

Marcellus Theatre in Rome

In ancient Rome, Emperor Augustus had a theatre built which he dedicated to his deceased nephew Marcellus. Marcellus was actually intended to be Augustus' heir to the throne, but died at the age of 19. The theatre could seat 10,000 to 15,000 spectators and was built around 83 years before the Colosseum. The building still stands today on the Field of Mars between the Tiber and the Capitol. Fragments of the theatre are still clearly visible in the façade.

The theatre fell into disrepair at the end of the 4th century. Like many other ancient buildings in Rome, it was used as a quarry. The remaining parts were converted into living quarters. In the 12th century, the Roman noble family Fabii expanded the Marcellus Theatre into a fortress, which was taken over by the Savelli family in the 14th century. The arcades of the two lower storeys were converted into residential and business premises.

A Renaissance-style palazzo was built on the foundations of the theatre in the 16th century. This state has been preserved to this day. Between 1926 and 1932, part of the façade of the old theatre was uncovered again.