

- 42 -

What is claimed is:

1. A prosthetic heart valve, comprising:
a frame comprising a plurality of strut members, and having an inflow end and an outflow end;
a leaflet structure situated at least partially within the frame; and
a covering disposed around the frame, the covering comprising a first layer and a second layer, the second layer having a plush surface, the first layer being folded over a circumferential edge portion of the second layer to form a protective portion that extends beyond the strut members in a direction along a longitudinal axis of the prosthetic heart valve.
2. The prosthetic heart valve of claim 1, wherein:
the protective portion is a first protective portion located adjacent the inflow end of the frame; and
the covering further comprises a second protective portion located adjacent the outflow end of the frame.
3. The prosthetic heart valve of claim 2, wherein the first layer extends along an interior surface of the second layer from the inflow end of the frame to the outflow end of the frame and is folded over a circumferential edge of the second layer at the outflow end of the frame to form the second protective portion.
4. The prosthetic valve of claim 2, wherein the first layer of the first protective portion is configured as a strip member that is folded over the circumferential edge portion of the second layer at the inflow end of the frame.
5. The prosthetic valve of claim 4, wherein a first layer of the second protective portion is configured as a strip member that is folded over a circumferential edge portion of the second layer at the outflow end of the frame.

- 43 -

6. The prosthetic valve of claim 5, wherein:
the strip member of the first protective portion encapsulates respective apices of the strut members at the inflow end of the frame; and
the strip member of the second protective portion encapsulates respective apices of the strut members at the outflow end of the frame.

7. The prosthetic heart valve of any of claims 1-6, wherein the second layer comprises a fabric having a woven layer and a plush pile layer including a plurality of pile yarns.

8. The prosthetic heart valve of claim 7, wherein the pile yarns are arranged to form a looped pile, or cut to form a cut pile.

9. The prosthetic heart valve of any of claims 1-8, wherein the first layer comprises a tissue layer.

10. A method, comprising:
securing a first layer to a first surface of a second layer such that a longitudinal edge portion of the first layer extends beyond a longitudinal edge portion of the second layer, the first surface of the second layer being a plush surface;
securing the attached first and second layers into a cylindrical shape to form a covering;
situating the covering about a frame of a prosthetic heart valve, the frame comprising a plurality of strut members; and
folding the longitudinal edge portion of the first layer over the longitudinal edge portion of the second layer to form a protective portion such that the protective portion extends beyond apices of the strut members in a direction along a longitudinal axis of the valve.

- 44 -

11. The method of claim 10, wherein situating the covering about the frame further comprises situating the covering about the frame such that the plush first surface of the second layer is oriented radially outward.

12. The method of any of claims 10 or 11, wherein:
the protective portion is an inflow protective portion adjacent an inflow end of the frame;
the first layer of the inflow protective portion is configured as a first strip member; and
the method further comprises folding a longitudinal edge portion of a second strip member over a longitudinal edge portion of the second layer to form an outflow protective portion adjacent an outflow end of the frame.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein:
folding the longitudinal edge portion of the first strip member further comprises folding the longitudinal edge portion of the first strip member such that the inflow protective portion encapsulates respective apices of the strut members at the inflow end of the frame; and
folding the longitudinal edge portion of the second strip member further comprises folding the longitudinal edge portion of the second strip member such that the outflow protective portion encapsulates respective apices of the strut members at the outflow end of the frame.

14. The method of any of claims 10-13, wherein the second layer comprises a fabric having a woven layer and a plush pile layer including a plurality of pile yarns that form the second surface.