effects of alcoholism. He came of age during a tumultuous era, when Russian identity was evolving—socially, politically, and culturally. The reforms that Alexander II set in motion in the 1860s (the emancipation of the serfs chief among them) brought into sharp focus the question of Russia’s destiny in the modern world.

Mussorgsky belonged to a group of composers based in St. Petersburg who were determined to define authentic Russian music—a quest that involved rejecting conventional Western models. In the summer of 1873, he was shattered by the sudden death of his friend Viktor Alexandrovich Hartmann (born in 1834), a multi-faceted artist he likely first met in 1868. Hartmann’s output ranged from watercolors, oil paintings, and architectural sketches to costume designs.

In *Mussorgsky and His Circle*, the biographer Stephen Walsh writes that Mussorgsky bypassed the “mediation of words” in *Pictures at an Exhibition*, creating “a realist work” whose “primary subject is the composer visiting the exhibition” assembled in 1874 as a memorial to Hartmann.

The retrospective of Hartmann’s quirky and varied artwork, the inspiration for which ranged from Russian folklore to places in France and medieval Italy, inspired Mussorgsky to write a suite for solo piano. He completed it within a mere three weeks in June 1874 and frequently played this

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series of relatively short but interlocking vignettes for friends at private gatherings. But Mussorgsky turned to other projects and left it unpublished.

The first edition of *Pictures at an Exhibition* to appear in print was a version of Mussorgsky's solo piano suite edited by his younger friend and former roommate, Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov. Rimsky made it his task to salvage what he considered publishable and/or suitable for completion from the chaos of sketches and manuscripts Mussorgsky had left behind. One of Rimsky's students was the first to orchestrate a selection of *Pictures*.

In 1922, nearly a half-century after Mussorgsky had composed this piano music, Serge Koussevitzky commissioned Maurice Ravel to orchestrate the entire suite. Ravel's orchestration soon established itself as the "standard" version of this music—the one most frequently played and recorded.

What to listen for

Pictures at an Exhibition begins with a brightly confident theme ("Promenade") depicting an imaginary spectator strolling through the Hartmann exhibition before stopping to linger and admire a particular artwork. This music provides the glue between sections and functions as Mussorgsky's "self-portrait."

A total of ten works by Hartmann is "translated" into musical terms. First is "The Gnome," a drawing of a deformed creature likely meant as a design for a nutcracker, which is followed by "The Old Castle," an architectural watercolor of an Italian castle. Drawings of

the Tuileries gardens, a place where children play but also quarrel, and of a big-wheeled oxcart ("Bydło"—Polish for "cattle") await as the spectator continues.

The "Promenade" then grows more wistful before we encounter Hartmann's costume designs for a "Ballet of the Unhatched Chicks." A pairing of what was originally two separate pictures illustrating "two Jews: rich and poor" ("Samuel Goldenberg and Schmuyle") has stirred up debate as to whether Mussorgsky intended an anti-Semitic caricature.

"Limoges: The Market" juxtaposes a scherzo-ish picture of urban life with the eerie, dark colors of the ancient catacombs in Paris ("Catacombs"). A fiercer scherzo follows in "The Hut on Hen's Legs," which is based on Hartmann's design for a clock that incorporates the image of the witch Baba Yaga from Russian folklore.

Sealing this musical monument to Mussorgsky's fellow artist and friend is "The Bogatyr Gates" in Kiev, which pays tribute to Hartmann's architectural design for a gate "in the old Russian style" (a dream that was never built).

By the end, the spectator merges with the artwork being admired. For his part, Ravel deploys a widely ranging palette and striking sonic contrasts that furthers the "conversation" Mussorgsky had initiated by reflecting on the art of Hartmann. The exquisite precision of Ravel's soundscapes invites comparison with the technique of a great painter—bringing us full circle.

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Music Director Joseph Young

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Joseph Young balances a flourishing guest conducting career with leadership roles as Music Director of Berkeley Symphony and Artistic Director of Ensembles at the Peabody Conservatory.

“Joseph Young has had quite a year . . . impressive,” wrote *Washington Classical Review* of his 2023 National Symphony Orchestra debut, which capped a year of debuts that included leading Jeanine Tesori’s *Blue* with Washington National Opera, the LA Phil at the Hollywood Bowl, and NYO2 at Carnegie Hall and on tour in the Dominican Republic, as well as collaborations with composer Du Yun, pianist Lara Downes, artist William Kentridge, bass-baritone Davóne Tines, and icon Debbie Allen.

Other recent and upcoming guest engagements include the San Francisco Symphony, Seattle Symphony, New Jersey Symphony, Milwaukee Symphony, Detroit Symphony, New World Symphony Orchestra, Spoleto Festival Orchestra, Orquestra Sinfónica do Porto Casa da Música (Portugal), the Orquestra Sinfónica y Coro de RTVE (Spain), and the Mzansi National Philharmonic Orchestra (South Africa). In July 2024, he will conduct the Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra in the Cincinnati Opera’s world-premiere staging of the *Liverpool Oratorio*, Paul McCartney’s acclaimed 1991 work for orchestra, chorus, and soloists.

Earlier in his career, Young served as the Assistant Conductor of the Atlanta Symphony, Music Director of the Atlanta Symphony Youth Orchestra and Resident Conductor of the Phoenix Symphony. He also served as the League of American Orchestras Conducting Fellow at the Buffalo Philharmonic and Baltimore Symphony Orchestra.

Young holds an Artist’s Diploma from the Peabody Conservatory, studying with Gustav Meier and Markand Thakar. Mentors include Jorma Panula, Robert Spano, and Marin Alsop, with whom he maintains an artistic partnership. Now a mentor himself, Young shapes the future of classical music through his dynamic engagements with major symphony orchestras, his steadfast commitment to teaching in classrooms and concert halls, and his service on the board of New Music USA.

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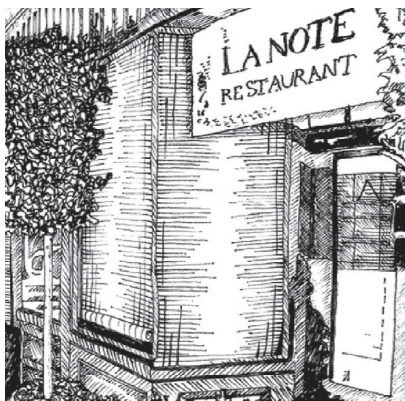


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Composer & Guest Artist Bios



Jimmy López Bellido, *composer*

Award-winning composer Jimmy López Bellido (*1978) is considered “one of the most interesting young composers anywhere today” (Chicago Sun-Times), and an “expert in orchestration” (New York Times) with a distinct voice that is “adventurous and winning” (Denver Post). His works have been performed by leading orchestras around the world including the Chicago Symphony, Philadelphia Orchestra, Boston Symphony, Sydney Symphony Orchestra, Norwegian Radio Orchestra, Helsinki Philharmonic, Orchestre Philharmonique de Radio France, and the National Symphony Orchestras of Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Peru and Spain, among others. His music has been heard in prestigious venues such as Carnegie Hall, Sydney Opera House, Gewandhaus Leipzig, Kennedy Center, Vienna’s Musikverein, Concertgebouw, Konzer-

thaus Berlin, and during the Singapore 2010 Youth Olympic Games and Lima 2019 Pan American Games. His music has been featured in numerous festivals, including Tanglewood, Aspen, Grant Park, Darmstadt, Donaueschingen, and the Nordic Music Days.

As part of the Renée Fleming initiative, the Lyric Opera of Chicago commissioned López a full-length opera based on the bestselling novel *Bel Canto* which premiered on December 7, 2015, to wide critical acclaim. *Bel Canto* became the bestselling opera of Lyric’s 2015/16 season and earned a nomination to the 2016 International Opera Awards. In 2017 it was broadcast throughout the U.S. on PBS’s *Great Performances*. His work *Fiesta!* has been performed over a hundred times worldwide, from New Zealand to Siberia. *Dreamers*, an oratorio that he wrote in collaboration with Pulitzer Prize winner Nilo Cruz, received its world premiere by Soprano Ana María Martínez, Conductor Esa-Pekka Salonen, and the Philharmonia Orchestra of London in Berkeley, California in March of 2019. Mr. López completed a three-year tenure as the Houston Symphony’s Composer-in-Residence in the spring of 2020.

López has been awarded numerous prizes, among them: a 2017 Hewlett 50 Arts Commissions from the Hewlett Foundation, TUMI USA Award 2016, Musician of the Year 2015 by Opera Peru and *El Comercio*; Honorable Mention at the 2015 Barlow Prize Competition; Special Mention at the 2015 Casa de las Américas Composition Prize; 2014

Antara Prize in recognition for his outstanding career; 2013 Prince Prize from the Prince Charitable Trusts; First Prize at the 2012 and 2011 Nicola de Lorenzo Music Composition Contest; 2009 Georges Ladd Prix de Paris, Kranichsteiner Musikpreis at the 2008 Darmstadt International Summer Course for New Music; 2008 Morton Gould Young Composer Award from ASCAP; Honorable Mention at the 2005 Irino Composition Prize in Japan; First Prize at the ALEA III 2003 International Composition Competition; and Orchestra Prize at the 2002 CCA International Composition Competition in Taiwan.

López is a member of ASCAP (American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers), Circomper (Circle of Composers of Peru), and the San Francisco Chapter of the Recording Academy (Grammy). *Aurora & Ad Astra*, a new album featuring his Violin Concerto and Symphony No. 2, was released on January 14, 2022, on Pentatone. Maestro Andrés Orozco-Estrada leads the Houston Symphony and soloist Leticia Moreno in these world-premiere recordings. *Aurora* has been nominated for a 2022 Latin Grammy in the “Best Classical Contemporary Composition” category.

López studied with Enrique Iturriaga from 1998-2000 at the National Conservatory of Music in Lima, and with Velimatti Puumala and Eero Hämeenniemi from 2000-2007 at the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki, from where he obtained his Master of Music Degree. He completed his PhD in Music at the University of California-Berkeley in May of 2012 with Edmund Campion. He is published by Filarmonika and Birdsong.



Leticia Moreno, violin

Recognized as an exciting and versatile violinist, Leticia Moreno has appeared with renowned conductors such as Zubin Mehta, Esa-Pekka Salonen, Paavo Järvi, Vladimir Ashkenazy, Christoph Eschenbach, Yuri Temirkanov, Krzysztof Penderecki, Andrés Orozco-Estrada, Josep Pons, Juanjo Mena, Gustavo Gimeno, Peter Eötvös, and Andrey Boreyko.

Moreno has performed with leading orchestras such as Wiener Symphoniker, St. Petersburg Philharmonic, Philharmonia, Mahler Chamber Orchestra, Washington's National Symphony, The Mariinsky Orchestra, Orchestra del Maggio Musicale Fiorentino, Orchestre Philharmonique de Monte Carlo, Orchestre Philharmonique du Luxembourg, Academy of St. Martin in the Fields, Orquesta Sinfónica Simón Bolívar; and is a regular guest with

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A keen recitalist and chamber musician, Moreno has collaborated with Sol Gabetta, Bertrand Chamayou, Kirill Gerstein, Alexander Ghindin, Lauma Skride, Mario Brunello, Leonard Elschenbroich, Ksenija Sidorova and Maxim Rysanov.

Moreno released her latest album, *Piazzolla*, on Deutsche Grammophon, recorded at Abbey Road Studios, London, and Emil Berliner Studio, Berlin with the London Philharmonic Orchestra and Andrés Orozco-Estrada. She has also recently recorded two CDs for Universal/Deutsche Grammophon: *Spanish Landscapes*, a study of Spanish music, and *Shostakovich*, with the Saint Petersburg Philharmonic Orchestra conducted by Yuri Temirkanov.

Moreno studied with Zakhar Bron, Maxim Vengerov, and Mstislav Rostropovich at Escuela Superior de Música Reina Sofía in Madrid, the Hochschule für Musik und Tanz in Cologne, and Guildhall School in London; and was the youngest member of the prestigious Alexander von Humboldt Stiftung. She has won international violin competitions such as the Szeryng, Concertino Praga, Novosibirsk, Sarasate, and Kreisler and has been awarded the Echo Rising Star.

Born in Spain of Peruvian descent, Moreno has developed strong ties with Latin America, especially with her country of origin, where she returns every season to perform and which has as a corollary her recent World Premiere of Jimmy López Bellido's new violin concerto *Aurora* in Houston and Lima. Moreno plays a 1762 Nicola Gagliano.

Music in the Schools



Crafted in partnership with Berkeley Unified School District, Berkeley Symphony’s Music in the Schools (MITS) program provides a comprehensive and inclusive music curriculum to over 4,700 Berkeley public school students each year and is recognized by the League of American Orchestras as one of the country’s top music education programs. Ming Luke has served as the Education Director since 2007 and continues to bring joy, laughter, and music to the students in the MITS Program.

Launched in Fall 2022, the Elevate initiative is a series of additional support opportunities to respond to two major transition points where BIPOC student participation and engagement drops more significantly than in other populations: the beginning of fourth grade, when students select instruments in band and orchestra, and high school seniors interested in music as a college path and career.

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Berkeley Symphony is unique among Bay Area and American orchestras for its commitment to innovation, community, and excellence. Founded in 1971 in the intellectual and artistic nexus of Berkeley, California, the Orchestra is committed to performing, premiering, and commissioning new music that reflects the cultural diversity and heady creative climate of its home city.

Berkeley Symphony entered a new era in the 2019/20 season under the leadership of Joseph Young, whose February 2019 debut was acclaimed by critics and audiences alike. In addition to building on the Orchestra's artistic innovation, creativity, and adventurous programming, Maestro Young, Berkeley Symphony's fourth Music Director in its 50-year history, is committed to amplifying the voices of underrepresented artists as well as telling diverse stories that reflect the local community.



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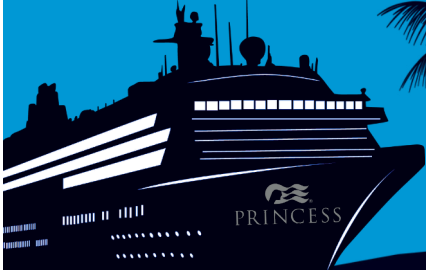
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