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- [About Us](#)
 - [Contact Us](#)
 - [Write For Us](#)
- [All Reviews](#)
 - [Album Reviews](#)
 - [EP Reviews](#)
 - [Single Reviews](#)
- [Features](#)
 - [Good Sounds Playlist](#)
 - [Regular Rotation](#)
 - [Debuts](#)
 - [Interviews](#)
 - [Premieres](#)
 - [Kaleidoscope Sessions](#)
 - [List Week 2019](#)
- [Love List 2020](#)

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- [Instagram](#)

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 - [Album Reviews](#)
 - [EP Reviews](#)
 - [Single Reviews](#)
 - [Features](#)
 - [Good Sounds Playlist](#)
 - [Regular Rotation](#)
 - [Debuts](#)
 - [Interviews](#)
 - [Premieres](#)
 - [Kaleidoscope Sessions](#)
 - [List Week 2019](#)
 - [Love List 2020](#)
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- [Album Reviews](#)
- [Debuts](#)
- [EP Reviews](#)
- [Feature](#)
- [Good Sounds Playlist](#)

- [Interviews](#)
- [Kaleidoscope Sessions](#)
- [Liner Notes](#)
- [List Week 2019](#)
- [Lockdown Music Guide](#)
- [Love List 2020](#)
- [Loved](#)
- [Premieres](#)
- [Regular Rotation](#)
- [Single Reviews](#)
- [Sounds Good PR](#)
- [Uncategorized](#)

Can we recreate the euphoric experience of a gig in lockdown?

[by davidalthom](#)
[4 November 2020](#)
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2020 has taken a lot from us, and continues to destroy livelihoods, businesses and entire industries. The music industry has suffered highly, you can hardly social distance in a 500-capacity unventilated, box of a room. You may make some of the best memories that way, but now doing so would be completely unsafe and irresponsible. Or, a normal day if you're lucky enough to be governed by Jacinda Arden.

As we're speeding to yet another round of gig postponements and cancellations, we're seeing new forms of gigs popping up. Gone are the days of the organised TV benefits, and impromptu Instagram Live gigs that required a Google Calendar to keep up with. Now we're onto special live streamed events and big time cinema releases.

Surely sitting on your couch in your pants can't feel a fraction as good as pushing through a sweaty crowd in a dark room because you need to wee before the headliner kicks in. There's no way sitting in a cinema with popcorn can replace spending £7 on a pint in a plastic cup that you'll promptly spill when someone nudges you in the back 'finding their friend' in the crowd, but there's 8 of them in a line and it seems their 'friend' is right at the front and they give up the search promptly after getting the best vantage point of the stage.

Recently I attended Glass Animals' 'Streamland' event '[Live From The Internet](#)'. This one-time only event saw the four-piece commission a custom platform for fans to interact, buy merch and watch a pre-recorded, full-length gig. I was totally gassed for this, *Dreamland* is my album of the year so far. I've been recommending it to anyone who will listen.

Seeing these songs come to life, after the eternity of the COVID summer, was incredible. A huge set built to come to life with fans lipsyncing songs, even a pool illusion from the massive screen set-up, with frontman Dave Bayley singing 'Hot Sugar' from a lilo. These type of things we'd never be able to experience due to the constraints of real life.

In real life, the stream doesn't cut out either though. Nor does it loop the same 30 seconds of Dave on the lilo until the stream has to cut off and restart over an hour after it began. No fault of the band at all, and I stress that they did so much to make up for this, like access for two weekends to rewatch the gig in full at your own leisure – a lovely gesture for something which is just 'one of those things'. However, the show was incredible, covering hits from all three albums, with a massive 'Pork Soda' closer.

But the moment the stream cut out, we were sucked back into the reality of being locked in our homes, in a dressing gown, watching a gig through a laptop. For a brief while I felt like I was back living my life as usual. Then the situation crashed back down, reminding me that normalcy and a sweaty night of live music is still far out of sight.

Just this week Fleetwood Mac legend, witchy hero and solo artist with the best album photoshoots around, Stevie Nicks released a live album covering her 2016-17 [24 Karat Gold Tour](#). Last week, for two nights, you could watch a recording of two nights spliced into one concert movie.

After entering a desolate, but well set up for this new world, cinema, forgetting my glasses and spilling my popcorn, I sat in my assigned seat, on its row only with other members of my household and watched Stevie perform many of her hits. 'Stand Back' and 'Edge of Seventeen', but I noted the absence of my favourite Stevie song, 'Rooms on Fire', that she hasn't performed since the nineties!

The concert came with so many clips of Stevie talking about her career, talking in depth about her songs, the process of making them, the Aspen mansion she wrote 'Landslide' in, the car Prince drove to the studio to play with her – stories that I assume came from separate nights of the show, due to the sheer volume of them.

If anything, this just proves to me we need a Stevie Nicks biopic or autobiography, hearing stories of the cocaine and breakup fuelled triumph of *Rumours* straight from the source is an incredible experience. These are a total bonus of a concert that has been edited and produced to be the absolute best version of itself it can be.

Of course it came with its issues, if you were pipped to the post in the booking process, you could lose your seats due to your empty-seat-bubble encroaching on other empty-seat-bubbles. This was genuinely a Glastonbury ticket like stint, all to go the cinema. At least the ticket buying experience can be recreated at home, with less touts as well – silver linings.

When else would you be able to see rock legend Stevie Nicks for £13? This tour only stopped in the UK for one date in 2017, as part of Hyde Park's British Summer Time festival, making a three year old tour more accessible in a world that makes human contact inaccessible.

Dua Lipa, Billie Eilish and more have announced their livestream concerts coming soon, so it seems high end production, ticketed events may become the norm for a little while. With studies saying full capacity gigs may only be viable in April 2021 at the earliest, seems we'll have to get used to it.

However all of the names referenced above aren't just successful musicians, they're some of the world's *most successful musicians*. A high end, custom production to be streamed online isn't available to everyone, nor are most artists sitting on a drone-filmed concert from years ago. With grassroots venues struggling to survive and artists receiving little support from the Government, our indie music scene may not survive the pandemic. Whilst larger artists can create and share some incredibly fun methods of connecting with fans, the pressure on smaller artists is immense. How are those unable to pay their rent due to the lack of funding for the arts, meant to create more revenue in a world that requires online gigs to be highly produced and provide something that makes the event 'worth it' to attend?

Our thriving music scene may be reduced to a commodified one. One with even more barriers to entry than it currently has, that's a deeply depressing thought.

Whilst we can try our hardest to enjoy ourselves at online events, nothing is going to hold a candle to the real experience. We all eagerly await the day we can fight our way into Brixton McDonalds with 5,000 others who have all just left the Academy. But until then, we'll make do with seeing our favourite artists through the screen and appreciating being in bed by 11 after a gig.

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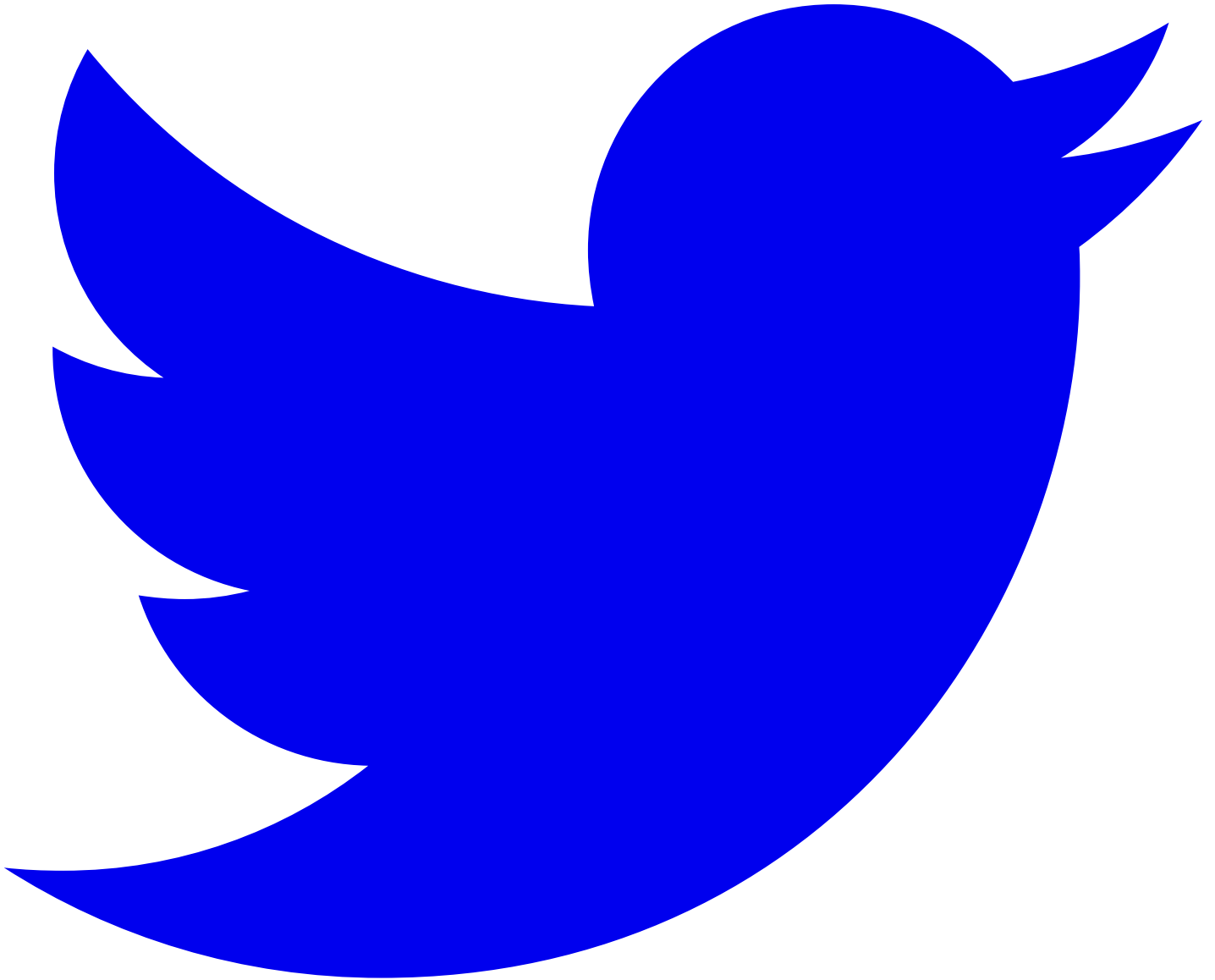
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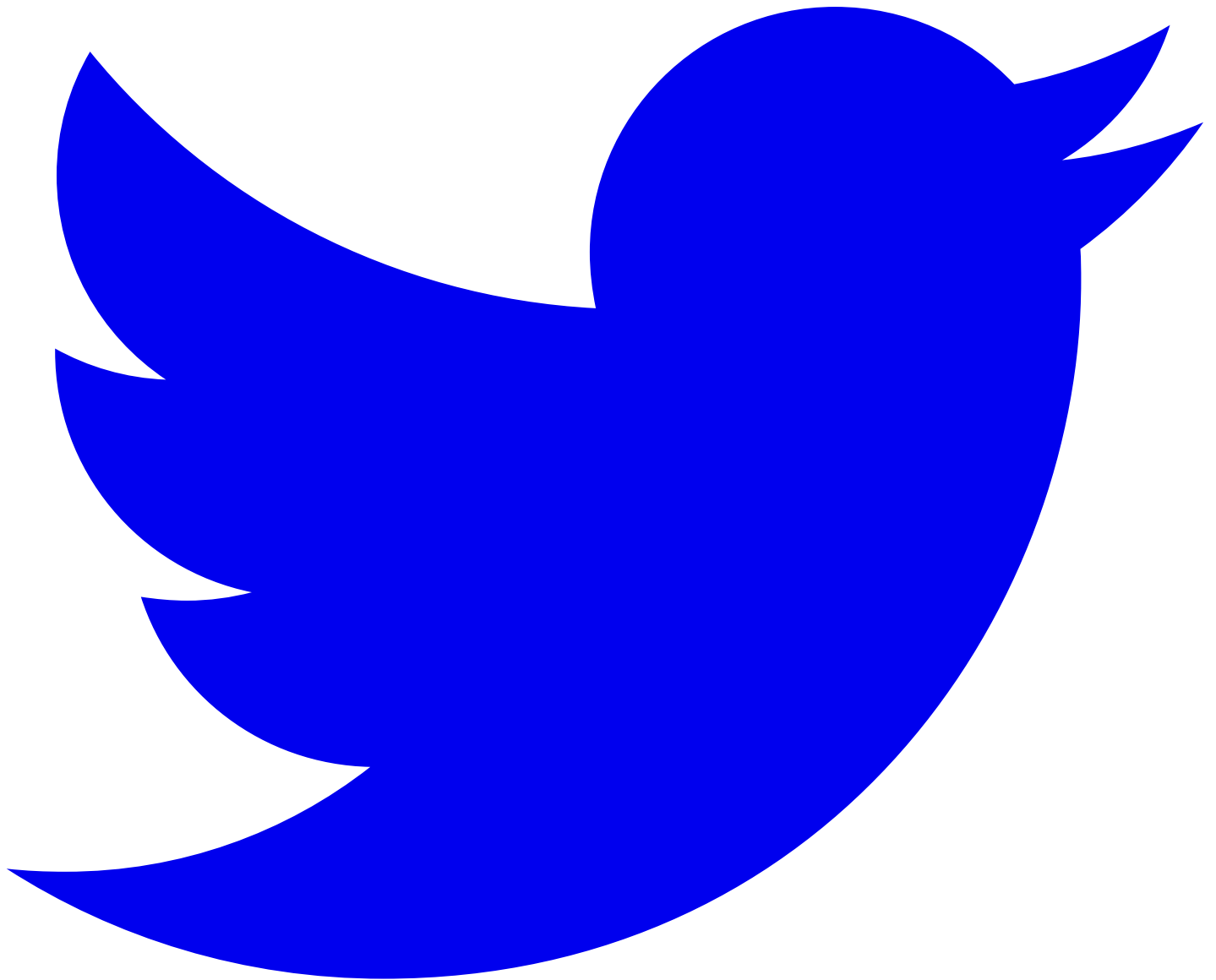
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- [Amie Jay's "Ricochet"](#)
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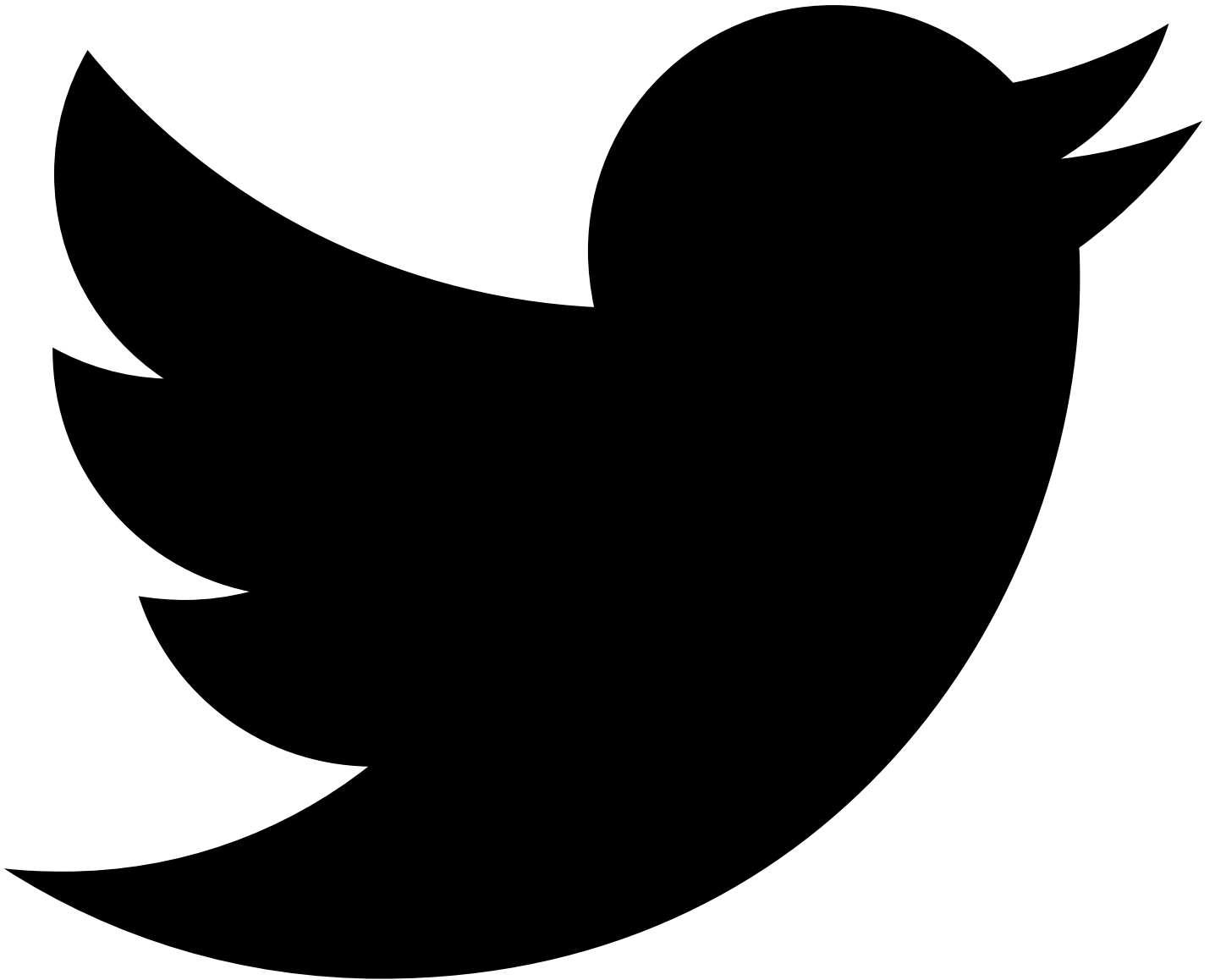
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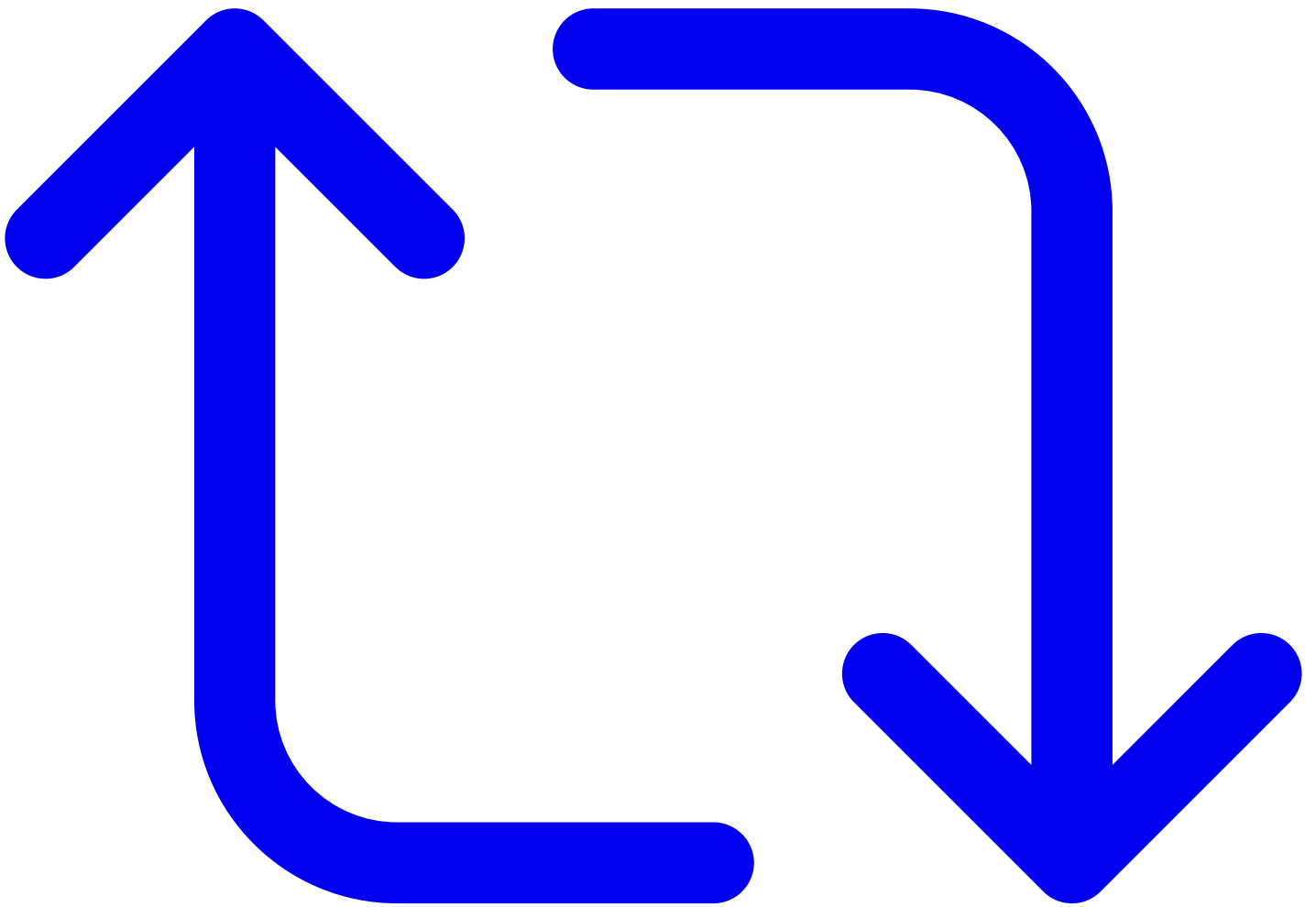


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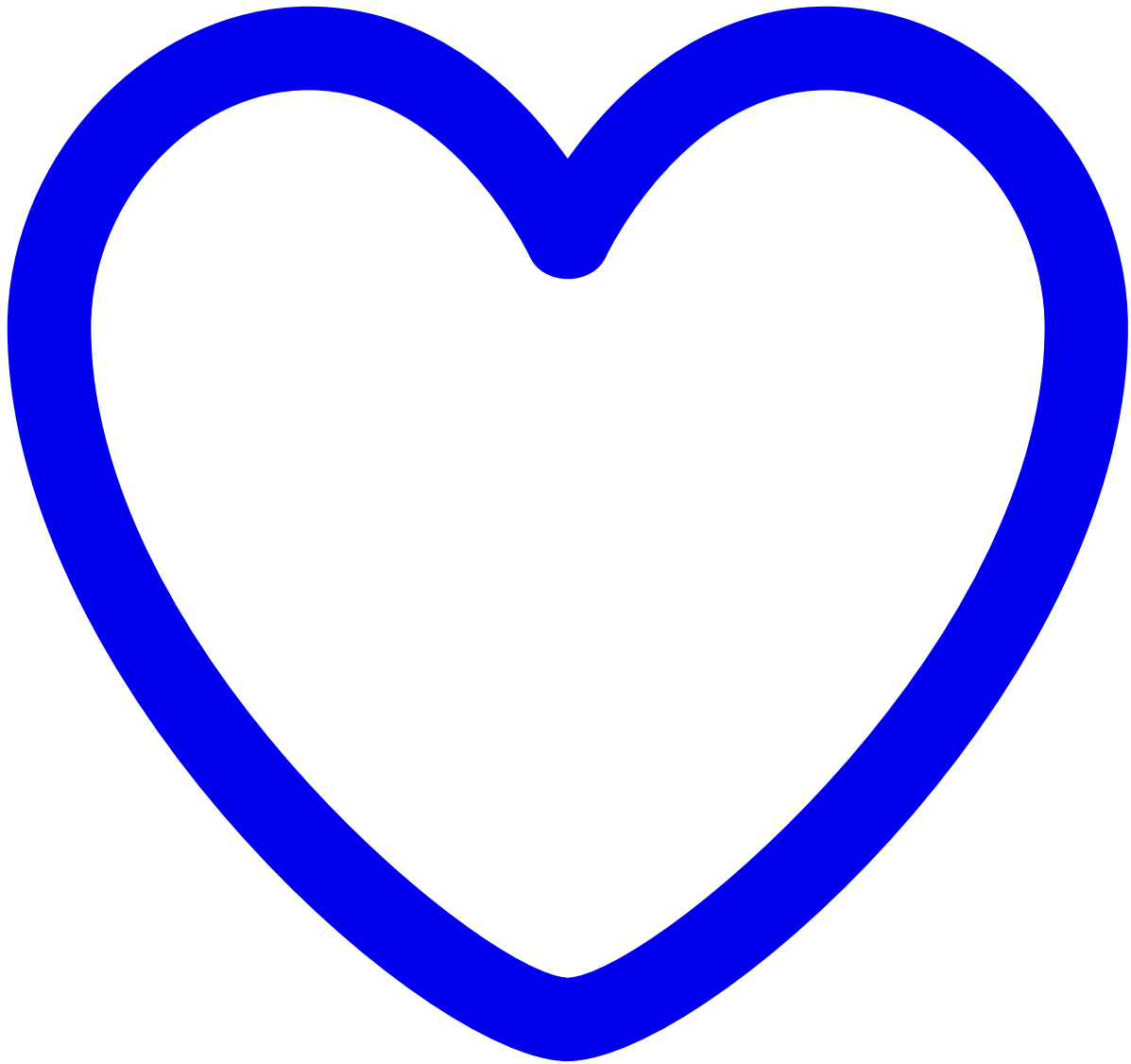
If yr not interested then...fair enough. No Lion Bars tho 🐾



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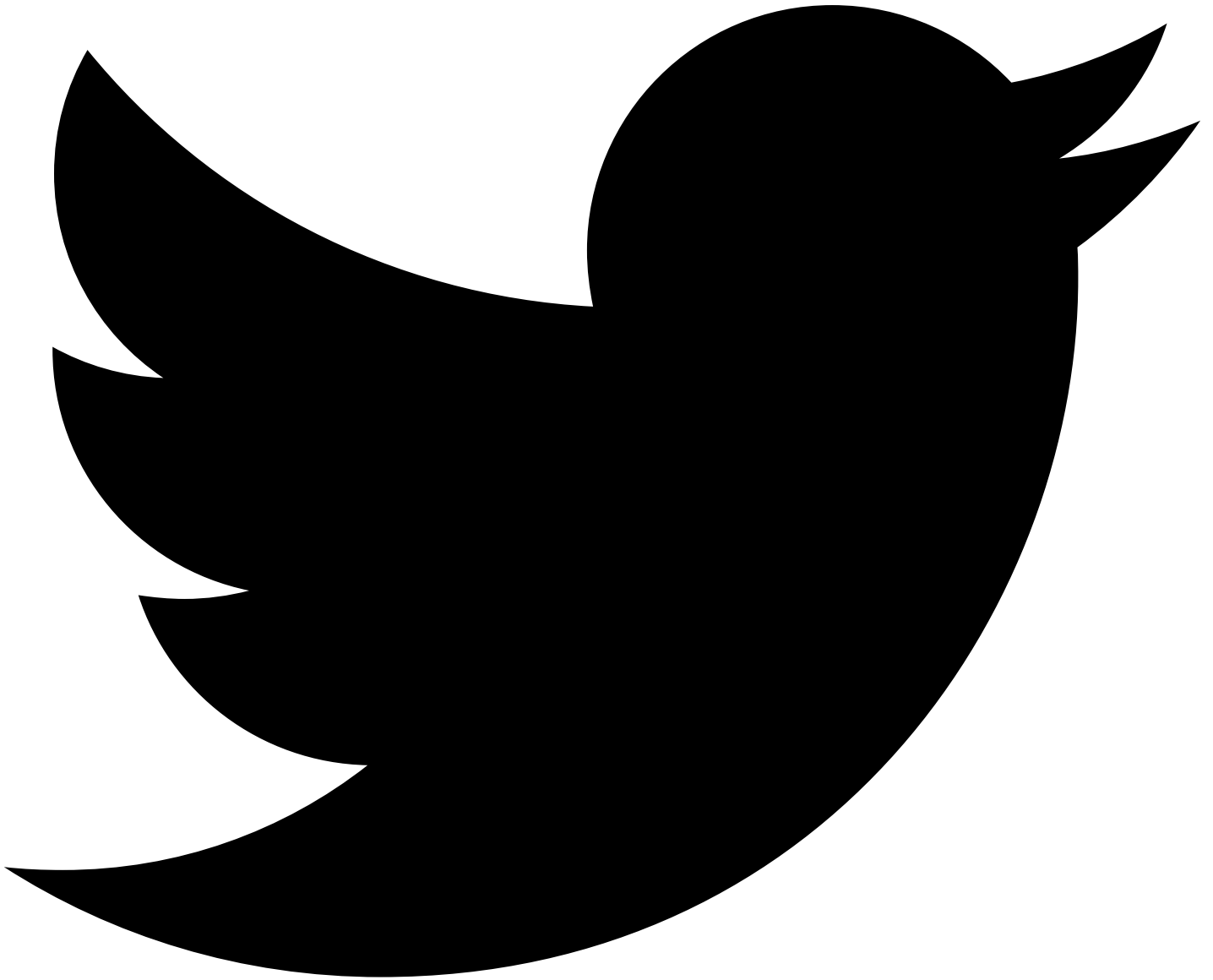
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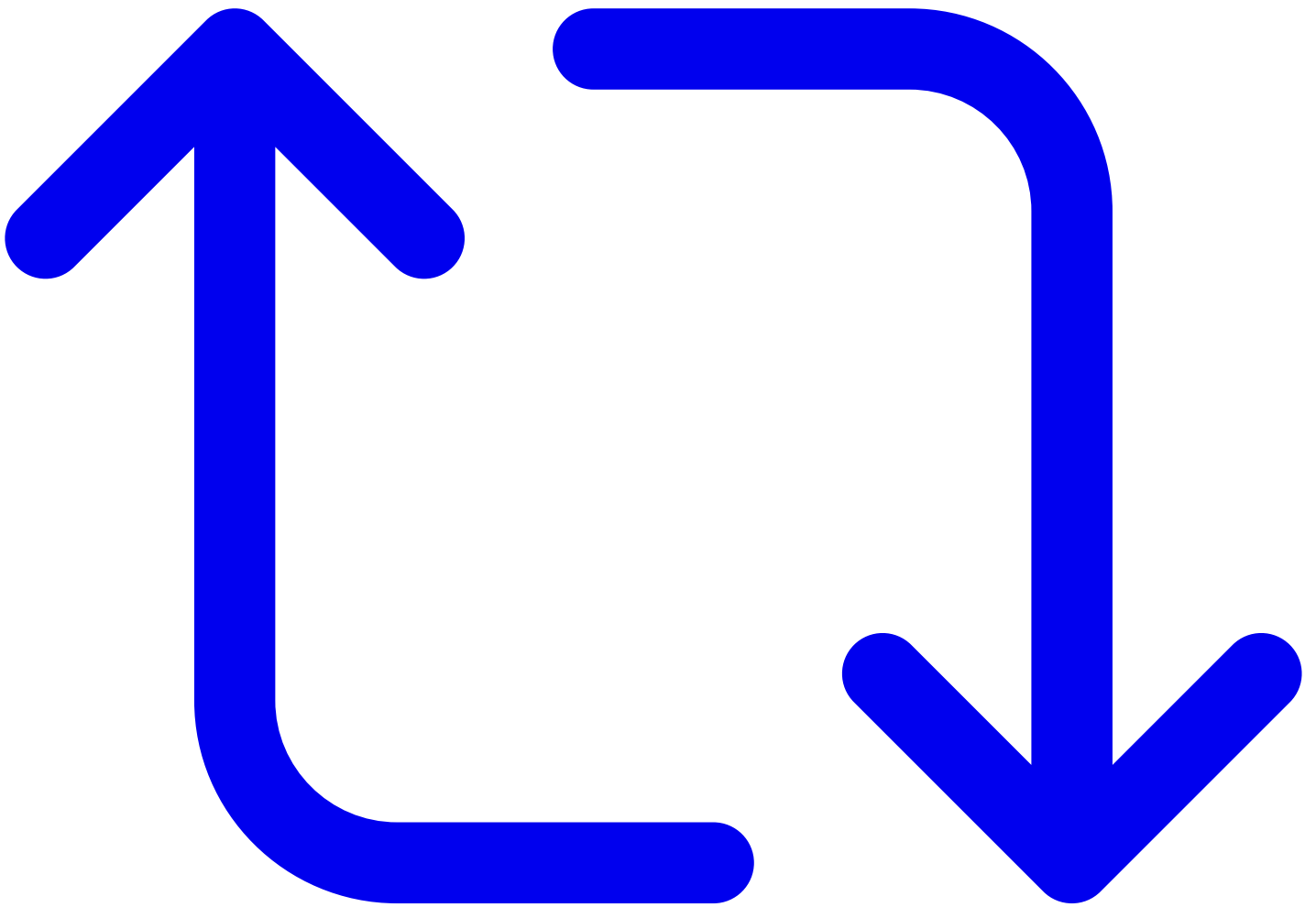
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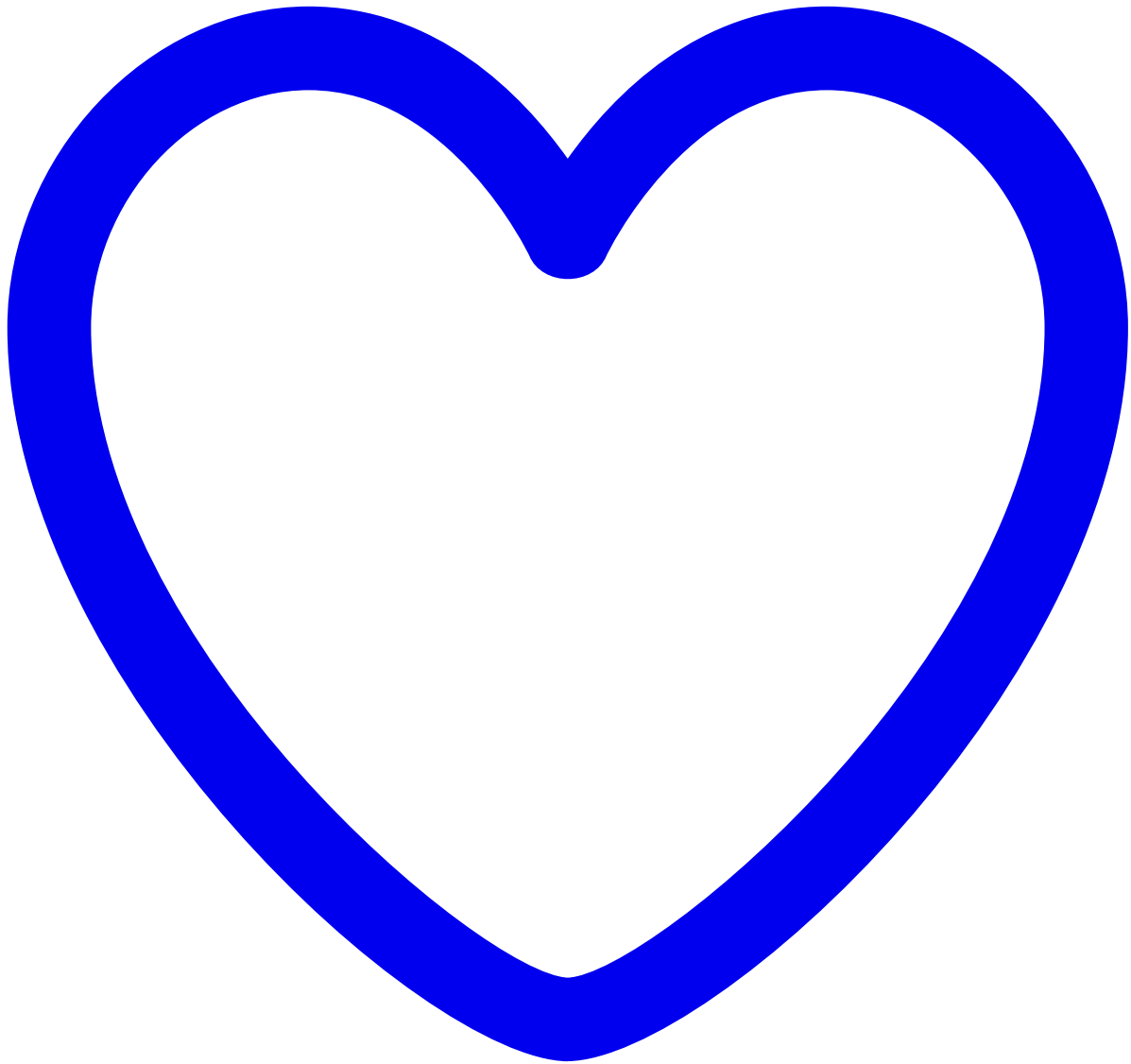




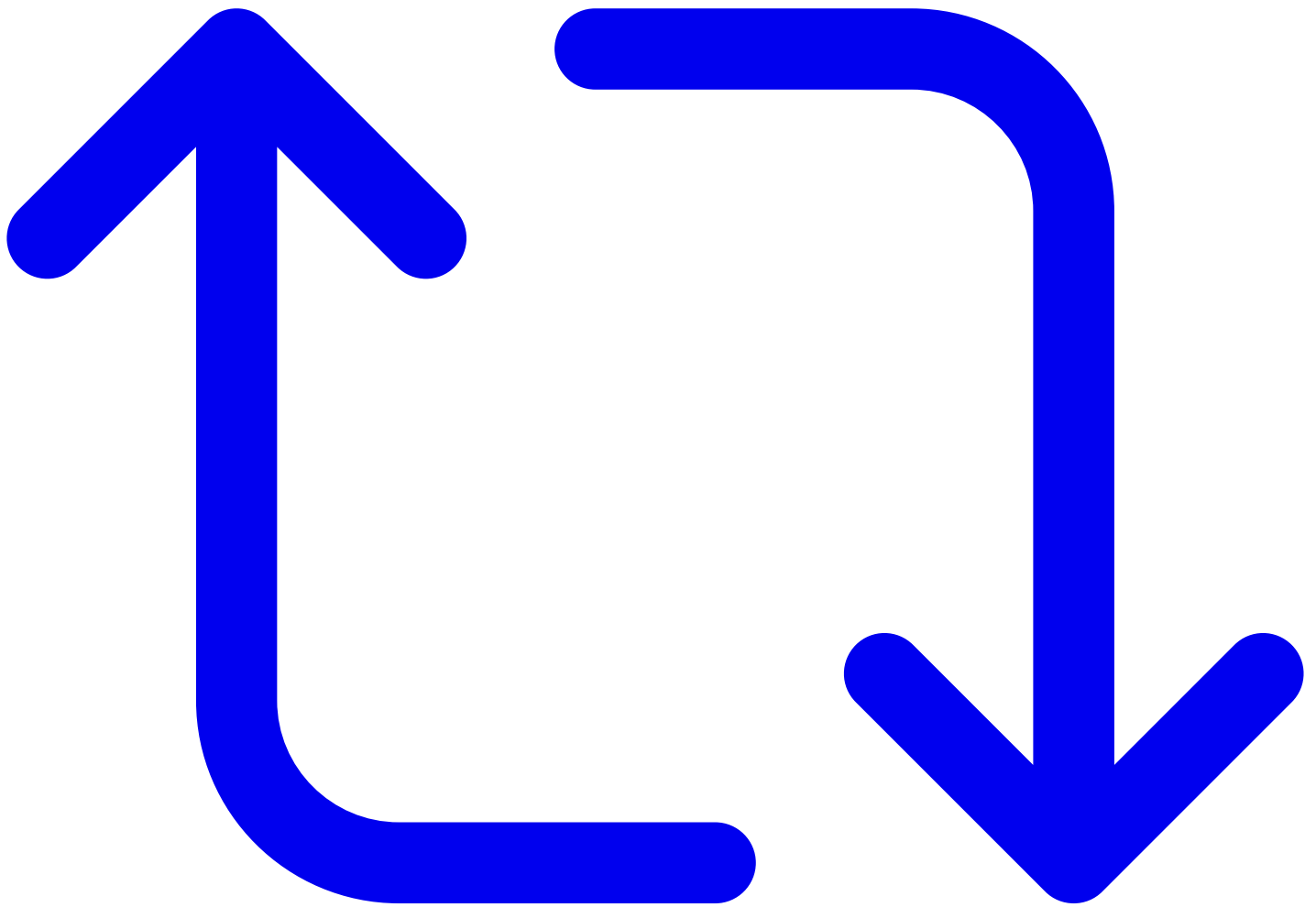
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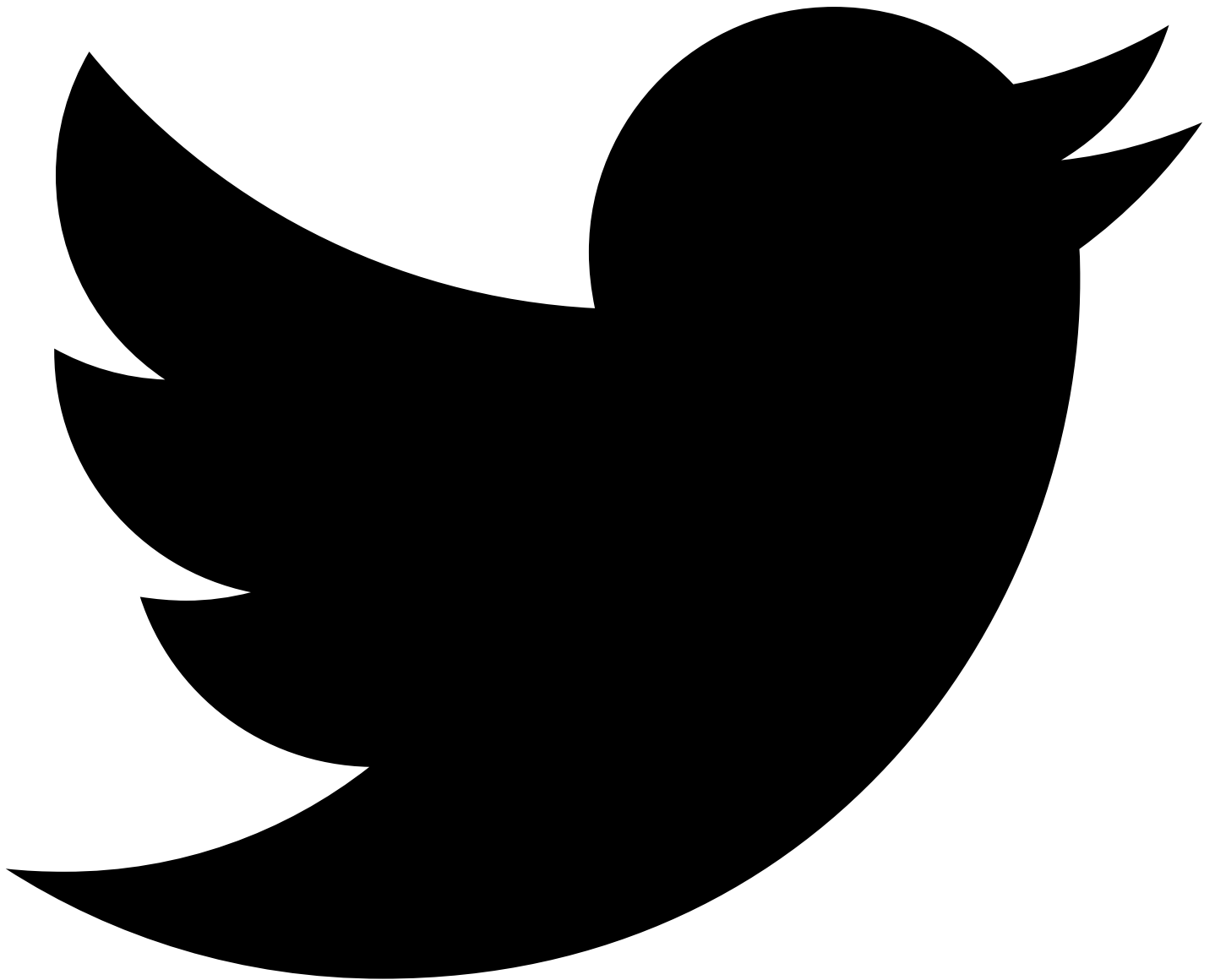
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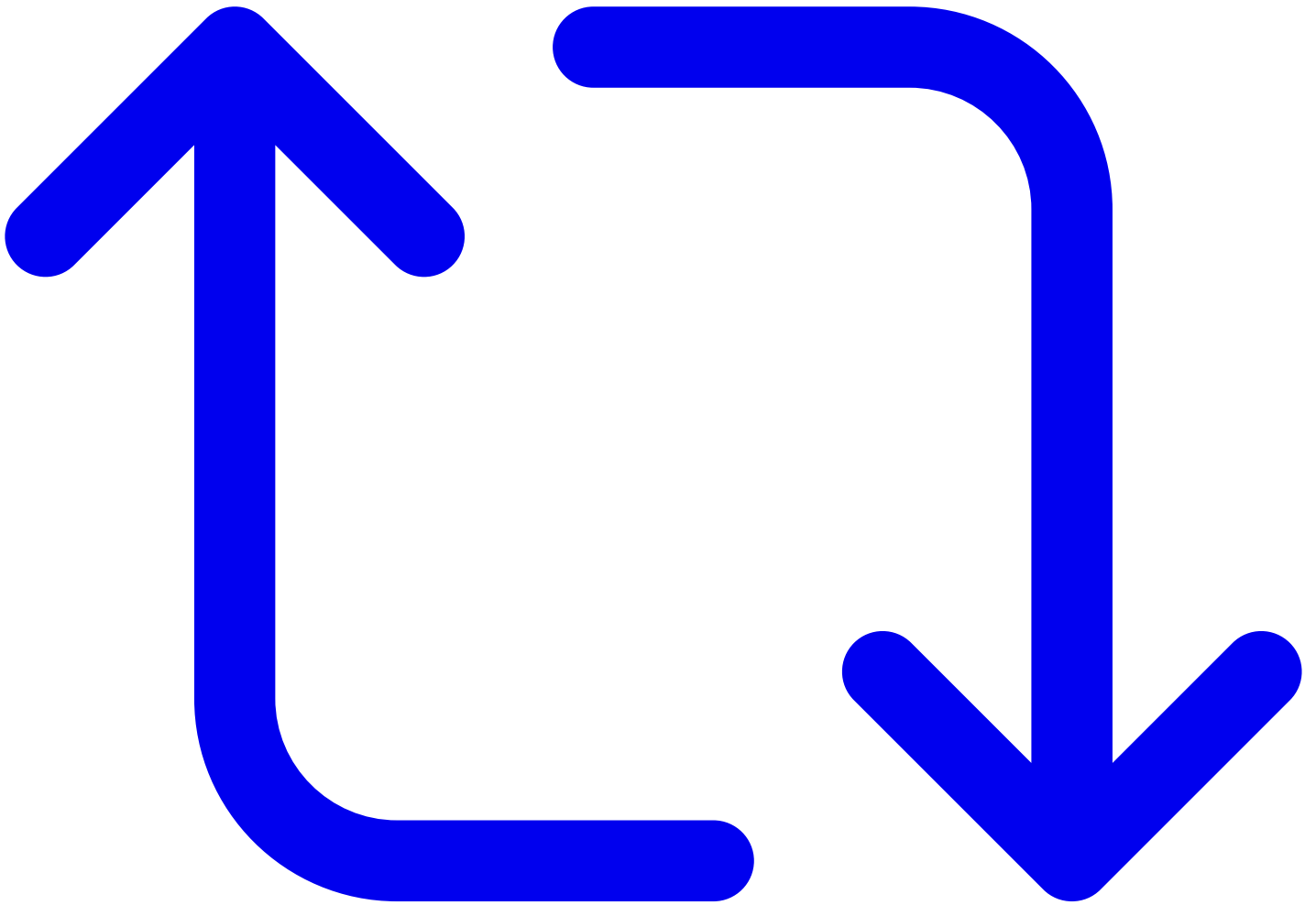
We had some time on our hands - as you'd expect - to dig back through the WFM archives of music we'd forgotten we fell in love with.

Sophie And The Giants (@SandTGofficial) we miss you. Mostly @rxbynhartley who wrote this about your EP, 'Adolescence' 🎧

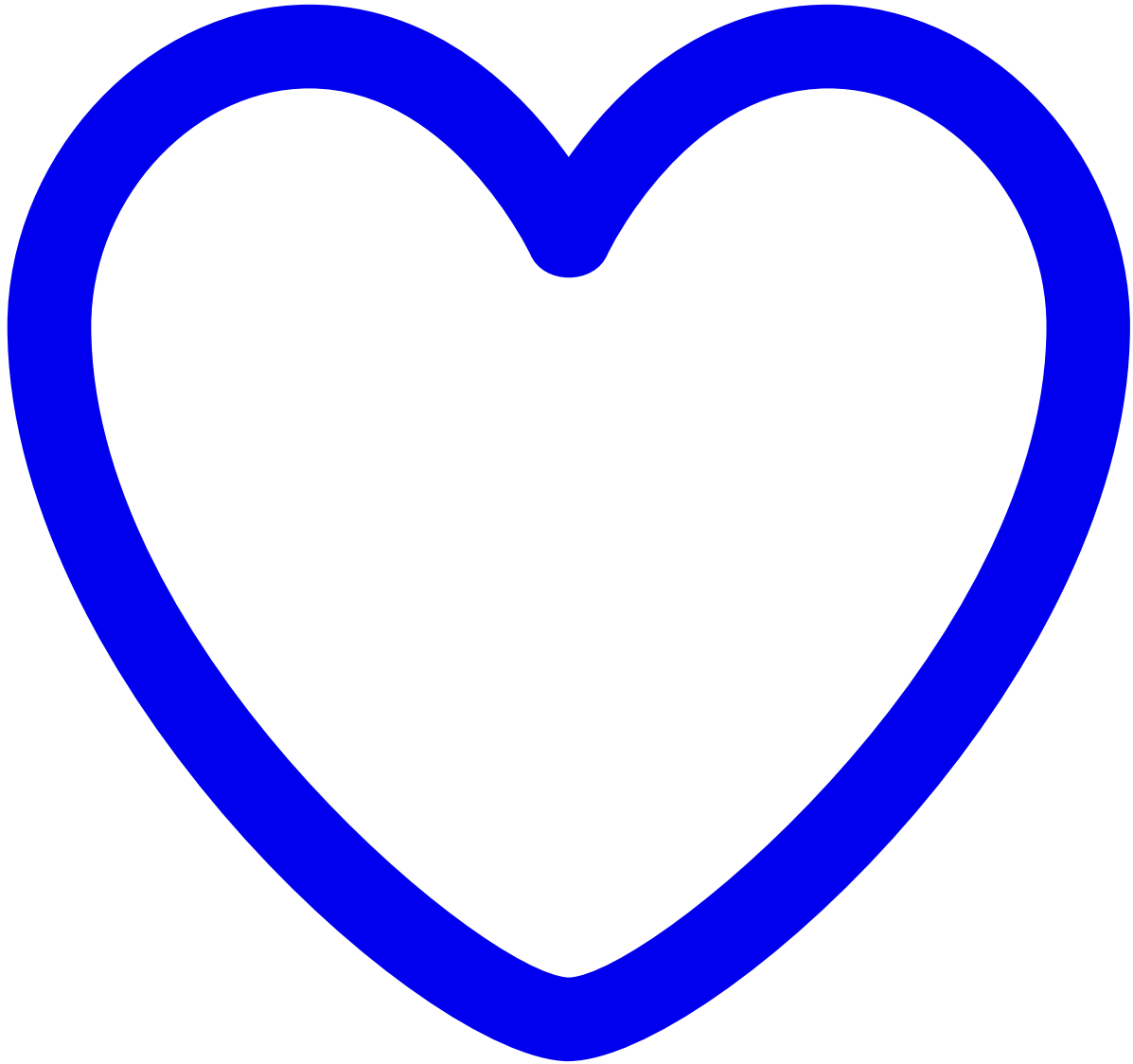
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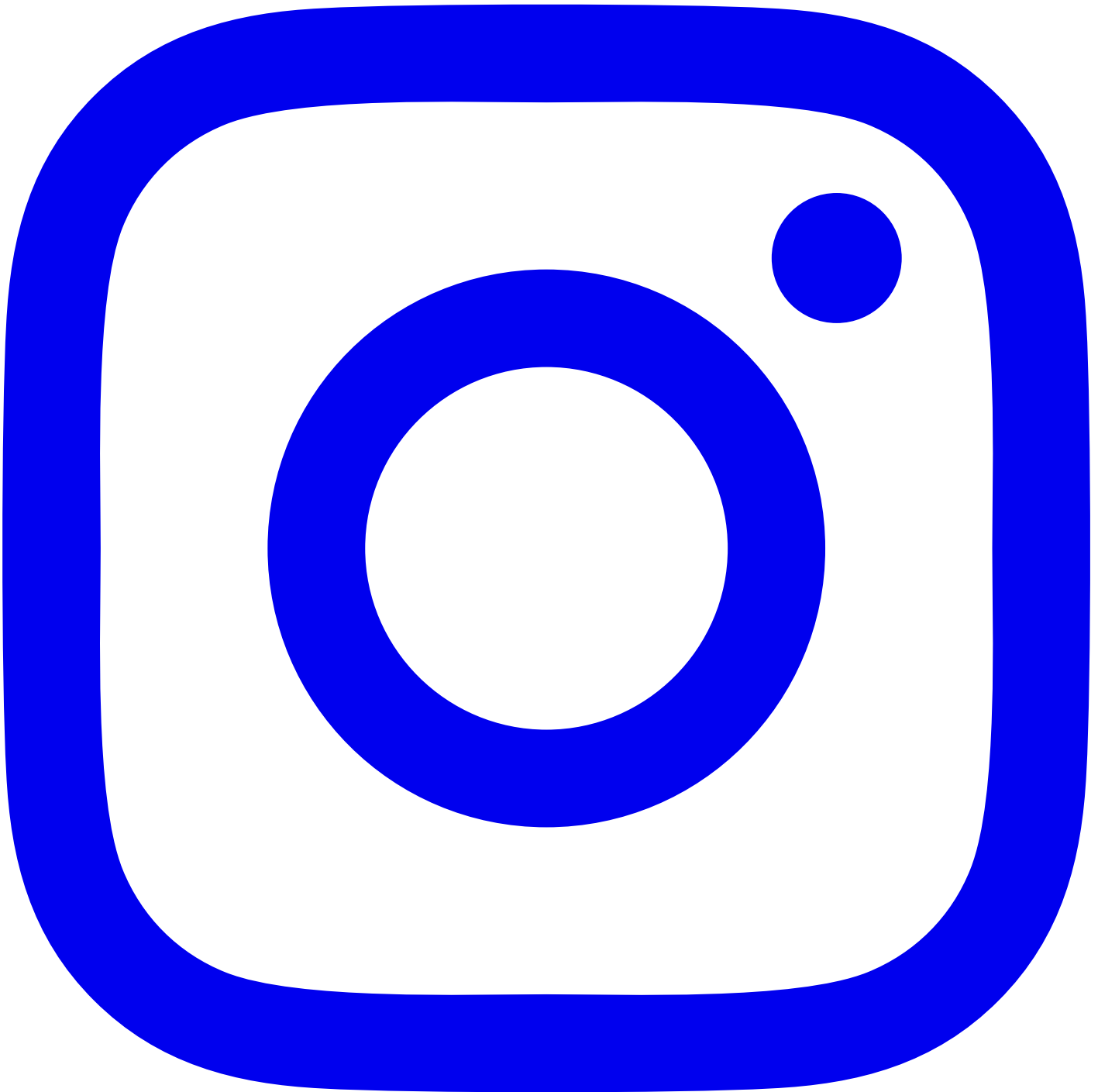
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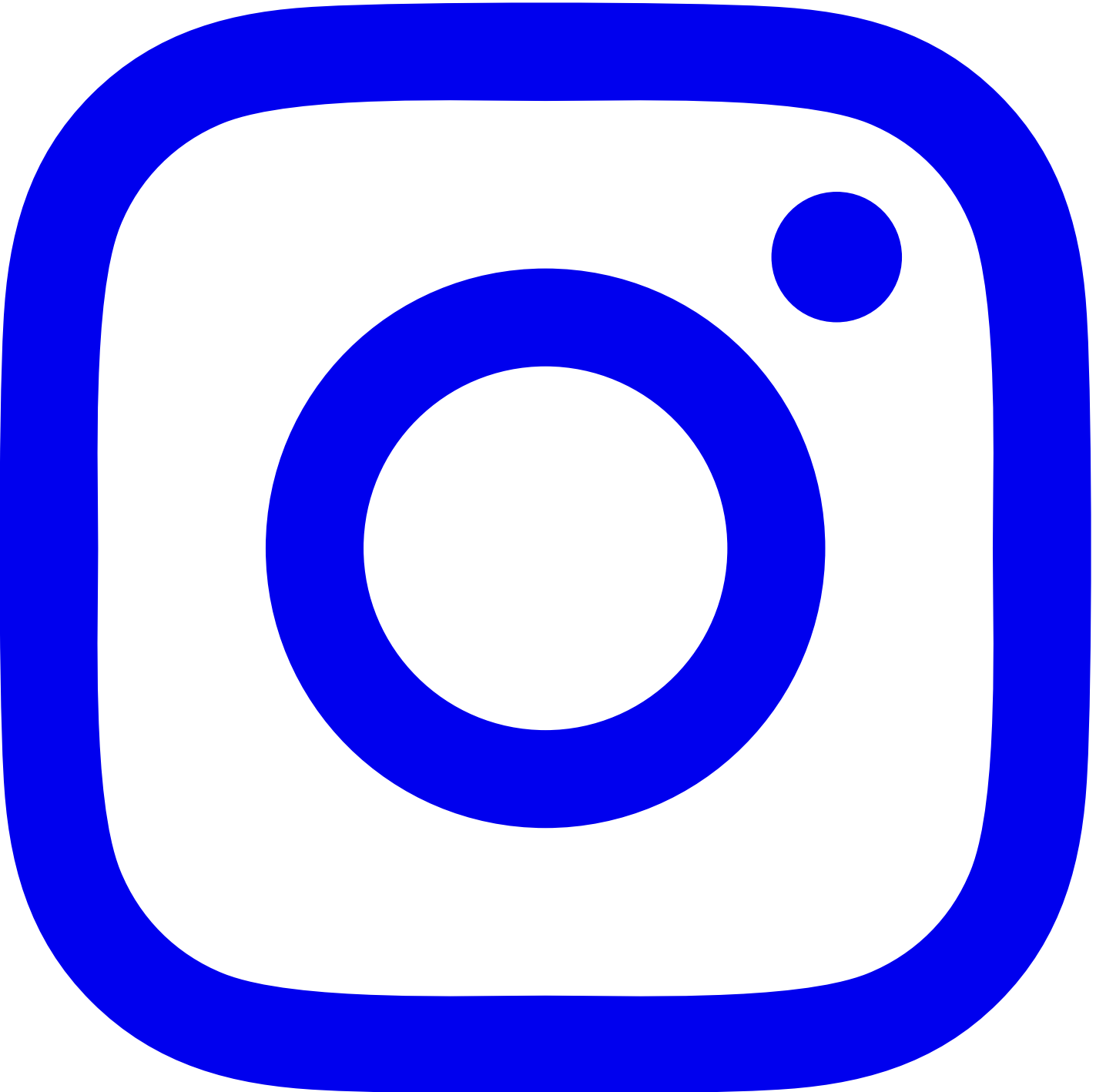
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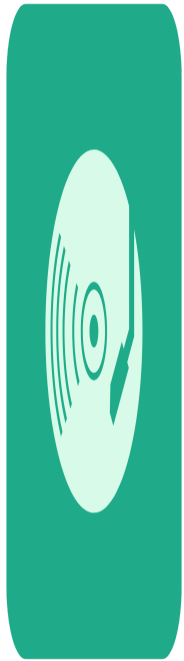
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