



Informaturismo

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From 9 am to 1 pm and from 3 pm to 7 pm

**COMUNE DI CORREGGIO**

Assessorato Promozione del Territorio



**Centro di Documentazione  
"Pier Vittorio Tondelli"**

Giulio Einaudi Public Library  
Palazzo Dei Principi  
Corso Cavour, 7

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**Tondelli's writings include:**

**Four novels**

(*Altri libertini*, 1980 - *Pao Pao*, 1982 - *Rimini*, 1985 - *Camere separate*, 1989)

**A stageplay**

(*Dinner Party*, 1984/86)

**A book of hours**

(*Biglietti agli amici*, 1986)

**Two complete chronicles of the 1980s**

(*Un weekend postmoderno*, 1990 - *L'abbandono*, 1993)

**From 1985 to 1990 he promoted and edited the "Under 25" Project**

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Stampa NUOVA GRAFICA Carpi (MO)

## 6. Palazzo Principi

*A bit of everything happened in that room full of orange spotlights and purple lampshades and every hippy that passed this way found hospitality amongst its books. Amongst the 'Oscar Mondadori's lying here and there, surrounded by piles of 'Arte Rizzoli' Classics, in between the Psychology and Psychoanalysis series by 'Feltrinelli' with their off-white covers, and the Critical Studies series by 'Einaudi', and the beat up 'Marsilio's and 'Savelli's lined up next to the 'Edizioni Mediterranee's and the 'Biblioteca Blu's and the 'Centopagine's and the rare 'Squilibri's, which were dangerously close to the 'Adelphi's and the 'Guanda's, which were flirting with the alcoholic beverages.*

In 1978 the Correggese group, *Simposio Differante*, was actively experimenting in art, poetry and music. The *Ambiguazioni* Festival, a national event of poetry and performance took



place in Correggio that year. As part of it, Tondelli performed a series of candle-lit readings in the courtyard of Palazzo dei Principi on 31 July. The very same Palazzo dei Principi built by a woman in 1507, which was quite unusual for that period. She was Francesca di Brandeburgo, the widow of Count Borso Da Correggio. Now, along with the library and museum, it also houses the memory of Tondelli in a permanent Documentation Centre and during the *Giornate Tondelliane* held every December.

## 7. San Quirino

*Inside the church, between two aisles packed with people and the smell of incense and candlewax, violins accompany the entrance of the catafalque [...]. People are crowding on to the steps. At a precise moment in the music the priests reach the statue, kneel down and kiss it, thus initiating the ritual that will conclude the Good Friday celebration.*

The Basilica of San Quirino is the backdrop for the Good Friday Procession in *Camere Separate*. Within it are the relics, amongst others, of the martyred bishop for whom the church is named. Next door is the parish, a place of mimeographs and meetings, of a staging of the Little Prince, of departures for alpine summer camps in Val di Fassa, Valbadia and Auronzo, in those



formative years of the oratory. Many happy memories.

## 8. Canolo

*He does not want to change, he just wants to let go and, in this way, better define his own moment in his own eyes. As always, when a cycle closes, everything falls into place. When the time is ripe, the chords and the harmonies are so bittersweet that they bring you to your knees.*



Canolo, the countryside of Correggio, Emilia, early 1900s. Pier Vittorio Tondelli died on 16 December 1991 and is buried here in quietude.

## 9. His Town

*No matter how much he has travelled the world, no matter how many places he has lived in, or will live in across the length*

*and breadth of Europe, his whole life will be contained in this walk that leads from his birthplace to the graveyard.*



Since Tondelli's death, the city of Correggio has shown a growing appreciation of both him and his work. Tondelli himself contributed to this with his writings and his obstinate belief that, regardless of everything, he would never leave his "Correggese womb".

Excerpts are cited from the following works by Pier Vittorio Tondelli:

1. *Camere separate*; 2-3-4. *Un weekend postmoderno*; 5. *L'abbandono*; 6. *Altri libertini*;
7. *Camere separate*; 8. *L'abbandono*; 9. *Camere separate*



**COMUNE DI CORREGGIO**



## 1. Piazzale Tondelli

A small town in the lower Po valley. It has colonnades, cobblestones on the main thoroughfare, a church consecrated to the town's patron saint, a Renaissance palace, towers and belfries, a castle, an old quarter with 19th century houses, and one or two 18th century mansions. The fabric of the town is still intact, gathered around the old city wall now in ruins. Pier Vittorio Tondelli was born here on 14 September 1955, in a house that no longer exists - replaced by an apartment building - beside the square that bears



his name and the "small devotional church" mentioned in *Camere separate*. Several years later, he and his family moved to the "skyscraper" across the street from his birth house. Tondelli was born and lived in the city centre - which was central but not exactly the heart of the city, history and discretion at the same time - near the square, Piazzale Carducci, from where the coaches came and went years ago, right beside the road that leads to the nearby town of Carpi.

## 2. Corso Mazzini

In Correggio, about fifteen kids took it upon themselves to celebrate Carnival without warning anyone, without any funding, without putting up any street posters or even spreading the word around town. No radio stations were informed, no press releases were sent. So, one Saturday afternoon, into the main square came a wagon pulled by a poor donkey, along with some strange but recognisable people, two muddy geese on leashes, and some hens rummaging through the confetti and escaping from the broken ranks of the procession while being chased by mean children cackling after them.

Oh yes, Correggio. Here it is. Your own street dedicated to the valiant



Mazzini. The theatre of many heroic and ridiculous gestures on the part of your people. Take a good look at it. It has everything that a self-respecting street should have including a few colonnades, a clock and a war monument. And it curves ever so slightly to the left, so on foggy days, you never know who is going who pop out down at the other end.

## 3. Via Borgovecchio

And of course Lucio Battisti. The first time that I ever hugged a girl was on one of those afternoons while listening to his song "Mi ritorni in mente". A masterpiece by an idol that all the girls were crazy about. I liked him not as a person but for his music, for his happy, sighing love themes, for his modern perdition, for his rhythm, and even for his, shall we say, poetry.

Apartments, rented rooms in Via Borgovecchio. A place to spend the afternoons with friends at that moment just before the seventies went over the hill. A place to talk about all kinds of fantastic things, about literature, about poetry, about music and about cinema. In



## 4. Secondary School

I have very superficial memories of the final exams I wrote at Rinaldo Corso Secondary School in Correggio in July of 1974 [...]. Now, years afterwards, it is strange that of those exams, and the years of my degree that followed, I only remember a few details and have no emotional attachment or any memory of how I used to feel. This is strange because, while I sometimes see a drill ground in my dreams and hear a menacing voice call my name at roll call or to report, which still disturbs and distresses me, I never go back to the classrooms of my youth in my sleep.

Between 1969 and 1974, Tondelli attended "Rinaldo Corso" Secondary School (at that time hosted in the boarding school of the same name) and participated in the catholic youth community. Everyone called him Vicky and that is how he signed his first



writings and his stage adaptation of the *Little Prince* by Antoine De Saint-Exupery, which was performed in Correggio.

## 5. Via Montepegni

It was the early eighties and young people had started hanging out in pubs [...]. Many of the old taverns we frequented in the seventies - which we had fervently sought out throughout the countryside while whispering precious clues to each other as if we were on a treasure hunt - just don't exist anymore. True, the wine we drank there wasn't exactly of the highest quality. But sometimes, if we insisted, we would get one of those famous bottles made by a neighbouring farmer. The important thing was to be present when the older generation handed down their experiences to the younger over hastily poured glasses of wine. Such occasions usually finished, after the card games, with memories of the war and the resistance, with stories



of a more rural or poorer Italy that we, the baby boomers, had never seen. We would listen to those stories as if they came from another galaxy.

Aroldo's tavern in Via Montepegni was

actually not more nor less than just that. A rite of passage, a place where, through all the smoke, one could listen to stories, improvise serious discussions, or live it up with the enthusiastic participation

of the regulars and their sayings. *Fra i quali* - a typical refrain of one of Aroldo's customers that means "amongst which" - actually became the name of a private beer house in Via Del Correggio. For five



years in the early eighties, it was a place of art and activity run by friends and volunteers. At that time, Tondelli had already moved out of town but whenever he came back to visit, he would make

his presence known there. So, ladies and gentlemen, it must be said that there was a time, not too long ago, when Correggio had about thirty taverns, so many that the question of *gir ed Pirùl* came up quite often.

*Fèr al gir ed Pirùl* literally meant "go round to Piero's" in dialect, but what it really meant was "to get stinking drunk". *Pirùl* was actually Piero Ferrari, who had a tavern near the Church of St. Francis. Located in the nearby square, Piazza Padella, were the taverns of Neina and Concetta and the "go round" was

the itinerary of the merrymakers as they passed from one to the other.