

AUGMENTED REALITY:
THE ART OF STORYTELLING THROUGH A BLEND
OF DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY
AND WOVEN JACQUARD STRUCTURE

A thesis submitted to the College of the Arts
of Kent State University in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

by

Oxana N Dallas

May, 2018

Thesis written by

Oxana N Dallas

B.S., Moscow Automobile and Road Construction University, Russia, 1994

B.A., Moscow University of Culture, Russia, 1998

M.A., Kent State University, 2018

Approved by

Janice Lessman-Moss, M.F.A., Adviser

Marie Bukowski, M.F.A., Director, School of Art

John R. Crawford-Spinelli, Ed.D., Dean, College of the Art

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
TABLE OF CONTENT	iii
LIST OF FIGURES	iv
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	v
AUGMENTED REALITY	1
FIGURES	6
GLOSSARY	17
BIBLIOGRAPHY	18

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE		Page
1	THREAD OF LIFE	6
2	THREAD OF LIFE, DETAIL	7
3	INFERNO	8
4	INFERNO, DETAIL	9
5	INCARNATION	10
6	INCARNATION, DETAIL	11
7	BORN FROM THE STARDUST	12
8	BORN FROM THE STARDUST, DETAIL	13
9	HER GUARDIAN	14
10	HER GUARDIAN, DETAIL	15
11	THESIS EXHIBITION	16

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My woven pictures are dedicated to every soul who wades through the Darkness on the way to the Light. In them I mourn my mother Nadezhda Turovskaja who left me early and unfairly into the unknown afterlife and celebrate my friend Natasha Makarova who sacrificed her beauty fighting for this world. She was the model and muse in all of my weavings, and bravely allowed me to share her image and intimate story with the public.

All of my achievements would not be possible without my husband Gregory, whose support and encouragement gave me strength and confidence to pursue my goals and go back to school after many years. He is not only my strongest critic and grammar “fixer”, but my hammer and nails - the technical installer for each of my woven pieces and the final show as a whole.

I owe the most to my adviser Janice Lessman-Moss, Head of Textiles School of Art, whose leadership, professionalism and passion to the Fiber Arts inspired me to learn beyond the limit of my possibilities.

I am very grateful to all my professor teachers: Rebecca Cross, Robin Vandezande, Albert Reischuck and Darice Polo. Each of them unselfishly shared with me a deep knowledge of subject matter, directed my insight and inspired me to move forward, enriching my brain and creatively feeding my soul.

I especially want to thank Catherine Amorosso-Leslie, PhD, who was a first faculty member from Kent State University I met. Her friendship and trust motivated me to follow my dreams despite the hurdles of age, language and culture shock.

I was very pleased to work with all of my student peers, both under and post graduate, and am thankful for all of their support and friendship.

Finally, I thank my son Anton, who always was with me across the ocean, finding the right words of love and support when I needed it most.

AUGMENTED REALITY

the art of storytelling through a blend of digital photography
and woven jacquard structure

Hope says, "I seem to see a light".

Faith says, "That is the dawn of day".

Doubt says, "I will wait, it is yet night".

Death says, "This left for me to say, which one is right."

Elihu Vedder, "Doubt & Other Things"

The starting point for my thesis project was not inspiration, but an emotional jolt. Breast cancer, the deadly disease that many people are struggling with today, befell my family and my friends. Some of them passed away, some won the battle. Having endured the loss of my beloved mother on the one hand and celebrating the recovery of my girlfriend on the other, I decided to create a manifest to the power of the human spirit, to weave a story of fragility of our lives and dedicate it to everybody who wades through the Darkness on the way to the Light.

All our life, from birth until last breath, since the moment when Adam and Eve were expelled from Eden and ashamed of their nakedness, we are dressing up our bodies in beautiful cloth, protecting from the weather, underlining our advantages and hiding our limitations, showing that we belong to the elite or trying to be different or special. But in the face of calamity we are all equal. Desperately asking "*why me*", we are all evenly naked in front of a diagnosed irremediable ailment. The illness entangles the frightened soul in the thread of doubts and fear, unraveling the past and reevaluating the present. Blind Fate or personal choice? Fight or surrender? Faith or

unbelief? Life or Death? These eternal questions I am trying to answer through the artistic engagement of digital photography and jacquard weaving. In my works the sense of cosmic loneliness externalizes into a patterned textile that represents the space-time fabric with the imprint of the story of one soul.

The medium of my art is fiber, which allowed me to make a strong statement with soft materials. The soul of my images captured by camera, since photography is my passion. The combination of these two media allows me to convey a tactility of my subject matter and express the meaning through the abstraction of color and texture of the weave structure. As the body and soul are two unbreakable parts of one (soul is invisible, divine, eternal, intangible and the body is visual, transient, tangible, mortal), the photography and jacquard cloth are interweaving in one, transforming the flat image into a relief and multidimensional texture. Elusive moments caught by the camera acquire new depth and dimension thanks to the textile. I am using woven structure as a “poetic language, evoking shapes, rhythm, and space in unexpected juxtaposition” (Barrett, 2015) in the attempt to represent human sensations through the graphics of woven patterns.

The work begins with the image in my mind. “What the Photograph reproduces to infinity has occurred only once” (Barthes 1980, 4), and my goal is to capture the invisible essence of my hero’s feelings and thoughts. I prepare the needed environment in the photo studio and direct my model how to move and how partially cover her body with transparent fabric. Carefully choosing the light and background, I take hundreds of photos for the sake of selecting a couple of the best images. The process continues with the laborious editing on the computer in Photoshop. Step by step I am adding to the image an augmented reality, increasing the content and meaning. Then,

using Pointcarre software I apply to the finished picture the weave structures to create a final file for the TC-1 jacquard loom. The choosing of a weave structure is a complicated process where each component is important: the number of weft insertions, the texture and size of each thread, the yarn's hues and content. Finally, the photographic image is reincarnated in the augmented reality of the textile body, where every part carries meaningful ideas and coded thoughts.

Through my research, the biggest inspiration was the art and writing of American symbolist painter Elihu Vedder. Especially his picture *Fates Gathering in the Stars*, 1887, and his book *Doubt & Other Things*, that responded to many philosophical thoughts and questions which I had in my mind. The ancient legend where three sisters were spinning, measuring and cutting thread of the human's life, tied with Albert Einstein's recently proven theory "...that we live in a curved four-dimensional space-time" where space and time are somehow fused together into a "fabric" (Kroll 2009, 104). Russian scientist Nikolay A. Kozyrev's discovery of the physical property of time gave the additional insight for the direction of my creativity. Just as weft and warp interact on the jacquard loom, all that is happening to us is interwoven with the thread of flowing Time in the mysterious pattern of Life. The energy of our decisions and acts vibrate on the surface of space-time fabric, raises and lowers the threads of our destinies and reflects on our surroundings. Every little dot of human behavior turns into the colorful pattern of fate, the same as a thread of woven cloth interlaces in the different ornaments and shapes.

Telling the story of the struggling soul, I encrypted in the body of my art the mysterious symbols of the Universe, its stratification and multidimensionality, its sinuosity and unpredictability. I designed the original weave pattern to connect the symbols of sacred geometry.

This subtle structure appears through the fields of all my weavings, expressing the hidden thoughts and feelings. A circle is an association with the cosmos. A square is a representation of the earth and of space-time. These two worlds tied together in the eternal dance of existence, reflect one in the other, confirming the fact that everything on earth has its counterpart in the heavens. At the junction of these two worlds stands a human being as a symbol of a microcosm - a man who is responsible for his own life and whose choices change the pattern of his given destiny. The veil of Time covers everything with an invisible layer and everyday each one of us interweaves our own thread into this ephemeral cloth.

The other hidden symbol in my pictures is a spiraling form known as Fibonacci, Golden Mean or “phi” spiral. Its swirl shape represents the most efficient pattern in which growth occurs in nature. The embryo in the womb, the twisted spiral shape of the human DNA, the pattern of fingerprints, ripples on a liquid surface, orbits of planets revolving around the sun, the trajectory of atom rotation around the nucleus, the evolutionary spiral, the recurrence of events on the time scale of human history, and finally the mystical ancient concept of God as “an infinite sphere, whose center is everywhere and whose circumference nowhere” (Richir, 2012). This endless list of the multiple meanings of the simple spiral shape echo the same idea - the repetition of everything on the micro and macro levels.

In fiber art the choice of yarn is very critical to the visual and conceptual outcome. As the thread of our life becomes thinner from birth to death, my project’s yarns have a different thickness to reinforce the contrast of fragility and strength. Fine embroidery threads are an allegory of the ephemeral nature of our plans. Using reflective surfaces, I wanted my weaving to resemble the

shimmering endless Cosmos and simultaneously work in space and time, bending light as the observer moves around them. This moving reflection is supposed to awake in each viewer a different feeling and emotion. It also echoes astrophysicist Kozyrev's assumption that a mirror shaped in the spiral can capture and reflect Time and reinforce human spiritual capacity. The Soul wandering in the labyrinth of reflections, drawing the illusive pattern of our misty Fortune, that we could not understand until we reach our final destination.



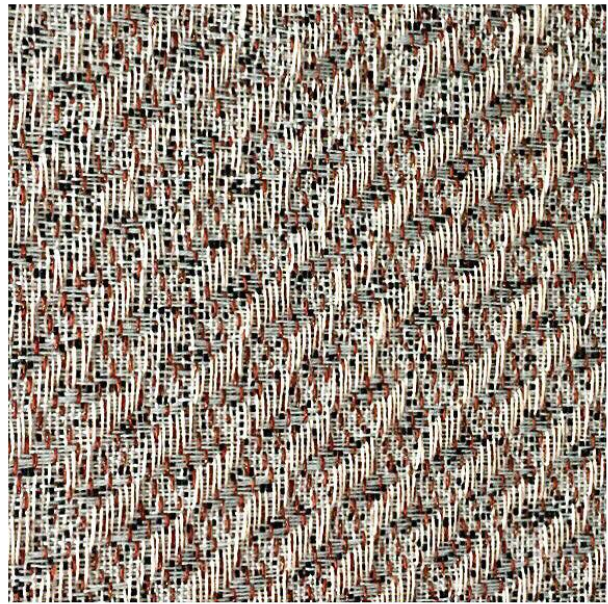
THREAD OF LIFE

Hand woven on TC-1jacquard loom
47.5" x 53"

1 warp: hand dyed cotton 10/2

3 wefts: black LUMINA polyester, copper RADIANCE polyester, salmon pink cotton 10/2

This is the first picture from the series of my woven story of the soul that is walking through the obstacle of irremediable circumstances and choosing the freedom to spin, to measure or to cut short her own life's thread.





INFERNO

Hand woven on TC-1 jacquard loom
42" x 62" (3 pieces 14 x 62" as parts of one)

1 warp: black cotton 10/2

2 wefts: white cotton 3/2 hand dyed Ikat technique, 18/2 copper RADIANCE polyester





INCARNATION

Hand woven on TC-1jacquard loom

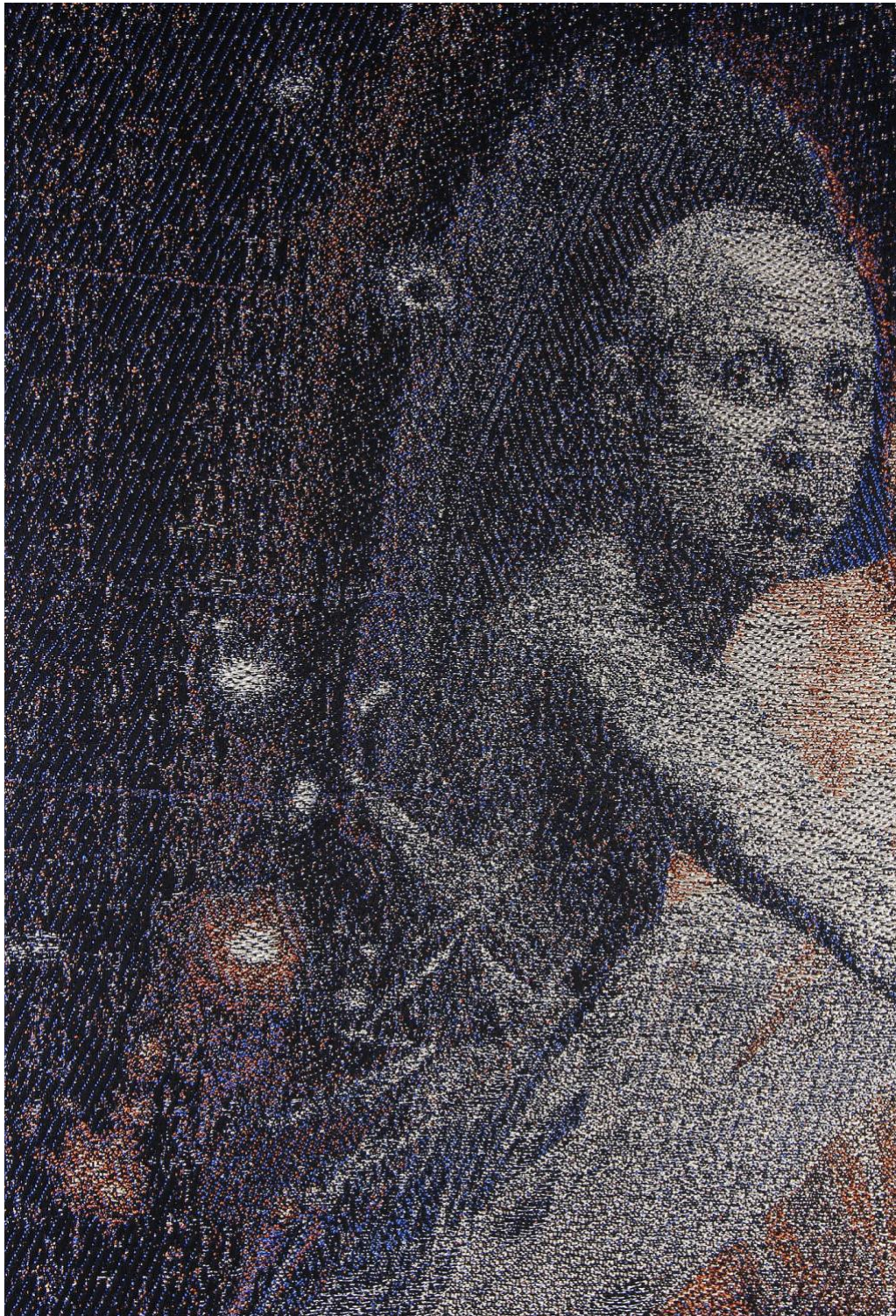
41" x 53"

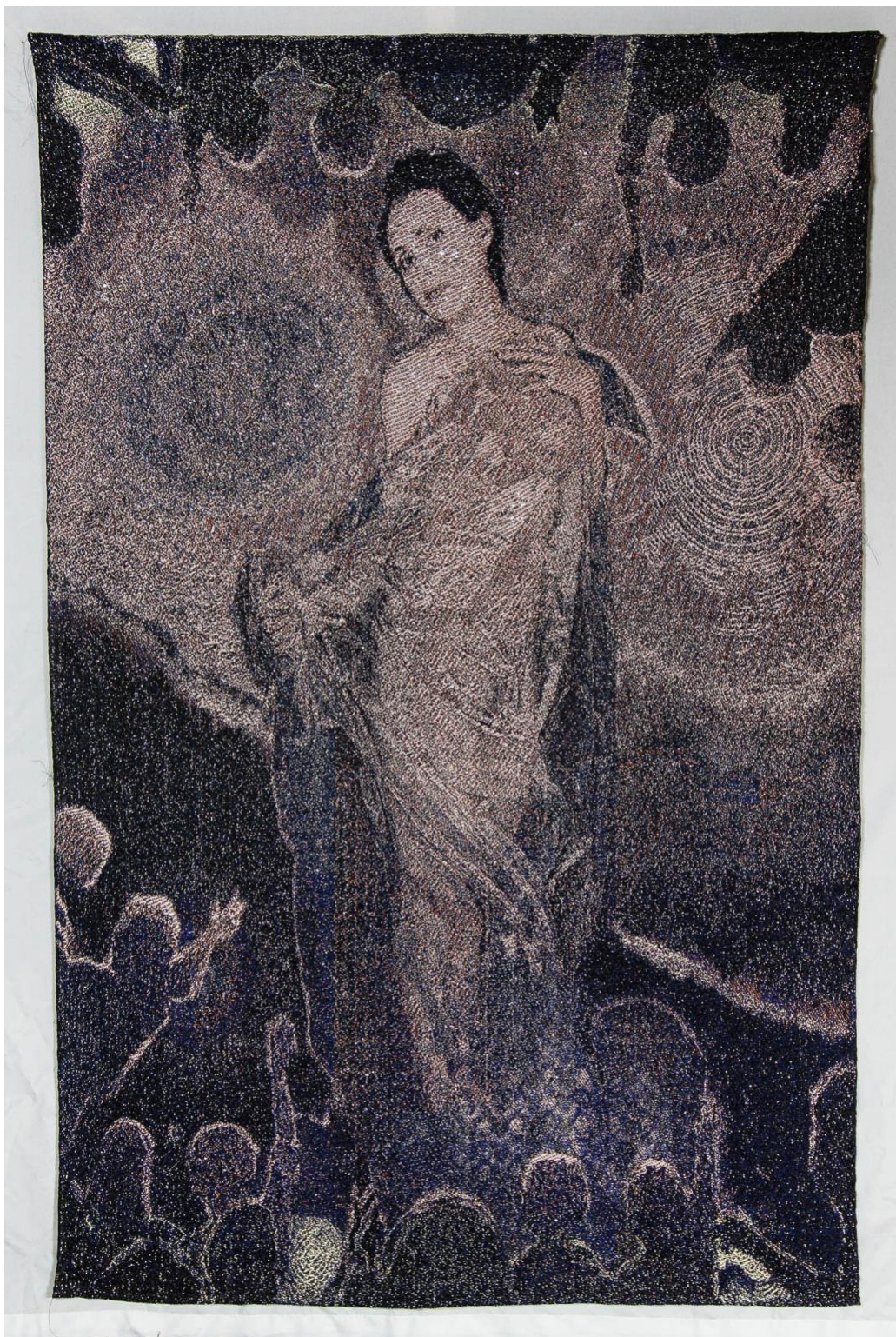
1 warp: black cotton 10/2

4 wefts: indigo SLINKY 5/2, copper SLINKY 5/2, Saturn Gray SLINKY 5/2, silver RADIANCE 18/2, all polyester

Two figures as one, are looking at you with a mesmerizing glance on the background of nocturnal landscape and rhapsodic, melancholic mood. The shadow of death is almost gone but the ghost of the bygone left the indelible imprint on the strong but fragile soul...

"What is understood is that Time and Eternity are two aspects of the same experience-whole, two planes of the same nondual ineffable; i.e., the jewel of eternity is in the Lotus of birth and death",
John Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, 1949



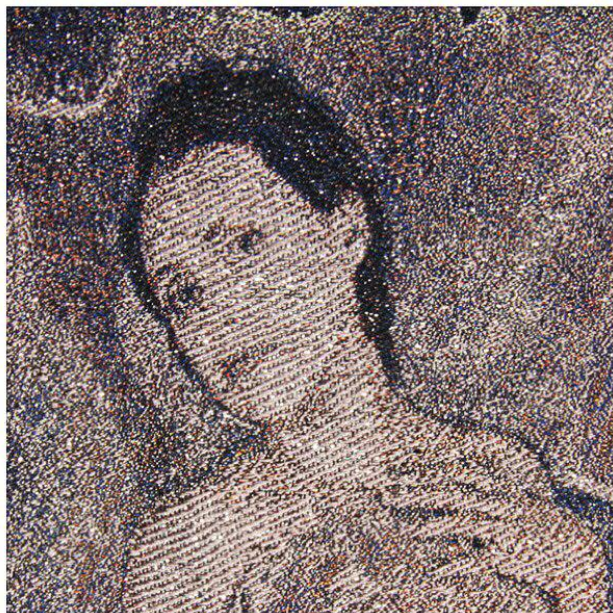


BORN FROM THE STARDUST

Hand woven on TC-1jacquard loom
38" x 59"

1warp: black polyester LUMINA

4 wefts: royal blue wool 18/2, light crème-pink polyester 5/2; copper and mirror novelty yarn 60/2





HER GUARDIAN

Hand woven on TC-1 jacquard loom
34" x 55"

1 warp: black cotton 10/2

3 wefts: white acrylic 16/2, lilac polyester 20/2; copper wire





GLOSSARY

Woven fabric	the fabric where two sets of yarns cross perpendicular to each other
Warp	a single yarn that runs lengthwise in a woven cloth
Weft	a single yarn that runs crosswise in a woven cloth
Weave structure	the design or sequence in which warp and weft are interlacing with each other
Ikat	special tie-dyed technique in which warp, weft, or both threads dying before weaving
Jacquard weaves	complex woven method of fabrication of cloth on a jacquard loom
Weft insertion	the number of weft threads using for the body of woven cloth
TC-1 loom	hand operated digital jacquard loom that controlled each warp thread individually using compressed air

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Barett, Annin, 2015. "Meisen Magic: How Textiles Could Revolutionize Big Data (Again)". *Medium* online magazine. June 1, 2015. <http://textilehive.com/stories/meisen-magic>

Barthes, Roland. 1980. *Camera Lucida: Reflections on Photography*. Translated by Richard Howard.
https://monoskop.org/images/c/c5/Barthes_Roland_Camera_Lucida_Reflections_on_Photography.pdf

Campbell, John. 1949. *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*. Third edition. Novato, California: New World Library.

Kozyrev, Nikolay. 1967. *Possibility of Experimental Study of the Properties of Time*. Pulkovo.
<http://www.rexresearch.com/kozyrev2/kozyrev2.htm>

Kroll, Henry. 2009. *Cosmological Ice Age*. Canada: Trafford Publishing.

Richir, Marc. 2012. *And God Became Space*.
https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/cross_fac/iatl/funding/fundedprojects/studentperformance/addivinola/

Vedder, Elihu. 1922. *Doubt and other things, verse and illustrations*. Boston: P. Sargent.
<https://archive.org/details/cu31924021714203>