

Tattoo You

Title

Tattoo You was not a new studio album. It is composed primarily of outtakes from previous recording sessions from the 1970s. The Stones wanted to tour behind a new album for their

The earliest songs used were cut in late 1972 during the *Goats Head Soup* sessions: "Tops" and "Waiting on a Friend." "Start Me Up", originally called "Never Stop" was from 1978 during the *Some Girls* sessions along with "Hang Fire" and "Black Limousine." The *Black and Blue* sessions yielded the backing tracks for "Slave" and "Worried About You." The basic tracks for "No Use in Crying", "Little T&A", "Neighbours", "Heaven" and "Hang Fire" came from the *Emotional Rescue* (1980) sessions.

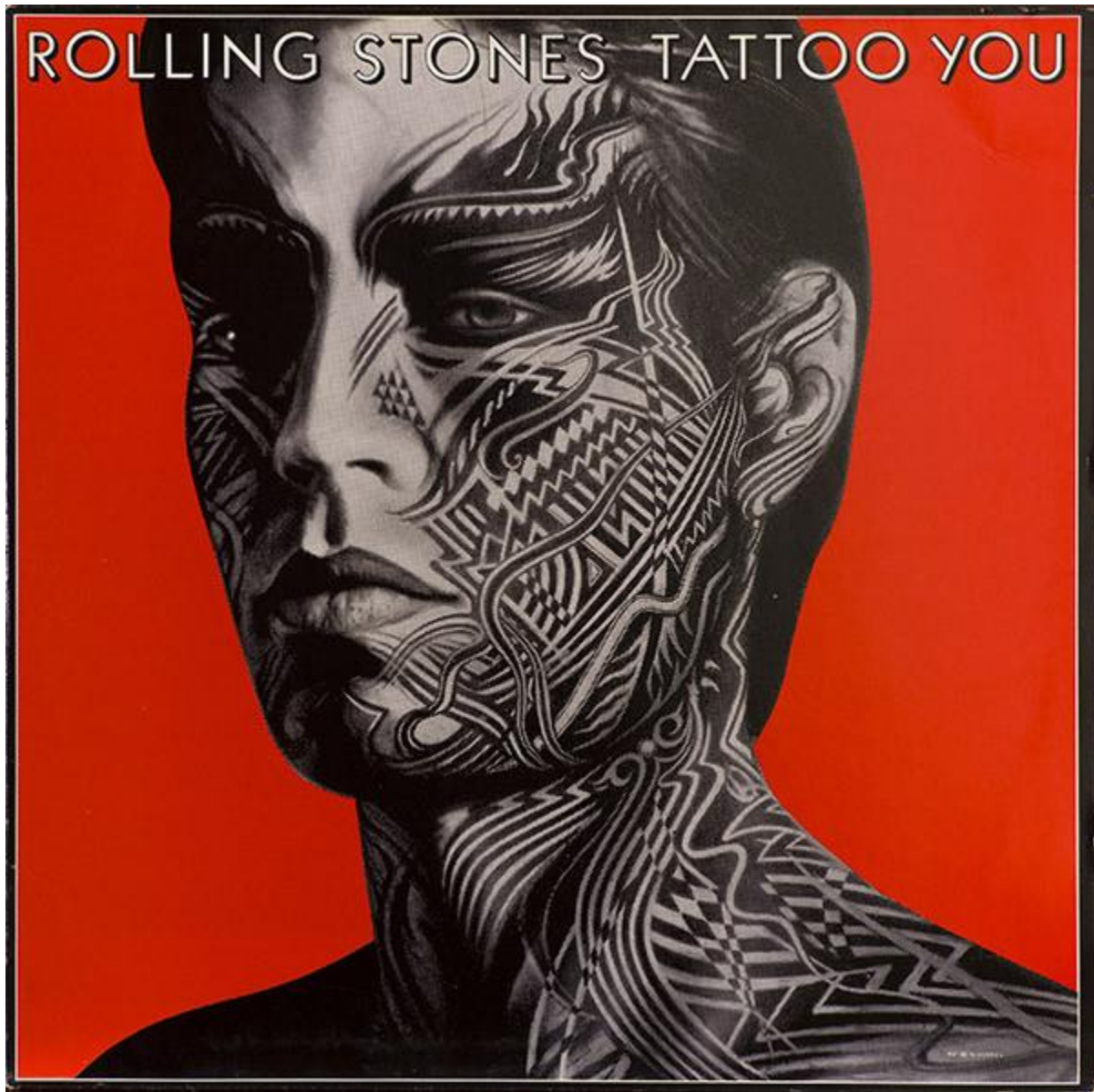
upcoming North American and European tours. Chris Kimsey, associate producer for the album said, "*Tattoo You* really came about because Mick and Keith were going through a period of not getting on. There was a need to get an album out and I told everyone I could make an album from what I knew was there." The album was originally going to be called *Tattoo*. One version of the final title's evolution is that Richards power in the band was still weakened by his drug use in the early eighties, and many decisions were still being made around him and for him. When the album came out as *Tattoo You*, Keith was surprised and not happy with the change exclaiming, "What's this *Tattoo You*?"

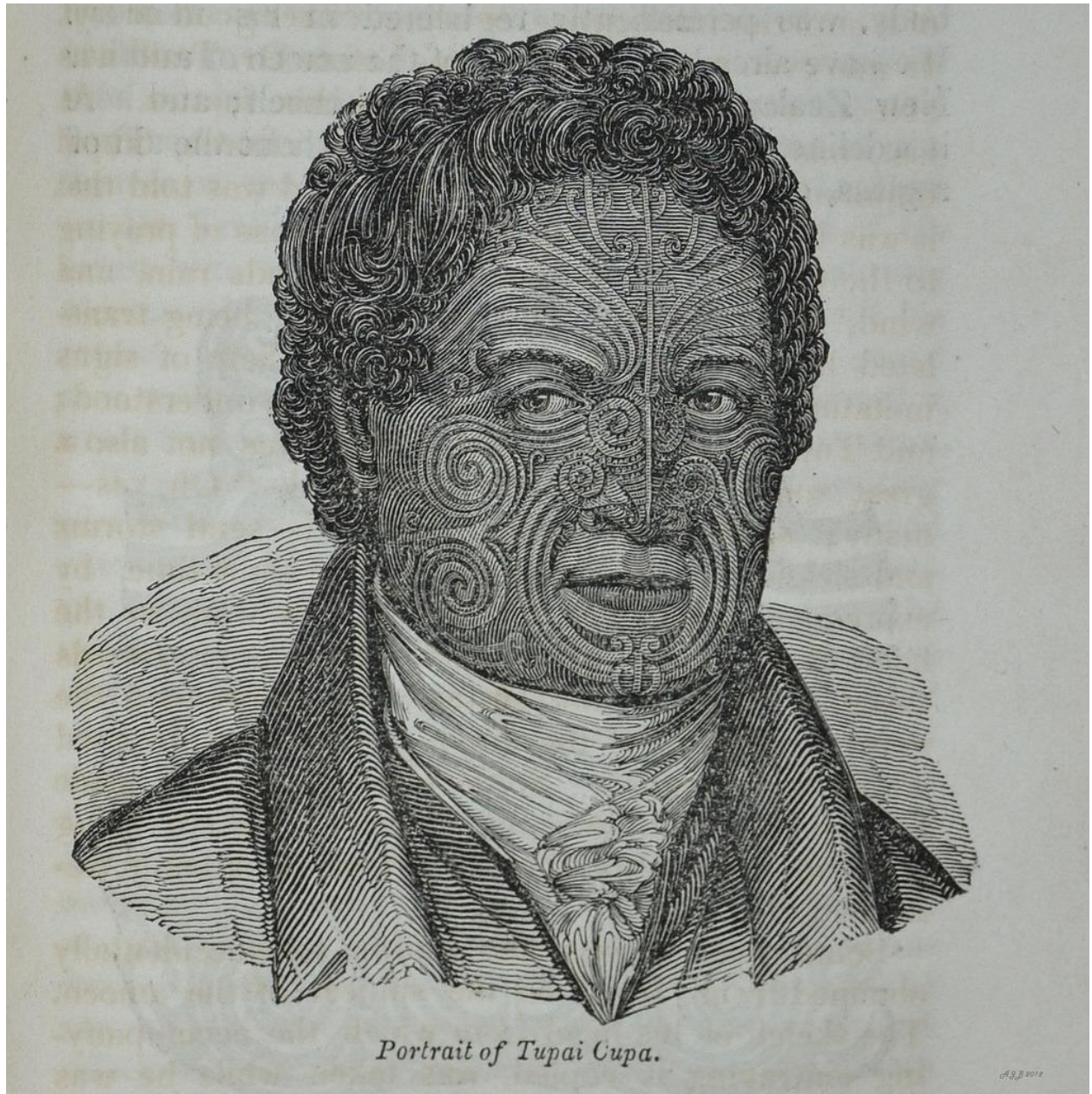
Jagger claims to this day that he has no clue how the "You" became attached to the title. This was just another nettle in the Jagger/Richards relationship as Richards suspected that Jagger had changed the title without seeking his input. In a 1981 interview Mick Jagger said, "We called it *Tattoo You* because we had these paintings by that guy [Christian Piper] and we just didn't know what to call it....Some friend of mine from Pharoah [sic] Island did these paintings....they're actually photographs but with that tattoo painting on them. I saw him do some other stuff and we liked them so I gave him a couple of pictures and asked him to do them like that. Then we used them for the cover. We had lots of different titles but in the end we decided to call it that." Hubert Kretzschmar, photographer, said, "The idea to give Mick and Keith a facial tattoo was based on a previous illustration that Christian made. I remember an upper torso covered with a tattoo. So, to use the title "Tattoo" is relatively close. The title was a reference to the cover art." Kretzschmar, when asked about the mysterious "You" addition said, "There was some issue with calling the album only "Tattoo" so Christian added the word "You"...Christian suggested that title and Mick used it." Mystery solved. The album was released 24 August 1981. It won the 1982 Grammy award for Best Recording Package.

The Cover Art

The cover art, like the cover of *Goat's Head Soup*, featured Mick Jagger on the front and Keith Richards on the back. No images of Bill Wyman, Charlie Watts, or Ron Wood are found anywhere on the album. Jagger is covered in tribal tattoos and set against a bold red background with the band name and album title above. The labyrinth of tattoos was illustrated by Christian Piper. Jagger's face has been likened to Queequeg the cannibal harpooner in

Moby-Dick. An 1830 woodcut of Tupai Cupa, a Maori leader, provides an excellent prototype for Piper's work. The boldness of Jagger's heavily tattooed face, inked to a haunting degree, in grayscale against a strikingly red background cannot help but stand out. A great many people did not recognize the face as Jagger's and more than a few wondered who the 'woman' on the cover was.



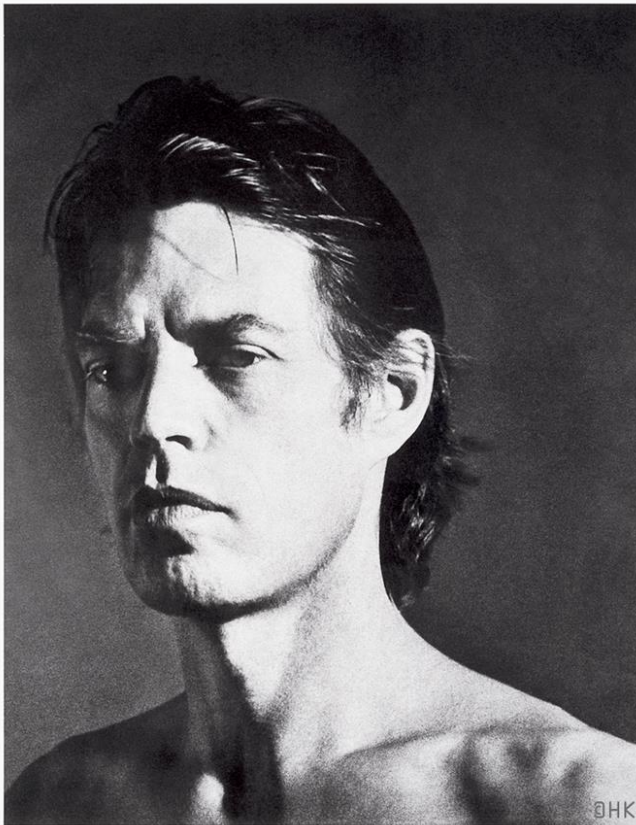


Portrait of Tupai Cupa.

Timeisonourside.com notes that on May 24, 1981, "Keith Richards sends a telegram to Ron Wood and Bill Wyman to show up in New York City for a band meeting - Be here tomorrow or you're not on the album cover -, then flies off for a holiday with Patti Hansen in Florida. This may indicate roughly when the photos were taken and perhaps why other Stones did not appear on the cover.

Kretzschmar took the photos for the album in June, 1981 in New York at his Tribeca Studio on West Broadway. He and Piper were actively engaged in pitching ideas for the cover to the Stones. Kretzschmar said, "During this time period me and Christian created a batch of different concepts, the "Tattoo" treatment being just one of them. Peter Corrison's claim that he originated the concept, is also not true. Peter had a typesetter who set a few title type variations, which was the extent of his alleged design. Peter was the go between, between Christian, myself, the graphics production house and the band. For that role he gave

himself the title "art director", which was a complete fabrication. His later claim and grab of the Grammy award for best cover did not mention Christian's or my work at all." Kretzschmar added that there a few interesting unseen treatments of the cover he hopes to include in a book he is working on. He said some of them are out on the web and he has a few color tests and a few prints in black and white in his archive. Asked why only two Stones appeared on the album Kretzschmar said, "It was a decision that Mick and Keith must have made. I remember Charlie was at the photo shoot with both of them, no effort was made to get him to pose or be part of it."



Kretzschmar's photograph of Jagger used for the front cover of the album is a stark black and white portrait depicting Jagger in a nude bust portrait. This photo became the art used to make the cover. It has been known for quite some time. Finding the photograph used for Richards has been more of a challenge. When asked if he has ever shared that photo used for the album, Kretzschmar said, "Christian had my negatives in his possession and I forgot to ask for them to be returned. At some point in the 90's he sold them to Keith's office (Jane Rose) without telling me, because he was low on funds as he admitted to me later."

Piper and Kretzschmar shared Kretzschmar's New York apartment at

the time of the Tattoo You work. Kretzschmar said of his temporary roommate, "At the time Christian, a buddhist, had returned from a six-month retreat from a monastery and had no earthly possessions...Christian was living with me at the time that we worked on this cover."

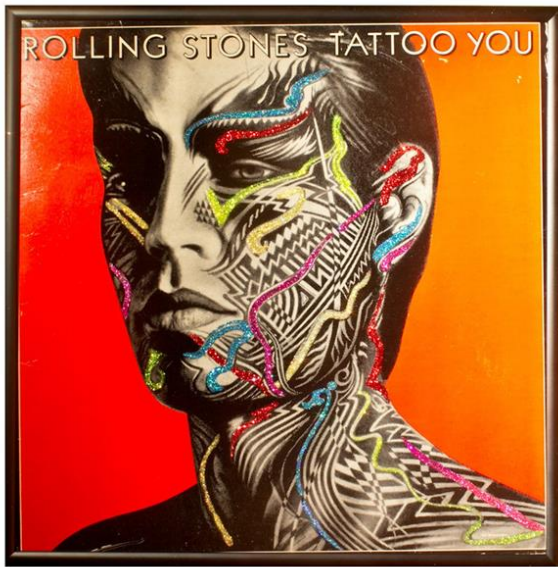
Describing the process of working with Piper on the cover art Kretzschmar said, "There were a few tests and trials, I helped with some color tests and prepared the prints that he used for the final artwork...The three of us worked on previous projects for the Stones. At a certain point I told Christian that I wanted him to take credit for the cover since most of the work was his illustration and I knew I would have another shot at doing a cover in the future."

The rear cover features the heavily inked face of Richards, also in the Maori style, against a vibrant green background. The track list appears in a small all caps red ink font to the left of the bridge of Richards' nose.



Album Cover “Enhancements”

Many album covers have lent themselves to imitation art (see Ken Orth’s Meet the Look-Alikes https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=meet%20the%20look%20alikes&epa=SEARCH_BOX). Tattoo You was especially enticing for artists who enhance the cover. Michel Rosenthal has created a series of glittered album covers.



Hubert Kretschmar, the photographer for this project, has also applied his artistic touch to the original photos of Jagger and Richards. The tattoo art has been hand-tinted with red, yellow, blues, green, pink, violet, and orange. These are digital on watercolor paper prints.



The Inner Sleeve

The cardboard inner sleeve was a simple design. On one side was the photograph/painting of an animal's foot fashioned into a high heel shoe. Kretzschmar said, "The goat's foot is an airbrush and photo collage and was an illustration that Christian made, as far as I know a one color black and white image." The high-heeled goat image became the sleeve for the Stones August 1981 release of the single "Start Me Up." On the upper left side of this image are three lines of text in blue, red, and green. They comprise the album credits. The credits, by color, say:



Produced by: The Glimmer Twins Recorded at EMI, Paris & Nassau, Bahamas Associate

Produced and Engineer Chris Kimsey for Wonder Knob LTD

Mixed by: Bob Clearmountain Three Paintings by: Christian Piper Art Direction: Peter Corriston

Mastering by: Bob Ludwig for Masterdisk

The flipside of the inner sleeve presents a pattern of black and white lines with no other images and no text. The pattern was Kretzschmar's contribution, one he admitted lifting from a design source book.



The image below shows a close-up detail for the pattern on the sleeve. It is a series of white and gray tone “cylinders” separated by black space.



One writer has remarked that compared to the elaborate cover design the inner-sleeve is ultra-minimalist with no written credits or thank yous. That is mistaken, there are a few credits on the animal hoof side. But the flipside comprises only the pattern above. Several writers have theorized the Stones were practicing some deception with this strategy so they would not have to admit that *Tattoo You* “was a ragbag of tarded-up discards” nor would they have to acknowledge that Mick Taylor and others played parts that were clearly not the work of Richards or Watts. Even saxophone virtuoso Sonny Rollins did not get a word on this album. Another theory is that the album was being put together quickly for the upcoming tour and there simply was not time to do a more formal acknowledgment. Asked about this in a 1981 interview for CREEM magazine Jagger said, he couldn't remember everyone that was on the tracks and couldn't be bothered and just decided it didn't matter since everyone was paid at the time. This has spawned another theory that Jagger was hoping the passage of time would have dulled the memories of the many contributors and he did not want to give them an invitation to come chasing him down for money with the confirmation of their contributions. Taylor, who was not credited, later demanded and received a share of the album's royalties.

Kretzschmar does not buy the conspiracy theories, “...we were not aware of what songs were used or where those recordings originated. And I [am] sure there is no deception going on as far as the band is concerned. As a visual artist creating album packages it was very rare for me to hear what music I was creating a package for. I knew what genre and maybe got a song title or a few titles. For example, I started to do *Some Girls*, only with the title of the song “Lies” that was all I had to work with. The reason that inner sleeve seems minimalistic was that there was a release date set and we had to scramble to put the package together.”



An early version of the album with one of Peter Corrison's alternative typesetting styles.

Repurposed Album Art

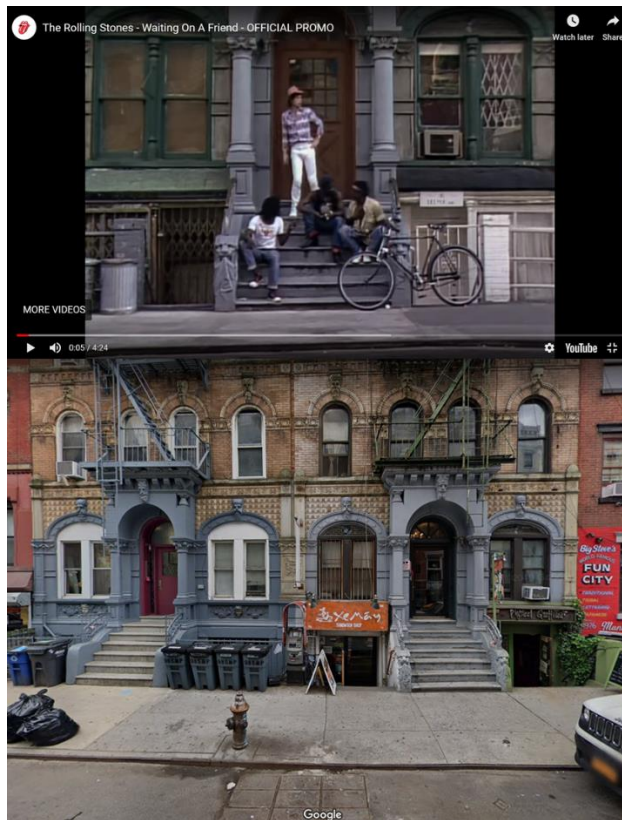
Creating the album art was a major undertaking and the Stones team took great care to get the most out of their artist's efforts. The sheet music for the Tattoo songbook was enclosed in the cover seen below, lifted directly from the album's cover. The sheet music for Start Me Up was enclosed in the inner sleeve art. This was very similar to the sleeve for the 45 RPM single release of "Start Me Up."



A Nod to the Videos

Album art was becoming more than just the album cover. In the 1980's videos were becoming an expected adjunct for experiencing the music itself. Videos presented an avenue for additional artists to contribute to the experience of an album. Videographer Michael Lindsay-Hogg created two videos for the album. "Neighbours" is an homage to Alfred Hitchcock's film "Rear Window." The Stones can be seen playing through one apartment window. Each of the other five apartment windows tells a different story, including a couple in foreplay, t'ai chi practice, and a man putting bloody body parts in a suitcase. This video was heavily censored when on TV. On July 2, 1981 "Waiting on a Friend" was filmed on location in New York City's East Village, where Jagger waits on the front steps of 96-98 St. Mark's Place. This is the same building used by designer Peter Corriston immortalized in the cover art of Led Zeppelin's 1975 album Physical Graffiti. Keith arrives, shakes hands with the late reggae musician Peter Tosh, and the two head off to jam with the rest of the Stones at a local pub.





Stones videos, Zeppelin cover, Google Earth April 2020

The Tour Stage

The set was 65 feet wide. Each wing added another 80 feet. The original paintings used in the stage design were by Japanese artist Kazuhide Yamazaki.



Cast of Characters



Peter Corrison, art director is seen left, Christian Piper, illustrator is in the middle, Hubert Kretzschmar, Photographer is on the right.

Recycled Artists and New Art

At times, over the years, the Stones have tended to try a new artist or photographer for their album covers, liked their work and then reused them for a series of covers before moving on in a new direction, sometimes propelled by the unavailability of the artists based on their volume of work spurred by their work with the Stones! Corrison and Kretzschmar were following in the footsteps of photographers Nicholas Wright, David Bailey, Gered Mankowitz, and Ethan Russell and artist Andy Warhol. They collaborated on *Some Girls*, *Tattoo You* and *Undercover*.

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