

“Contagio – Humans against viruses”: the long fight against infectious diseases

On February 2 and 3 2021 the Congress was held in LIVE STREAMING from Facebook and Youtube “Contagio – Humans against viruses”, promoted in collaboration with the Presidency of the Council of the Municipality of Milan and born in 2018 from an idea of the Expert of the Culture Commission and of the Environment Commission of Municipality 1 **arch. Natasha Calandrino Van Kleef** on the basis of the then recent EU Council Recommendation on strengthening cooperation between Member States against preventable diseases with monitoring and sharing the objectives stated in the document of the European Action Plan on prevention (2015-2020), approved by the 65th World Health Assembly with resolution WHA65.17.

Telling the colossal struggle of humanity against **infectious diseases** and promoting the spread of a culture of respect for ecosystems was the main goal of “Contagio – Humans against viruses”: the themes, more and less known, but certainly the most relevant that hover around and within the **pandemic** to respond to the need for scientific disclosure, analyzing the facts in the light of virology, immunology, the medical clinic and new application techniques in the fight against pathogens.

The Congress, which should have taken place in the Sala Alessi of Palazzo Marino, was presented by **Ginevra Trinchieri**, associate astronomer of INAF (National Institute of Astrophysics) at the Astronomical Observatory of Brera in Milan, on the first day, and by **Alessandro Cecchi Paone**, scientific popularizer, in the second.

To accompany the spectators, distinguished academic speakers and men of culture in order to best transpose the language of science for the general public, bringing complex themes and the subject of international research into everyday life.

Opening both days of the Congress was the introduction of **Beatrice Uguccione**, Vice President of the City Council of Milan, who immediately supported and promoted the project. Opening day of the first day: the presentation, from Venice, of the unpublished work *Fuga dal Coronavirus* in glass presented by the artist Lucio Bubacco and by the curator and art critic Jean Blanchaert, to follow the first speech by Giovanni Pareschi, Research Director INAF (National Institute of Astrophysics), focused on the attention to the use of new technological applications which contribute to the fight against pathogens.

The intervention of Dr. Elisa Vicenzi, Head of the Viral Pathogenesis and Biosecurity Unit of the IRCCS San Raffaele Hospital, an excellent virologist who began her studies on **virus dell’HIV**, gave a detailed overview of the evolution of the virus, from its birth to today, **Massimo Galli**, Full Professor of Infectious Diseases, University of Milan, Director of Infectious Diseases III, ASST Fatebenefratelli Sacco, addressed his speech “Clinical aspects of the COVID-19 disease” with quantitative and qualitative analyzes.

At the end of the first day the **Prof Fabrizio Pregliasco**, Health Director of the IRCCS Galeazzi Orthopedic Institute of Milan, with “Perspectives for prevention”.

The second day opens the story, full of courage and intuition of **Dott.ssa Annalisa Malara**, Anesthetist at Codogno Hospital, who first diagnosed the virus in patient 1, Matti Maestri di Codogno, violating the protocols.

Current affairs and health were addressed by Dr. Elena Bottinelli, CEO of IRCCS San Raffaele Hospital and IRCCS Galeazzi in Milan, who discussed the issue of **telemedicine**. In addition to breaking down the barriers of distance and allowing the patient to be followed from home, it also gives great opportunities from the point of view of prevention and monitoring.

Ultraviolet vs SARS-COV-2: the UVs have a germicidal power, that is, they are able to inhibit, inactivate pathogens including bacteria, viruses, parasites. The mechanism of action is fundamentally based on the absorption of UV rays at the level above all of the pathogen genome, which means DNA or RNA. Science and technology are addressed by Prof. Mara Biasin, University of Milan Department of Biomedical and Clinical Sciences L. Sacco, and by, Dr. Giorgia Sironi, Italian National Institute for Astrophysics (INAF) Brera Astronomical Observatory.

At the conclusion of the Congress, the speech of **Dr. Massimo Polidoro**, Italian journalist, writer and science writer, national secretary of CICAP, who has dealt with conspiracy theories and fake news from the beginning of history to today, with interventions by the moderator **Alessandro Cecchi Paone**.

