

# DISCOVERING JEP GAMBARDELLA'S PLACE

Many of us have been wondering how it is that Jep Gambardella, a failed writer, has one of the most exclusive balconies in Rome. Poetic licence, allowing Sorrentino to observe the city from a decidedly original viewpoint. Until 1870, this was one of the “greenest” parts of Rome. Here, in this part of the Colle Celio, or Caelian Hill, between the Monastero dei SS. Quattro Coronati (the religious house of the Four Crowned Martyrs) and the Basilica of San Clemente, there used to be a number of famous Roman vineyards, just a stone’s throw from the busy city centre. This haven of peace, a retreat, disappeared when the State of Italy decided to move its capital to Rome after 1870. Urban development occurred on a particularly grand scale, lasting until the 1960s. Among the first buildings to be built next to the Colosseum, the building in the square at no. 9 reflects a nineteenth-century taste for the neo-classical style which survived in Rome into the first decades of the twentieth century. Adorned with high ashlar work and six semi-columns resting against the wall, the recently repainted facade glows ochre-red in the sunset.

On the balcony where the dinner parties and the “train” dances organised by Jep Gambardella take place, we find a sort of covered terrace with a gable and large window with view. From the penthouse, now privately owned, the view embraces the Colosseum and the garden of the Passionists, which rests on the remains of the Temple of Divus Claudius, surmounting the Colle Celio.

Piazza del Colosseo, 9  
Not open to the public

