Animals Inside (Geneva, 17 Nov 25)

HEAD – Genève, Geneva, Switzerland, Nov 17, 2025
Deadline: Sep 15, 2025

Alexandra Miskufova

Animals Inside: A History of Objects and Furniture for Pets in Domestic Interiors.

The Master of Arts in Interior Architecture (MAIA) at HEAD – Genève studies the role of interior spaces in shaping contemporaneity, paying particular attention to human–non-human entanglements. This includes the dynamic relationships between humans and animals within the domestic sphere — a relationship that has transformed radically across time and geography.

This conference invites designers, architects, historians, researchers, artists, and theorists to explore the history of objects and furniture designed for pets in domestic interiors, from antiquity to today. We aim to investigate when and how animals entered the home, and more crucially, when their presence began to transform its design through specific furniture and objects created for their use.

From the ornately crafted birdcages of imperial courts to Victorian aquariums, and from today's wall-mounted cat gyms to AI-powered talking buttons for dogs — these objects offer a unique lens through which to examine changes in domestic space, material culture, design, and our understanding of interspecies cohabitation.

Organized by: MAIA, Master of Arts in Interior Architecture, HEAD – Genève (HES-SO)
Scientific Committee: Javier Fernández Contreras, Youri Kravtchenko
Deadline for Submissions: 15 September 2025
Conference Date: 17 November 2025
Location: HEAD – Genève, Avenue de Châtelaine 7; 1203 Geneva

We welcome contributions that:
• Offer a 30-minute presentation based on original research or practice-based investigation.
• Clearly specify the geographic and historical context of the case study.
• Examine any type of non-human animal (birds, dogs, cats, fish, reptiles, etc.).
• Investigate any historical period, from ancient civilizations to contemporary design.
• Address a range of objects and furnishings, such as:
- Aquariums, terrariums, bird cages
- Pet beds, perches, feeders
- Cat trees, wall gyms, litter furniture
- Wearables, communication devices, or smart pet furnishings

Practical Information

• Proposal Submission Deadline: 15 September 2025
• Notification of Acceptance: by 25 September 2025
• Honorarium and travelling allowances: covered by individual contributors

Submission Guidelines
Please submit your proposal including:
• Title of your presentation
• Abstract (300–500 words)
• Biographical Note (150 words)
• Affiliation and contact details

Send your submission to:
javier.fernandez-contreras@hesge.ch; youri.kravtchenko@hesge.ch

For further information or inquiries, please contact:
Javier Fernández Contreras, Youri Kravtchenko
HEAD – Genève (HES-SO)

Reference:

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