

ADOLPH VON MENZEL

BRESLAU 1815-1905 BERLIN

SIX DRAWINGS

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are pleased to present this small, monographic catalogue of drawings by Adolf von Menzel, an artist of particular interest to the gallery. Arguably the most important German draughtsman since Dürer, Menzel challenges, almost uniquely, the dominance of the great French draughtsmen of the nineteenth century, and casts a fresh and critical eye on modern life with unparalleled virtuosity.

We are indebted to several scholars, colleagues, and friends who have so generously given assistance with the preparation of this catalogue. We would like to thank, especially, Antoine Bechet, Florent Dumas, Florian Härb, Gerhard Kehlenbeck, Claude Keisch, Thomas le Claire, and Marie Poisbelaud. We are particularly indebted to Dr. Marie Ursula Riemann-Reyher for her help with the cataloguing of these six drawings by Menzel.

Laura Bennett
Mark Brady

CATALOGUE

Frontispiece

2. *Various Test Marks of Watercolor (verso)* (detail)

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Measurements are given height before width.
All drawings are sold mounted but not framed.

I Study for the Portrait of Hans Karl von Winterfeldt

Black and white chalk on brown paper, mounted on thin cardboard
11¹³/₁₆ x 9¹¹/₁₆ inches
300 x 245 mm

Provenance
Dr. Gustav Rau, Stuttgart
Thence by descent

Drawn circa 1851

In May 1851, Menzel's friend Friedrich Eggers noted in the art newspaper *Deutsches Kunstblatt*: "Berlin, April: Adolf Menzel has just finished the drawing of *General Winterfeldt* (sic) for his cycle 'Heroes of the Seven Years War' which is to be cut in wood. One can always rest assured that Menzel will perform all tasks in this matter in a way singular and peculiar to himself. And he does this in such an accomplished way that one always believes that his latest achievement is the best one has ever seen from him. Everything is alive in this figure."¹ From this note, the present drawing can be securely dated to the first months of 1851. The sheet is a preparatory study for one of a series of woodcuts entitled *Aus König Friedrichs Zeit, Kriegs- und Friedenshelden*.² The series contained twelve sheets; the portrait of Generallieutenant Hans Karl von Winterfeldt was the sixth sheet (fig. 1). The woodcuts are in very large format, comparable in size to the format normally reserved for portraits of monarchs.

Hans Karl von Winterfeldt (1707–1757) was one of Frederick the Great's closest military advisors, serving him for much of the Seven Years' War (1756–1763). The woodcut depicts Winterfeldt in a private moment away from the battlefield. He is shown in the process of binding his sash, with his tricorne hat resting on a chair at the left. The three-quarter-length study is based on a studio model fitted out in historical military dress.

A second preparatory study is recorded, depicting the same figure seen from a slightly different angle.³ A third preparatory study for Winterfeldt's portrait is in the Nationalgalerie in Berlin.⁴



Fig. 1



- 1 F. Eggers (ed.), *Deutsches Kunstblatt Zeitschrift für bildende Kunst, Baukunst und Kunsthandwerk; Organ der deutschen Kunstvereine*, Stuttgart, 2.1851, p. 150.
- 2 The full title reads: *Aus König Friedrichs Zeit: Kriegs- und Friedens-Helden gezeichnet von Adolph Menzel, in Holz geschnitten von Eduard Kretzschmar*, Alexander Duncker (ed.), Berlin, 1854–56.
- 3 Black chalk and wash, with stumping, heightened with white; formerly with C. G. Boerner, Düsseldorf, Lagerliste 92, 1990, no. 27.
- 4 Black chalk heightened with white, 11¹/₂ x 8³/₄ inches, 291 x 211 mm; Berlin, Staatliche Museen Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Nationalgalerie, inv. no. 175.

2 *A Sheet of Various Studies, including Two Heads of Men,
and Two Studies of Hands, one holding a Fan;
with Test Marks of Watercolor (recto)
Various Test Marks of Watercolor (verso)*

Marked with the artist's estate stamp, in violet ink, upper left center, *A. M.*
Carpenter's pencil and watercolor (*recto*); watercolor (*verso*)
6¼ x 5½ inches
170 x 130 mm

Provenance

Emilie Menzel Krigar (1823–1907), Berlin, the artist's sister
Thence by descent until 2015

This handsome sheet of sketches, showing four different and seemingly unrelated sketches of heads and hands, placed on the page with great sensitivity, derives additional aesthetic delight from the randomly placed touches of watercolor at the lower and left edges of the paper. Presumably, while working on a separate watercolor, the artist used both sides of this small page to blot color tests from his brush, despite the already drawn sketches on the *recto*. The *verso*, left undrawn, is a riot of color blots, evocative of the work

of many artists in the twentieth century. While every watercolor artist used such sheets to mix his colors, to test the tone of a color or pigment, or to dry a too-wet brush, the usual practice of the artist was to discard such sheets. Interestingly, both Menzel and his slightly younger contemporary, Gustave Moreau (1826–1898), seemed to have kept many examples, indicating the value both artists attached to this type of drawing. Indeed, Moreau preserved nearly 400 sheets of this type.¹ Other examples by Menzel include such drawings as *Menzel in the Pose of Pesne* of 1861 (fig. 2),² *Study for the Figure of "Germania"* of 1871,³ and *Japanese Seamstress* of 1887.⁴



Fig. 2

It has been suggested that the study of a man's head in the upper right of this sheet may possibly be a study from life of Otto Edouard Leopold, Prince of



- 1 See R. Rosenberg and M. Hollein, *Turner Hugo Moreau: Entdeckung der Abstraktion*, exhibition catalogue, Frankfurt, Schirn Kunsthalle, 2008, pp. 222–43.
- 2 Pencil with watercolor, 8¼ x 6¼ inches, 221 x 162 mm; Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen, Inv. -Nr: KK SZ Menzel Kat. 830.
- 3 Carpenter's pencil with watercolor, 8 x 4¾ inches, 204 x 125 mm; Schweinfurt, Dr. Georg Schäfer Stiftung, Inv. Nr.: 594A.
- 4 Pencil, watercolor and gouache, 9¾ x 6¾ inches, 246 x 170 mm; Schweinfurt, Dr. Georg Schäfer Stiftung, Inv. Nr.: MGS 3829A.

Bismarck (1815–1898), who was appointed the first Chancellor of Germany in 1871, a position he held under three monarchs for nearly twenty years. Menzel painted Otto von Bismarck twice, the first time for the great stage piece, the *Coronation of King William I at Königsberg* (1865; Potsdam, Neues Palais). Although Bismarck was at the time the Ambassador to Saint Petersburg and not present at the actual coronation, he became Minister for Foreign Affairs in 1862, and it was felt imperative to have him included in the assembly of court and government figures surrounding the king. Menzel drew his portrait from life in preparation for the painting May 4, 1865.

Bismarck sat again for the artist in 1871 for a larger-than-life size, full-length portrait, one of a pair of portraits of Bismarck and Field Marshall Helmuth Graf von Moltke, intended to decorate the Academy of Arts building for the victorious German army returning from Paris at the end of the Franco-Prussian War. The preliminary drawing for this portrait, now in Berlin, shows Bismarck standing at a table with his hand resting on an unfolded map spread over the tabletop (fig. 3).⁵ The likeness of Bismarck shown in the Berlin sheet corresponds suggestively to the head, facing in the opposite direction, shown in the upper part of our sheet, which would suggest that our drawing was made at about the same time, *circa* 1871.



Fig. 3



verso

5 Pencil, 1 5/4 x 10 1/4 inches, 399 x 262 mm; Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen, Inv.-Nr.: KK SZ Menzel Kat. 99.

3 *Half-length Study of a Young Man Wearing a Hat*

Signed with the artist's initials, upper right, *A. M.*
Carpenter's pencil, with stumping, on Whatman paper; watermark,
[WH]ATMAN/[1]875
7¼ x 4⅞ inches
198 x 125 mm

Provenance
Private collection, Berlin

This vivid study from life is conceived as a free, independent work of art. Unlike many studies made by Menzel from life, in which the subject is often caught off-guard, or taken unawares, the sitter in this study appears to be deliberately posing for the artist. The intensity of the sitter's gaze reveals his consciousness of having his likeness drawn, and adds immeasurably to the powerful, expressive qualities of the drawing. The figure is seated with his hands resting on his knees, looking downwards to his left. He wears a tall hat set at a slightly rakish angle, which barely contains his thick, un-brushed hair. The striped shirt, set off with a tied kerchief at the neck, adds a rhythmic, flowing graphic quality to the sheet.

While the model is yet unknown, it has been suggested that he may have been one of the several Italian models which Menzel employed both in Berlin and on his trips to Italy. While the models from which the artist drew in Italy are anonymous, the models he worked with in Berlin are often known by name and address, such as Caterina Miniscalco, Domenico Miniscalchi, Filomena Gizzi, Rocco Arcasi, Francesco Tartaglia, amongst others. The models were of all ages, both male and female, and were drawn from the large group of laboring immigrants from the Abruzzi who had settled in Berlin. They posed in Menzel's studio on the Sigismundstrasse, often wearing traditional costumes.¹ While it has not been possible to connect this figure with any other composition, the style and aspect of the model suggests that the drawing may possibly have been an unused study related to the great painting of the *Piazza d'Erbe, Verona*, which Menzel began painting after his first visit to Verona in 1881 and finished in 1884. While the paper bears a watermark of 1875 and the drawing could easily have been made in Berlin at that time, Menzel may also have had it in his possession during his trips to Italy in the 1880s while working on the *Piazza d'Erbe* composition.



¹ See L. Pelizzari, "Menzels italienische Modelle," in *Menzel in Verona*, exhibition catalogue, Ingelheim am Rhein, 2008, pp. 209–34.

4 *The Zwölferturm in Sterzing, 1888*

Signed with the artist's initials, dated, and inscribed, lower left, *A. M. 88 Sterzing*
Carpenter's pencil with stumping on wove paper
7⁷/₈ x 4⁹/₁₆ inches
180 x 115 mm

Provenance

C. G. Boerner, Dusseldorf, 1966
Private collection, Dusseldorf

Literature

C. G. Boerner, *Neue Lagerliste* 44, Dusseldorf, 1966, no. 123, illustrated
H. Ebertshäuser (ed.), *Adolph von Menzel: Das graphische Werk*, II, Munich and Frankfurt, n.d. (1977), p. 1249, illustrated

Menzel's summer trip in the year 1888 took him to Bamberg, Munich, Pommersfelden, Sterzing, Kissingen, Dresden, and Merseburg. This drawing was made in Sterzing that year and depicts one of the town's important landmarks, the Zwölferturm, a 46-meter-high night watchman's tower which is flanked by the façades of Sterzing's characteristic, tall townhouses. A monument to St. John of Nepomuk can be seen at the center right of the drawing. The architecture of this view remains largely unchanged to this day. Menzel has inserted just a single figure in the quiet emptiness of an otherwise deserted town center. A high Alpine massif rises behind the tower, closing off the composition.

The historic trading town of Sterzing was strategically situated between Alpine passes on the route running between Verona, Innsbruck, Munich, and Augsburg. The town's wealth was based on silver mining and its elegant buildings, with their richly decorated marble façades, bay windows, gables, and doors, testify to this wealth. Built in 1468 to 1872, the Zwölferturm separates the old town from the new. Its distinctive stepped gable was built to replace the original gable destroyed by fire in 1867. St. John of Nepomuk—to whom the monument is dedicated—was believed to possess powers to protect people and property from the dangers of flooding, caused by nearby rivers such as the Vallerbach and the Eisack.



5 *A Man Reading, with an Additional Study of his Left Hand*, 1886

Signed with the initials and dated, lower right, *AM/86*

Carpenter's pencil with stumping on wove paper

4½ x 7½ inches

115 x 181 mm

Provenance

Private collection, Switzerland

Menzel's most important tools as a draughtsman were his sketchbook and his carpenter's pencil (*Zimmermannsbleistift*) which he would always carry in his pocket until his artistic curiosity, possibly provoked by some random event, required him to immediately put them to use. Our drawing was probably made in such circumstances. It shows a man seen from above, close-up and in near three-quarter profile, sitting at a table and immersed in reading, though the precise object of his focus remains elusive. As so often in Menzel's drawings, it was not the object of the man's attention that was of interest to him but the concentrated attention itself that the man devoted to his reading.

Menzel worked out the head and upper body of the man with great care, using his characteristic technique of swiping the graphite with his wet thumb to achieve the silvery, *sfumato*, effect on the skin and fabrics; as was his habit, he added a subsidiary study in the upper left corner of the sheet, in which he elaborated the left hand. In this study, the fingers are more clearly defined—the jacket's sleeve is pushed farther back—and the knuckles are now well lit. Menzel completed the composition with his characteristic monogram and date in the lower right corner.

Menzel's informal portrait drawings frequently depict ordinary people, often seen in profile and from unusual angles and, as in the present sheet, apparently unaware of being portrayed. Menzel's close friend, Paul Meyerheim, pointed out that the artist often chose regular people as his models because he wished his work to be regarded for its artistic merit, rather than for the prominence of his sitters.¹



¹ P. Meyerheim, *Adolph von Menzel: Erinnerungen*, Berlin, 1906, p. 41.

6 *Häuser in Regensburg*, 1894

Signed with the initials, dated, and inscribed, upper left, *A. M./94. Regensburg.*; the old backing board with exhibition label inscribed, *Prof. Krigar-Menzel, Dablem/Peter Lennéstr. 74.*

Carpenter's pencil with stumping on wove paper

8¼ x 5½ inches

210 x 130 mm

Provenance

Estate of Adolph von Menzel, 1905, by descent to the artist's sister, Emilie Menzel Krigar (1823–1907), Berlin, by descent to her children, Margarethe and Professor Dr. Otto Krigar-Menzel, Berlin, 1907
Thence by descent until 2015

Exhibitions

Berlin, Königliche National-Galerie, *Ausstellung von Werken Adolph von Menzels*, 1905, exhibition catalogue, p. 158, no. 2075 (as *Häuser in Regensburg*)

Berlin, Galerie Thannhauser, *Adolph von Menzel, 1815–1905. Ausstellung von Gemälden, Gouachen, Pastellen, Zeichnungen*, April 1928, exhibition catalogue, p. 36, cat. no. 268 (lent by Prof. Krigar-Menzel)

Adolph von Menzel enjoyed capturing views through windows throughout his life. Drawn from a second-floor window or balcony, the present sheet shows the upper floors of several buildings in the Bavarian town of Regensburg. It was executed in 1894 on one of the artist's nearly annual summer trips to southern Germany and Austria, and is typical in subject and technique. Instead of a grand, panoramic view, Menzel focuses here, in a modern and snapshot-like way, on a small, specific, and quotidian corner of Regensburg. At the height of his powers, and in keeping with many of his drawings from the 1880s and 1890s, he uses a carpenter's pencil to great effect. The sharp point renders in detail the rough texture of the roofs of the building on the left, while the smooth façades of the buildings, their tonal gradations, and the play of light and shadow therein are realistically depicted by stumping and wiping the graphite. The view is tight and cropped, and the buildings, domestic and non-touristic in nature, of interest to Menzel for their features so typical of this part of southern Germany. Menzel was drawn to the wrought-iron balcony and seemingly organically placed dormers, chimney, and overhanging gable, and to the buildings' steeply pitched roofs, square and angled façades, and close proximity to one another. The site lacks the space, grandeur, and exacting rigor of classical planning and design, and the buildings seem to have evolved as need and space allowed. They are just the sort of real and commonplace subject to which Menzel was attracted.

The sheet can be compared to another drawing by Menzel in the same technique and of nearly identical dimensions, also signed with the initials and dated 1894, *Brandmauer* (fig. 4).¹ Showing the fire wall of a building with an empty lot in front

¹ Carpenter's pencil with stumping, 8¼ x 5½ inches, 210 x 129 mm (Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Inv. No. KK Menzel N706), see *Adolph Menzel, radikal real*, exhibition catalogue, Munich, Kunsthalle der Hypo-Kulturstiftung and Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett der Staatlichen Museen, 2008, p. 88, cat. no. 51, illustrated.



of it and the angled façade of another building to its right, it, too, is a cropped and highly focused city view, intentionally unremarkable, unglamorous, and devoid of people, in which the shapes, textures, and placement of the buildings were of especial interest to Menzel. It was probably drawn on the same summer trip in 1894, perhaps even from the same sketch book.



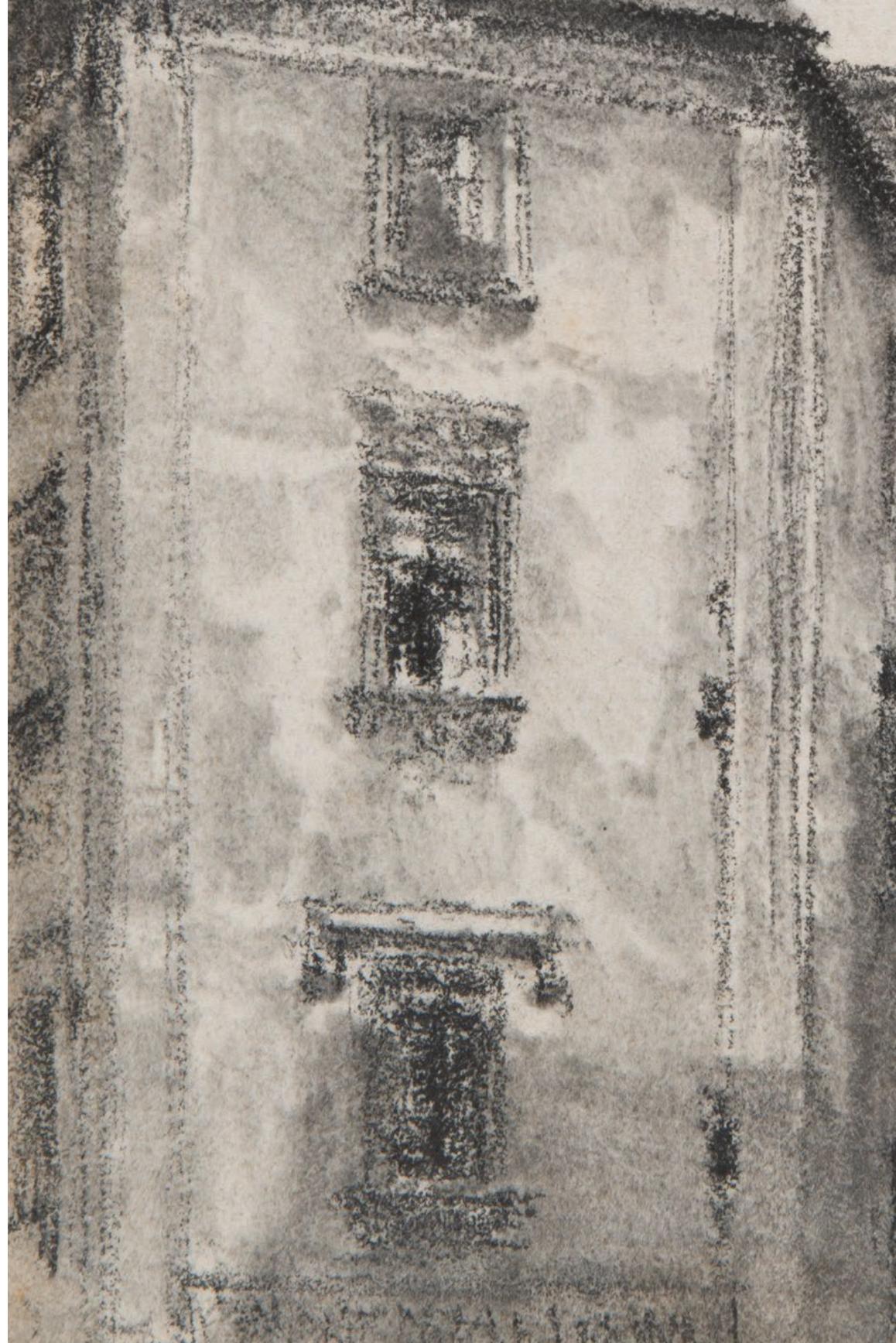
Fig. 4

Located at the confluence of the Danube, Naab, and Regen rivers, Regensburg is the fourth largest city in Bavaria after Munich, Nuremberg, and Augsburg. A stone bridge built across the Danube at Regensburg in the 12th century, extant today, opened major trading routes between northern Europe and Venice, and established the city as a wealthy mercantile and cultural center in southern Germany in the Middle Ages. Its medieval center, or Old Town, the largest north of the Alps, is beautifully preserved and was named a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2006. Menzel was obviously drawn to Regensburg's architectural heritage and picturesque qualities. Along with Munich, Nuremberg, Bamberg, Salzburg, Linz, and Vienna, it was one of the cities he visited on his first extended summer trip to southern Germany and Austria in 1852.² A favorite spot, he visited it again, in addition to 1894, the year of the present sheet, in the summers of 1872, 1874, 1877, 1883, 1889, and 1892.³ Seventeen further studies of Regensburg were included in the posthumous exhibition of Menzel's work at the Königliche National-Galerie in Berlin in 1905, all today in the collection of the Kupferstichkabinett, Berlin.

After Menzel's death in 1905, a large portion of his estate was sold in 1906 to the Nationalgalerie in Berlin. A number of works and documents, including the present sheet, however, were inherited by Menzel's sister, Emilie, to whom he was very close. Upon her death in 1907, this work and others passed to her children, Margarethe and Otto Krigar-Menzel. The sheet descended through the Menzel family until 2015.

² P. Betthausen, C. Keisch, G. Lemmel, and M. U. Riemann-Reyher, *Adolph Menzel, 1815–1905: Master Drawings from East Berlin*, exhibition catalogue, New York, The Frick Collection, and elsewhere, 1990–91, p. 225.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 228–31.





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