

DISCOVERING CARACALLA'S BATHS

Already in the third century, when they were built, Caracalla's Baths could host up to 8,000 people per day. We should therefore not be surprised at the scale of this work. Nowadays, as we look at the bare walls we can only guess at the sumptuous adornments of this structure and how well organised it all was. Geometrical mosaics adorned the floors; marine motifs adorned the ceilings and marble works; and large statues were placed on the imposing walls. Very little is left of these adornments. A few fragments of mosaic are to be found in the Palestra Orientale, which Sorrentino chose as the location for the scene of the disappearance of the giraffe. Within this space - once frequented by athletes, senators and visitors from all parts of the world, who came to bathe, train or just to chat - Gambardella seems lost and surprised. Perhaps it is no coincidence that this location was also used in the film "La Dolce Vita", and that, for many years it has hosted the summer season of the Teatro dell'Opera. Sorrentino presents the Baths as a place where dreams may come true. For a brief few minutes, he ignores the place's remarkable historical identity.

For visitors

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