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EL CABALLO, TAL Y COMO ES ÈL

The horse as he is 9 - 10 APRIL 2016, EQUINURA

Explore how to preserve or recover 'the horse as he or she is' taking in account equine subjectivity, cognition and ethics, in the daily coexistence between horses and humans.

Key Words

- Equine Socio-Cognition
- Ethics and Quality of Life
- Equine-Human Relationship

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Biologist and passionate speaker about animal ethics, ethology, cognition and zooanthropology, Francesco is a human animal who works with his head and his heart and his hands, integrating scientific knowledge into ethical daily practice. His motto is:

"Be there without being there".



Asking Question To The World

A change in the day-to-day understanding of nonhuman animals, asks for more than scientific research.

The awareness of nonhuman animal subjectivity, of the fact that our interaction or mere presence is a cognitive experience in the nonhuman animal's life is not easy to take into account. Therefore, seeing another nonhuman animal as an *individual other*—someone with a unique subjective experience of the world—requires a necessary understanding of changing values.

A paradigm change is required in which the human is no longer central, so we can make room for a "zooanthropologic" understanding of our coexistence with others. Such an understanding must be based on reciprocal relations and on the comprehension of other animals' mental elaborations, choices, and perceptions of interactions.



Program



Day 1

Theory:

- Principles of Animal Ethics

Practice:

- Be There Without Being There

Theory:

- The Spontaneous Horse

Practice:

- Observing Spontaneous Behaviours

Day 2

Theory:

- Training versus Learning

Practice:

- Learning to learn

Theory:

- Beyond Equine Welfare

Practice:

- Quality Experiences

Redefine our understanding of horses' way of being in dialogue with the world is an important starting point—a dialogue in which they do not merely react to their environment, but are instead part of a system in which they look for their own information and learning.

Recognizing that horses are in dialogue with the world—that they ask their own questions of the world and look for their own answers and understanding—is the central idea when it comes to preserving their quality of life and considering them as the owners of their own experiences and initiatives.

"All horses are born cognitive. Their cognitive abilities allow them to understand themselves, their initiatives, each other, their environment, and their social context."



However, due to their co-existence with humans, horses gradually change. They grow up in a context without a socio-cognitive environment, and start to fulfil a human purpose. Then they start to respond to stimuli with behaviouristic responses without actually processing the information. It is not surprising that what we see at the end is an unpredictable flight animal. In fact, there are more preys, predators and leaders in round pens, than in nature. (De Giorgio, 2013)"