

## THE DECAMERON

The classical Decameron, written in XIV c. by Giovanni Boccaccio, tells a story about 10 young people that decide to run away from the city of Florence, which is being ravaged by plague, to a distant countryside villa. They lock themselves in that villa and spend their time telling each other all kinds of stories ranging wide and far both thematically and geographically.

Unexpected, but important coincidence occurred – this interpretation of the Decameron that was finished painting in 2020 has coincided with a global coronavirus pandemic. People were forced to lock themselves between four walls and live of memories, hopes, movies, tv-series, video calls, social networks – everything that is not entirely real. Such life furthers one from reality even more than the XXI century usually does. Living of fictional tales of some kind. This new context of the pandemic ties us with Florence that is being ravaged by the plague.

This interpretation of Boccaccio was done not directly, not by the book, instead, it was done trying to imagine a modern screen adaptation of the book. A non-existent movie while painting random scenes from it. It was done like this because at these times we get most of our information this way – fast and in fragments. And that information itself is often built on emotion.

What were the themes of the paintings shortly:

- Human nature (original sin). We are guilty of being born.
- Can a person choose? Is there free will?
- Human lives two lives at the same time – a classical dramatic choice between the voice of the heart and the voice of the mind (in abstracto/in concreto). How do we, being decent and educated people as we are, would act if the situation would turn a little to the right or a little to the left?
- The anti-enlightenment approach to human nature versus the Enlightenment approach to it. Enlightenment approach would be being born, then getting to know, then wanting that what is known (or good), while the anti-enlightenment approach would be being born, then starting to want things, then getting to know of what it is that one wants.
- We all have a bad side, so an educated European is only one step away from a war criminal.
- The human from Renaissance is not that different both from the prehistoric and contemporary human. The colonization of planet Mars is being planned now while the human is as lost and unhappy as few thousand years ago.

•Some degree of vulgarity in the paintings came from the experience of traveling through the former Yugoslavia while touching the still-fresh scars of war and violence. But nevertheless, the paintings are not geographically bounded to any place. If those travels would have been through other freshly scared post recent war nations, I guess both emotional and factual information would be remarkably similar.

•There is a certain sympathy for metamodernist ideas. (*Metamodernist manifesto* by Luke Turner, 2011)

Every painting tells a different story. Some are based on our *western* reality, some are about the things we see on the news, some are the echoes of cruel things happening in faraway places mixed with history, some are fiction and some are not, some of them are personifications of our inner fears. The XXI century is different because of giant waves of uncontrolled and unreliable information of millions of things happening each second. Combined with our personal tragedies it drives us insane. If Boccaccio's *Decameron* is a kind of an encyclopaedia of XIV century humans, then this should be an attempt to take a look at XXI century humans. Did it change a lot?

The painting I chose for the competition THE DECAMERON X is the last painting of the series. It is a kind of epilogue, metaphorically showing the conclusion of the whole idea behind these paintings. We sleep in a warm cocoon, dreaming while the harsh weather scorns the earth.

**EDUCATION:**

2013-2017 – BA at Vilnius Academy of Arts, Monumental Art

2018-2020 – MA at Vilnius Academy of Arts, Site-specific Art

2019 – Erasmus+ studies at University of Montenegro, Faculty of Fine Arts, Montenegro

**OTHER:**

2020 – Membership in Lithuanian Artists Association

**MAIN EXHIBITIONS AND PROJECTS:**

2021 – Personal exhibition "THE DECAMERON", Smoke Factory, Vilnius.

17th International Vilnius painting triennial "(UN)DETERMINED", Vilnius.

2019 – Exhibition of a painting expedition "Painting the River", Routers Art Lab, Vilnius.

2018 – Painting expedition "Painting the River" and exhibition at Kintai Arts Residence, Kintai.

Exhibition "The Look (Žvilgsnis)", VDA gallery "Akademija", Vilnius.

2016 – International project "In the trails of Baltic refugees", Baltic Art Center, Visby, Gotland, Sweden.