

# *Sara Ravelli*

1. CV
2. Statement
3. Selected Works

## CV

Sara Ravelli, Crema 1993.

Lives and works between Milan and Geneva.

## CONTACTS

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## EDUCATION

2013 / 2016 - Accademia di Belle Arti G. Carrara, Bergamo, IT

2018 / 2020 HEAD | Work.Master, Geneva, CH

## EXHIBITIONS

**2023** Bouquet Final, Hasch, Marseille, FR

It's the tip of the iceberg, MASSIMO, Milan, IT

**2022** Items of Bliss, AN/CO, Ancona, IT (*solo*)

The Special Treat, Espace3353, Geneva, CH (*solo*)

**2021** Primary Domain, Ordet, Milan, IT

Tamed Love, Schiavo Zoppelli Gallery, Milan, IT (*solo*)

Feeder, Lokal-int, Biel/Bienne, CH (*solo*)

Palazzina#9, Palazzina, Basel, CH

**2020** Alla Mattina Appena Alzata#2, Lumpen station, one gee in fog, Biel/Bienne, Geneva, CH

Wie zu Hause, Wo ich nicht bin, Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève, Geneva, CH

La Mas Màla, Supermala, Madrid, ES

A Healthy Dose of Confusion Before The Bang, Federica Schiavo Gallery, Milan, IT

EMO, Schwobhaus, Bern, CH

**2019** Fridges are not Frigid, Archivio Conz, Berlin, DE

CRIPTA747, July open studio, Turin, IT

INSONNE, La grande mostra di scultura, Sonnenstube, Lugano, CH

**2018** Move the Museum!, When water touch the grounds | MAXXI, Rome, IT

Trigger Party#16, Marsèlleria, Milan, IT

La bottega oscura, Giorgio Galotti gallery, Turin, IT

VIR Viafarini open studio, VIR, Milan, IT

Luogo\_e la zona metamateriale, Luogo\_e, Bergamo, IT

**2017** Blind Date, CURRENT project, Milan, IT

Ambiente, Visioni del Futuro, VIII edizione di ArteImpresa, Spazio Giacomo, Bergamo, IT

Petra, Museo Archeologico Paolo Giovio, Como, IT

Dopolalode, Spazio Giacomo, Bergamo, IT

Sono contento che tu sia lì, Studi Festival, Milan, IT

## WORKSHOPS / RESIDENCES

**2022** Fosforo Immortale, Cantieri Aperti, Massa, IT

**2021** UNPAE “un paese tutto per te”, Roccacaramanico, IT

**2020** Summer In, FutureDome, Milan, IT

**2019** CRIPTA747 Studio programme, Turin, IT

**2018** Residenza La Fornace curated by Edoardo Manzoni, Giada

Olivotto, Spino d'Adda, IT

Q-RATED W/ Carolyn Christov-Bakrgiev, Sofia Hernandez  
Choung Cuy, Hito Steyerl curated by La Quadriennale di Roma, Castello  
di Rivoli, Turin, IT

VIR Viafarini-in-residence, Milan, IT

## PUBLICATIONS

**2021** Fermacampione Issue#3, published by Fermacampione, Milan, IT

**2020** Spears, Issue#1, PAN Publications.

12\_12, Self published by Paola Bombelli, Milan, IT

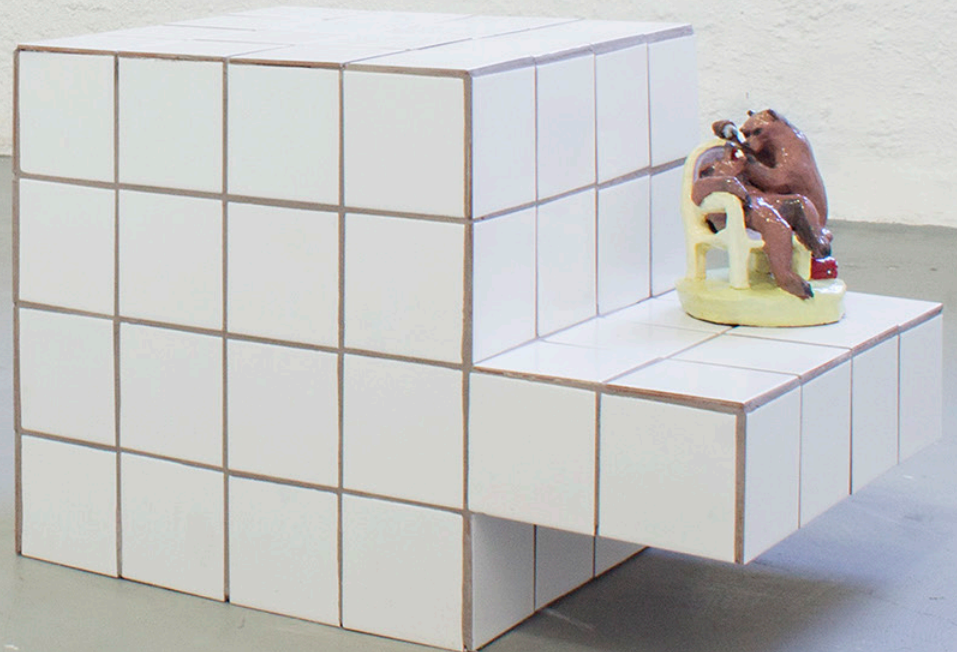
Sara works across sculpture, installation and writing, questioning the sentimental charge of objects and the idea of compromised functionality in the capitalistic society.

Setting up tensions between social contexts and intimacy, she investigates the relationships where human, non-human and artifacts are in continuous oscillation and affection and control coexist interchanging. In her practice, objects are seen as symbol of power relations, often obscured by subjective traits.

Domestic and technical materials are employed in a crafty way, assembled conceptually and emotionally. Materials features are treated as a possibility to upturn ordinary meanings and uses, becoming both a burden and an element of evocation.

**NO TEETH LEFT** Ceramic, Tiles  
56x53x23  
68x45x45  
34x30x22  
2023

No teeth left is a series of three ceramic animal sculptures portraying a dentist extracting teeth from his patient. The work stems from the observation of iconological references of already existing representations, in which animals are depicted in comical and grotesque human postures, using human tools and objects. These figurines rest on architectural volumes covered in white tiles, usually used for sanitary ware or flooring that needs to be washed frequently and easily.

















## ITEMS OF BLISS

Lycra, velour, terry fabric, painted feathers, glitter stickers, papier-mâché, toilet paper, iron structure; Stadium seats, cardboard boxes, glitter stickers, unfired clay; Bulletin board, nail polish, pin, paper  
variable dimensions  
2022

The work - duplicated by the presence of a mirror - consists of five young gymnasts; their bodies, made of toilet paper, are posing evoking the set of a group shot. Paperboard boxes containing croissants, made of raw clay, rest on stadium seats, replacing a potential audience.

The installation stages an environment where materials and languages typical of leotards come together into characters charged with subjective postures and behaviors.

Items of Bliss questions the relationship between humans and objects which, due to their functional and symbolic nature, can be conceived as containers of competitiveness as much as of affectivity.





















## THE SPECIAL TREAT

Cardboard covered with plaster, plaster, styrofoam covered with plaster, baitworms, book, clay, silicone, latex, papier mâché fleece, grid, iron structure, diffused chemical essences of beaver, owl, cortex, leather  
variable dimensions  
2021

From the starting point of giant - colored - gifts given as treats to zoo animals the work wants to put in space the images of an ambivalent relationship of both decoration and domination. In many zoos the zoo keepers use to give presents to the animals during festivities or on their birthday and document the events with images. Working around the tension of an object that can simultaneously appeal or disgust, this scenario aims to redirect attention to an interpersonal relationship in contemporary capitalism and to the anthropocentric and authoritative nature of the relationship that humans maintain with animal.



Installation view, Espace3353, Geneva, CH  
Photo: Anastasia Mityukova











TREAT #1, MONROE  
Carboard covered with plaster, plaster, grid,  
iron structure  
50x100x65 cm









1

TREAT #2, CECIL  
Styrofoam covered with plaster, baitworms  
50x65x5 cm







TREAT #3, PLAYTIME  
Book, clay, plaster  
30x20x22 cm





TREAT #4, GUS  
Styrofoam covered with plaster, silicone, latex,  
grid, iron structure  
180x150x100 cm







TREAT #5, BOO!  
Papier mâché, fleece, grid, iron structure  
80x20x50 cm



Unbecoming You Favored Spot  
Diffused chemical essences of beaver, owl, cortex,  
leather





# To Eat or Be Eaten

Colin Raynal, December 2021

I propose the following equation: in 150 years zoos will have disappeared, or in 150 years humanity will have disappeared.

○

It would be the tale of a stomach that eats, and eats, and eats, that never ceases to fatten, that swallows everything in its passage and ends up gobbling us all.

○

How did the wolf become a dog? Probably because humanity enticed it with offerings of food.

○

To try to stimulate animals in zoos, we hide food in different places every time they are fed.

○

My sister remembers very well the day a goat started eating her dress.

○

At Samut Prakan in Thailand can be found the largest crocodile farm in the world. From the top of the path that spans the pond, one can purchase a chicken to place at the end of a fishing rod to make the crocodiles jump out of the water.

○

The orca named Tilikum was captured in 1983 off the Icelandic coast to be exhibited in North American theme parks. Over the course of its captivity, Tilikum killed three people, including its trainer, Dawn Brancheau. To explain this attack, the following theory was proposed: during the show preceding the tragedy, Dawn Brancheau was short on fish to reward the orca, which would have frustrated and annoyed the animal. After the performance, Tilikum caught the trainer by the arm to lure her into the

water. The medical examiner's report documents lacerations, hemorrhaging and fractures.

○

The lion of Atlas, the macaw of Spix, the toad of Wyoming, the scimitar-horned oryx, the crow of Hawaii, the cinnamon kingfisher and the soft-shelled black turtle are species extinct in the wild.

○

Some people gather the plentiful hairs shed by their cats, with which they fabricate little hats that they place on the heads of their pets for the time required to take a photo shareable on social media.

○

I would have liked to be a prehistoric human. Senses always alert. Fixed on survival, on top of things, going on the hunt. Guided by my flair. Inventing objects that serve my survival. Appreciating the heat of the fire, that luminous beast difficult to tame, that eats dead wood and that bites when one approaches too closely.

○

The zoo of Asson in the department of Pyrénées-Atlantiques proposes that children 6 to 11 years old celebrate their birthdays at the zoo. The package involves going to feed the animals before they may have their own birthday party.

○

The suggested videos will finish by gobbling me up.

●

Text written by Colin Raynal for the exhibition The Special Treat, Espace3353, Geneva, CH



**FEEDER** Fleece, quilted fabric, satin, unfired clay, iron structure  
400x200, 300x200 cm  
2021

Inspired by the aesthetic language of the animals' kennel, the work is composed of two curtains made of fleece, quilted fabric and satin.

Tents for puppies molded in clay weigh down on the curtains decorating it.

When both wild and domesticated puppies are motherless - for natural or human-related causes - breastfeeding is provided by using artificial prosthesis including baby bottles, whose nipples have an elongated shape that follows the conformation of the snout.

The feeding station creates a bond of dependence between human and animals, becoming both an object of taming as well as affective care.

Installation view, Lokal-int, Biel/Bienne, CH  
Installation view, Schiavo Zoppelli Gallery, Milan, IT  
Photo: Andrea Rossetti















Detail, Schiavo Zoppelli Gallery, Milano, IT  
Photo: Andrea Rossetti



**TAMED LOVE** Quilted fabrics, polyester, satin, nylon, unfired clay, rope, hairpins, salt, iron structure  
variable dimensions,  
2020

Tamed Love questions the power relations between human and animal, in particular the idea of disguise meant as a form of control.

The work is composed of elements used in horses' costumes sewn with different fabrics that refer to specific imageries; the quilted fabric and the polyester that refer to a domestic sphere, the nylon that recalls the idea of performativity. The materials give the animal, as with the clothes used by humans, a distinctive identity. The rope braids, like the clay parts, evocate a sense of decoration as well as constriction.

Some of the elements are soaked in salt, a substance considered nutritious for horses, but also linked to sweat, to the living body of the animal.

The disguises become an artificial and an imposed obstacle, not useful to the animal but rather to humans.

The body becomes a sensitive encumbrance between object and affection: it is controlled, caressed, protected and forced.



Installation view, HEAD - Geneva, Geneva, CH  
Photo: Raphaëlle Mueller





























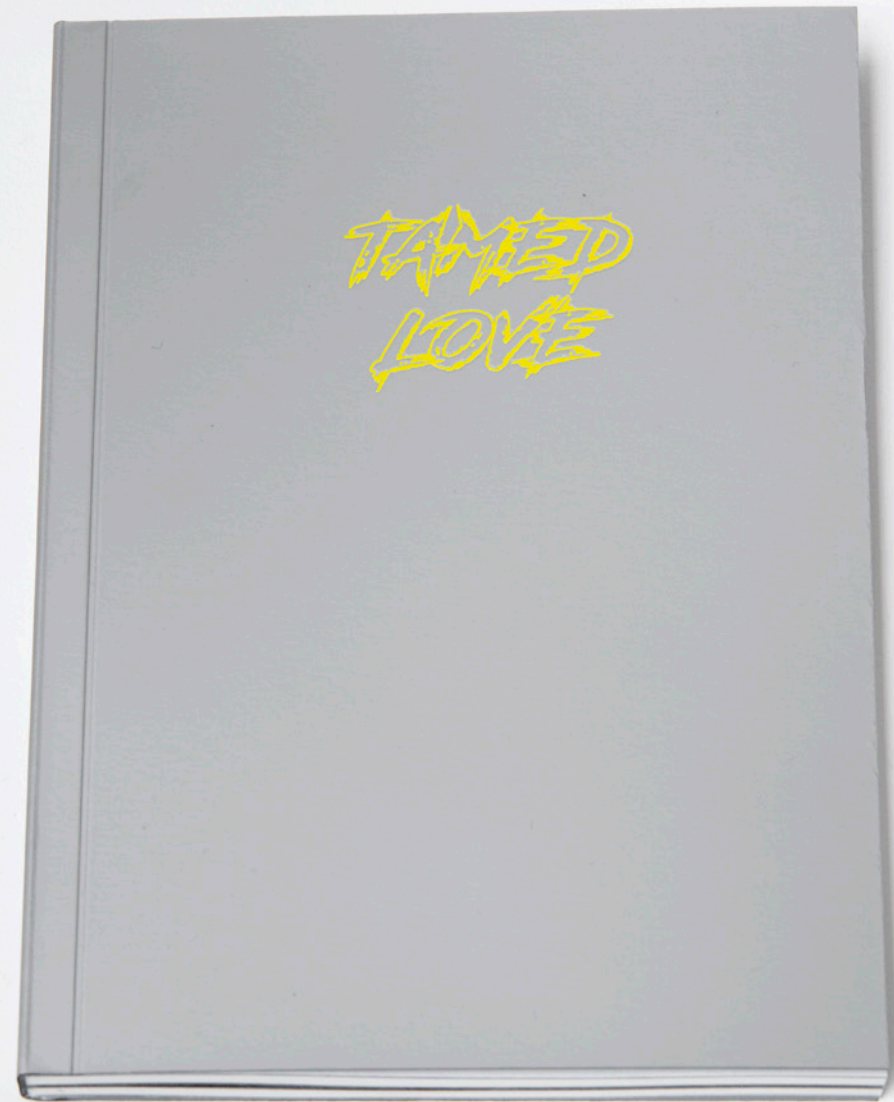






**TAMED LOVE** Book  
12x17  
2020

Collection of stories where the interplays between humans and animals are the main characters. Affective experiences, news stories and scientific facts are mixed together creating new narratives, becoming “case studies” reworked through a subjective interpretation.





MARCO

doesn't like pizza.

I often travel across borders and crossing them puts a lot of pressure on me. Before being scanned by the scanners and computers at the airport, I keep thinking if I forgot the water bottle in my bag, if I'm carrying some forbidden materials, if I'm not fast enough. I don't like to take my shoes off and only wear socks, I don't like to put my belt, my earrings, my phone, my home keys, my computer in the plastic tray. If I forget something the alarm will go on and a person will touch me on the other side of the gate as if I were an object. My favorite means of transportation is the bus, mainly because if I take the bus I will meet Marco. Every time the bus crosses the French border I can't wait for it to stop and I can't wait to be checked by Marco. Every time it's the same routine, when the bus stops Marco gets on, he starts running, climbs up here and there, smells the passengers' luggages, he looks at everyone with his suspicious gaze, he moves very fast, faster than all of us, Marco doesn't

miss anything, he understands everybody's feelings and that's one of the reasons why I love him. Sometimes he barks very noisily when he is angry. He always wears a black technical harness with a reflective "Police Dog" tag on it. According to Working Dogs Association, a police dog, known as a "K-9", is a dog that is specifically trained to assist police and other law-enforcement personnel. Their duties include: searching for drugs and explosives, locating missing people, finding crime scene evidence, and attacking people targeted by the police. Police dogs must remember

SEVERAL VERBAL GUES AND HAND GESTURES.

Training of police dogs is a very lengthy process since it begins with the training of the canine handler.<sup>3</sup> For a dog to be considered for a police department, it must first pass a basic obedience training course. They must be able to obey the commands of their handler without hesitation. This allows the officer to have complete control over how much force the dog should use against a suspect. Motivation in dogs during training is always channeled through

PLAYTIME OR FOOD.

Initial training of all police dogs is based on wheel-shaped toys and is used to train the dog in odour discrimination. This toy works like a spinning wheel, anchored to the ground.

Its rays have containers at their end, and said containers are filled with so-called "distractors", substances such as anchovy paste, toothpaste, shampoo or food in general. Negative odours are mixed with positive ones: about 20 basic substances used for the preparation of explosive devices. If the dog smells the explosive while the wheel turns, he sits down and waits for the reward: a food kibble. The dog is fed about 100-120 kibble rations per day. During training the animal associates explosive with food. Another method is to hide substances inside some toy balls or puppets, the smell of substances is associated to fun.<sup>4</sup> Recently I read a farewell letter written by some drug dealers to Rocky, a police dog who died in Vicenza, Italy:

*"We're criminals, we are drug dealers but we have feelings too, a dog is not to blame and what happened is sad for us. Maybe you thought we would have celebrated with a bottle of wine but we didn't. Bye officers, happy hunting. Bye Rocky."*

Once I had a slice of pizza in my hands, Marco approached me and leaned his snout on my legs, I noticed that his eyes were all black and very sweet, my impulse was to offer him a piece of pizza but he refused with a big bark. If Marco had the chance to choose, I'm sure he would have chosen my pizza. Marco is a Dutch Shepherd and every time I cross the border I can't wait to meet him, one day I would love to give him a pet.





Lamb feeding bucket, designed with rubber nipples giving lambs comfortable and natural mother-like feeling





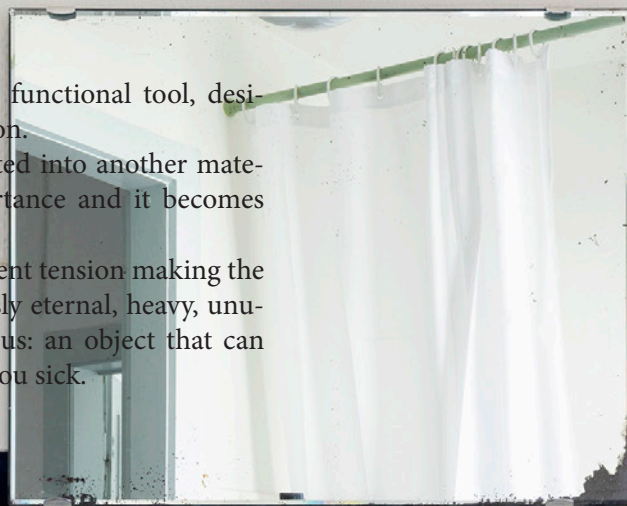
UNTITLED (THE TOOTHBRUSH)

Lead  
18,50x0,50 cm  
2019

A toothbrush is a functional tool, designed for its function.

The object translated into another material gathers importance and it becomes unique.

Lead creates a violent tension making the toothbrush uselessly eternal, heavy, unusable and poisonous: an object that can potentially make you sick.



Installation view, Palazzina#9, Basel, CH  
Photo: Guadalupe Ruiz



