

2025

# Bachelor of Digital Screen with Honours

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Be part of the exciting  
transformation in the  
digital screen industry

Bachelor of Digital Screen  
with Honours in:

Animation

Cinematic Arts

Game Arts

Game Development

Indigenous Narrative

Screen Sound

Screenwriting



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# Bachelor of Digital Screen with Honours – BDigiScreen(Hons)



The digital screen sector is growing globally and we're seeing exciting new connections being made across disciplines, in areas such as virtual production, 3D storytelling, virtual and augmented reality, and more.

## World-class facilities

We are developing new state-of-the-art facilities and post production spaces, where film production, game development and cross-reality technologies come together. These new international quality workspaces will include, sound stages, studios, laboratories, and more. One of the highlights of our program is the opportunity to learn directly from industry experts, whether from growing startups or well-established organisations. Alongside globally renowned academics, this unique blend provides an environment where you can network and gain insights from some of the finest minds in the screen industry, enriching your learning journey every step of the way.

## A focus on storytelling

The BDigiScreen(Hons) is an applied, four-year degree with a key focus on storytelling, whether it's with words, still or moving images, animated graphics or sound. You will develop skills in building relatable characters, scenarios and worlds. You will also learn what it means to tell stories in Aotearoa and Te Wai Pounamu, considering issues of representation and how your creative choices affect, and are affected by our society.

## Shared first and fourth year

The first year is shared with all your peers to get a core foundation in various disciplines. It's important when working in the digital screen industry to have a base level understanding of each of the majors, as you're likely to interact with those disciplines in your career. After your first year, you will break into your chosen major for the following two years. The fourth year is dedicated to creating a commercial quality creative project for the digital screen.

# Majors and minors

To specialise in the BDigiScreen(Hons) you choose one of six available majors. As we are seeing a strong demand for core competency in Indigenous storytelling across film and video games in Aotearoa, we've developed a minor that deepens your insights into Indigenous Narrative while you develop your technical skills within your major. This minor is designed to complement and sit alongside any of the major subjects. In addition, each of the majors can also be taken as a minor (i.e. major in Game Arts with a minor in Screen Sound), or you can also choose a minor from other programmes at UC, including any Arts, Science or Commerce subjects. Students can pick from a wide range of papers across the University to fill their 'elective' course slots. To learn more about which subjects can fit within your chosen major, talk to an Arts Kaitoko or Student Advisor.

## Majors / minor

- Animation
- Cinematic Arts
- Game Arts
- Game Development
- Screenwriting
- Screen Sound
- Indigenous Narrative (minor)

	Semester 1				Semester 2			
First year	DISC101 Storytelling for the digital screen	PROD110 Design Principles	MUSA126 Sound Technologies	Elective	PROD121 The Game Development Process	DISC102 Principles of screen production	PROD142 2D and 3D art for film and games	Elective
Second year	DISC201 Storytelling in action	Major	Major	Elective	Major	Major	Major	Elective
Third year	DISC301 Story development	Major	Major	Elective	DISC380 Year 3 capstone project		Major	Elective
Fourth year	DISC401 Conception and development in the digital screen	DISC403 Digital Screen Project			DISC402 Postproduction, exhibition and distribution	DISC403 Digital Screen project (continued)		

In 2022/23, nine international series and one international feature film were in production in New Zealand.

# Connecting study with industry



## Engaging with Digital Screen experts

The core idea behind the Bachelor of Digital Screen with Honours program is to provide a space where industry and academic facilities can connect. This enables you to explore the screen industry as part of your study and get support and mentorship from industry studios and experts, preparing you for a successful career in the dynamic world of digital screen.

## Graduate with a work portfolio

In your final Honours year, you and students from other majors will come together to work on a big capstone project, including preproduction, production and post production processes. Additional to other smaller creative projects you will work on throughout your degree, this will set you up with a substantial portfolio of high-level production work that will help give you a head-start for your career.

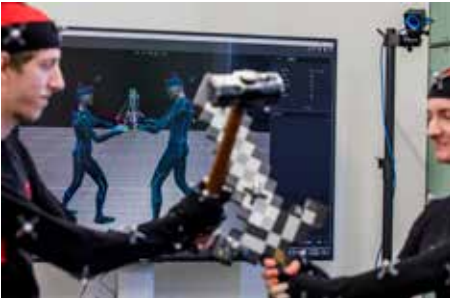
## Virtual production – convergence of technologies

We're seeing considerable growth in the game and film industry in Aotearoa and around the world. At the same time, new connections between these disciplines are developing that are critical to the future of the entertainment industry and leave a huge demand to develop the talent needed for these industries to grow. Virtual production is one example where technologies in film and game have merged. It's not only big blockbusters like *The Mandalorian*, *The Batman* or *Thor: Love and Thunder* that are benefiting from this technology; in fact, this new tool enables storytellers to achieve any big dream on a budget, making it one of the most exciting recent developments in the entertainment industry. It also opens new opportunities for other types of content production, including commercials, local productions, documentaries and advertising.

## Career pathways

As a successful graduate of the Bachelor of Digital Screen with Honours, you will finish your study with a substantial portfolio of work to help get you a foot in the door. You will have learned both the creative and technical skills to excel across the digital screen industries of film-making, screenwriting, screen sound, game arts, game development, and animation. We will guide you along your journey to become a skilled storyteller, who can translate a vision onto the digital screen using industry standard tools and techniques. These skills will open many doors into the entertainment industry and beyond.

# Animation



## Bringing characters to life

Animation goes beyond just making things move. Whether in film, TV, or video games, animation is what brings characters to life. Modern-day animation crosses the boundary between the disciplines of filmmaking and game arts, and as such this major covers key content from both Cinematic Arts and Game Arts alongside specialised animation courses.

## Highlights

- Work in specialist facilities for animation and game development, including computer laboratories, motion capture suites, and more
- Develop your own animation style with support from our expert teaching staff
- Collaborate with other students from other majors to produce short animated films for your own work portfolio
- Find your passion within an animation pipeline, be it storyboarding, D2, modeling, rendering or 3D animation

## Overview

Animation in filmmaking and video games replaces live actors and real sets with characters and worlds created by visual artists – using either traditional hand drawn or modern computer graphic techniques. In this major, you will develop your 2D and 3D drawing and modeling skills while learning animation concepts such as structure, motion, physics, and timing. You will also learn how to create multi-dimensional and engaging characters and worlds, editing and post production for filmmaking, and cinematics and visual effects, as well as the future directions of tools and techniques to create digital art.

## Careers

With this major you'll graduate with skills in animation and visual effects for anything from film and TV to video games, and will also gain many transferrable skills that are relevant to careers in other sectors. A major in animation could set you up for careers in:

- Animation
- Visual effects (VFX)
- Digital Content Design
- Graphic design
- Web design

**The New Zealand screen industry contributes \$3.3b to GDP per year.**

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## Animation Course Diagram

	Semester 1				Semester 2			
First year	DISC101 Storytelling for the digital screen	PROD110 Design Principles	MUSA126 Sound Technologies	Elective	PROD121 The Game Development Process	DISC102 Principles of screen production	PROD142 2D and 3D art for film and games	Elective
Second year	DISC201 Storytelling in action	DISC241 Foundations of Animation	PROD241 Character Design	Elective	PROD244 Lighting and Rendering	DISC213 Editing and postproduction	DISC240 Animation project I	Elective
Third year	DISC301 Story development	PROD341 Cinematics and Visual Effects	PROD342 Digital sculpting	Elective	PROD344 World Building	DISC380 Year 3 capstone project		Elective
Fourth year	DISC401 Conception and development in the digital screen	DISC403 Digital Screen Project			DISC402 Postproduction, exhibition and distribution	DISC403 Digital Screen project (continued)		

# Cinematic Arts



## Overview

This major is all about filmmaking, from preproduction and production to post production. You will learn why filmmakers use certain cinematic effects, and how to achieve them. With a strong foundation in storytelling, Cinematic Arts includes practical hands-on courses in cinematography, picture editing and sound design as well as a range of reflective work. You will work closely with other students from the Game Arts and Game Development majors, and learn how those technologies support modern virtual film productions. Your third year particularly focuses on documentary-making and Indigenous storytelling in the digital space.

## Join a world-class film industry

New Zealand doesn't only provide stunning backdrops for many blockbusters like *The Power of the Dog* or *Lord of the Rings*, but is home to its own world-class film industry with internationally recognised filmmaking talent. The Cinematic Arts major focuses on all aspects of the modern filmmaking production process, from script to screen to distribution, helping you to prepare for work in this field in a wide variety of creative roles.

## Highlights

- Make films in our new multi-purpose theatre, using state-of-the-art cameras, lighting and sound recording facilities
- Work in our sound stages and picture edit and post production suites
- Become experts in digital screen production to shape the future of filmmaking

## Careers

Being able to think creatively and critically while also being able to use modern technologies like digital production tools will get you set up for a successful start in the film industry. A major in Cinematic Arts could open career pathways in

- Directing and producing in film or television
- Videography or cinematography
- Post production
- Screen or script editing
- Production design

**In 2022/23 New Zealand films grossed over 4.2M at the New Zealand box office.**

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## Cinematic Arts Course Diagram

	Semester 1				Semester 2			
First year	DISC101 Storytelling for the digital screen	PROD110 Design Principles	MUSA126 Sound Technologies	Elective	PROD121 The Game Development Process	DISC102 Principles of screen production	PROD142 2D and 3D art for film and games	Elective
Second year	DISC201 Storytelling in action	DISC211 Lights, lens and mics	DISC212 Screenwriting: research and story development	Tito202 Kiriata: Maori film and media	DISC213 Editing and postproduction	DISC210 Film project I		Elective
Third year	DISC301 Story development	DISC311 Preproduction and production for documentary	CINE302 Documentary: From the Margins to the Mainstream		Elective	DISC380 Year 3 capstone project		Elective
Fourth year	DISC401 Conception and development in the digital screen	DISC403 Digital Screen Project			DISC402 Postproduction, exhibition and distribution	DISC403 Digital Screen project (continued)		

# Game Arts



## Create immersive visual worlds and characters

Game Arts focuses on the things you see while playing video games. Game artists work alongside developers to create believable and relatable characters, scenarios, and worlds within a game. This major is for anyone with a creative mind and an interest in digital art. You will learn traditional and cutting-edge tools and technologies to visualise creative ideas for the digital screen in both 2D and 3D.

## Highlights

- Learn how to create digital art using a variety of industry-standard software.
- Collaborate with your peers to produce video game art for your own portfolio when entering the workforce
- Apply film production tools and techniques to game arts, and turn your games into cinematic masterpieces
- Design immersive worlds and breathe life into the characters within them

## Overview

The Game Arts major will teach you the tools and techniques you need to bring your creative vision to life in a video game setting. During your study, you'll explore how design choices affect, and are affected by society. You'll learn how to design and develop multi-dimensional and engaging characters, as well as real and fictional worlds for these characters to exist in. You'll also learn how to apply techniques from film to make your games more cinematic, use state-of-the-art digital sculpting tools, and create art which is not just visually appealing, but is optimised for video game platforms.

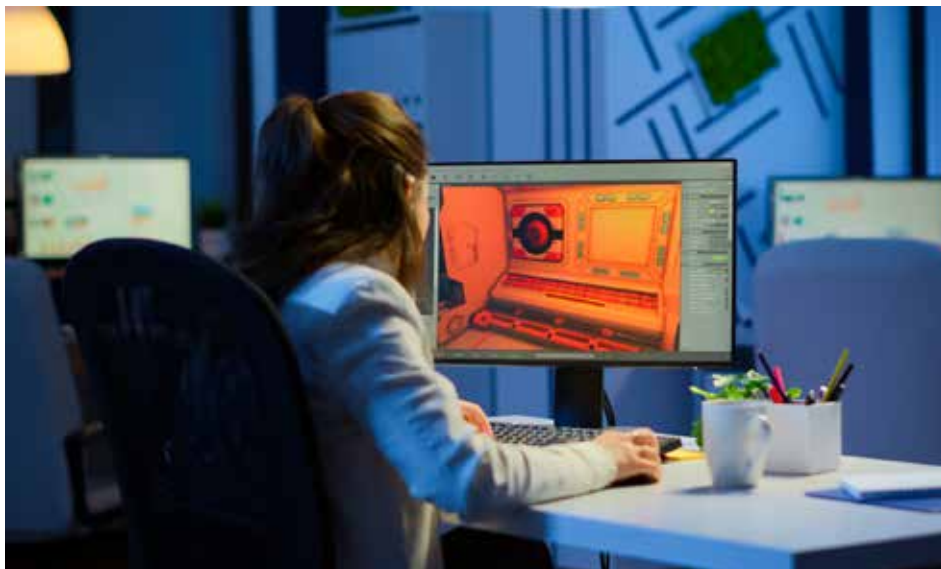
## Careers

A degree in Game Arts gives you the opportunity to work in creative and fun environments of game and film production, as well as opens the door to other careers. Possible pathways include:

- Game art (specialising in various areas including character, environment and UI art)
- Animation
- Concept art
- Multimedia programming
- Graphic design

**A good video game project can easily bring in \$300M revenue.**

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## Game Arts Course Diagram

	Semester 1				Semester 2			
First year	DISC101 Storytelling for the digital screen	PROD110 Design Principles	MUSA126 Sound Technologies	Elective	PROD121 The Game Development Process	DISC102 Principles of screen production	PROD142 2D and 3D art for film and games	Elective
Second year	DISC201 Storytelling in action	PROD221 Game Design in Context	PROD241 Character Design	Elective	PROD244 Lighting and Rendering	PROD222 Game Project Studio 1		Elective
Third year	DISC301 Story development	PROD341 Cinematics and Visual Effects	PROD342 Digital sculpting	Elective	PROD344 World Building	DISC380 Year 3 capstone project		Elective
Fourth year	DISC401 Conception and development in the digital screen	DISC403 Digital Screen Project			DISC402 Postproduction, exhibition and distribution	DISC403 Digital Screen project (continued)		

# Game Development



## Overview

In this major, you will learn everything you need to know to take a game concept through to a completely playable prototype. We will teach you all the technical skills required to develop games – from the fundamentals of computer programming through to team-based software development, game engine design, and the latest immersive technologies to create virtual and augmented reality experiences. This major includes two 100-level Computer Science papers in the first year to provide a base level of computer programming knowledge.

## From consumer to creator

Video games are a multi-billion-dollar global industry that continues to grow every year. By studying Game Development, you will learn the tools, processes and skills required to create modern digital games from scratch, and evolve from being the consumer to becoming the creator of your own masterpieces. If you're interested in the technical side of game design and development, this is the major for you.

## Highlights

- Gain access to fully equipped video game facilities, with the latest generation consoles, high-end PCs, and cutting-edge AR/VR equipment
- Learn how to use essential game development programs and technologies, including Unity and Unreal
- Collaborate with fellow students to create games, starting from your first year of study

## Careers

The video game sector is growing to become a billion-dollar industry in New Zealand, leading to a high demand from organisations for new talent in this space. A major in game development could set you up for careers in a range of areas of game programming, including gameplay, AI, audio, graphics, and more. Career opportunities include:

- Game development
- Software engineering
- Game testing
- Game art
- Multimedia programming

**The video game sector in NZ is predicted to grow into a billion-dollar revenue industry by 2026.**

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## Game Development Course Diagram

	Semester 1				Semester 2			
First year	DISC101 Storytelling for the digital screen	PROD110 Design Principles	MUSA126 Sound Technologies	COSC121 Introduction to Computer Programming	PROD121 The Game Development Process	DISC102 Principles of screen production	PROD142 2D and 3D art for film and games	COSC122 Introduction to Computer Science
Second year	DISC201 Storytelling in action	PROD221 Game Design in Context	PROD223 Immersive game design	SENG201 Software Engineering 1	PROD224 Computation for Games	PROD222 Game Project Studio 1		PROD225 Game Development in Unreal and C++
Third year	DISC301 Story development	PROD321 Interactive Computer Graphics and Animation	PROD323 Game Engines and AI	Elective	DISC380 Year 3 capstone project		Elective	Elective
Fourth year	DISC401 Conception and development in the digital screen	DISC403 Digital Screen Project			DISC402 Postproduction, exhibition and distribution	DISC403 Digital Screen project (continued)		

# Screen Sound



## The importance of sound

Sound is as important as the visuals you see on screen. It is a powerful tool that can capture an audience and trigger emotions like joy, fear or excitement. Great sound effects can elevate any digital production dramatically. Whatever is made in media, be it film, game, or other story content, requires sound design, sound effects, and music. This major in Screen Sound will prepare you for a career in the world of sound for the digital screen and interactive media.

## Highlights

- Study a unique major in screen sound for digital screen production in New Zealand
- Leverage from our new acoustically treated sound stages, sound mixing suite and sound recording studio
- Work in specialist voice-over and dubbing studios

## Overview

In the Screen Sound major we will teach you how to create sound effects, character voices, and source digital music for video games as well as film. You will get hands-on training with industry standard software, studio equipment and recording hardware. You will become an expert in acoustics and psychoacoustics, digital audio, microphones, and signal processing to work alongside students from other majors on full digital screen productions.

## Careers

The creative work portfolio you develop throughout your degree will help you get a head-start to become a sound professional in the digital screen industry. A major in Screen Sound could set you up for careers in several areas including:

- Audio production for film, TV or video games
- Location sound
- Foley recording
- Sound or music design

## Screen Sound Course Diagram

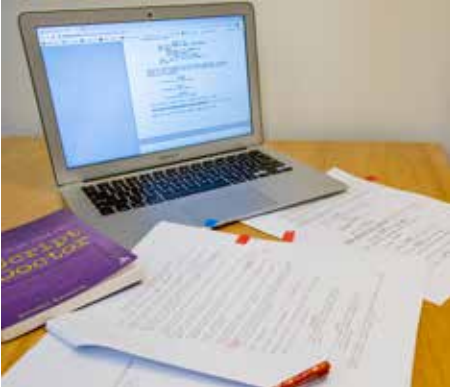
**Sound designers collaborate with screenwriters, directors and producers to create immersive experiences and bring stories to life!**

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	Semester 1				Semester 2			
First year	DISC101 Storytelling for the digital screen	PROD110 Design Principles	MUSA126 Sound Technologies	Elective	PROD121 The Game Development Process	DISC102 Principles of screen production	PROD142 2D and 3D art for film and games	Elective
Second year	DISC201 Storytelling in action	DISC231 Sound capture	DISC233 Critical listening	Elective	DISC232 Sound Design and editing	MUSA229 Introduction to game audio	DISC230 Screen sound project I	Elective
Third year	DISC301 Story development	DISC331 Creative sound studio		Elective	DISC332 Sound mixing for film and games	DISC380 Year 3 capstone project		Elective
Fourth year	DISC401 Conception and development in the digital screen	DISC403 Digital Screen Project			DISC402 Postproduction, exhibition and distribution	DISC403 Digital Screen project (continued)		

# Screenwriting



## Before anything we need a story

Screenwriters create the worlds we see on screen, whether it is in film, television or video games. They create the characters we fall in love with and the plot that keeps us at the edge of our seats. This major will teach you the skills needed for effective storytelling that moves an audience. You will learn how to write short scripts, feature length screen plays and episodes, and how different media are adapted for the screen.

## Highlights

- Create your own scripts and screenplays as part of your degree and add to your portfolio to graduate with a head-start
- Work with students from other majors to bring your story to life
- Leverage brand new facilities with cutting-edge technology in the film and game industry

## Overview

In this major you will learn how to create, structure and develop stories in ways that allows the audience to experience your world and characters as if they were real. Your creative projects will include plotting the story treatment of a feature film and writing the first act. The third year focuses particularly on episodic screenwriting, adapting different genres to screen as well as the revision and doctoring process. Throughout your degree you will get plenty of opportunities to work on creative projects with other students from other majors.

## Careers

Screenwriters create scripts for film, TV, video games, commercials, theatre and other types of content that involve scenes and dialogue. A major in Screenwriting could set you up for careers in several areas including:

- Screenwriting for film and TV
- Story writing and developing narrative for video games
- Advertising copy writing
- Creative content production and editing
- Studio management

**The NZ film commission contributed over \$20M in script development and production funding in 2023.**

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## Screenwriting Course Diagram

	Semester 1				Semester 2			
First year	DISC101 Storytelling for the digital screen	PROD110 Design Principles	MUSA126 Sound Technologies	Elective	PROD121 The Game Development Process	DISC102 Principles of screen production	PROD142 2D and 3D art for film and games	Elective
Second year	DISC201 Storytelling in action	DISC212 Screenwriting: research and story development	DISC222 Feature screenwriting: the first act	Elective	DISC223 Creating story worlds	DISC220 Feature screen writing project I		Elective
Third year	DISC301 Story development	DISC321 Episodic screenwriting	DISC322 Adaptation	Elective	DISC333 Screenwriting revision and doctoring	DISC380 Year 3 capstone project		Elective
Fourth year	DISC401 Conception and development in the digital screen	DISC403 Digital Screen Project			DISC402 Postproduction, exhibition and distribution	DISC403 Digital Screen project (continued)		

# Indigenous Narrative (minor)



## Self-determination in film and video game industries

Aotearoa New Zealand is home to amazing Indigenous filmmakers, producers and game designers who are shaping these industries and telling their own stories. The film and video game industries are important sites for self-determination. The Indigenous Narrative minor and Te Whare Pūrākau Academy have been developed to contribute to Māori and Pasifika storytelling. A good understanding of Indigenous storytelling is also important for anyone working in the digital screen industry in New Zealand and beyond.

## Highlights

- Study the only specialisation in Indigenous Narrative in Aotearoa
- This minor will complement any of the majors by adding a core understanding applying an indigenous context to anything you do
- Te Whare Pūrākau scholarship students will learn from Māori and Pasifika storytelling experts who are leading the way in the digital screen industry

## Overview

Indigenous Narrative is available as a minor in the BDigiScreen(Hons), and will give you a grounding in Māori and Indigenous Narrative concepts and forms. You will gain an understanding of approaches to Māori and Pasifika storytelling in digital forms, including production strategies and issues of representation. This subject complements any of the majors available in the BDigiScreen(Hons).

## Te Whare Pūrākau Academy

As Māori, Pasifika and Indigenous storytelling are important in the film and video game industry, we will be offering a scholarship programme through Te Whare Pūrākau.

Te Whare Pūrākau Academy Scholarships are available annually for Māori, Pasifika or other Indigenous identities and will include learning from Māori and Pasifika storytelling experts within the digital screen industry in wānanga.

As part of this programme you'll complete a minor in Indigenous Narrative while you develop your skills through one of the majors in the BDigiScreen(Hons).

## Scholarships

[www.canterbury.ac.nz/study/getting-started/scholarships](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/study/getting-started/scholarships)

**The Lion King Reo Māori has been the only film given permission to reversion the Sir Elton John song – ‘Can You Feel the Love Tonight’ in Te Reo Māori. Frozen commenced in 2022 with a special focus on Ngāi Tahu dialect.**

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The University of Canterbury's Digital Screen initiative is a unique addition to the training landscape of the screen industry in Aotearoa. The sector has a proud history of pushing boundaries, innovating and redefining technology and storytelling. The Digital Screen programme will provide the skills, connections and the knowledge needed for the next generation of innovative and creative storytellers in Aotearoa, helping to continue our country's reputation for excellence and being a leading screen production industry that competes globally. All involved with UC Digital Screen should be congratulated."

**Dale Corlett**

Head of Talent Development NZ Film Commission

**Join us on this exciting adventure in 2025.**

**Find out more**

University of Canterbury  
Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha

**UC Future Students team**

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[www.canterbury.ac.nz/study/academic-study/qualifications/bachelor-of-digital-screen-with-honours](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/study/academic-study/qualifications/bachelor-of-digital-screen-with-honours)

**Or come to our Open Day**

[www.canterbury.ac.nz/openday](http://www.canterbury.ac.nz/openday)



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