



Lost in Iceland  
Dakini Dance Projects 2016/17

# BLENDING

*«Dance under the microscope: Susanne Daeppen and Christoph Lavener are different. They are masters of concentration, artists of reduction. They express an amazing restraint and become moving sculptures. Every wrinkle is animated, every instant is full of tension... Time spans unravel. The venue becomes a huge resonance body in which everything pulsates, resonating further on in each spectator.»*

*Bieler Tagblatt*





# BLENDING – Lost in Iceland

Dakini Dance Projects with Susanne Daepfen & Christoph Lauener

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### Link 1 Public

#### **BLENDING – Research Dance in Icelands nature**

10:22 min Iceland 2012-2015

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=87TzIRv3jn8>

### Link 2 Public

#### **Trailer short version BLENDING – Lost in Iceland**

05:13 min Premiere Biel-Bienne 2015

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DonNQZ5dKek>

### Link 3 Organizers only

#### **Full version BLENDING – Lost in Iceland**

80 min Premiere Biel-Bienne 2015

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jl9fU6iuBqo>

# BLENDING – Lost in Iceland

Dakini Dance Projects with Susanne Daepfen & Christoph Lauener

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## Inspiration

### BLENDING Lost in Iceland

*Blending: transition, purifying, bridging, to refine, to mix, to shift*

Dakini Dance Projects 2015's new dance performance draws its inspiration from the powerful and magical natural phenomena that take place in Iceland. The two performers, Susanne Daeppen and Christoph Lauener, devote themselves to the impetuous elements of nature, which they internalize and absorb through the language of slow movement. This slow dance helps us attain a wavelength which allows us to assimilate the full density and permeability of nature. Likewise to the making of a new tea or coffee blend, our experience is refined into a new Blend of Dance and Nature. Our explorations, shaped by the abundance of natural phenomena, are refined into a dance and manifest themselves on stage and in the art space. We thereby open channels of receptiveness in the audience and touch people on an emotional level.

The journey to the elementary is simultaneously a journey to the inner landscape of the being: Dakini Dance addresses the collective longing for origin and simplicity in a complex and hectic world. The inhumane hastiness that pushes us continuously forward comes to a halt, leaving us in total wonder of the beauty and power of the living Earth. Why do we conduct our dance explorations in Iceland? Iceland is a place where you stand in wonder of the Earth moving, pulsating and being created over and over: next to bubbling holes in the ground, near roaring waterfalls, in the steamy fumes of the solfataras... ice floes drifting on glacial lakes... the sumptuous colours of gigantic lava fields left behind by volcanic eruptions. The shapes in the landscape seem to hold an echo deep within the human being. Nowhere else than in Iceland have we ever seen such a blaze of colour! In our quest as dancers, we are drawn to nature, to the human being and to light, like alchemists or archaeologists of our own self.

*«This is a living land. We see the fluid boundary of land and see move back and forth, like a courtship ritual. Ice, etched in a thousand shades of grey, lies on the land like tyranny. Under and around it tumble fire and brimstone, building up mounds which wait to be sculpted by rain and wind into ever-changing forms. Torrents roar by like eternity. Rivers and streams meander back and forth, like blood vessels in the body, transporting nutrients. And lakes, eyes in the landscape, gaze back at us.» Gudmundur Andri Thorsson*

### Participating artists

Head of production	Dakini Dance Projects <i>Biel-Bienne</i>
Idea/Concept	Daeppen & Lauener
Choreography & Dance	Daeppen & Lauener
Stage setting	Jörg Mollet <i>Solothurn</i>
Lighting designer	Brigitte Dubach <i>Basel</i>
Technical assistant	Catherine Rutishauser <i>Basel</i>
Costumes	Rachel Ghazarian <i>Biel-Bienne</i>
Sound composition	Andi Pupato <i>Zürich</i>
Management	Daniela Lüthi <i>Bern</i>
Premiere	08. – 10. Mai 2015 <i>Theater Rennweg 26 Biel-Bienne</i>

# BLENDING – Lost in Iceland

Dakini Dance Projects with Susanne Daepfen & Christoph Lauener

## Background

**Butoh as a starting point** Susanne Daepfen and Christoph Lauener's choreographic language is butoh, a very slow and expressive dance that originated in Japan. Butoh is an authentic dance, it responds to the moment and does not belong to any dance style categories, old or contemporary. It is timeless and informal. Dakini Dance's starting point is butoh, yet it clearly distances itself from the «dance of darkness», as it is known in Japan, in order to develop its own new interpretation.

**BLENDING** is the essence underlying our work: to dissolve boundaries, to crystallize transitions, to reveal the invisible; dance seen as a way to bridge. In butoh, we give no importance to existing forms and styles of dance. Butoh dancers are like alchemists: they blend and reshape what already exists. The risk of making possible what seems impossible is a source of motivation for our new production. To dance and carry out our explorations in «the youngest country» on the planet, Iceland, is a great source of inspiration.

*«Iceland is the youngest country on Earth, the only one that can still be witnessed in the making. The sole constant factor of the Icelandic land and life is change. And Iceland has remained a land of living impossibilities until nowadays.»*  
Kristof Magnusson

**About slowness and impermanence** BLENDING is about our devotion to nature. We are guests on planet Earth. The finite is subjected to the infinite. Generation gives way to decay; with death comes birth. The Earth spits up its guts. As humans, we see this as a catastrophe. Yet it is a necessity that allows for the renewal of the great cycle of life. With the dance of slow movement, Dakini Dance meets the natural elements with an alert and respectful mind, transforming essences into atmospherically dense dance images. We conducted the research for our project during three separate trips to Iceland (2012 – 2014).

**About light, matter and human kind** Five tubes suspended in the air and made of shoji paper characterize the stage set. Landscape structures are depicted on them and rolled up: they act as a symbol of the DNA fingerprint of Iceland. With their highly individual shapes, they stand out clearly against the white background. The painted structures and colours gleam through the delicate paper and vary according to the light. Simultaneously, shadows fall onto the stage. All along the dance journey, the lightness of the suspension objects gives way to the vertical force of standing: pillars with three-dimensional shapes appear, the DNA print reveals new facets: Blending is taking place.

**About vibration and revelation** Dakini Dance Projects has chosen a sound collage of electronic elements and sounds of nature, from which pearls of classical music filter through. It is a composed and dense vibration that reveals the wonder of life. This sound collage created by Andi Pupato is the acoustic part of the stage installation.

DANCE VIEWED UNDER A  
MICROSCOPE – SUSANNE  
DAEPPEN AND CHRISTOPH  
LAUENER ARE DIFFERENT  
THEY ARE MASTERS OF  
CONCENTRATION ARTISTS  
OF REDUCTIVE ART THEY  
CONVEY AN INCREDIBLE  
RESTRAINT BECOMING  
MOVING SCULPTURES  
EVERY SINGLE PLEAT IS  
ENLIVENED EACH INSTANT  
IS FULL OF TENSION  
ENTIRE SPACES OF TIME  
OPEN UP THE WHOLE VENUE  
BECOMES A BODY OF  
RESONANCE IN WHICH  
EVERYTHING VIBRATES  
TOGETHER AND REMAINS  
VIBRANT IN EACH  
INDIVIDUAL SPECTATOR FOR  
A LONG TIME  
BIELER TAGBLATT

## Susanne Daeppen

*Dancer, choreographer, certified dance and yoga pedagogue*

As a dance professional from canton Berne, Susanne Daeppen began creating her own dance form, the Art of Slow Movement, 20 years ago. From today's perspective, one can truly call her a pioneer and a visionary: in the meantime, the working and cultural spheres of life have also embraced the shift toward slowing down, or «Slow Movement», thus promoting new ways of thinking about politics and society.

For her training, Susanne Daeppen has always sought a direct path to the founders and masters of autonomous philosophies of movement, from whom she learnt firsthand. Her dance studies led her to Japan (Kazuo Ohno), New York (Martha Graham School, Anna Sokolow and Eiko & Koma) and to the likes of Annemarie Parekh in Switzerland. Susanne Daeppen deepened her yoga studies with yoga master Mark Whitwell (L.A., New Zealand), the co-founders of Jivamukti Yoga David Life & Sharon Gannon (N.Y.) and Suresh Kumar (CH/India).

Thanks to her long-lasting yoga practice, Susanne Daeppen has withstood the physical demands of a career in dancing and teaches yoga and butoh with full passion. Her dance studio, the Dakini-Tanzwerkstatt in Nidau, is a meeting place open to all: artists, professional dancers and amateurs. She is sought both nationally and internationally as a director of workshops, dance pedagogue and for talks, and her direct approach generates enthusiasm, be it at the Paul Klee Center, the Tanzkultur Uni in Bern, the Swiss Art Therapy Foundation, the Northport Arts Coalition, N.Y., or cultural institutions in Merano and Orta, Italy.

Susanne Daeppen is author of the book «The Art of Slow Movement - A Dance from Nature to the Soul». (ISBN 978-3-905297-23-2)

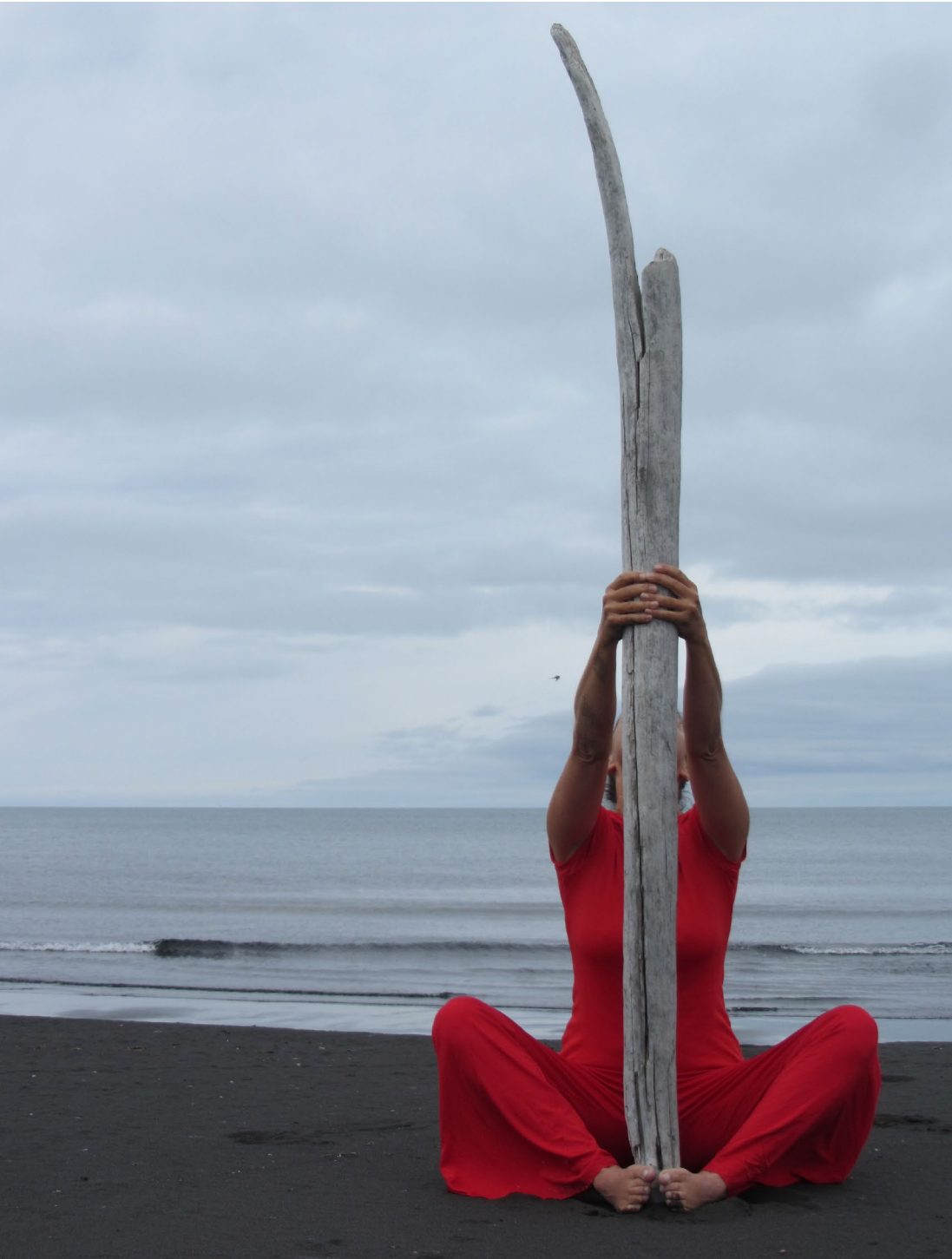
### Scholarships / Prizes / Grants

2015/16	Winner OFF-Stage-Award from Council of the Art, Bern for research in Iceland
2011	Cultural Award of the H. Danioth Foundation for the Arts
2004	Cultural Prize of the City of Biel-Bienne
Since 1990	Public authority funding
1987-1988	Grant for dance studies in N.Y. from canton Berne
1986-1988	Scholarship at M. Anthony Dance Theater, N.Y.

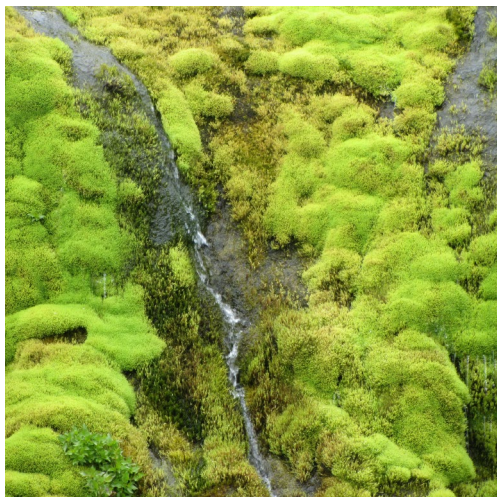
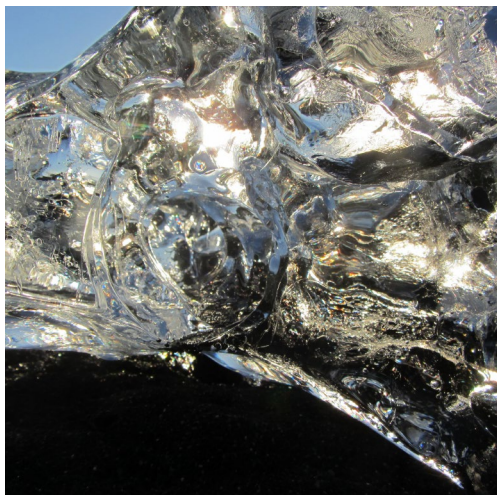
### Productions / Engagements

2015	BLENDING CH / I / N.Y.
2013-2014	Child's Breath CH / D / I / N.Y.
2011-2012	SILK CH / I / N.Y.
2006-2014	The queen/king inside CH
2007-2010	Twilight - Dancing into the light CH / I
2003-2010	Fragile CH / I / N.Y. / JAP
	The human Plant CH /
2000-2002	Hyperballad CH / D / I / A
1998	Invisible Portraits CH
1996	Skin of a Soul CH
1993	Hanae... Schrei im Wind CH
1992	Eating Life CH
1990	Die zwei Fridas N.Y. / CH
1990	Earth Dances CH
1986-1988	div. Choreo-Show-Cases N.Y.
1987	Woman... Cry! N.Y. / CH

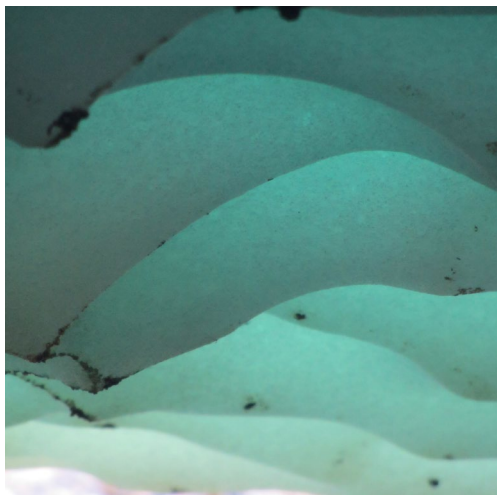
















Christoph Lauener

*Dancer, choreographer, certified dance and yoga pedagogue*

«eagle-motion» acquaints us with an artist who has a strong bond with his power animal, the eagle: gracefulness and strength, foresight and freedom, precision and discernment. «King of the air in a kingdom of infinite possibilities» is a good way to depict Christoph Lauener and his work. With his label «eagle-motion», he proves himself an authentic souldancer and bodyworker.

In the past 15 years, Christoph Lauener has developed steadily his movement language and refined his craft. This led him from movement acting to contemporary dance, with Denise Lampart and Hervé Diasnas. By studying the Franklin Method and the techniques applied in Esalen massage, he found complementary disciplines suited to his talents. As a bodyworker, he gives massages in Zurich, Bern and Biel-Bienne and leads workshops in Switzerland and abroad.

In October 2014, Christoph Lauener became a certified yoga teacher under the mentoring guidance of yoga master Mark Whitwell, in Fiji.

His encounter with the dancer Susanne Daeppen can be regarded as a stroke of luck. The «Art of Slow Movement» not only fulfilled his soul-aspiration: their affinity in the way of experiencing nature, being an artist and experiencing life itself has found resonance in the couple they form in dance and in life.

To date he has not written a book... And yet, no less than 9578 photos are waiting to be selected and published.

## Awards

2011 Cultural Award H. Danioth Foundation for the Arts

## Productions / Engagements

2015	BLENDING CH / I / N.Y.
2013-2014	Child's Breath CH / D / I / N.Y.
2011-2012	SILK CH / I / N.Y.
2009-2012	... meine süsse Süsse! CH / N.Y.
2008	Twilight - Dancing into the light CH
2004	Last Call... CH
2003	Renaldo 2 & Clara 3 CH
2002	Magie de l'Energie Expo.02 CH
2001	Founded item tanztheater

## Participating artists

### **Jörg Mollet** *Painter*

Jörg Mollet lives and works in Solothurn. In the course of his extensive travels throughout India and Japan, he explored the philosophies of Asia as well as Eastern aesthetics. During his further pursuits, he discovered Japanese shoji paper, which he has been using for many years with his large-scale paintings and sails, or in the spatial installation that can be seen at the Franciscan Church of Solothurn. After SILK, BLENDING is his second collaboration with Dakini Dance Projects.

### **Brigitte Dubach** *Lighting Designer*

Brigitte Dubach is a much sought-after lighting designer working for the Swiss dance scene. She has toured extensively abroad. She shows careful attention to detail and a great deal of commitment to the topics developed in her work. Through her aesthetic use of lighting, she has forged a distinctive signature. She realised sophisticated lighting concepts for Hyperballad, Invisible Portraits, Fragile and SILK.

### **Catherine Ruthishauser** *Technical Assistant and Lighting*

Catherine Ruthishauser is an artist with international experience. She is a founding member of the circus theatre Cirq'uenflex. During 11 years, she toured Switzerland, Germany, France and South Africa (Sirkona Project), working as an artist, head of production, technician and putting up marquees. Since 2003, she has worked mainly as a lighting technician with artists such as Cie Be Willie, Zimmermann & de Perrot, Anna Röthlisberger, Eugénie Rebetez, Savannah Bay, Tiziana Arnaboldi, Serena Wey and Dakini Dance Projects.

### **Rachel Ghazarian** *Costume Designer*

Rachel Ghazarian runs her own fashion design atelier in Biel-Bienne. She advises, designs and creates custom-made clothing according to individual requests. Her clients include Twin Productions, Caran d'Ache, artists working in the fields of dance, theatre and music, as well as magicians. She teaches further education and preparatory courses for fashion students at the Basel Academy of Art and Design as well as at the Vocational College of Basel.

### **Andi Pupato** *Percussionist*

Andi Pupato is an established percussionist of international renown as well as a sound engineer at the head of his own sound studio in Zurich. His percussion artistry can be listened to in live bands, on film soundtracks and on over 30 albums in a variety of musical genres, from jazz to rock: Andreas Vollenweider, Nik Bärtsch's Ronin, Don Li, Thierry Lang, Valeri Tolstov, Chico & the Gypsies, Nina Corti, Mich Gerber, Gotthard, Seven, Grand Mother's Funk, Marc Sway, etc. Andi Pupato is a lecturer at the Universities of Lucerne, Bern and Basel.

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## Tour 2015

Premiere Theater Rennweg 26 *Biel-Bienne*  
08 – 10 Mai 2015 (4 performances)

Centro d'Ompio, *Orta/Italy*  
12 August 2015

7 Gardens of the Art of Living, *Merano/Italy*  
28 August 2015

Theater (uri) *Altdorf*  
19 & 20 September 2015 (3 performances)

Northport Arts Coalititon, *New York/USA*  
14 October 2015

## Tour 2016/17 (in planning)

Bozen / Italy

Basel

Zürich

Bern

Fribourg

Olten

St.Gallen

Munich / Germany

Reykjavik / Iceland

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## Spectators' comments

«BLENDING – Lost in Iceland transposes perfectly the natural beauty of Iceland into an emotional dance performance. BLENDING exerts a total fascination through its symbiosis between dance, costumes, music, light design and stage installation, fusing them into one and casting a spell on the audience. The dynamism and the way in which the theme, slowness, is transposed into dance are enthralling. Combined with a striking, fluctuating stage installation and a subtle, harmonious lighting, BLENDING becomes a full emotional experience.»

*Peter Battanta, filmmaker Biel-Bienne*

«Long live slowness! Although I have never been to Iceland, I experienced the island's powerful natural phenomena at a deep level. The danced «pictures» are totally fascinating, from the beginning until the compelling end. The dance performance BLENDING - Lost in Iceland is in my view an impressive, joyful experience. I am impressed by the professionalism, heart and soul displayed by the two dancers.

The dancing, the costumes, the stage installation, the music and the lighting create a harmonious unity marked by its quality and its sobriety.»

*Germaine Winterberg, former Director Völkerkundemuseum Basel*

«You slowly walk out of this beautiful performance and head back to your everyday life with a deep sense of peace and happiness. Rachel Gahazarian's costumes are heavenly beautiful.»

*K. Kuhn*

«Deeply absorbed by your performance, I was amazed by your clarity and attention, by your transparency and intensity. I was very impressed by your global masterpiece BLENDING. I was deeply moved by your presence, the flow and the interaction between the scenic design, lighting, sound and dance.»

*M. Wittenwiller*

«The glacier rolls out, the river cracks, the troll dances, the Goddess sails by and the spectator dreams. Absolutely beautiful!»

*A. Mathis*

«As I watched you dancing, I felt bound in an ongoing process of creation.»

*E. Kreis*

«I no longer need to go to Iceland, I have already been there: yesterday - with BLENDING.»

*M. Zahner*

«It was awesome!»

*D. Daeppen*

Photos nature	Dakini Dance Projects
Photos stage	Marcel Meier
Cover picture	Sigurgeir Sigurjónsson Aerial view of the Jökulsárlón glacial lagoon, Southeast Iceland

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