# The shadow of the unicorn. Past, present and future of rhinos

**Temporary exhibition** 







### The shadow of the unicorn. Past, present and future of rhinos

MUSE – Museo delle Scienze of Trento (Italy)

02.07.2022- 09.10.2022

The exhibition focuses on the theme of rhinoceroses (African and Asian), their conservation in the contemporary world and the incredible and devastating market revolving around rhino horn and its use (without effectiveness...) in Chinese and Vietnamese pharmacopoeia.

The highlight of the exhibition is 'Toby', the taxidermy of the southern white rhinoceros, *Ceratotherium simum simum*, which lived for a long time at the Parco Natura Viva in Bussolengo and died at the venerable age of 54 (it was the oldest specimen in Europe to be housed in a zoological park). Visiting time without a guide is estimated at between 20 and 30 minutes. The exhibition consists mainly of texts (in Italian and English), specimens and objects (mostly replicas), photographic images and narrative videos.





#### THEMATIC CORES AND CONTENTS

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The idea of the rhinoceros in the
ancient world

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and the roots of the present conservation crisis

UNIT 3 A companion in the cold harshness of the Ice Age
Rhinos evolution, woolly rhinos and Palaeolithic imagery about rhinos

UNIT 4 Armoured mammals with a surly temperament
Rhinos biology and eco-ethology

**UNIT 5 A horn that brings bad luck**Rhinos threats and conservation

UNIT 6 Toby's story
For 54 years ambassador of his kind at

Natura Viva zoological park

**UNIT 7 Photographs and paintings** (optional)



#### **UNIT 1 The shadow of the unicorn**

The idea of the rhinoceros in the ancient world

1.1 An unseen animal, a mirage of the Orient
No direct knowledge, by the ancient civilizations in
the Mediterranean basin, of the existence of
rhinos (African or Asian), but a belief, supported
by numerous authors, that a large unicorn
mammal lived in the distant and almost mythical
Indian world.

#### 1.2 Death in the amphitheatreo

Occasional arrival in Imperial Rome of rhinos from India or - much more rarely - East Africa and their use, like many other large mammals

(predatory or not) of exotic origin, in interspecific fights or with gladiators in circuses.

**1.3 The 'papal rhinoceros' that Dürer never saw**Probably unknown in Europe throughout the
Middle Ages, the rhinoceros reappeared in
Western

culture on the threshold of the Modern Age - the individual "saga" of the (Indian) specimen brought to Lisbon in 1515 as a gift to the Portuguese king Manuel I and then returned by him to Pope Leo X.

#### **Items**

Rhinoceros, xilografia by Albrecht Dürer (Fine art print)

n. 2 ancient books:

Lodovico Moscardo, Note ouero memorie del museo del conte Lodouico Moscardo nobile veronese vno dei padri nell'Accademia filarmonica: dal medesimo descritte in tre libri..., Verona, Andrea Rossi, 1672

Ulisse Aldrovandi, Vlyssis Aldrovandi patricii Bononiensis Serpentum et draconu[m] historiae libri duo, Bologna, Clemente Ferroni, 1640



# **UNIT 1 The shadow of the unicorn**

The idea of the rhinoceros in the ancient world





## UNIT 2 Rhinomania, from see-wonder to big game trophy

The last three centuries of exoticism and the roots of the present conservation crisis

#### 2.1 'Clara' and the legend of the missing horn

The eighteenth-century "proliferation" of rhinoceroses that were imported into Europe As naturalia et mirabilia to be exhibited in villages or at courts, and the story of "Clara", the female Indian rhinoceros brought to Venice for Carnival.

#### 2.2 Big Hunter, Big Five

The colonial epic and the defaunation of sub-Saharan Africa and India under the banner of the 'safari' as a status symbol of the white elite employed in the colonies or on pleasure trips to the tropics. Genesis of a pentad of totemic species (including the rhinoceros, white or black) that became a must absolutely to shoot.

# 2.3 Hunting to conserve? The shortcut to 'canned rhinos'

The recent emergence of legalised forms of hunting and its dubious role in conservation. Potential slippage of wildlife management towards forms of "wild breeding" in support of a "ready-to-hunt" industry.

#### Video 1 – It's my life

Animation with original illustrations of Clara's story, narrated in Italian with English subtitles.

#### **Items**

Clara the rhinoceros, oil painting by Pietro Falca known as Longhi, 1751 (Print on canvas)



# UNIT 2 Rhinomania, from see-wonder to big game trophy

The last three centuries of exoticism and the roots of the present conservation crisis





## UNIT 3 A companion in the cold harshness of the Ice Age

Rhinos evolution, woolly rhinos and Paleolithic imagery about rhinos

# 3.1 On the way to the horn, between racing dwarfs and grazing giants

Evolutionary radiation and speciation phenomena in the "rhinoceros" group sensu lato since their separation from other Perissodactyls.

# 3.2 From forest to steppe to tundra: the 'glacial' rhinos

Adaptation, -similar to that found among Proboscidates and leading to mammoths- to the glacial climate by at least 4 species of rhinos, which became very large and hairy and spread across the cold steppes and tundra throughout Eurasia.

# 3.3 Great prey and great inspiration for early artists

Interactions between the woolly rhinoceros and Paleolithic hunters (hunting, use of carcasses for food and as a source of raw materials) and the abundant presence of this species in the figurative universe of cave paintings.

#### **Items**

Skull of Merck's rhinoceros Stephanorhinus kirchbergensis (Replica)

Skull of Etruscan rhinoceros *Stephanorhinus* etruscus (Replica)

Skull and horn of woolly rhinoceros Coelodontha antiquitatis (Replica)



# **UNIT 3 A companion in the cold harshness of the Ice Age**

Rhinos evolution, woolly rhinos and Paleolithic imagery about rhinos





## **UNIT 4 Armoured mammals with a surly temperament**

Rhinos biology and eco-ethology

# 4.1 The horned Big Five on the brink of extinction

Distribution and status of the 5 living species of rhinos.

#### 4.2 Alone, two or a few

Life cycle, daily life and (little) sociality of large herbivores that tend to be solitary.

#### 4.3 To browse or to graze, that's the dilemma...

Ecological and anatomo-behavioural segregation between the two African species, black rhinoceros and white rhinoceros, and between the three Asian species.

#### **Items**

Black rhinoceros skull *Diceros bicornis* (Replica)

White rhinoceros skull *Ceratotherium simum* (Replica)

Javan rhinoceros skull *Rhinoceros sondaicus* (Replica)

Sumatran rhinoceros skull *Dicerorhinus* sumatrensis (Replica)

n. 2 Indian rhinoceros calves *Rhinoceros unicornis* (Replica)



# **UNIT 4 Armoured mammals with a surly temperament**Rhinos biology and eco-ethology





## **UNIT 5 A horn that brings bad luck**

Rhinos threats and conservation

#### 5.1 My life for a jambiya

The Arab and Middle Eastern market for rhino horn to make ornamental objects with status symbol value.

**5.2** A miraculous powder... with no effect growth and globalization of rhino horn trafficking in response to the traditional use of pulverized rhino horn In Chinese pharmacopeia and to the recent renunciation of the ban on it as a consequence of its proven effectiveness.

#### 5.3 Like a pachyderm on an islet

The shadow of habitat loss on island species.

#### 5.4 Rhino connection - Video Slideshow

Complexity and capillarity of the international network managing the trafficking of rhino horns, in a manner similar to that of drug trafficking.

**5.5 A future without horn? - Video Slideshow** Strategies, resources and solutions to ensure a future for rhinos.

#### **Items**

n. 2 White rhinoceros horns *Ceratotherium simum* (Replica)



# **UNIT 5 A horn that brings bad luck**

Rhinos threats and conservation





## **UNIT 6 Toby's story**

For 54 years ambassador of his kind at Natura Viva zoological park

#### 6.1 Toby's story - docu video

The individual story of the southern white rhinoceros, a guest of the Natura Viva Park, narrated by Director Cesare Avesani and a biologist who took care of it.



#### **Specimen**

#### **Toby**

Taxidermy of the Southern white rhinoceros Ceratotherium simum simum lived at Parco Natura Viva, Bussolengo (VR)

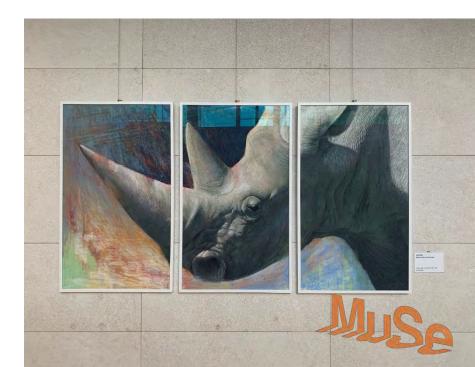


# **UNIT 7 Photographs and paintings** (optional)

5 pictures 50x70 cm B/W

"Aeternitas": 94x171 cm.
Drawing of Toby (living) by Samuele Drago





## **Original illustrations**

Each of the 5 content units has an original illustration that ironically summarizes the core message of the thematic unit (in Italian)
Artwork by Sara Filippi Plotegher





# **Technical requirements**

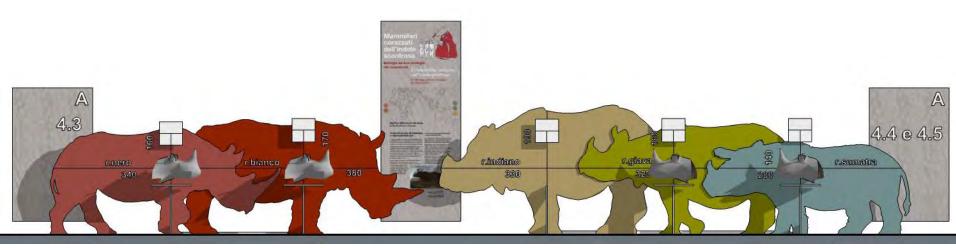
Space 180 sqm Height 3 metres

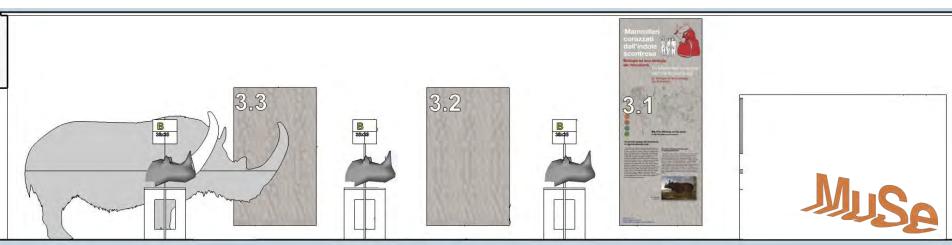
Adjustments on spatial distribution can be agreed upon



# **Outfitting**

Example of silouhettes, panels and stands for exhibits





In collaborazione con With the collaboration of Parco Natura Viva



Supervisione
Supervision
Michele Lanzinger e Patrizia Famà миѕє

A cura di Curated by Osvaldo Negra e Alessandra Pallaveri миѕе

Coordinamento
Project Management
Alessandra Pallaveri MUSE

Testi e traduzioni Texts and translations Osvaldo Negra muse

Illustrazioni originali Original illustrations Sara Filippi Plotegher

Foto in bianco e nero
Black and white pictures
Osvaldo Negra MUSE
Laura Dal Bosco

Produzioni multimediale e copy Multimedia production and copywriting

Video "It's my life"

Ideazione, testi e regia
Concept, texts and direction
Osvaldo Negra e Alessandra Pallaveri MUSE

Illustrazioni | Illustrations Sara Filippi Plotegher

Voci | Voices Diego Sala e Miriam Toldo MUSE

Animazioni | Animations Mara Di Clemente Muse

Assistente regia e editing audio
Assistant director and audio editing
Davide Dalpiaz MUSE

Video "Toby al Parco Natura Viva"

Ideazione e regia | Concept and direction Osvaldo Negra MUSE

Riprese | Shooting Fabio Pupin MUSE

Montaggio | Editing Davide Dalpiaz MUSE

Con | With
Cesare Avesani Zaborra e Giorgio Ottolini
- Parco Natura Viva

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Con i contributi video di With video contributions by Parco Natura Viva

Video "Rhinos under threat"

Per gentile concessione | Courtesy of CITES Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

Progetto allestimento Exhibition layout Luigi Zanoni

Progetto grafico Graphic project Deborah Cagol e Mattia Micheletti

Supervisione tecnica
Technical supervision
Lavinia Del Longo e Ivan Muscolino миse

Realizzazione allestimenti Exhibits manufacturers Ufficio Tecnico MUSE Arteam (TN) Designers (MI)

Stampa
Printing
Designers (MI)
Digitalcarton (TN)

Tassidermia Taxidermy Naturaliter (PI) Repliche
Replicas
Riccardo Miolo (PN)
Skulls Unlimited International, Inc
(Oklahoma)

Tecnologie multimediali e supporto tecnico ICT & technical assistance Ufficio Tecnico MUSE

Coordinamento programma
mostre temporanee
Temporary exhibitions
programme coordination
Ufficio Programmi per il Pubblico мизе

Ufficio stampa, web e promozione Press office, web and promotion Ufficio Stampa MUSE

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Accoglienza e prenotazioni Visitor assistance & bookings Ufficio Organizzazione Risorse Umane e Servizi Diversi di Gestione MUSE

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#### For contacts and further information

Alessandra Pallaveri <u>alessandra.pallaveri@muse.it</u> Tel. + 39 0461 270321

Muse Museo delle Scienze Corso del Lavoro e della Scienza 3 38122 Trento (Italia)

