



TEATRO SOCIALE (MUNICIPAL THEATRE)

You can find this point of interest in Canzo - Path 1 - Stage 1

INFORMATION

Location: the Teatro Sociale (Municipal Theatre) of Canzo looks onto Via Volta, where the main entrance once was before being moved to Piazza Garibaldi for safety reasons.

Paving: Piazza Garibaldi and its pavement are asphalted; the path giving access to the theatre is made of concrete slabs.

Architectural barriers: in order to enter the path giving access to the Theatre one must use the pavement of Piazza Garibaldi. There is a small threshold just before the entrance.

Access: access to the Theatre is by the entrance on the right (when looking at the façade), protected by vaulted roof; it is preceded by a path, limited by a kerb on the left (and partially on the right), which leads from the pavement of Piazza Garibaldi. The Theatre remains closed, except for shows or other cultural events.

Services: free and paid parking available in the area; automated teller machines along Via Mazzini; Chemist in Via Mazzini; Municipal Police station in Canzo's "LeNord" Railway Station square.

Leisure and food: bars and restaurants in the area; "Barni" public park in the immediate surroundings.

DESCRIPTION

(Silvia Fasana)

The Teatro Sociale (Municipal Theatre) of Canzo is an elegant neoclassical building that overlooks Via Volta. The façade has two orders, surmounted by a tympanum with a strongly evident cornice in-between; the lower order is decorated with stone slabs that simulate a portico with three supporting arches, and has two side windows and a front door, flanked by two hanging lanterns. The composition of the building is quite harmonious in its simplicity, and was designed by the Milanese architect Gaetano Besia at the request of a group of people – either belonging to wealthy local families or holidaymakers from Milan – who founded the "Società del Teatro di Canzo" (*Society for the Theatre of Canzo*) in April 1828. Painter Orazio Tessa from Milan was called to fresco the interior, while the scenographer of Milan's Teatro alla Scala took care of the stage design.

Just a year and a half later, on 18th October 1829, the theatre was inaugurated with the Italian version of *Le faux Bonhomme* (*The false good-natured man*) by Alexandre Duval, staged by the Compagnia dei Filodrammatici (*Company of Amateur Actors*) of Milan.

In the course of its long history, the theatre hosted performances of plays and operas, especially around the mid-nineteenth century; a few parties and charity events were held there, too. At the end of the century some of the theatre rooms were used for the School of Drawing and evening classes promoted by the Società Operaia di Mutuo Soccorso (*Workers' Mutual Aid Association*) of Canzo.

In the thirties and forties of the twentieth century the building was also used for film screenings; when the war ended the property was transferred to the Municipality, which continued to use it as a cinema and occasionally as a theatre. In the mid-80s the building underwent complete restoration; since its second inauguration in 1990, the theatre has presented notable music and prose seasons, and has become an important cultural landmark for the area.