Cat Museum
A space of public health intervention

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Our story begun in 2004 when Paolo Gambacurta’s heirs decide to donate to Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale dell’Abruzzo e del Molise (IZSAM) more than 500 objects among which sculptures, ornaments, paintings, prints, engravings, postcards, stamps, masks, playing cards, posters, books that Paolo had collected in all his life.
Who is Paolo Gambacurta?

Paolo Gambacurta (1943-2003) was a teacher and a poet borned in Foligno. He spent his life in Teramo but curiosity and passion for literature pushed him to travel in search of new culture and... new cats for its collection.

For the first time Paul’s roommates left their home and the IZSAM starts a challenging phase of knowledge on art and cat...
Why IZSAM?

The IZSAM is a national public health institute, which operates in Teramo as a technical and scientific arm of the Ministry of Health, the Abruzzo and Molise Regions in the field of veterinary public health.

What could we do?

Commute the collection in a pretext to…

Initially preserve Paolo’s and his roommates memory
Understanding what we get on our hands

Step one: catalogue (IZSAM and Paolo Gambacurta’s heirs) 2004
Step one: catalogue (IZSAM and Paolo Gambacurta’s heirs)

- 375 cards with paintings, artefacts, sculptures, prints and plates
- 222 books
- 340 thematic postcards
- 701 stamps

Oggetto: soprammobile
Descrizione: Gatto di Sandycast, seduto, occhi verdi, baffi in nylon
Provenienza: Canada
Materiale: gesso
Colori: bianco e grigio
Dimensione: 35x28 cm
Note: scultura di Sandra Brue, dettaglio del pelo
Understanding what we get on our hands

Thinking a museum

Catalogue 2004

Step two: project (IZSAM, Teramo Municipality, Abruzzo Region) 2016

More than 10 years late, the year was 2016, the Cat Museum finds its location in Teramo (Italy). Initially it was intended to revive the spaces of the Science Park located on the outskirts of the City.

Cat Museum is a pretext to preserve the collection, Paolo’s memory… and local culture
The choice fell on Palazzo Urbani, a private medieval construction in a hidden area of town, decentralized from the commercial streets, rebuilt in the fifteenth century that had already hosted the G. Braga Musical High School of Teramo.
IZSAM and Teramo Municipality participated in the design phase in the common goal of using the Museum as a tool to promote heritage, health and wellbeing practices. The exposition’s staging obtained public funding of 50000 euro and includes a bookshop, an educational workshop for children, a music environment and a space for IZSAM to disseminate scientific information on animal welfare and human-animal relationship especially on feline sphere.
An Italian heterogeneous professional network works together and thought a tortuous path that reflects, exploiting the different levels, the habitats of feline stray dogs to gain a new reconstruction of wellbeing which can be shared with the entire city. We
2016 Step three: Museum inauguration

Specially crafted cases with red pesta paper columns depicting cats protectes the majority of the objects but all the natural architectural elements of the medieval building (seats, steps, windows) have been exploited to make the objects visible to the outside and converse with the citizens who stop in the adjacent square and frequent the alleys of the historic center.
Phase 1: Cat Museum

Understanding what we get on our hands

Catalogue 2004

Thinking a museum

Project 2016

Make an exhibition agreement

Step three: Museum 2016
Agreement

An agreement stipulated in 2016 between IZSAM and Teramo’s Municipality regulates the duties of each member of the network. IZSAM is responsible for a scientific assistance service, research and study relating to the cat and contributes to the creation of events.
Development of a welfare assessment protocol for cats housed in rescue shelters: a preliminary study

Introduction

Free-roaming Dogs and Cats in Central Italy: Public Perceptions and Magnitude of the Problem

Feline Morbillivirus identified in the urine of a cat: an unusual and nephropathic presentation in Italy
LA DEFINIZIONE DEL PROFILO PSICO-DIAGNOSTICO E LA DEFINIZIONE DEGLI OBIETTIVI DELL’INTERVENTO

di Lejla Valerii, Stefania Del Papa, Laura Corona e Michela Galante

Programma sperimentale di terapie e attività assistite con animali (TAA/AAA)

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2016 Step three: Museum inauguration
Phase 2: Cat Museum for animal’s health and animal’s welfare

First way: promote activities on animal’s health

Step four: Lessons for child, Dissemination for adult, Guided tours, citizens participation 2017
Cat Museum was a pretext to promote animal’s health (IZSAM and citizens)

Step four: activities to promote animal’s health and animal’s welfare

The consumer interest in animal welfare and living condition of livestock is actually growing steadily. An animal is therefore in a good state of welfare if is healthy, well fed and provided with adequate shelter, and able to express their behavioral inner traits. Also the relations between companion animals and humans is considered an important topic in order to increase knowledge on dogs and cat’s ethological needs and to promote a responsible ownership, according to One health’s approach.
Step four: activities to promote animal’s health and animal’s welfare

During the spring and summer season in 2017 meetings on:
• dog and cat’s communication;
• the social role of animals through fairy;
• the actions of the IZSAM for animal rescue during the recent natural disasters were illustrated in order to involve the community and primary school pupils.

Lessons for child
We had transform dark alleys in urban theater proscenium where the community plays a new learning capacity and participates to health’s promoting.
Dissemination for adult: Incontriamoci in Piazzetta 2017

To discuss with citizens on food safety, welfare and animal health through short films and friendly scientific conversations.
Dissemination for adult: Incontriamoci in Piazzetta 2018
Guided tours for national and international delegation visited the IZSAM
The Cat Museum permits to improve the citizen’s quality of life through cultural and scientific approach with possible positive impacts on health promotion and illness prevention.

The first way is through human- artistic manufacture relationship: the citizen is actor in the construction of museum suggesting topics to explore and through guided tours and donations.
Phase 2: Cat Museum for animal’s health

How?

First way: promote activities on animal’s health

Step four
2017

Second way: promote activities on human’s wellbeing

Step five: Cat & CATs
???
Supported by human-animal relationship in holistic health program, according to city council, part of the collection could become, with the facilitation of veterinaries, psychologists and museum operators, an instrument to overcome traumas trigging memories touching and talking about cat both object of manipulation and animal to take care.

The skills of experts will be useful to create programs suitable to particular audiences and to provide linkages between a museum’s resources and a community’s needs.

The expertise of IZSAM in the field of TAA (Therapy Assisted Animal) can assure a systematic and scientific support to the health promotion strategy.

Focused on research into animal sentience, emerging from neuroscience, evolutionary biology, zoology and philosophy.
Thank’s for your attention