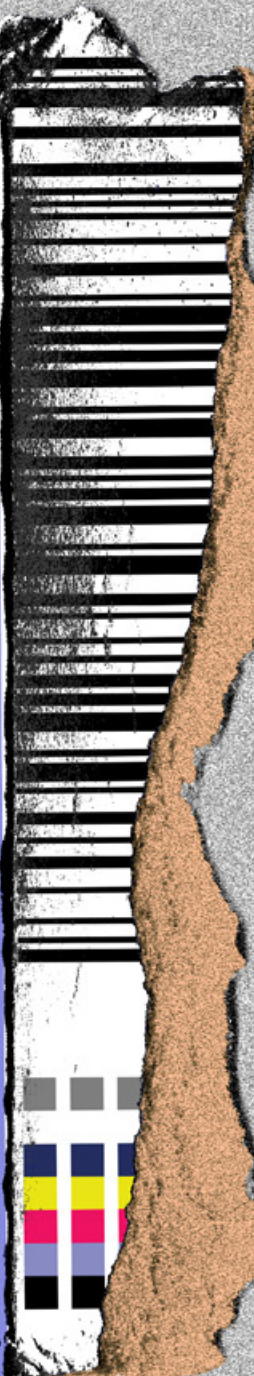


*a rococo inspired tapestry*

# *(ROCO) COCKS*

author: Uroš Topić





# (ROCO)COCKS

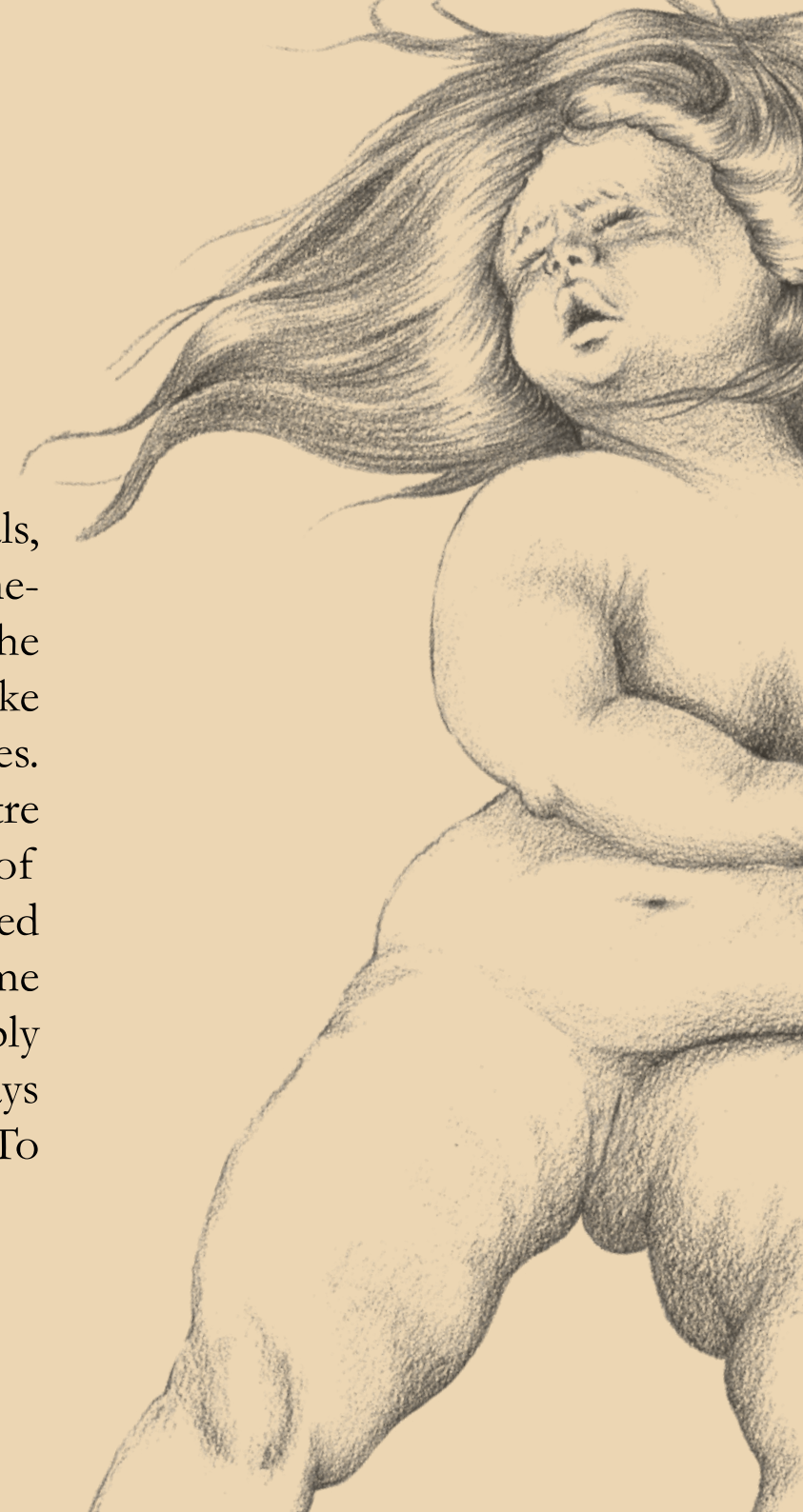
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Although part of a larger installation, the tapestry (RO)KOKOŠI (translated into English as (ROCO)COCKS) was, like the other two constituent elements, design to also be displayed on its own. Its all-encompassing nature offers the viewer a deeply contemplative experience, one which allows for detailed examination of the work, looking for hidden clues and meanings. This tapestry is an artist's interpretation of their view on the state of people's relationship to culture and art in the Republic of Slovenia. The name of the artwork itself already reflects that, as chickens, hens and cocks are animals usually associated with the physical shape of the country; this leads to Slovenia often being caricatured as a "Mother Hen", dressed in a typical national costume. This image was directly repurposed in the (ROCO)COCKS tapestry, where the chicken representing the country, sits at the very centre of the artwork. Much like a golden goose, she is the bringer of plenty, of joy and prosperity, her existence and wellbeing are essential to our country's identity and keeping her safe and thriving is something we should all take part in.

# ARTWORK

## SUMMARY

The scene is set; the finest and most cultured of animals, wearing their nicest powdered wigs – a symbol of refinement – have gathered for a banquet in the great barn. The food is just about to be served and the clock about to strike 12:00, as the feast is disturbed by three incoming vultures. They descend with neck breaking speed towards the centre of the great table, aiming their sharp claws for the Chicken of Plenty in the basket of Cornucopia. Other animals, flustered by the sudden development, rush to save the chicken, some nearly fall off the banqueting table and some are too deeply asleep to notice anything. The all-wise chicken simply stays put and stares piercingly at the viewer, calling to action. To save the culture and art. To save the chicken.



# DIGITAL TEMPLATE

## FOR THE JACQUARD TAPESTRY



26.12.2031  
12:00:01

**S** Osvetljeni sadni gosti sok:  
Sestavine: voda, breskova kaša (15 %), jagodna kaša (15 %), jabolčna kaša (11 %), sladkor, glukoza-fruktozni sirup, grozdni sok iz zgoščenega soka (4 %), kislina (citronska kislina).  
Izdelek lahko neodprto hranite pri sobni temperaturi. Po odprtju hranite na hladnem do 7 dni. Pred uporabo pretresite embalažo.  
Za rok uporabe glejte datum, odtisnjen na vrhu embalaže.

100 ml jabolčnega sadnega soka  
100 ml breskovega sadnega soka  
100 ml jagodnega sadnega soka  
100 ml grozdnega sadnega soka  
100 ml sladkorja  
100 ml glukoza-fruktoznega sirupa  
100 ml kislina (citronska kislina)



Ideja za serviranje:  
V večje kozarce s pretlim nalijete okusen gosti sok, na vrh pa nabrizgate nekaj stepene sladke smetane za dekoracijo in izvesten okus! Napitek je najboljši postrežen hladen in je primeren za vse vrste dogodkov, otroške zabave, kulturne prireditve, piknike, pike, praznovanja, ... Uživate en lahko tako otroci kot odrasli.  
Vsakina embalaža zadržuje za potestitev od 4 do 5 oseb ali povprečne slovenske družine. Spod ali stavilo staršev ne spreminja izračuna.

Proizvajatelj: **MIRAZI**  
Proizvodnja: **1. ROS TOPIC**  
NETO/HETO: **1L**  
Icons: Family, Group, Child, Adult, Baby, Stroller, Wheelchair, etc.

# PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE WOVEN TAPESTRY

Tapestry measurements:  
Height: 2,7 m  
Length: 6,5 m















26.12.2021  
12 190105

...ni sadni gosti ok.  
Sestajino: vob, brezskavala 112 95, zapomba Lala  
113 51, jabolona kaga 114, staklar, oba vno-lyk.  
tano strap, grando ok iz zapomba oba 115 51.  
Lindna izrtavna kofina.  
Urdok, lalko vopri hranite pri sobi, temperatu-  
turi. Pa odreja tramite na blazaru do 7 col. Pyyd  
oparaka pretente eshinala.  
Za rak, mende glajo dafim, odijaje na vrhu vni  
hoda.

WOLFF  
OSTERHAYN  
TROJOKOSI

...de servise.  
...toje kano i poytoz, kalyo obano nosti ok, ni  
...to po vobovno, mika obano nosti ok, ni  
...kandy iz izrtavna kofina. ...toje kano i poytoz, kalyo obano nosti ok, ni  
...to po vobovno, mika obano nosti ok, ni  
...kandy iz izrtavna kofina.

Prizvata korenje  
Prokavda  
Drovasonsi  
Korenje  
METOHEO:  
1L



**READ MORE**  

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**ABOUT THE**  
**CHARACTERS**



In order not to get lost in the whirlwind of characters and pictorial messages on the tapestry, it is perhaps best to present the composition in order, from left to right.

**The clock,** which is attached to the wooden bow of the barn, is seemingly nothing special. Similar clocks are typical of Slovenian hunting cabins, and they are characterized by richly carved and sometimes vividly painted cases, depicting some smaller forest animals. The time that the clock shows, however, is much more meaningful.



Given that the whole composition can be interpreted as a banqueting table for animals, the time shown on the clock - about 100 seconds to 12 o'clock - could be interpreted as the last moment before the clock strikes noon, which is the traditional time for Sunday lunch in Slovenia. In a more international sense, however, there is a clock that shows not the actual time, but the minutes to apocalypse. This is referring, of course, to the Doomsday Clock, which was created in 1947 by the American artist Martyl Langsdorf, and the image of the clock was published in the Bulletin of Atomic Sciences at the University of Chicago. The dial shows the time in minutes to midnight, where midnight represents the total destruction of the world. Langsdorf created this right after the Second World War as a “measure of nuclear danger”, because it was then that humanity first successfully used nuclear weapons. Upon unveiling it in 1947, scientists set the hands of the clock to seven minutes to midnight. They were moved the longest from midnight in 1991, with the fall of the Eastern Bloc. In January of 2022, when the (ROCO)COCKS tapestry was still in development, scientists set the hands of the Doomsday clock to one hundred seconds to midnight, the closest to apocalypse in history.

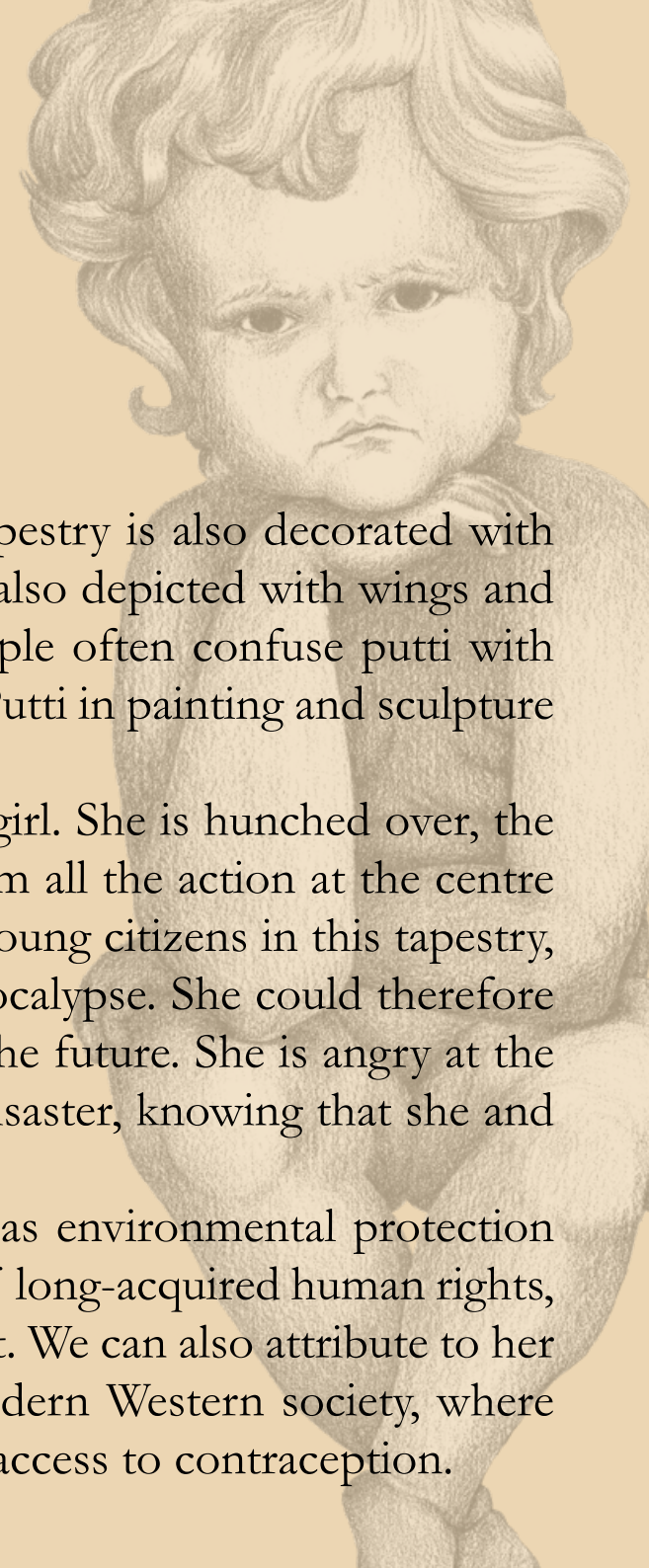
At the end of February 2022, when the clock was long drawn and placed on the tapestry composition, Russia launched an attack on Ukraine. Setting the hands so close to midnight is unfortunately increasingly more justified.

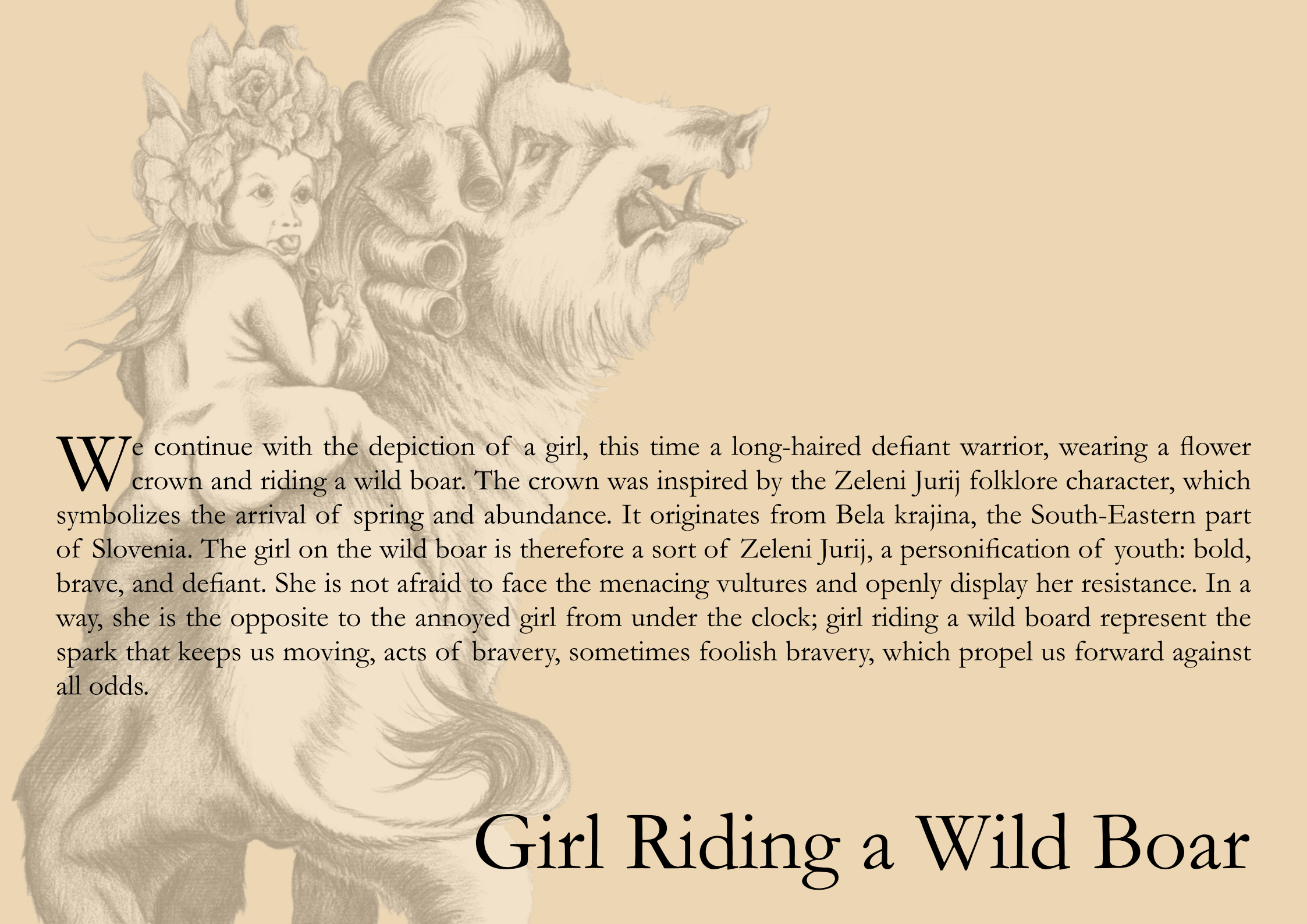
# the Annoyed Girl

As has been tradition in classical painting since the Renaissance, this tapestry is also decorated with putti. They are figures of chubby babies or small children, sometimes also depicted with wings and almost always boys, which appeared mainly in Italian Renaissance art. People often confuse putti with cherubs, which are distinctly Christian in nature and represent small angels. Putti in painting and sculpture serve only decorative purposes, like Atlases and Caryatids in architecture.

Just under the clock, on the edge of the banqueting table, sits a red-haired girl. She is hunched over, the expression on her face visibly displeased. She seems to have withdrawn from all the action at the centre of the table. The girl, just one of a series of putti that symbolize youth or young citizens in this tapestry, sits just below the clock, a harbinger of doomsday and the approaching apocalypse. She could therefore be interpreted as representing a disaffected youth who look darkly toward the future. She is angry at the older generations who allowed the state of the world to come so close to disaster, knowing that she and her peers will be the ones to right the wrongs of their ancestors.

A whole range of things could be added to the girl's dissatisfaction, such as environmental protection problems, the growing nuclear threat, economic instability, the curtailment of long-acquired human rights, etc. She is of female biological sex, which is extremely unusual for putti in art. We can also attribute to her dissatisfaction with the constant re-challenging of female autonomy in modern Western society, where debates and real campaigns are again taking place to ban abortion and limit access to contraception.

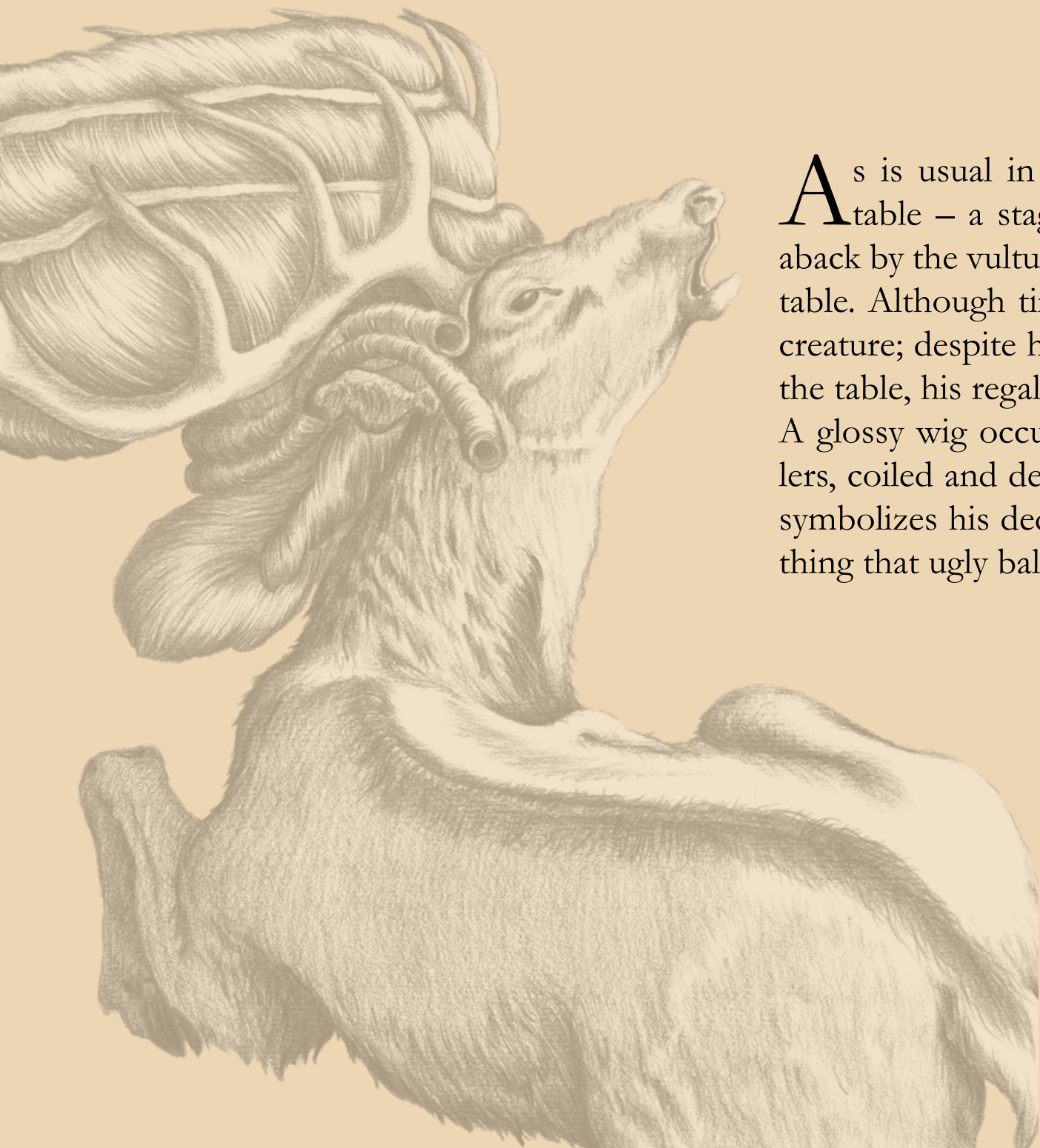




We continue with the depiction of a girl, this time a long-haired defiant warrior, wearing a flower crown and riding a wild boar. The crown was inspired by the Zeleni Jurij folklore character, which symbolizes the arrival of spring and abundance. It originates from Bela krajina, the South-Eastern part of Slovenia. The girl on the wild boar is therefore a sort of Zeleni Jurij, a personification of youth: bold, brave, and defiant. She is not afraid to face the menacing vultures and openly display her resistance. In a way, she is the opposite to the annoyed girl from under the clock; girl riding a wild board represent the spark that keeps us moving, acts of bravery, sometimes foolish bravery, which propel us forward against all odds.

## Girl Riding a Wild Boar





As is usual in nature, so is true at this banqueting table – a stag is easily flustered. He was so taken aback by the vultures flying in, that he almost fell off the table. Although timid, a stag is no doubt a magnificent creature; despite his struggles to pull himself back onto the table, his regal splendour is shining through. A glossy wig occupies the space between his large antlers, coiled and decorated with ribbons of silk. The wig symbolizes his dedication to culture and the arts, something that ugly bald creatures cannot possess.

the Stag

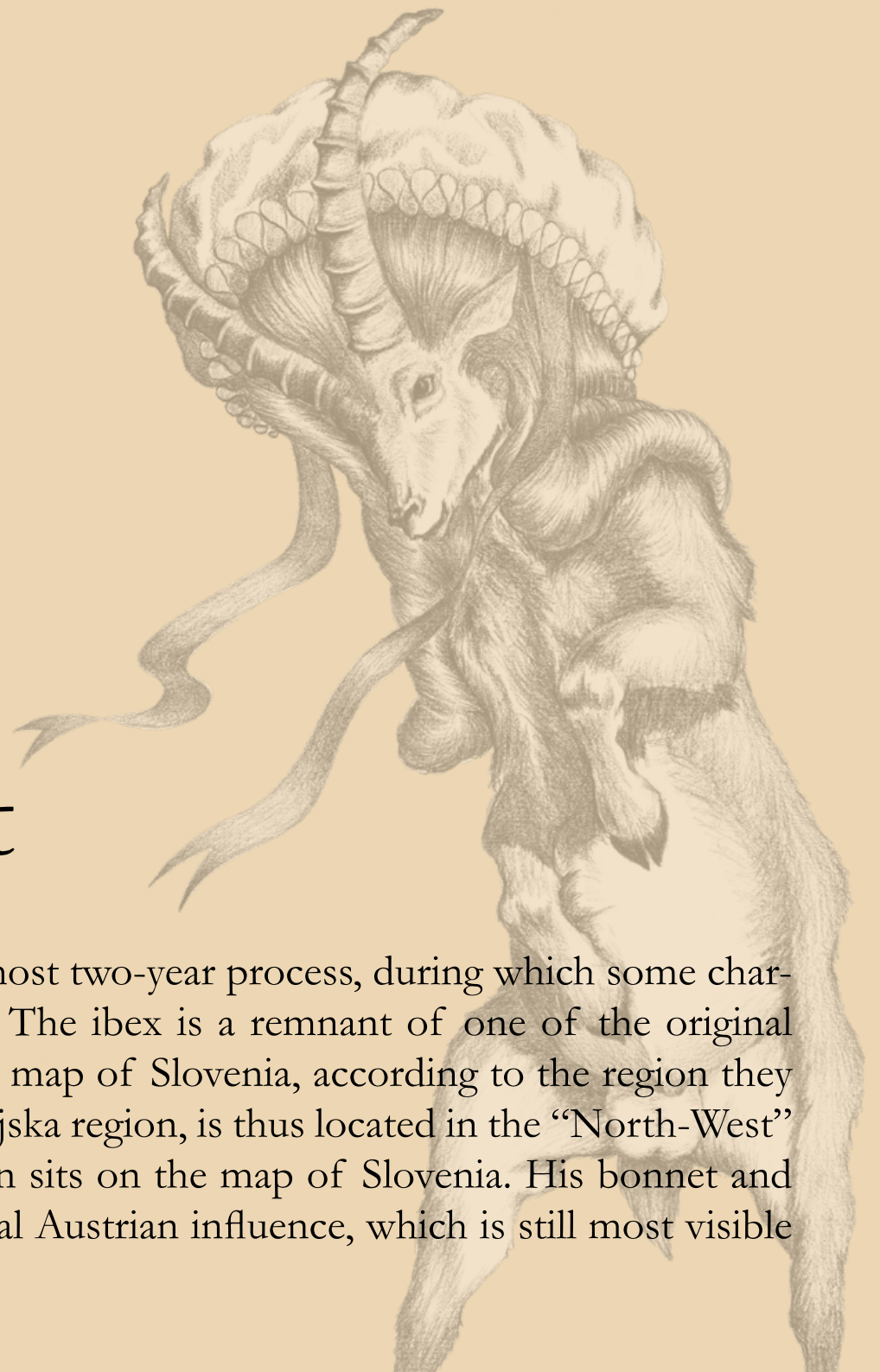
# Lipizzaner and the Vulture

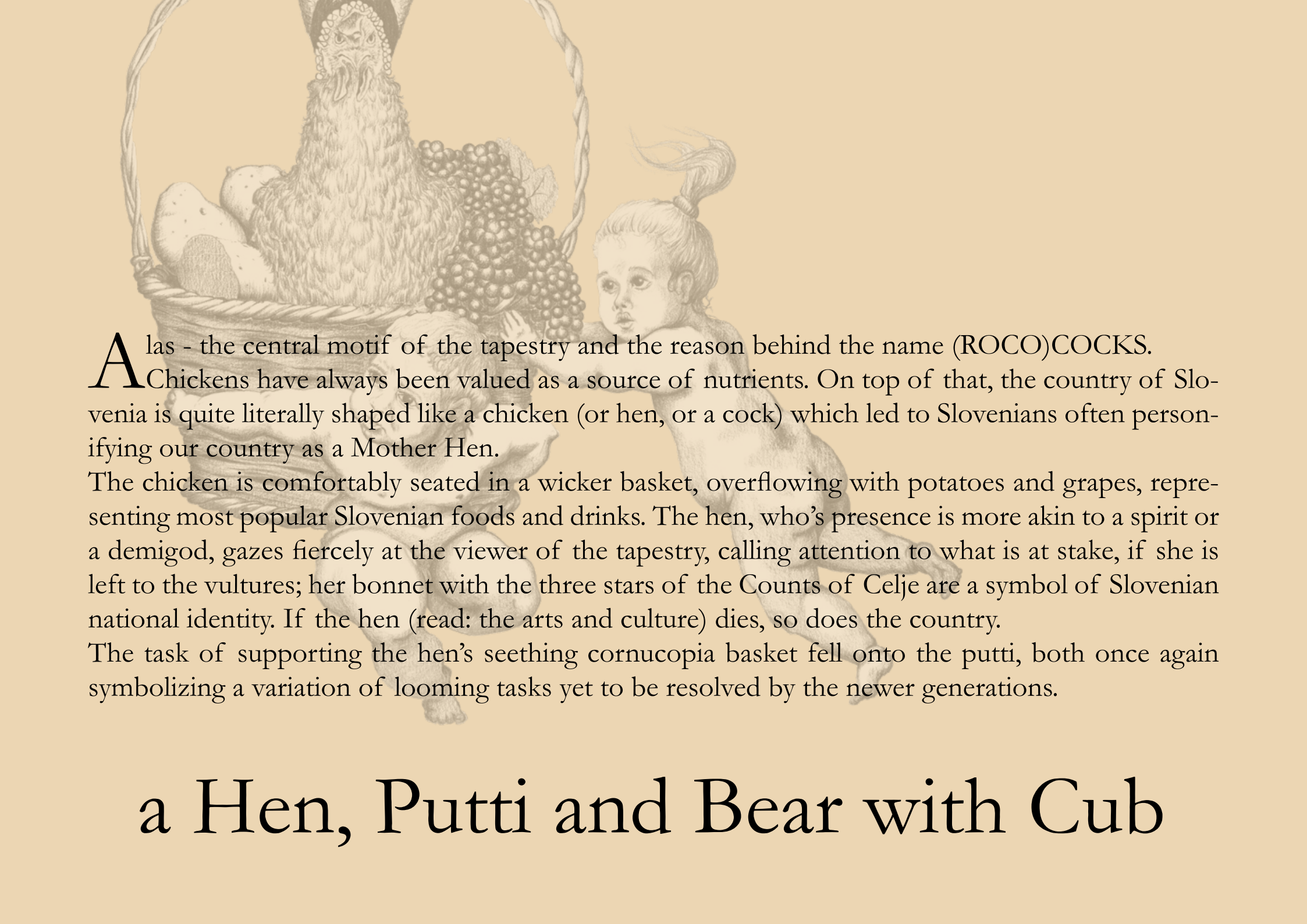


**O**n the back of the Lipizzaner mare, we see the first of the vultures which disturbed the animal banquet. A large black and white bird with a multi-coloured head and a bare pink scalp is the diametric opposite of the Lipizzaner. In real life, this bird is extremely large with a wingspan that can measure up to 2 m. Like all scavengers it often feeds on dead, possibly already infected meat. This is where the rosy bald scalp benefits the vulture, as the thin skin allows the sun's UV rays to penetrate it and kill any bacteria the vulture may have ingested. Compared to a noble Lipizzaner mare, cared for, and tended to from its birth and always only fed the best possible food, the vulture seems like a complete stranger.

# Ibex in a Bonnet

The development of the tapestry was an almost two-year process, during which some characters and their positions changed places. The ibex is a remnant of one of the original ideas, in which the animals were placed as on a map of Slovenia, according to the region they come from. Ibex, which can be found in Gorenjska region, is thus located in the “North-West” of the tapestry, approximately where the region sits on the map of Slovenia. His bonnet and frills are also an indication of the inventive rural Austrian influence, which is still most visible today in the Gorenjska national costume.





Alas - the central motif of the tapestry and the reason behind the name (ROCO)COCKS. Chickens have always been valued as a source of nutrients. On top of that, the country of Slovenia is quite literally shaped like a chicken (or hen, or a cock) which led to Slovenians often personifying our country as a Mother Hen.

The chicken is comfortably seated in a wicker basket, overflowing with potatoes and grapes, representing most popular Slovenian foods and drinks. The hen, who's presence is more akin to a spirit or a demigod, gazes fiercely at the viewer of the tapestry, calling attention to what is at stake, if she is left to the vultures; her bonnet with the three stars of the Counts of Celje are a symbol of Slovenian national identity. If the hen (read: the arts and culture) dies, so does the country.

The task of supporting the hen's seething cornucopia basket fell onto the putti, both once again symbolizing a variation of looming tasks yet to be resolved by the newer generations.

# a Hen, Putti and Bear with Cub

In contrast to the hen, which despite its physical smallness is able to represent the whole of Slovenia, the bear with cub represents a symbol that is more intimate and closer to home.

The mother bear is in a deep sleep and seems completely unaware of the approaching danger. Wrapped around the group of Hen and two putti, it represents the last barrier, the last defensive wall that can protect Mother Hen from predators.

Her cub is looking over her shoulder at us, the viewer. She is the offspring of the biologically rich Slovenian landscape, a treasure which we must protect and preserve.

This central group is also, in a more general sense, based on the ancient motif of a beast guarding a precious treasure.





The (ROCO)COCKS tapestry is imbued with the unconventional, which is perhaps best observed in the character of the Kurentina.

Traditionally only men would wear the Kurent costume, yet in recent years it has become increasingly popular among women as well. In any case, we cannot determine the biological sex of the person wearing the Kurent costume (the wearer's entire body is covered in thick sheep skin), which makes the Kurentina stand out all the more on the tapestry. In line with the tradition of Rococo painting, she is depicted in the nude, with freely exposed breasts and curves that emphasize her femininity. She lunges at the table with outstretched arms to intercept the descending vulture, aiming for the precious chicken. In doing so, she risks deep wounds on her beautiful body, but she is willing to accept this compromise for culture's sake.

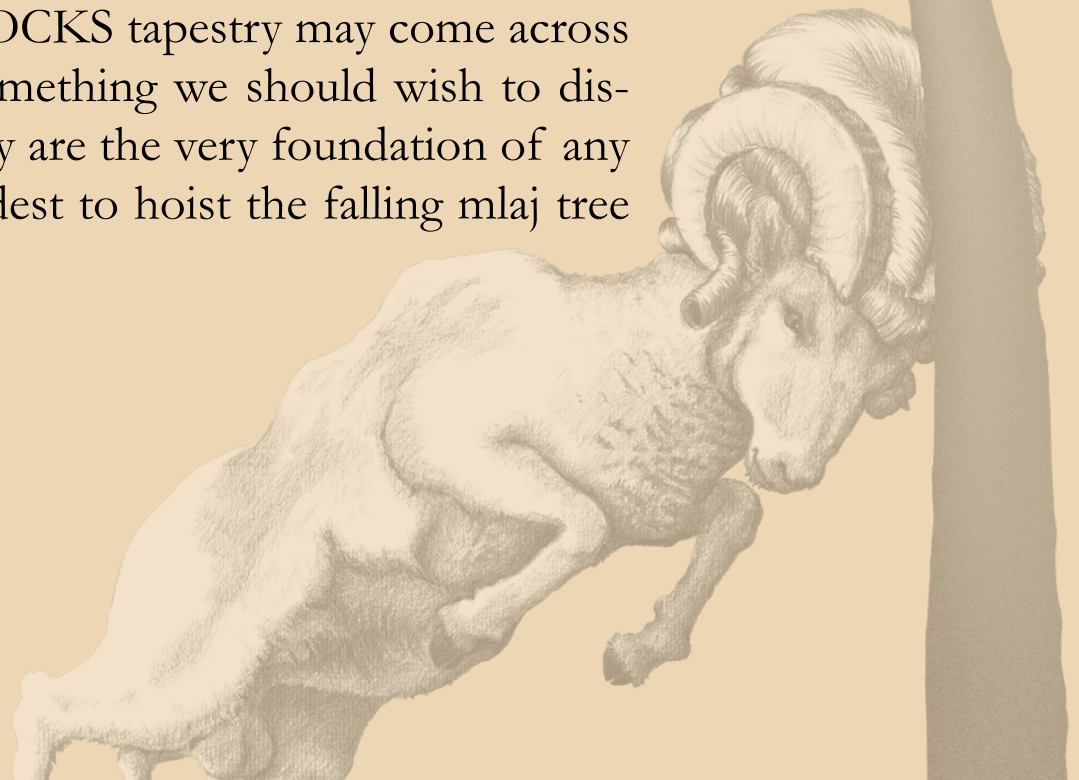
The body and of the Kurentina is actually a redrawing of a work by the Baroque Italian painter Artemisia Gentileschi, perhaps the most famous female Baroque painter. With the bravery and determination, she had to show during her life, she inspired the author of the tapestry to pay homage to her and other strong women in art. Kurentina, with her bravely outstretched arms and bare breasts, stands for all women.


# Kurentina



# the Ram and a Mlaj Tree

A traditional mlaj tree, usually put up for various occasions in Slovenia (weddings, birthdays, special holidays etc.) symbolizes old folklore. Although the message of the (ROCO)COCKS tapestry may come across as a progressive one, traditions aren't something we should wish to discard, rather to preserve and nurture. They are the very foundation of any culture; thus, the ram is working its' hardest to hoist the falling mlaj tree once again.





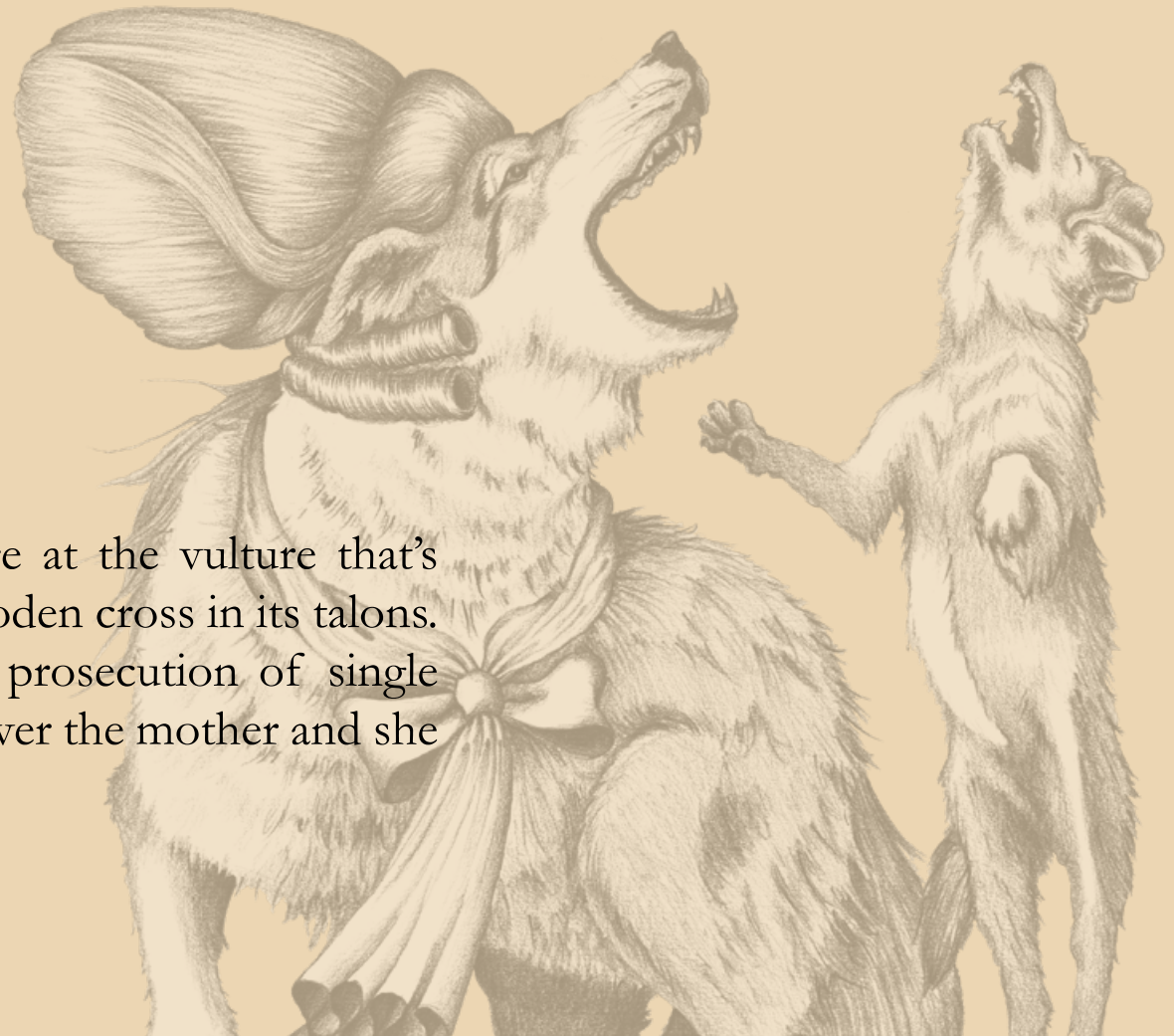
The dairy cow represents factories and various industries that feed us. This is revealed by the engraving on its golden bell. Her udders are completely full, milk overflowing from her teats, with no one to collect it. The great old cow has no offspring to feed, no future generation to take charge in her stead. Despite all this, perhaps in vain, the little redhead putto tries her hardest to lift the great cow and make her fight for a better future once again; but alas, the great dairy queen appears to be too heavy for the little one. It seems that the cow will remain on the ground, its precious milk spilling out, forever draining this once great industry.

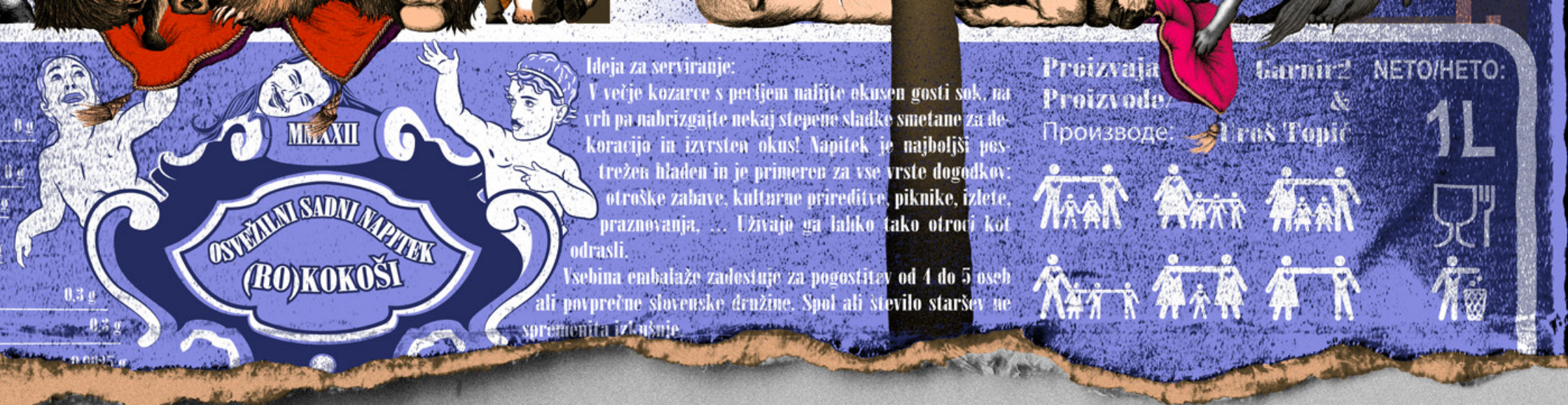
the Cow and the Little Redahead



# She-Wolf and Cub

The she-wolf and her cub prepare to lunge at the vulture that's spreading its great wings above them, a wooden cross in its talons. This great bird of prey, symbolising religious prosecution of single mothers and other one-parent families, looms over the mother and she will stop at nothing to protect her cub.





# Translation of the Text on the Bottom

## Serving idea:

Pour the delicious thick juice into larger stemmed glasses and top with some whipped cream for decoration. The drink is best served cold and is suitable for all kinds of events: children's parties, cultural events, picnics, trips, celebrations, etc. It can be enjoyed by both children and adults.

The contents of the package are enough to entertain 4 to 5 people or an average Slovenian family. Gender or number of parents does not impede on the experience.



(ROCO)COCKS tapestry as part of the larger art installation, with marquetry cabinets by Garnir2 (Gašper Gajšek - left, and Klara Rešetič - right).

**(ROCO)COCKS**





Uroš Topic

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