

a move which attracted hysterical applause. Despite the fact that Jep belongs in the said collective, he is probably the only one with enough self-awareness to escape its harmful effects. While the story line is funny and original, *The Grand Beauty* possesses a prominent air of spirituality. This is seen in the way there is an elaborate fear of what lies beyond the current life, while at the same time, there is greatly desperate yearning for a return to youth. Jep experiences brief flashbacks of his first sexual encounter with Elisa, a factor which would make a younger person think about what they will feel at Jep's age, and the eagerness for the vibrant moments again. As he hops from one elegant party to another and from one woman to the next, Jep has these flashbacks of his youth particularly one love affair that has been holding the key to his inner melancholy. The big question though is, does it really? Sorrentino likes to code some particularly crucial back-story moments in his films, with *The Great Beauty* being no exception. The meanings of these moments are however not expounded on by the director. All in all, they appear as passages of the characters; paths not taken or distant memories of the people that they once were.

