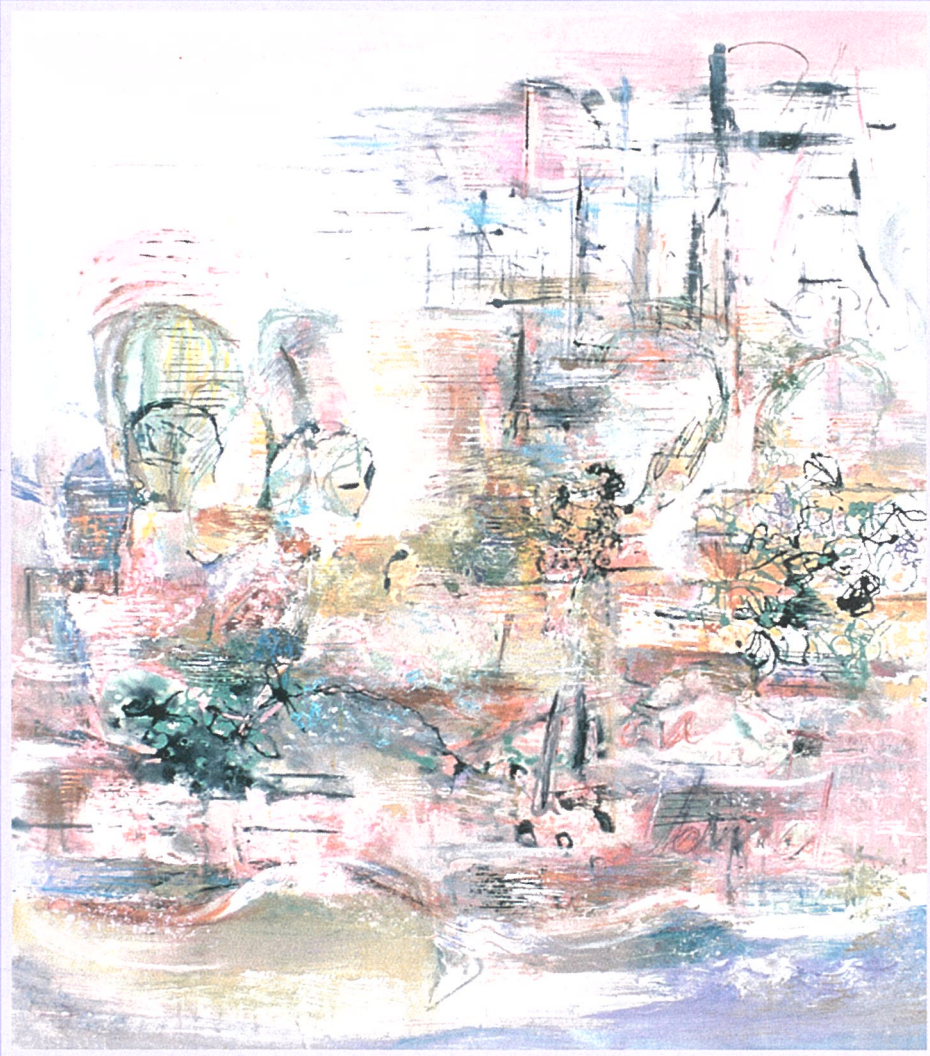


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The Art of

Dorothy Kurgans Goldberg

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Flossie Martin Gallery
February 15 – March 9, 2001

Biographical Essay by Robert Goldberg

Critical Essay by Arthur Jones

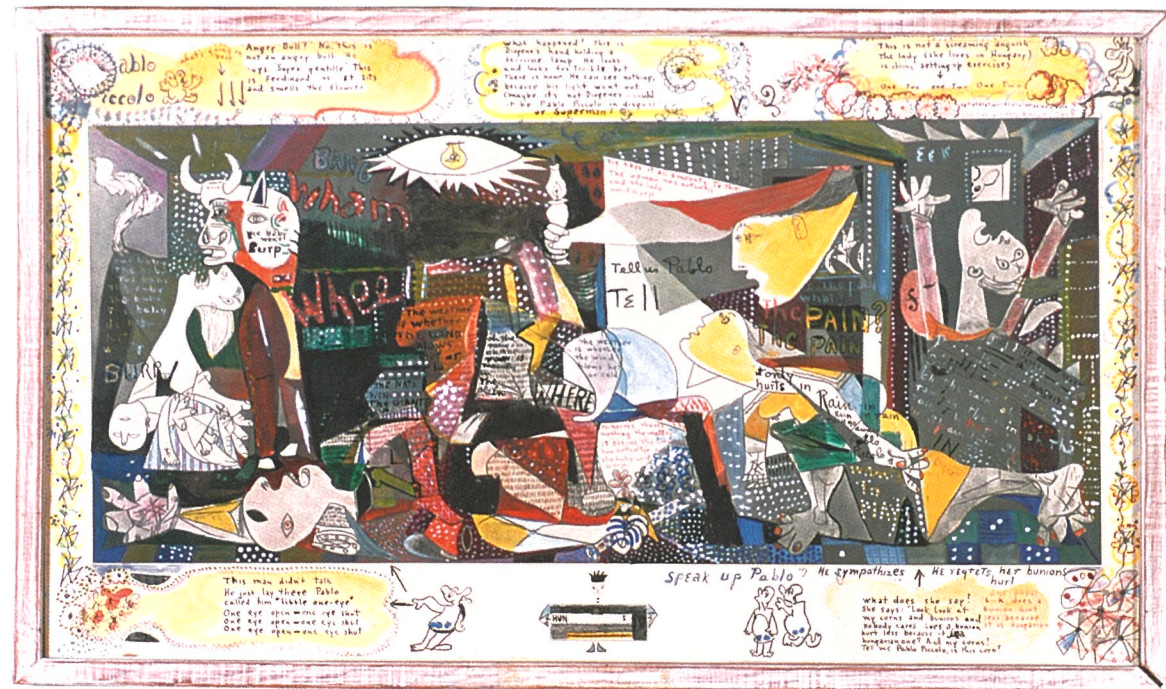
Annotated Catalog by Steve Arbury

Edited by Steve Arbury

The Art of
Dorothy Kurgans Goldberg

"Desk Set" (cat. no. 36)

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Top: *HunGuernica* (cat. no. 45); Bottom: *The Wall* (cat. no. 27)



The Life of Dorothy Kurgans Goldberg

by her son, Robert Goldberg



Dorothy Kurgans Goldberg, the first of Esther and Louis Kurgans' three children, was born in St. Louis, Missouri, on August 1, 1908. Her parents were Russian Jews who had emigrated separately to the United States shortly after the turn of the century. Esther Feldman met Louis Kurgans when she became an employee at his skirt factory in St. Louis. After courageously leading the employees in a factory strike, she married the boss in 1907.

The family lived in an immigrant neighborhood west of the Mississippi River until about 1911. They then moved to Chicago, Illinois. Dorothy continued her public schooling, graduating from high school in 1926. Shortly thereafter she attended both the University of Chicago and the Chicago Art Institute, earning a Ph.B. (Bachelor of Philosophy) degree in Art Education from the University of Chicago in 1933. That was followed by a year and a half of study in the Department of Social Services.

She met her husband-to-be, Arthur Joseph Goldberg, in Chicago around the time that he entered law school. They married in 1931. Their daughter, Barbara, was born in 1936, and their son Robert, in 1941. During these years, Dorothy continued to study at the Chicago Art Institute where she painted in a modern style, influenced by the former Bauhaus group in residence there.

At the start of the Second World War her husband was commissioned in the Office of Strategic Services, and the family



moved to Washington, D.C. Dorothy continued with her painting in Washington, writing and illustrating a children's book as well (*Lola and the Moving Stairs*, privately published in 1991). At the same time, she further developed her own poetry and prose writing.

The Goldbergs returned to Chicago by the war's end to live on Greenwood Street in Hyde Park on Chicago's South Side. In 1948, the family moved once more to Washington, D.C., following her husband's appointment as the CIO's chief labor lawyer. Dorothy's art work and studies continued with a Phillips Gallery Fellowship, which allowed her to paint at the Phillips studio behind the gallery. She began to exhibit in the Corcoran Gallery group shows and elsewhere in the area. In 1951 she took over the lease of the Phillips studio and painted there for a decade.

Dorothy traveled widely during the fifties. She visited Europe on several occasions and took at least three trips to Israel. With sketch pad in hand, she was a common figure at labor conventions, court proceedings, and congressional hearings. All appear in her paintings and drawings. Additionally, she started teaching introductory classes in modern art at her studio. She moved a lithograph press there in 1957 to follow up on earlier studies of that medium.

In 1958, she opened the Associated Artists Gallery with three other Washington area painters in her studio. The Gallery prospered, holding shows by Henry Miller, Herblock, and other national names. Dorothy also had annual shows at the gallery, as well as exhibits in New York and Chicago.

She particularly enjoyed teaching. Classes, lectures, and group tours to New York, France, England, and Israel were all featured in her program. That aspect of Associated Artists was among its greatest contributions to the Washington art scene. Her painting as well was influenced by all of this activity. By 1960, the gallery was an important part of Washington's culture.

The election of President John F. Kennedy marked a change in the Goldberg family's lifestyle. Dorothy was strongly affected by Arthur's appointment as Secretary of Labor. Indeed, she stopped painting and exhibiting because she did not want her work to be judged in light of her husband's position. Moreover, the aggressive social demands of the "New

Frontier" limited her time to attend to other concerns. Yet, these other concerns mattered to the administration. She responded to its interest and began working for social justice and various other educational gains.

When her husband was appointed to the Supreme Court in 1962, Dorothy virtually closed the gallery. By this time, her writing and social activities took an enormous amount of her time. The publication and promotion of her first book, *The Creative Woman* (1963), gave her little time for anything else. The book was a considerable achievement and illustrates the demands on her as well as her ability to meet them. It is also a significant and often overlooked testament to identity and change during this important chapter of recent history.

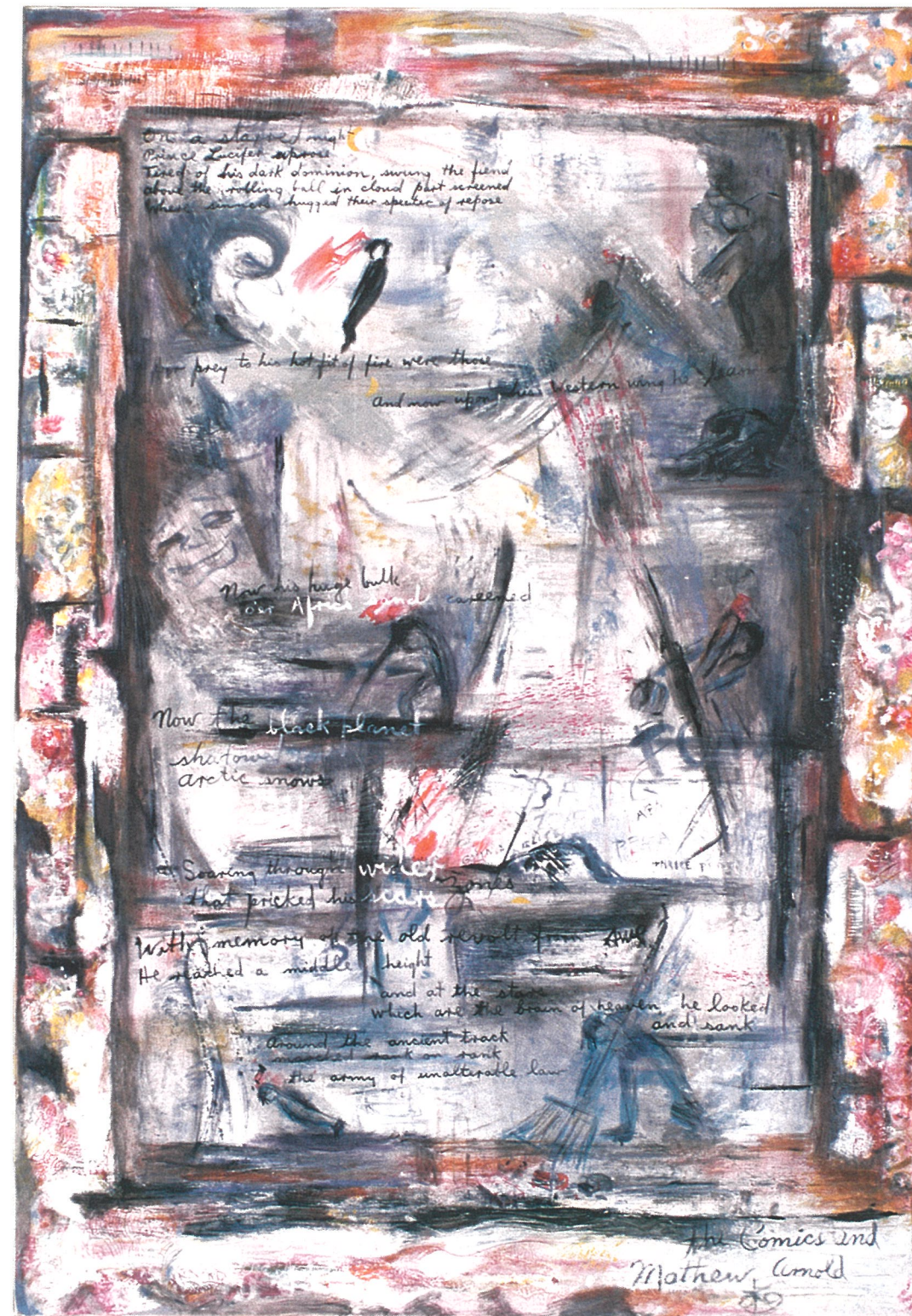
Following the President's assassination and her husband's appointment as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Dorothy found herself with him in New York City. There she continued to write and travel. She met many people and worked constantly for various good causes. She also lovingly attended to her mother during her last months and became a concerned and caring grandmother to her six grandchildren born during the next nine years.

In 1971, however, she and her husband returned to Washington. Upon arrival, she did not reopen her studio. In fact, her painting had stopped. While she continued to write and keep illustrated notebooks, there was not enough time in her schedule to allow for a dedicated artistic life. Shortly thereafter, she published her second book, *A Private View of a Public Life* (1975), considered to be an important part of the literature of the Kennedy and Johnson administrations. She also wrote a third book, never published, on her husband's unsuccessful campaign for Governor of New York. At the same time, she continued to lecture around the country. While she never lost her interest in art, very little formal work remains from this period. As had her husband, she frequently wrote for newspapers and magazines.

The Goldbergs maintained a farm in Warrenton, Virginia, where they spent time with their family and entertained visitors. Dorothy's husband proudly kept many of her best paintings on display there. After a year's illness, Dorothy Kurgans Goldberg died of lung cancer in 1988. Her husband survived her for 16 months.

List of One-Woman Exhibitions

- 1954 Bordelon Galleries, Chicago
- 1954 The Colony Lounge, Washington, D.C.
- 1956 The Dickey Gallery of the Teachers' College, Washington, D.C.
- 1956 The Franz Bader Gallery, Washington, D.C.
- 1959 The Morris Gallery, New York City
- 2001 Radford University, Radford, VA



The Comics and Matthew Arnold (cat. no. 40)



In Advance of the New Frontier: The Art of Dorothy Kurgans Goldberg

Arthur F. Jones, Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art



Although she had serious aspirations as a painter, Dorothy Kurgans Goldberg was not destined to receive renown in the art world as did her husband, Arthur Goldberg, in the political arena. Her career extended from the late 1920s, when she studied at the Chicago Art Institute, until the early 1960s when she decided to abandon painting. During her prolific years she was a writer as well as a painter, often combining both creative genres in her visual art. This exhibition, the first solo show since her death, reveals her unusual place within American and world artistic styles of her time.

While the works included in this exhibition span Goldberg's entire career as a painter, major emphasis is given to her maturity in the 1950s. In many respects, her work was out of sync with much of the abstract art that dominated this period. Some concepts introduced through her paintings of the 1950s anti-

pate major new trends that emerged during the early 1960s. Developing an accurate chronology of Goldberg's art is problematic. Only a few works are dated, but these provide clues by which some undated works may be compared stylistically. Recollections of family members and listings in published



records provide additional evidence from which approximate dates were tentatively assigned.

During the late 1940s and 1950s, when Abstract Expressionism was a dominant style, a concept of modernist purity strongly affected American art. To achieve purity (according to the art critic Clement Greenberg) modernist painting strove to eliminate references to all things outside of painting itself and its process. Since the primary quality of a painting is its flat surface, flatness became the primary feature of a modernist picture. All references to the illusions of a realistic three-dimensional space were to be eliminated. So were references to (or effects achievable through) other art forms such as sculpture, dance, theater, poetry, and literature. Goldberg's mature painting, while revealing influences from earlier Cubism and Expressionism, abstract Surrealism, and Abstract Expressionism, is anything but "pure" by Greenbergian standards.

Goldberg's earliest works in the show reveal her involvement in American realism of the 1930s, especially the style of her drawings from her student years. Her ballet theme paintings from 1936 (cat. nos. 14 and 15) seem affected by Marc Chagall's figurative style, but their subject also reveals Goldberg's interest in art forms outside of painting. Even later, when Goldberg's art became more abstract, the painter never committed herself to modernist purism.

Always a writer as well as a painter, Goldberg often had something to say verbally and visually in her paintings. If a picture by itself can say a thousand words visually, perhaps Goldberg felt a need to express even more by including actual words in her art. Several canvases might even be viewed as tablets for writing as much as they are paintings. In this respect, Goldberg's paintings with words anticipate the later word-works of Joseph Kosuth and other verbally oriented "conceptual" artists of the 1960s.

While Goldberg introduced words, fragments of quotations from history and poetry, and references to names of literary and political figures, she also included aspects of popular culture (such as comic strip characters) in her art. In addition, she interjected her religious feelings as a Jew, her patriotic sentiments as an American, and her interest in humanitarian issues and political life (the latter reflecting her husband's world that she shared).

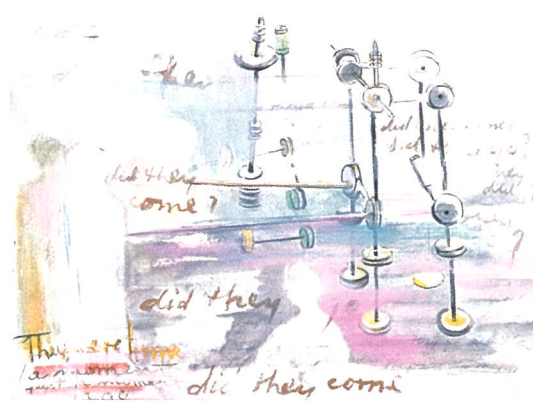
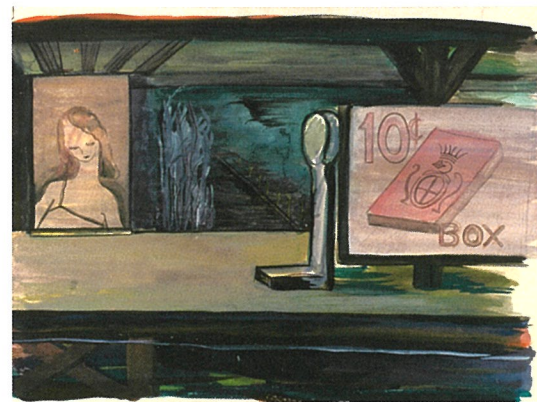
High culture is juxtaposed with popular culture in Goldberg's works of the 1950s. For example, in *The Comics and Matthew Arnold* (cat. no. 40) the popular art of the comics is interfaced with references to two high-culture English writers

of the nineteenth century, Matthew Arnold and George Meredith. Goldberg's favorite comic strip was *Krazy Kat*. In *Krazy Kat: Homage to Herriman* (cat. no. 34), Goldberg pays tribute to George Joseph Herriman (1880-1944), the comic strip's creator. In addition to *Krazy Kat*, the *Peanuts* comic strip was also appropriated in a work from about 1959, *Il n'est en art qu'une chose qui vaille: . . .* (cat. no. 59). Such works by Goldberg may be viewed as ahead of their time because they predate the comic strip images painted by Pop artists such as Andy Warhol and, especially, Roy Lichtenstein.

Some of Goldberg's works, particularly her collages, might also be seen as Neo-Dada in spirit. In one such work, *HunGuernica* (cat. no. 45), Goldberg collages a reproduction of Picasso's *Guernica*. In this respect, Goldberg's work might be compared to that of other Neo-Dadists of the 1950s such as Robert Rauschenberg and Jasper Johns. Goldberg's work, however, is more overtly political. In *HunGuernica*, Goldberg has altered the Picasso composition to transform it into something reminiscent of an American comic strip image. Through her insertion of words to activate Picasso's narrative, Goldberg did not wish to trivialize Picasso's masterpiece, but rather to mock its creator. Goldberg was disturbed by Picasso's refusal to denounce the Soviet Union's harsh suppression of the Hungarian revolt of 1956 in comparison to his strong support for the Republican cause against Fascism during the Spanish Civil War some 20 years earlier. Hence, Goldberg has altered *Guernica's* printed title by hand lettering "Hun" in front of it. She has also altered the printed date, "1937" by hand lettering a "5" over the printed "3" in order to inscribe *HunGuernica's* date of 1957. Recently, more attention has been given to Picasso's strong Communist views [see *Art News*, November 2000, pp. 186-190]. A new book suggests that Picasso may have been more loyal to hard-line Communist leaders in the USSR than previously thought by most art scholars.

As President John F. Kennedy launched his "New Frontier" in the early 1960s, Goldberg's involvement as a visual artist was ending. At this same time, in contrast, her husband's career advanced to national prominence as a U.S. Supreme Court Justice. Although Dorothy Kurgans Goldberg was among those to spearhead the integration of art and popular culture, the use of words in painting, and the appropriation of comic strip images, it was other artists who would gain fame in the early sixties paralleling her themes and ideas. As a new era emerged in the early 1960s, Pop artists and Conceptual artists would develop these concepts further.

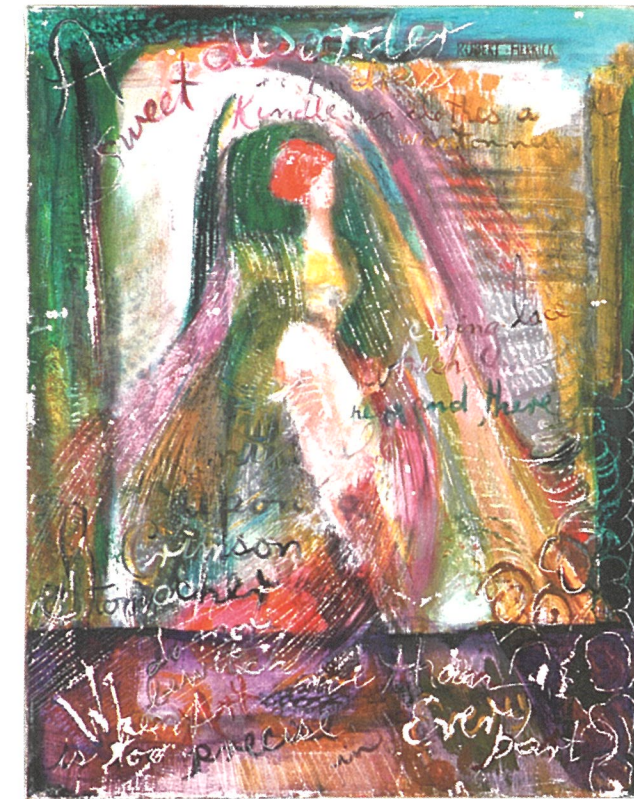




Annotated Catalog of Works by Dorothy Kurgans Goldberg

by Steve Arbury

Note: Not all works are included in the exhibition. All dimensions are in inches.



1. **10¢ Box.** Tempera on paper, c. 1930s, 15 x 20.
2. **Head of Man.** Charcoal on paper, c. 1930s, 12 x 9.
3. **Man.** Red conté on paper, c. 1930s, 18 x 11½.
4. **Seated Man.** Red conté on paper, c. 1930s, 18 x 17.
5. **Nude Male.** Charcoal on paper, c. 1930s, 18 x 12.
6. **Nude Male.** Pencil on paper, c. 1930s, 18 x 12.
7. **Female Figure.** Brown conté on paper, c. 1930s, 24 x 18.
8. **Female Figure.** Brown conté on paper, c. 1930s, 23 x 18.
9. **Female Nude.** Pencil on paper, c. 1930s, 18 x 12.
10. **Female Nude.** Red conté and pencil on paper, c. 1930s, 16½ x 10.
11. **Female Nude.** Red conté and pencil on paper, c. 1930s, 18 x 10.
12. **Female Nude.** Charcoal on paper, 1931, 17 x 11.
13. **Female Nude.** Red conté and pencil on paper, c. 1930s, 18 x 12.
14. **Untitled.** Watercolor and ink, 1936, 21 x 23½. This work is a companion piece to *Big City Ballet of Kurt Jooss*.
15. **Big City Ballet of Kurt Jooss.** Watercolor and ink, February 10, 1936, 21 x 23½. Signed Dorothy Goldberg at lower right. Kurt Jooss (1901–1979) was a German dancer and choreographer who fled Nazi Germany in 1933. He extended the classic technique and created



- dances of modern temper, often on topical themes. His best known work, *Green Table* (1932), was an expressionistic view of the origins of war. *The Big City* was a ballet he created in 1932.
16. **Justice Brandeis.** Oil on canvas, c. mid-1930s, 28 x 22. Louis Dembitz Brandeis (1856–1941) was an American jurist. He was appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court in 1916 despite anti-Semitic opposition, and he served until 1939. He was noted for his devotion to free speech. Brandeis often dissented from the majority (along with Oliver Wendell Holmes), and he was one of the few justices who voted to uphold most of Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal legislation.
 17. **Notwithstanding the sight of all our miseries.** Mixed media, c. 1940s, 19 x 25½. Signed DKG at lower center. The title comes from Pascal's *Pensées*. The full quote is: "Notwithstanding the sight of all our miseries, which press upon us and take us by the throat, we have an instinct which we cannot repress and which lifts us up." Blaise Pascal (1623-1662) was a French mathematician, physicist, religious philosopher, and writer. His later writings were a defense of Jansenism (a seventeenth-century reform movement within the Catholic Church) against the Jesuits, and the *Pensées* (*Thoughts*) were written for them. The 924 *Pensées* (in 15 sections) were an apology for the Christian religion. One of the underlying themes in the *Pensées* is Pascal's belief in the inadequacy of reason to solve our difficulties or to satisfy our hopes. Instead, Pascal believed in the necessity of mystic faith in order to understand the universe and its meaning to us. This *pensée* is number 411 from section VI.
 18. **The Monday, The Sunday.** Oil on canvas, c. 1945–1947, 16 x 36¼. Signed D. Goldberg at lower right. This painting contains four Greek words (πολλα χρονια μηδενος κρατειν), which translate as "many years nobody governing."
 19. **Lola and the Moving Stairs.** Book, 1946, 8 x 10. This is a children's book written and illustrated by Dorothy Kurgans Goldberg. It was published privately in 1991.
 20. **Female Figure.** Red conté on paper, late 1940s, 24 x 23½. Signed Dorothy K. Goldberg at lower right. This work was exhibited in 1949.
 21. **Senatorial Hearings.** Charcoal sketch, late 1940s, 7 x 9½. Dorothy Goldberg often attended labor conventions, court proceedings, and congressional hearings with a sketch pad in hand.
 22. **Virgin Islands.** Watercolor and pencil on paper, 1949, 11½ x 17½.
 23. **"Meetings."** Oil on canvas, c. late 1940s or early 1950s, 35 x 16. Dorothy Goldberg often attended labor conventions, court proceedings, and congressional hearings with a sketch pad in hand.
 24. **Logic is Child's Play.** Mixed media on paper, early 1950s, 23½ x 27½. In the painting one sees the words "A game for children, for me the wonder, for me the totally illogical unstatistical wonder."
 25. **Susannah.** Mixed media on board, early 1950s, 20 x 16½. The title refers to a character in the poem, "Peter Quince at the Clavier," by American poet Wallace Stevens (1879-1955) [see catalog entry no. 30]. The poem clearly refers to the erotic story of Susanna and the Elders (as told in the Apocryphal Book of Susanna). The last stanza of the poem reads,
Susanna's music touched the bawdy strings
Of those white elders; but, escaping,
Left only Death's ironic scraping.
Now, in its immortality, it plays
On the clear viol of her memory,
And makes a constant sacrament of praise.
Like *A Throw of the Dice* (cat. no. 53) and *The Horse and His Rider* (cat. no. 29), this is another painting by Goldberg that deals with musical imagery in poetry.
 26. **Untitled sculpture.** Clay, early 1950s, 8½ high. Initialed DKG at rear near bottom.
 27. **The Wall.** Oil on canvas, early 1950s, 26 x 40½. The title refers to the book by John Hersey (1914–1993), an American novelist and journalist noted for his documentary fiction about catastrophic events in World War II. *The Wall* (1950) is Hersey's most ambitious novel. Dealing with human inhumanity and courage, it is a fictional account based on fact of the courageous, but doomed, Jewish uprising against the Nazis in the Warsaw ghetto during World War II. The "wall" refers to the only thing that was left after the destruction of the ghetto, its encompassing wall. The book was one of Arthur Goldberg's favorites.
The "wall" may also allude to the Western Wall, or Wailing Wall, in Jerusalem, the only remnant left of Herod's addition to the Second Temple, which was destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD and is a holy site for Jews.
 28. **Female Nude.** Watercolor, early 1950s, 32½ x 26½. Signed DKG at lower right.
 29. **The Horse and His Rider.** Oil on canvas, early 1950s, 34 x 18. Signed DKG at lower right. The title comes from Exodus 15.1: "I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea." This is the beginning of the song that Moses and the Israelites sang to the Lord. It is the first mention of singing in the Bible.
 30. **Variation on a Theme by Wallace Stevens.** Oil on board, early 1950s, 18½ x 28½. Signed DKG at lower right. Wallace Stevens (1879-1955) was a major American poet. Profoundly concerned with aesthetics,

- his poetry explored the relationship of reality and imagination and the idea of seeking order and understanding in chaos. The words that can be seen in the painting are, "The fitful passing of a portal" and "but mine immortal," which may refer to the poem, "Peter Quince at the Clavier" [see catalog entry no. 25]. A line with many of the same words in that poem reads, "The fitful tracing of a portal; But in the flesh it is immortal."
31. **Nude Study with Four Figures.** Watercolor on paper, early 1950s, 18 x 24. Signed DKG at lower center.
 32. **Supermarket.** Oil on canvas, early 1950s, 14 x 18. Signed DKG at lower left.
 33. **Yes, No.** Oil on canvas, early 1950s, 8 x 18.
 34. **Krazy Kat: Homage to Herriman.** Watercolor, c. early 1950s, 19½ x 26. Signed DKG at lower center. George Joseph Herriman (1880–1944) was an American cartoonist who created the comic strip *Krazy Kat* in 1910. Considered by many to be the greatest comic strip, it attracted a wide readership with highly original language, abstract scenes, and the theme of impossible and unrequited love. It ceased with the death of Herriman in 1944.
 35. **How small Sinai appears when Moses stands upon it.** Oil on board, c. mid-1950s, 34 x 30. The title refers to the greatness of Moses. This work was exhibited at the Corcoran Gallery in the late 1950s.
 36. **"Desk Set."** Watercolor, c. mid-1950s, 19 x 24. Signed DKG lower right.
 37. **Did They Come? (Tinker Toys).** Oil on canvas, probably 1950s, 18 x 24. Signed DG at lower right. Another phrase seen in this painting is "They were home a moment just a moment ago."
 38. **The Umpire.** Oil on canvas, 1954, 21 x 26. Signed DKG at lower center. This was exhibited at the Baseball Hall of Fame.
 39. **Cornerstone.** Oil on mat board, 1955, 30 x 22½. "April 30th, 1955: Cornerstone. The building going up with thousands of stones with the name inscribed: Gompers, Murray, Hillman, Green, Bittner, Tracy, Hayward."
 40. **The Comics and Matthew Arnold.** Oil on canvas, c. 1955, 57 x 40. Signed DKG at lower right. Matthew Arnold (1822–1888) was an English poet and critic. A promoter of better state education, Arnold believed that the welfare of a nation is dependent upon its intellectual life, which is best served by objective criticism. He viewed the Bible as literature and thought its great poetry contained fundamental moral and spiritual truths.
The sonnet that is inscribed in the painting is "Lucifer in Starlight" by George Meredith (1828–1909). The poem was published in his *Poems and Lyrics of the Joy of Earth* (1883). Meredith was an English novelist and
- poet who believed that life is a process of evolution. "Lucifer in Starlight" is considered by some to be one of the great sonnets in English verse. Its theme can be seen as the conflict between anarchy and order.
- Lucifer in Starlight**
- On a starred night Prince Lucifer arose.
Tired of his dark dominion swung the fiend
Above the rolling ball in cloud part screened,
Where sinners hugged their spectre of repose.
Poor prey to his hot fit of pride were those.
And now upon his western wing he leaned,
Now his huge bulk o'er Afric's sands careened,
Now the black planet shadowed Arctic snows.
Soaring through wider zones that pricked his scars
With memory of the old revolt from Awe,
He reached a middle height, and at the stars,
Which are the brain of heaven, he looked, and sank.
Around the ancient track marched, rank on rank,
The army of unalterable law.
41. **And So History, ladies and gentlemen.** Oil on board, mid-1950s, 24 x 18. Written in pencil on the back of the stretcher is: "Smoke filled room."
 42. **With Nothing to Fear But Fear Itself.** Mixed media on board, mid-1950s, 33 x 37. In his first inaugural address in 1933, Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1882–1945) uttered his famous line, "There is nothing to fear but fear itself." But Henry David Thoreau (1817–1862) wrote a similar line 82 years earlier: "Nothing is so much to be feared as fear." (*Journal*, September 7, 1851). The Italian verse seen at the lower right, "*E quindi uscimmo a riveder le stelle*" is the last line of Dante's *Inferno* (Canto XXXIV, line 139). It translates: Thence we came forth to see the stars again.
 43. **A Sweet Disorder.** Oil on canvas, mid-1950s, 28 x 22¼. Robert Herrick (1591–1634) is generally considered the greatest of the English Cavalier poets, (seventeenth-century English poets who wrote on the courtly themes of beauty, love, and loyalty with wit and directness). Herrick never married, and the many women mentioned in his poems are thought to be imaginary. Probably his best known line is "Gather ye rosebuds why ye may;" from "To the Virgins, to Make Much of Time." The words seen in this painting come from the poem, "Delight in Disorder."
- Delight in Disorder**
- A sweet disorder in the dress
Kindles in clothes a wantonness:
A lawn* about the shoulders thrown
Into a fair distraction:
An erring lace, which here and there
Enthrals the crimson stomacher:*
A cuff neglectful, and thereby



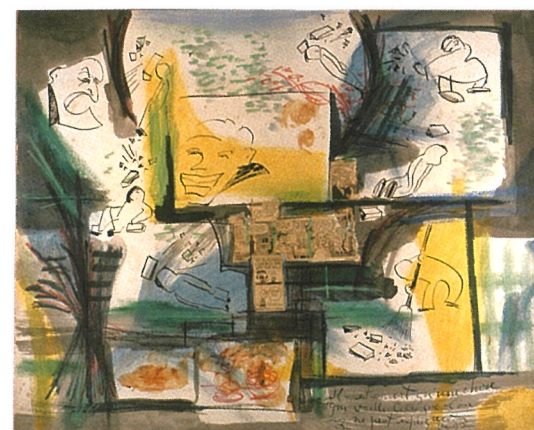
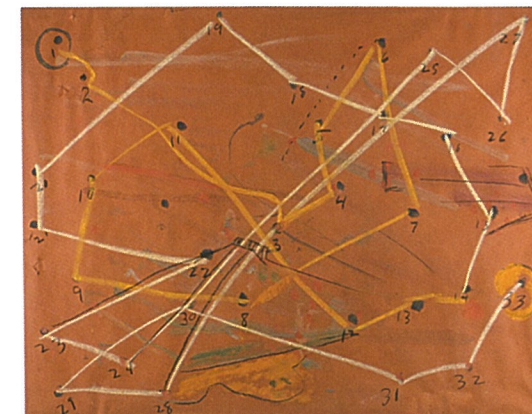
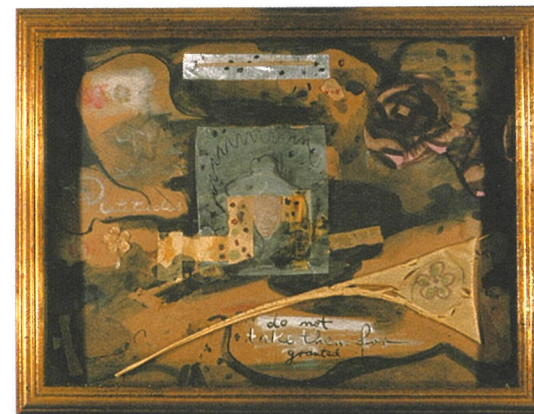
Ribbands* to flow confusedly:
A winning wave, deserving note,
In the tempestuous petticoat:
A careless shoe-string, in whose tie
I see a wild civility:
Do more bewitch me than when art
Is too precise in every part.

*lawn = a sheer linen or cotton fabric
*ribbands (ribands) = decorative ribbons
*stomacher = a richly ornamented garment covering the stomach and chest

44. **You Are My Witness.** Oil on canvas, c. 1956, 27 x 35. The passages seen in this painting are Biblical. They deal with God's redemption by grace and foretell the Jews' liberation from exile in Babylon. "Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west;" (Isaiah 43:5). "Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled: who among them can declare this, and show us former things? Let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified: or let them hear, and say, It is truth." (Isaiah 43:9).
45. **HunGuernica.** Mixed media, c. 1957, 24 x 40. In 1937 Guernica, a Basque village in Spain, was air bombed by the Nazi German Condor Legion (*Luftwaffe*) to aid the Spanish Nationalists and their fascist allies during the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). This was the first time a town had been destroyed by an air raid. Guernica's destruction was synonymous with the atrocities committed by the Nationalists and their fascist allies. The Nationalists ultimately won, and their fascist leader, Francisco Franco, became dictator of Spain. Spain remained under Franco's rule until his death in 1975. The anti-Communist revolt in Hungary took place in 1956. *HunGuernica* does not mock Picasso's *Guernica*, but rather Picasso himself, as is indicated in the many verbal insults such as "Pablo Piccolo" (Little Pablo). This work was exhibited at the Corcoran Gallery in Washington, D.C., in the late 1950s.
46. **Portrait of Arthur Goldberg (in Positano).** Watercolor on paper, June 24, 1957, 14 1/2 x 19. Arthur Joseph Goldberg (1908-1990) was an American lawyer and the husband of Dorothy Kurgans Goldberg. He received his law degree from Northwestern University in 1929. He taught law at the John Marshall Law School in Chicago (1945-48). In 1948 he became general counsel to the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) and the United Steelworkers Union. A major figure in the merger of the AFL and CIO in 1955, Goldberg was later appointed Secretary of Labor by President Kennedy in 1961. In 1962 he was appointed by Kennedy to the Supreme Court, where he was one of its more liberal members. He resigned in 1965 when President Lyndon Johnson

appointed him U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, a post he held until 1968. He later taught and practiced law in Washington, D.C. At the end of his career Goldberg taught at Radford University (1987-89). Positano is a coastal town in Italy south of Naples.

47. **Justice Holmes.** Mixed media on paper, 1957, 25 x 19. Signed DKG at lower right. Oliver Wendell Holmes (1841-1935) was an American jurist. He served on the U.S. Supreme Court 1902-1932. He was known for his vigorous, lucid opinions, often in dissent from the majority. In fact, he was known as the Great Dissenter. He promulgated the "clear and present danger" test for freedom of speech (*Schenck vs. U.S.*, 1919). This painting hung behind Arthur Goldberg's desk in his office in Washington, D.C., when he served on the U.S. Supreme Court.
- The painting contains a quote by Holmes: "I always have thought that not place, or power, or popularity, makes the success that one desires, but a trembling hope that one has come near to an ideal." (Letter to Justice Benjamin Cardozo, December 15, 1928). Commenting on this line, Joseph L. Rauh, Jr., said, "While the majesty of Holmes towers mightily above us lesser mortals, the ideal of making some contribution, however small, to the growth or implementation of the law in the public interest is one to which every lawyer can aspire, and even the most modest achievement in this area can provide a measure of life's satisfaction." ("A Public Interest Standard of Ethics for Lawyers," Law Day Lecture, University of Minnesota Law School, May 1, 1979).
48. **Do Not Take Them For Granted.** Mixed media, c. 1957-58, 12 1/2 x 16. Another phrase seen in this work is "These are not Platitudes."
49. **Commentary (Ancient Scroll).** Oil on canvas, c. mid- to late 1950s, 49 x 30.
50. **Press Photographers.** Oil on canvas, mid- to late 1950s, 36 1/2 x 20 1/2.
51. **We the People.** Watercolor, late 1950s, 41 x 27. These are the first three words of the Constitution of the United States of America. This work was exhibited at the Corcoran Gallery in Washington, D.C., in the late 1950s.
52. **To Robert Frost.** Oil on board, c. late 1950s, 25 x 38. Signed DKG at lower right. Robert Frost (1874-1963) was an American poet who won the Pulitzer Prize four times. He used colloquial language, easy verse forms, and symbols drawn from common experience. The words seen in this painting come from the last stanza of "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening":
- The woods are lovely dark and deep,
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.





53. **A Throw of the Dice.** Oil on board, c. late 1950s, 23½ x 27½. The title comes from a poem by Stéphane Mallarmé (1842–1898), a French poet who anticipated the Symbolist Movement (in which artists and writers sought to express subjective emotions using highly metaphorical language that is often obscure.) “*Un Coup de dés jamais n’abolira le hasard*” [“A Throw of the Dice Will Never Eliminate Chance”], from 1897, is one of his best-known poems. The poem is so obscure that it probably can never be explained definitively. By varying the size of the type and the arrangement of words on a double page, Mallarmé attempted to reproduce the effect of a musical score. The title is formed by words in the boldest type, which are spread over several pages. A second idea is expressed on a single page: “Even when cast in eternal circumstances from the depths of a shipwreck.” The final line of the poem is “Every thought emits a throw of the dice.” F. Chase St. Aubyn believes Mallarmé was saying that every thought offers many possibilities; acting on one of those possibilities does not eliminate chance, it merely fixes it. (Frederic Chase St. Aubyn, *Stéphane Mallarmé*, Twayne Publishers, New York, 1969, p. 152).

Another word depicted in the painting is Kilroy. The best-known single sentence to come out of the Second World War (1939–1945) is “Kilroy was here.” Found written on walls, sidewalks, windows, fences, and billboards wherever American soldiers had been, it became a symbol of America’s worldwide presence and achievements during a dark moment in history. Nobody knows who the original Kilroy was. One theory is that a shipyard inspector named Kilroy in Quincy, Massachusetts, used the phrase to mark the cargo he had inspected.

54. **In the beginning was the pale signature.** Oil on canvas, c. late 1950s, 24 x 27. Signed DKG at lower center of frame. Also on frame: Dylan Thomas. The title comes from the first line of the second stanza of a poem by Dylan Thomas entitled, “In the Beginning”:

In the beginning was the pale signature,
Three-syllabled and starry as the smile;
And after came the imprints on the water,
Stamp of the minted face upon the moon;
The blood that touched the crosstree and the grail
Touched the first cloud and left a sign.

Dylan Thomas (1914–1953) was a Welsh writer who is considered one of the greatest twentieth-century poets.

One Dylan Thomas scholar believes that the five stanzas of “In the Beginning” “present five coordinate explanations of the reduction of primeval chaos into ordered creation.” (Rushworth M. Kidder, *Dylan Thomas: The Country of the Spirit*, Princeton University Press, 1973, p. 118.)

55. **Dial Zero.** Oil on canvas, late 1950s, 26 x 34. Another phrase seen in this painting is “Hello, Are you there?”

56. **“Lavender” Dura-Europos.** Oil on canvas, late 1950s, 51½ x 46½. Dura-Europos was an ancient city in Syria on the Euphrates River. A synagogue was excavated there that has a fine mural depicting the consecration of the tabernacle and its priests (3rd century AD). Goldberg painted variations of this theme, and the painting inspired her to do other things. It was one of her favorite paintings.

57. **Temple of Dura-Europos.** Oil on board, probably 1950s, 22½ x 26.

58. **Arch of Triumph for Johanan of Gischala and Simon bar Giora.** Mixed media on paper, late 1950s, 18 x 24. Signed DKG at lower right. John of Gischala and Simon bar Giora were Zealot leaders of the Jewish revolt against Rome 67–70 AD. They were rivals. When the future Roman emperor Titus captured Jerusalem, John surrendered and was sentenced to life imprisonment. Simon tried to escape, but was captured. He was executed by being thrown off the Tarpeian rock in Rome.

59. **Il n’est en art qu’une chose qui vaille: . . .** Ink and watercolor collage, c. 1959, 24½ x 30. The title comes from a quote by Georges Braque (1882–1963), a French artist and co-inventor of Cubism: “*Il n’est en art qu’une chose qui vaille: Celle que l’on ne peut expliquer.*” (*Notebooks*, 1917–1947). It translates as “In art there is only one thing that matters: what cannot be explained.” The theme of music appears again in this work with the reference to Beethoven in the *Peanuts* cartoon.

60. **Notebook of drawings, watercolors, and notes.** Circa 1954, 11 x 8½.

61. **Binder of drawings and watercolors.** 11½ x 10.

62. **Notebook of drawings and notes.** Circa 1952, 14 x 11.

63. **The Goldberg Haggaddah, illustrated by Dorothy Kurgans Goldberg.** 8½ x 11.

64. **Photograph of Dorothy Kurgans Goldberg and Arthur Goldberg,** 1965, 15½ x 20½.



We the People (cat. no. 51); *Front cover: "Lavender" Dura-Europos* (cat. no. 56)

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