



Memorabili Armonie

Music therapy at the museum

for people with dementia and their caregivers

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INTRODUCTION

Memorabili Armonie ("memorable harmonies") is a **social inclusion project** dedicated to **people with dementia and their family caregivers**, promoted in Trieste (Italy) by CasaViola - de Banfield Association, with the support of the Directorate of Municipal Museums of Trieste and the contribution of the Rotary Club Trieste Nord. The music therapy project was conceived and managed by APS Aulòs.

THE PROJECT

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|--------------------|---|
| WHAT | A pilot project of a special guided tour led by music therapists, where the museum turned into a therapeutic setting and the therapy became a way to experience a cultural place (otherwise inaccessible) |
| WHERE | «Carl Schmid» Theatre Museum - Trieste, Italy |
| WHO | 12 dyads = 12 people with dementia & 12 caregivers 2 music therapists / 2 musicians with music therapy training + 2 psychologists + museum curator |
| HOW | 60 min. tour / 2-3 dyads at a time |
| WHEN | 5 tours from May to November 2021 |
| WHY | Music therapy may have effects on cognitive functions, emotions, behavioural and psychological symptoms of people with dementia (Livingstone et al. 2014; Pongan et al. 2017; Ray et al. 2018; van der Steen et al. 2018; Liu et al. 2021; Soufineyestani et al. 2021). The quality of the relationship between people with dementia and their caregiver is an important factor influencing their wellbeing and quality of life. There is, therefore, the need to support the dyadic relationship (Clair 2002; Davidson&Fedele 2011; Spruytte et al. 2002; Van der Steen et al. 2018) and music therapy can have a role in this (Tamplin et al. 2018; Van der Steen et al. 2018; Clark et al. 2021; Baker et al. 2022). |
| ORIGINALITY | The museum becomes a setting, a place of welcome, meeting, and musical exchange. The aim of the music therapy session plays a transformative role in the museum enjoyment quality. |

OBJECTIVES

PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA

To experience:

- socialization / relations
- pleasant and gratifying situations
- an aesthetically satisfying experience
- communication through sound/musical contact / sound sharing
- self-expression

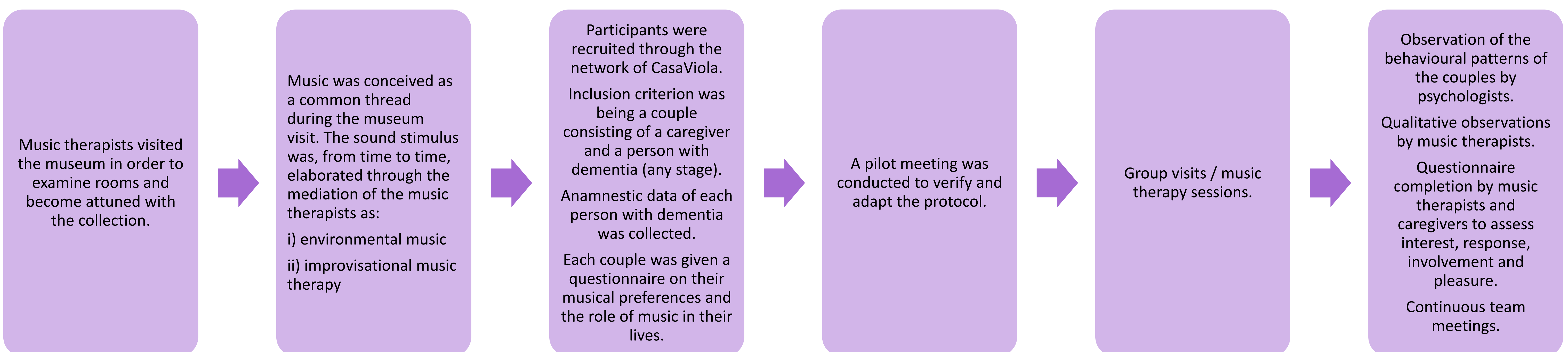
FAMILY CAREGIVERS

- Same as above +
- To experience a new point of view in communicating and engaging with their assisted

DYADS

- To experience a social moment together
- To rediscover peaceful moments in relationships

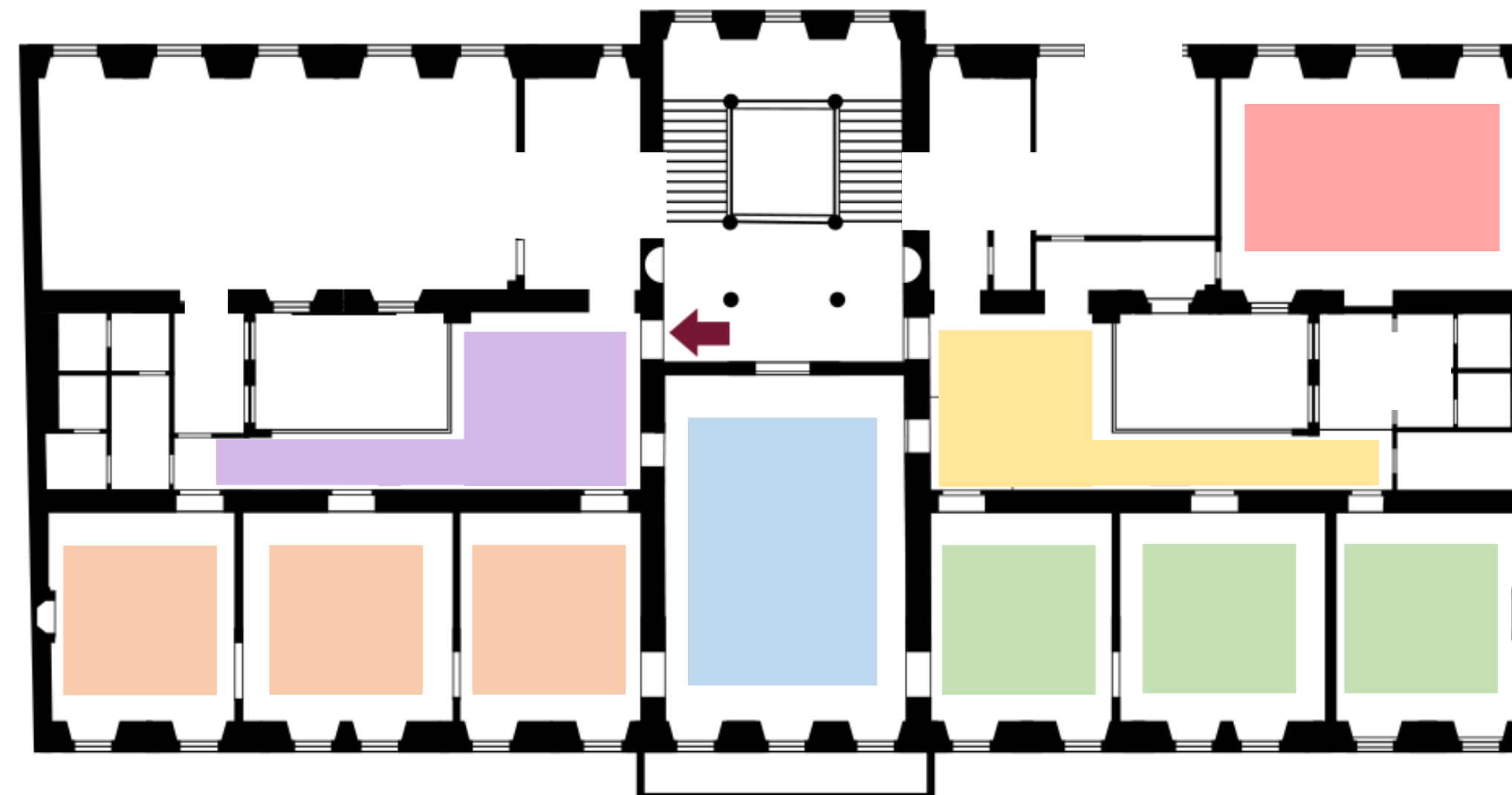
METHODS



THE TOUR

1. WELCOME

Greetings from the curator and brief historical presentation of the museum. Music therapists present the programme and invite the participants to begin the tour through the museum rooms.
KEYWORDS: bewilderment, fear, dependence on caregiver.
Caregiver: embarrassment, worry, uncertainty.
TIMING: 5 min.



MUSIC THERAPY EMERGENCY ROOM

A music therapy setting and a corner for the psychologists is set up in a room, separate from the visitation pathway, in order to accommodate any person who needs to disengage from the group.

5. LEAVE TAKING

Chat and greetings.
KEYWORDS: (all) happiness, gratitude, satisfaction, activation.
TIMING: not determined

2. THE MUSICAL PROMENADE

Visit of the first 3 rooms of the museum (antique musical instruments and collections of theatrical costumes from the 19th and 20th centuries). Environmental music. Communication with the music therapists (initial connection; introduction to the collection; conversation about music).
KEYWORDS: anxiety, impatience, movement difficulties, anchoring to caregiver, request to return home.
Caregiver: tension, worry, oppression.
TIMING: 5 min.

3. THE MUSIC THERAPY SESSION

2 musicians welcome the participants with meaningful music performed on the piano and/or guitar. The visit turns here into a music therapy group session, and structured music is transformed in free improvisation with the facilitation of the music therapists. Easy-to-use musical instruments are set up in the room. Singing and body movement play a central role.
KEYWORDS: progressive relaxation, attention to music and songs, reminiscences, curiosity, participation, adherence to the here and now, fun.
Caregiver: same as above + surprise, fun.
TIMING: 40 min.

4. THE SECOND MUSICAL PROMENADE

Visit of the last 3 rooms (instruments of the orchestra, European ethnic instruments, non-European instruments). No music, as the sound of the improvisation still echoes.
KEYWORDS: improvement in speech, walking, reminiscence of memories related to music, broader and more fluent communication with both music therapists and caregiver, independence.
Caregiver: relaxation, loosened hold on the assisted.
TIMING: 10 min.

RESULTS

In addition to the numerous positive feedbacks from the participants, we generically recorded:

PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA

- More fluent and participative speech / Sharing of reminiscences
- Growing participation and interest in the sound/musical experience
- Exploration, also shared, of instrumentation
- Promoted wellbeing (posture, facial expression, relaxation)
- Greater willingness to experience / Increased interest in visiting the museum in the last rooms

FAMILY CAREGIVERS

- Improved communication with the cared ones
- Increased wellbeing / Sensible stress relief
- Satisfaction from participating in a social occasion / cultural event

DYADS

- Improved interpersonal non-verbal and verbal communication
- Greater relaxation in the relationship
- Discovery of unusual modes of communication
- Pleasure in participating together in a social occasion / cultural event

FUTURE PERSPECTIVES

Due to the positive results and feedbacks, the project is repropounded in extended form, to gain also a deeper and more systematic understanding of the impact of this intervention on the target population. To this end, assessment and self-assessment tools are systematically introduced.

In the future, it is intended to replicate the project in other museums in the region.

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REFERENCES & MEDIA



APS Aulòs

creates and manages music therapy projects, supports the continuing education of music therapists and promotes the dissemination and knowledge of music therapy.