

### **The story of the Project**

In the heart of the old town of Genova, in the early 50's, there was a small music shop. The shop was located in via del Campo, a beautiful old street, full of historic buildings, but just beside the harbour. At that time the whole area was much more famous for prostitution and illegal activities, than for its architectural beauty. During the 50's some marines were still living and travelling through Genova, having been stationed there during the second world war. Thanks to them the shop started to sell music from foreign countries that inspired generations of local musicians who, for the first time, were able to get songs in English and French.

Via del Campo became very well known in Italy in the 60ies, because of a song by Fabrizio De André, the most famous italian *cantautore* (singer-songwriter), born in Genova in 1940. In his song, Via del Campo, Fabrizio De Andre told the story of a prostitute working there. As in many of his songs he painted a picture of the mysterious human richness of the old downtown, populated by marginalized and rebellious people, gypsies, prostitutes and knaves.

Artistically active for almost 40 years and writer of 30 studio albums, he contributed to keeping alive the forgotten and neglected languages of Italy, like Genovese, and Sardinian. As a musician, Fabrizio De André experimented with many different genres. As a writer De Andre was mainly recognised as a poet. And using poetry, he attacked the Catholic Church hierarchy and the bourgeois morality for their hypocrisies in his songs. As the last line of the song Via del Campo says "Nothing arises from the diamonds, the flowers arise from the dung."

De Andre was not the only singer-songwriter from Genova to become very famous throughout Italy. In the late 60's and early 70's the *cantautori* was first recognized as a national musical phenomenon. Most of them were influenced by the "beat" generation and famous songwriters like Bob Dylan and Leonard Cohen, but also by the French troubadour Georges Brassens. Their music was lyrically very strong and politics shaped some of their works. Artists like Lucio Battisti, Francesco Guccini, Roberto Vecchioni, Lucio Dalla, Francesco De Gregori, Franco Battiato, Ivan Graziani have been considered *cantautori*.

Umberto Bindi, Bruno Lauzi, Gino Paoli, Luigi Tenco and Ivano Fossati, just like Fabrizio De André and almost at the same time, started their career as *cantautori* in Genova, leading to the term, la "scuola genovese dei cantautori" (Genoa singer-songwriters school). Most of them, as teenagers, used to go to the old music shop in Via del Campo, to find the music from foreign countries they couldn't find easily at that time. Some years later, Mr. Tassio, the new owner of the music shop in

Via del Campo, became a great fan of Fabrizio De André and a passionate collector. He had been collecting every sort of things: LPs, pictures, articles, photos, letters, concert tickets and so on. After De André's death in 1999, the shop became the destination for the spontaneous pilgrimage of thousands of fans.

In 2001 Mr Tassio, together with a group of entrepreneurs from Via del Campo, and helped by donations from hundreds of citizens and fans from everywhere, bought the last guitar belonging to Fabrizio De André, an Esteve 1997. The guitar, auctioned for a charity for almost 100.000 euros, has since become the showpiece of the shop collection. Buying and displaying the last De André guitar the small music shop became famous all over Italy and attracted more and more visitors. Especially after his death, Fabrizio De André became a kind of myth in Italy and even more so in Genova. More than 10,000 people attended his funeral. Squares, streets, schools, libraries have been dedicated to him all over Italy and the exhibition dedicated to his life and music in 2009 got more than 150.000 paying visitors just in Genova.

But he also got international awards: the musician David Byrne, deeply impressed and influenced by his album *Creuza de ma* ("Mule Track by the Sea", 1984), considered that so songs inspired by Mediterranean culture a kind of pre-dated of the World Music boom. The same happened to the German film maker Wim Wenders who included one of De André's songs in his film "Shooting Palermo" and declared in video interview that Fabrizio De André is one his most favourite artists.

In many songs De André talked about Genova and the people from the hidden city. He used the dialect from his town as a metaphoric language, challenging globalizing power and as a way to remind people of the Arabic roots of Mediterranean culture. An Italian journalist wrote, "Coming from a port like Genoa, De André knew all about different types coming together, while he himself was a migrant within the worlds of literature and music," and "on his journey he entered the cultural DNA of Italy."

The roots of his music in the history of the old town became more evident, the link between the poetry in his songs and adoration by the people. In 2010 the Genova Municipality, also realising the amazing cultural value, not only of De André's Music but of all the members of the *scuola genovese*, decided to give the *cantautori* a new home, creating a place in the heart of the old town to promote their work and to support the new generations of local artists. The place elected was the music shop in Via del Campo. Genova Municipality bought the whole collection in it. At that time was starting in via del Campo a wider regeneration of the nearby "Ghetto" area and investment in a public cultural attraction was seen as complementing this renaissance.

## **Viadelcampo29rosso today**

To realise the dream of the museum of the Cantautori, the Municipality of Genova launched a project competition, including the architectural design. A consortium of 3 organizations called ViaDELCAMPO29ROSSO got the highest score and on the 25<sup>th</sup> february 2012, the dream of the municipality, all the De Andre lovers and the scuola genovese fans, became true. Where the old Music shop had been active for so many years, a new beautiful shop museum called Viadelcampo 29 rosso opened.

Via del Campo 29 rosso fulfils many roles. It is a museum and a shop, a tourist attraction and a leisure centre for the community. As a musical workshop, it is supporting new cantautori and new bands from Genova or related to the Cantautori tradition to perform and become famous. As a tourist point of interest Via del Campo 29 rosso offers visitors the chance to discover the town of Genova through singer-songwriter lyrics and melodies.

And at the same time, working with many other Institutions and organizations, there is the main aim to promote the life and works of De Andre and the Scuola Genovese among generations, throughout Italy, and possibly internationally.

Via del Campo 29 rosso is run by a social consortium comprising:

### **Solidarieta e Lavoro**

a large and innovative social enterprise that offers advanced tourism services, whilst providing job opportunities to marginalised people

### **ETT**

a very interesting ICT international enterprise, specialised in designing and developing new technology solutions for Heritage and Tourism. They created the multimedia and interactive interpretation within the shop.

### **Sistema Museo**

a cooperative leader in Museums and Expositions, Book Shop design and management in Italy: They take care of the commercial side of Viadelcampo29ROSSO including merchandising, music, books and so on.

The richness of this cultural offer is at the heart of the most important aim of the whole project. It started the rehabilitation and major revitalisation of a beautiful but forgotten area in the heart the old town, making it the reference point for music, culture and tourism.

The shop museum itself is based in one of the most beautiful buildings of the street, part of the Rolli system, a kind of network of royal residences recognised by Unesco as part of town's World Heritage status.