

**Corporal • Natural • Celestial**



**Blessings On Your Journey Through Time And Space**

# Corporal • Natural • Celestial

Blessings On Your Journey Through Time And Space  
Curated by Jillian Taylor

ALEX SLATO MIAMI is pleased to present this group show with selected works by

IRENE PRESSNER • MISHA JAPANWALA • NATALIA OCERIN  
RENATA FERNANDEZ • TIFFANY TAYLOR • SYLVIA TENENBAUM

Opening Reception  
Saturday APRIL 15TH | 5 - 9 PM  
Runs through May 30, 2023

## ALEX SLATO

710 NW 55th Street • Miami FL 33139

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When Alex approached me about curating a show for the gallery, I knew immediately that I wanted to fill the space with the work of the artists you see here today. Many of these artists have careers that I have followed for years; others I discovered (and fell in love with) rather recently. One thing they all have in common is that they're women, and I ask myself, was that a conscious choice? On the one hand, I'm acutely aware of how underrepresented women are in the art world, so yes, as a woman I feel compelled to enhance the visibility of women artists. On the other hand, I wanted to curate a space that feels beautiful, welcoming, maybe a little sexy, and deeply connected to nature, and these are the artists, gender notwithstanding, who I felt could help me accomplish that goal. Their work—the blend of mediums, the imagination at play, the technique—it all thrills me and fills me with wonder, awe, and excitement, and I want nothing more than to share those feelings with you, the viewer.

Now as for the exhibition itself. The title “Corporal • Natural • Celestial” comes from the various perspectives on display. Pieces like Natalia Ocerin’s “Kintsugi” and “Romantic Love” as well as Misha Japanwala’s “Keera” invite us to look inward, to explore our intimate, emotional selves. In many ways, these pieces lay claim to our rights of personhood during this corporal life. In fact, all of Ms. Japanwala’s work can be seen as a sociopolitical protest in an attempt to reclaim the power of the female body and highlight the strength of women who aren’t afraid to fight to live on their own terms. “Keera” is Urdu for “worm,” the epithet used by a reporter to disparage the participants in Pakistan’s most recent Women’s March. The artist herself has been called “shameless” and her work “un-Islamic.” The hardened resin body casts act as a kind of armor against these labels and subvert them into a powerful visual that emboldens women who want—and deserve—basic human rights.

In “Romantic Love,” Ms. Ocerin paints an exact replica of Fragonard’s rococo classic “The Swing” with one noticeable exception: instead of portraying 18<sup>th</sup>-century aristocrats enjoying a carefree escapade, we see a man and woman, untethered by epoch, engaged in the pleasures of the flesh. The characters are playfully dressed in bird-like costumes—a playfulness inherent in the mix of mediums, the whimsy of Play-Doh coexisting with the austerity of traditional oil painting.

The works of Renata Fernández and Irene Pressner ask that we look outward and to slow down as we observe the sensuality of the shared world around us and appreciate its pleasures. The lush detail displayed at such grand scale in Ms. Fernández’s “ATC charcoal series” puts the viewer in a Zen-like state akin that which the artist entered in the making of the series. Her extreme attentiveness to the mechanics of these tropical plants, depicted without color, leaps off the page in majestic yet menacing beauty, while her precise use of white reminds the viewer that in darkness there is always space for light to come through.

The divine benevolence of bees—those mighty pollinators, food suppliers, medicine makers, and providers of fibers, oils, and beeswax—is honored by Irene Pressner in her tattooed encaustics. Encaustic painting,

which dates back to 1<sup>st</sup>-century Greece, is an ancient technique of heating, melting, and layering beeswax to create a smooth, skin-like surface. Ms. Pressner boldly reinvigorates the art form by tattooing the wax epidermis with a modern-day tattoo machine, thereby creating emblematic constructs and intricate textures that will stand the test of time. The famous Sailor Jerry pin-ups included in "Sirens" juxtapose feminine pleasure and sensuality with the physical discomfort of tattooing. Meanwhile, every meticulous stroke of each individual leaf on the "Cambodia Tree" speaks to a reverence for small things (like the humble bee) that serve the big picture.

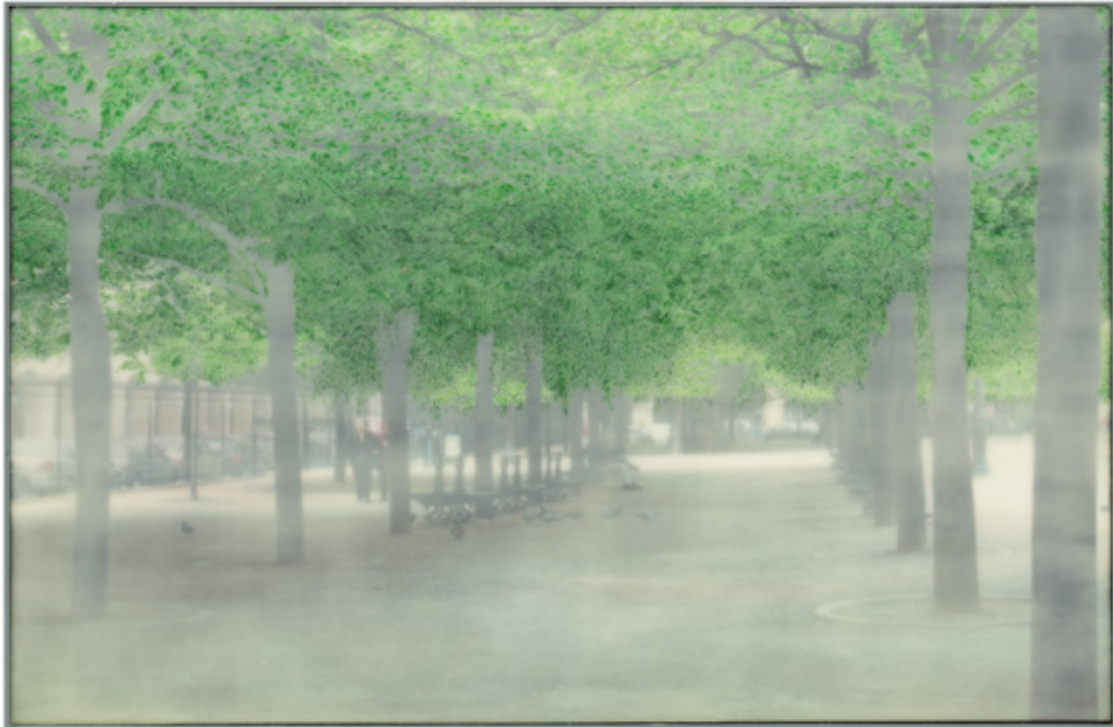
Sylvia Tenenbaum and Tiffany Taylor dare us to cast our gaze upward to the vast expanse of stellar space. Their works provide the amplitude for our curiosities and imaginations to soar! Ms. Tenenbaum's "Gone Beyond," made up of innumerable fragments of layered cotton, is a large-scale mosaic vision of a galaxy far, far away—a thick, cozy, cosmic blanket one yearns to be wrapped up in. Dense, dark hues contrast with the delicate trickling of pixelated colors in Ms. Tenenbaum's "Raining Down." The hanging framework of this aerial mosaic allows surrounding elements to accentuate it, for example, the way air moves through and around the piece to animate it, the way light casts graceful shadows.

In researching how close we are as earthlings to the center of the universe, Ms. Taylor discovered that scientists cannot identify a center due to the expanding nature of outer space. So she decided to compose such a center the way a modern-traditionalist quilt-maker would: with equilateral triangles and lots of bright colors! "this is the center of the universe" can be seen as a literal center of the universe, but perhaps there is a figurative perception to consider: that the center of the universe can be found when we stand before these works of art and cast off this earthly plane to embrace an eternal Now.

Combined together, the pieces in this exhibition represent the undulating inner/outer synthesis of our individual and collective journeys through time and space, hence the subtitle. This exhibition was also inspired by this quote from Will Reynolds: "An artist processes their lived experience in public so that others may process their lived experience in private. Art is always an act of service." My interpretation is that each piece of artwork you see here today is the visual expression of a particular moment in the artist's life. We are blessed to stand in the presence of these moments and honor our own unique journeys through time and space.

Jillian Taylor

Irene Pressner





Still Life • photograph and layered tattooed drawing on encaustic • 19 1/2 x 19 1/2 in

Images in previous page

Cambodia Tree • photograph and layered tattooed drawing on encaustic • 17 x 26 in

Place de vosges • photograph and layered tattooed drawing on encaustic • 23 x 35 in

Renata Fernandez



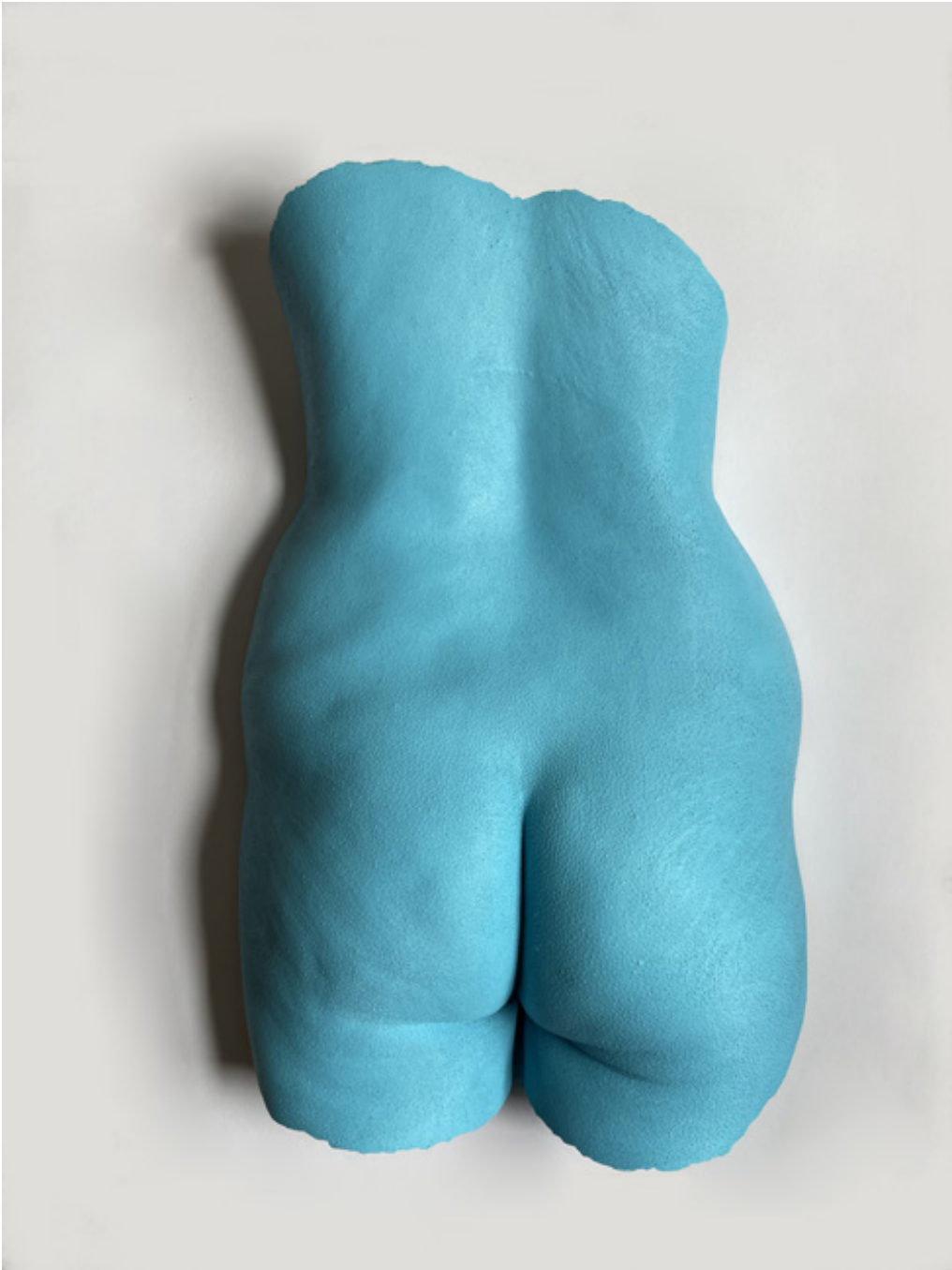
• ATC SERIES # 6 • CHARCOAL DRAWING ON PAPER • 76 X 46 in



• ATC SERIES #15 • CHARCOAL DRAWING ON PAPER • 76 X 46 I



Misha Japanwala



• Keera in Blue, resin 2023 • 21 x 16 x 6 in



• Keera in Orange, resin 2023 • 21 x 16 x 6 in

Natalia Ocerin



• Kintsugi , oil on canvas 2022 • 54 x 38 in



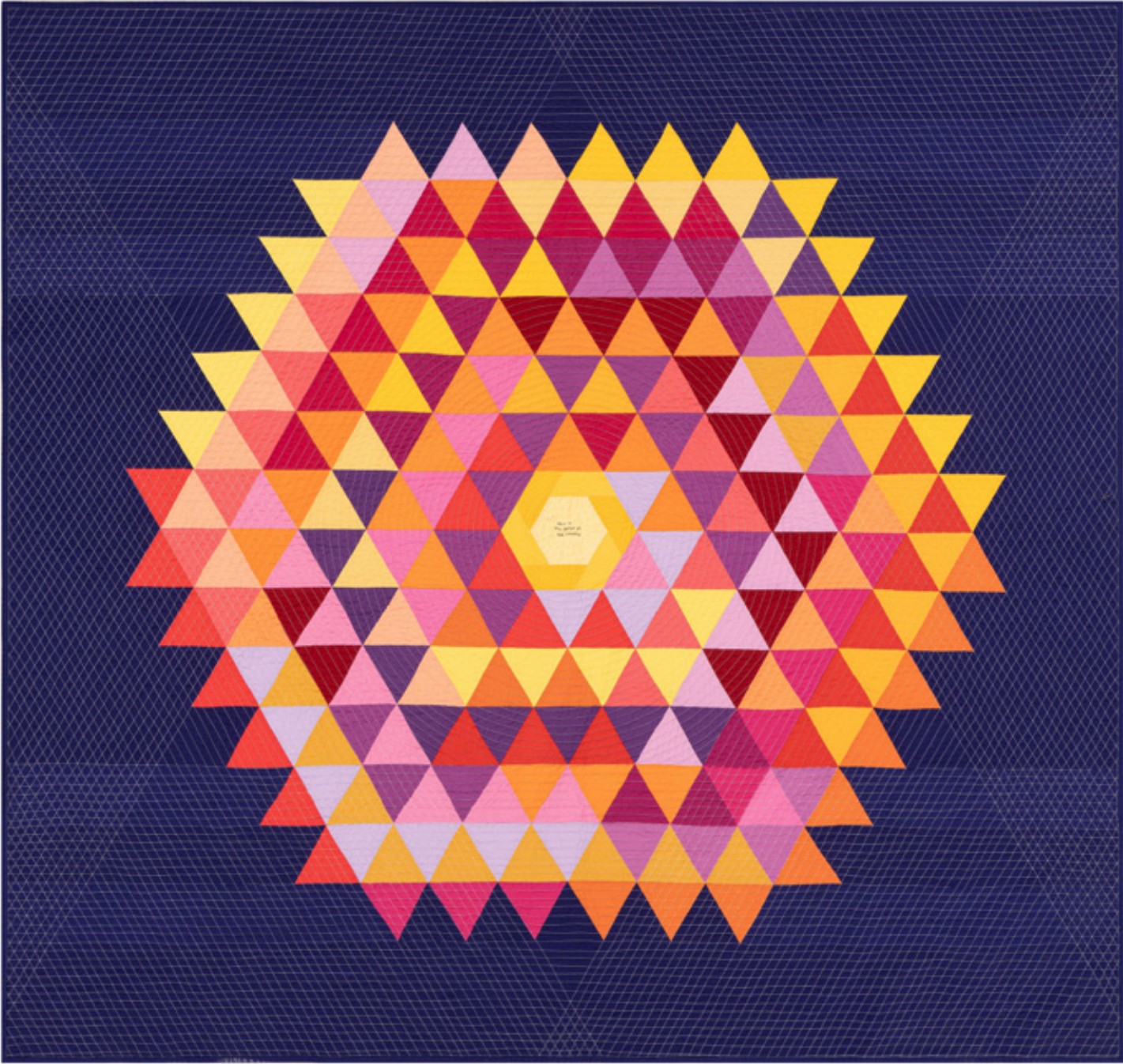
• Romantic Love , oil on canvas 2023 • 70 x 50 in

# Tiffany Taylor



Image below (detail above)

• this is the center of the universe , hand made quilt 2023 • 62 x 60



Sylvia Tenenbaum





• Raining down, aerial textile mosaic 2023 • 37 x 30 x 150 in (height can vary)

Image in opposite page • Gone Beyond , textile mosaic 2023 • 98 x 41 in



Jillian Taylor b. 1985, Sacramento California. Based in Miami Beach

Jill approaches everything she does with curiosity and respect which serves as the foundation of her estimable taste. With a BA in Human Development as well as an MFA in acting from the prestigious Yale School of Drama, she has spent her lifetime in pursuit of all things that bring about wonder and beauty in the human spirit and that speak the truth of the human condition. She has lent her curatorial vision to dozens of projects in the mediums of theater, film, fashion, music, and fine art and continues to cultivate her keen eye through travel and exposure to new cultures and experiences.

Renata Fernandez. b. 1971, Venezuela. Based in London since 2003.

Issues about immigration, notions of territory, identity and displacement inspire and preoccupy Fernandez, as she seeks to emphasize the sociopolitical embedded in found imagery. A reconstructed memory seems to emerge from both her bi-dimensional and tridimensional work (installations and sculptures). Disciplines and techniques intermingle and feed each other in her studio, making her practice largely self-referential. She is very invested in hand-intensive processes and is drawn to emphasize the inherent materiality of her works, in a continuous material exploration and experimentation, as she is always looking to develop their sculptural possibilities. Fernandez studied Fine Art -painting and sculpture- in the Armando Reverón University Institute (now called UNEARTE), Social Sciences, Media and Drama-Set Design in Universidad Católica Andrés Bello, all in Caracas, Venezuela.

Misha Japanwala. b. 1995, Pakistan. NY Based.

Misha is a Pakistani artist Based in NYC since 2014. and fashion designer whose work celebrates women's bodies. Her body casts, worn as sculptural garments, blur the lines between fashion and fine art, clothing and nudity, freedom and censorship. Misha's work attempts to reclaim the way women's bodies have historically been depicted in art, and subvert the male gaze and colonist beauty standards from the way we see real bodies. Misha's work has been photographed and written about in numerous publications including Vogue, Harper's Bazaar, Elle and i-D, and she has created custom pieces for women including Cardi B, Gigi Hadid, Halsey and Joy Crookes. She was recently honoured on the Forbes Under 30 List. Her work continues to be an explorative and radical celebration of women, their agency and their bodies.

## Tiffany Taylor. b. 1982, California.

Tiffany Taylor is a self-taught textile artist and pattern designer grounded in modern traditionalism. She has been included in group shows on both national and international levels including QuiltCon and Pacific International Quilt Festival. Her work has been published in *Make Modern* magazine as well as *Love Patchwork + Quilting* magazine. Having participated in several online auctions, her artwork can be found in private collections around the country.

## Natalia Ocerin. b. 1989, Spain. London Based.

A Masters of Fine art from Central Saint Martins, University of art London 2024 Candidate. She received her BA from the Politécnico de Valencia, Spain, and her Master's in Artistic Production from the same university. Human subjects and social issues have marked Natalia's career from the beginning. One of her goals is for her viewers to relate to what they see, as a reflection of shared experiences that both children and adults can internalize. The objects in Natalia's paintings, drawings, and sculptures step out of her reality, which, even though personal, are part of collective experiences. They are not an exact copy of reality; Natalia re-interprets and shapes them in a playful and almost-childish style, developing a visual language that combines shared codes and images with new ones. The familiarity with the elements, bright colors, and vivid compositions attract the viewer's gaze in order to grasp the powerful messages and social critiques conveyed through them.

## Irene Pressner. b. 1952, Venezuela. Miami Based.

Irene is a conceptual artist who has been practicing with the medium of bee's wax (encaustic) for twenty years and counting. This material was used by the ancient Greeks and Irene brings forth a contemporary and idiosyncratic form by imprinting the wax with a modern day tattoo machine, combining both color and texture with masterful technique. She has been the recipient of the MoLAA Award and the Salon Michelena Award and her work can be found in the permanent collections of the Museum of Latin American Art in California, the Galería de Arte Nacional, and Museo Abreu in Venezuela.

## Sylvia Tenenbaum. b. 1965, Guatemala.

Sylvia Tenenbaum is best known for spreading the stories told by indigenous women in the shape of large scale mosaics and aerial mobiles created from up- cycled traditional mayan dress. Through abstracting maps and landscapes Sylvia Tenenbaum uses the historical, cultural, and politically charged mayan weavings as living plots to shape her own texts, creating an interethnic, urban, and contemporary discourse. Born in Guatemala City in 1965, Sylvia was raised in Miami, Florida from the age of 16. She studied at Syracuse University (BA 1987) and the School of Fine Arts in Miami to study fashion (AA). While living in New York City she developed her brand called ZYLE specializing in hats and knit accessories (1991). Upon returning to Guatemala (1994), a connection was reestablished with the traditional weavings of the country. She began making decorative cushions with different weaves and textures, experimenting with silk screen printing (2004) and transitioned to weaving throws from chenille in different fibers (2012).

## Gallery Staff

Alex Slato:	Director
Jillian Taylor:	Director/Curator
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Sean Madden:	Editor
Catalogue Printing:	<a href="http://synergieprints.com">synergieprints.com</a>

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