

Acropolis Museum

A highlights report
June 2010 - May 2011

year two

President's message

The Museum celebrates the close of its second year of operation at the same time as Greece faces a crisis of new proportions in its economic, political and social life. Despite this, between June 2010 and May 2011 more than one million and three hundred thousand Greek and foreign visitors passed through the Museum's doors. However developments in the broader environment did not leave the Museum untouched and visitor numbers were reduced in relation to the first year of operation. On the other hand, the Museum began to establish real friends, visitors that come frequently, and are developing a close relationship with the Museum and its exhibits. In part due to the crisis, the Museum has also intensified its efforts to play a positive role and to provide much needed relief from the pressures of daily life for the local community. Having already placed the visitor at center stage, the Museum has attempted to offer more quality services using a variety of approaches.

Ticket prices were maintained at an exceptionally low level and the Museum was generous in its response to requests for free entry in order to enable as many people as possible to visit. From October 2010 the Museum took over the management of the Museum shops and in spite of the extreme constraints of the legal environment, in which the public sector operates, was able to offer visitors quality products associated with the Museum's collections and its activities. From the autumn of 2010 the Museum undertook

management of the restaurant and café with daily monitoring of its operations. All these services are considered part of the Museum and need to operate in accord with its policies and practices.

The exhibition areas of the Museum were considerably improved. New exhibits, improvements in the presentation of exhibits in relation to natural lighting, reorganization of the layout of elements of the exhibition, the remounting of sculptures, are all but a few of the changes in the galleries of the Museum. The conservators of the Museum confidently adopted new technologies for all these initiatives with success. The Museum also commenced a project replacing and improving the text labels and panels of the exhibition. And finally, a temporary exhibition focusing on the Athenian politician that envisioned and implemented the construction program of the classical Acropolis, "Pericles Son of Xanthippos", provided visitors with the historical context for better understanding the Parthenon sculptures.

Since opening its doors in the summer of 2009 the Museum has overcome countless difficulties while still attempting to implement a range of activities that support the growth of a Museum culture into which it welcomes all its visitors. The Museum cooperated with the City of Athens and the Greek Choreographers. Their free performances in the Museum's courtyard were embraced by the public with enthusiasm.



Productive cooperation with the two key bodies managing the Acropolis, the First Ephorate of the Acropolis and the Acropolis Restoration Service, also continued.

I thank the officials of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism for their valued support, the Board of Directors of the Museum and the Organization for the Construction of the Acropolis Museum, my team of close coworkers and all the staff that demonstrate their commitment to the work of the Museum on a daily basis.

Dimitrios Pandermalis
*President of the Board of Directors,
Acropolis Museum*



Our visitors

Without visitors a Museum is a valuable storeroom. Our goal is to provide access to a quality experience within the Museum so that people wish to come back. Over time we aim that visitors build a relationship with the Museum - indeed a fondness for a stimulating, friendly and pleasant environment that provides an incentive for returning again and again.

The Museum places considerable emphasis on the collection of data to measure its performance and for planning purposes and aims to increasingly improve the reliability and validity of its data.

Systematic research with visitors in the coming years will provide us more information on the make-up of existing visitors and how often they return to the Museum – and a better appreciation of visitor experiences and expectations.

Museum visitation numbers are a measure of the Museum's success but also reflect other external factors such as the number of tourist arrivals to Athens and the disposition and mood of the local community. In spite of current conditions the Acropolis Museum managed to achieve a ranking of 25 in the annual breakdown of museums internationally by visitor numbers, released by The Art Newspaper in April 2011.

**Total
visitors**

1,309,859

visitors arriving independently

68%

885,465

visitors arriving in organized groups

32%

424,394

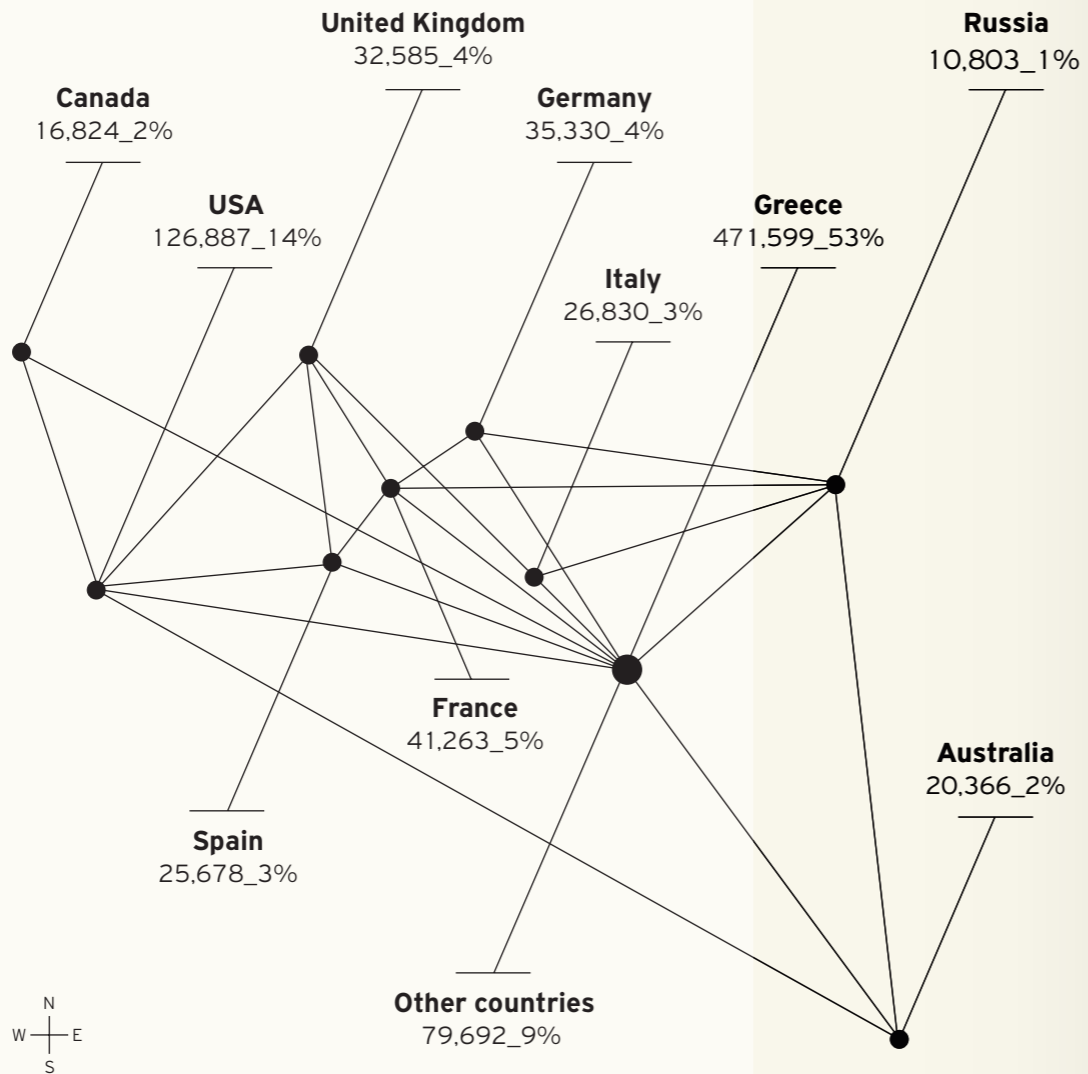
An incentive for returning
again and again



Independent visitors
total (different) countries of origin

148

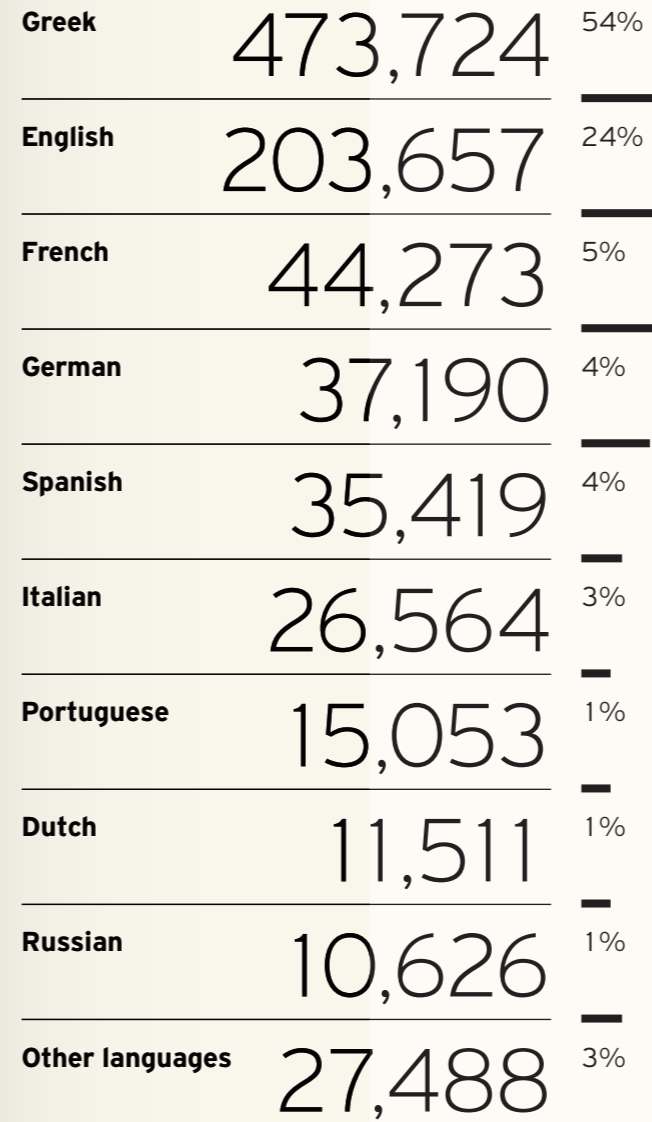
Independent visitors
countries of origin



Total Languages spoken
by independent visitors

89

Total Languages spoken
by independent visitors



An incentive for returning
again and again



Total
visitors in adult groups

233,416

from abroad

45%

105,037

from Greece

55%

128,379

Total free tickets

523,440

39%¹ of all tickets

Total discounted entry
3 euro tickets

99,870

8%² of all tickets

1. The Museum provides free entry to: children up to age 18 (EU countries); all children up to age 5; students of tertiary institutions (EU countries); Greek citizens performing military service; ICOMOS and ICOM members; tour guides; holders of the Ministry of Culture 'Free Card'; journalists; members of the 'Friends of the Acropolis'; official guests of the Greek State; visitors with disabilities and their carers; holders of the 'Culture Card'; Professors of Archaeology and members of the Greek Parliament – all with the presentation of the relevant and specified current and valid identity card for each circumstance.

2. Discounted entry is provided to: Children up to age 18 (non EU countries); Students of non EU tertiary institutions; holders of the International Student Identity Card; Greek citizens aged 65 and over; participants in the Organization of Public Housing and those in active service of the Security Forces - all with the presentation of the relevant and specified current and valid identity card for each circumstance.



An incentive for returning
again and again



School visits

Total
visitors in student groups*

190,977

*Preschoolers to tertiary students, Greek and foreign schools

Greek class visits

88%

168,059

Foreign school visits

12%

29,917

School programs and presentations

*Students participating in a program
of the Educational Service (YSMA)*

2,300

*Students participating in presentations
by Museum Archaeologist - Hosts*

7,950

School visits, virtual visitors,
facebook, museum doctor



Virtual visitors

Total
number of visitors to museum website

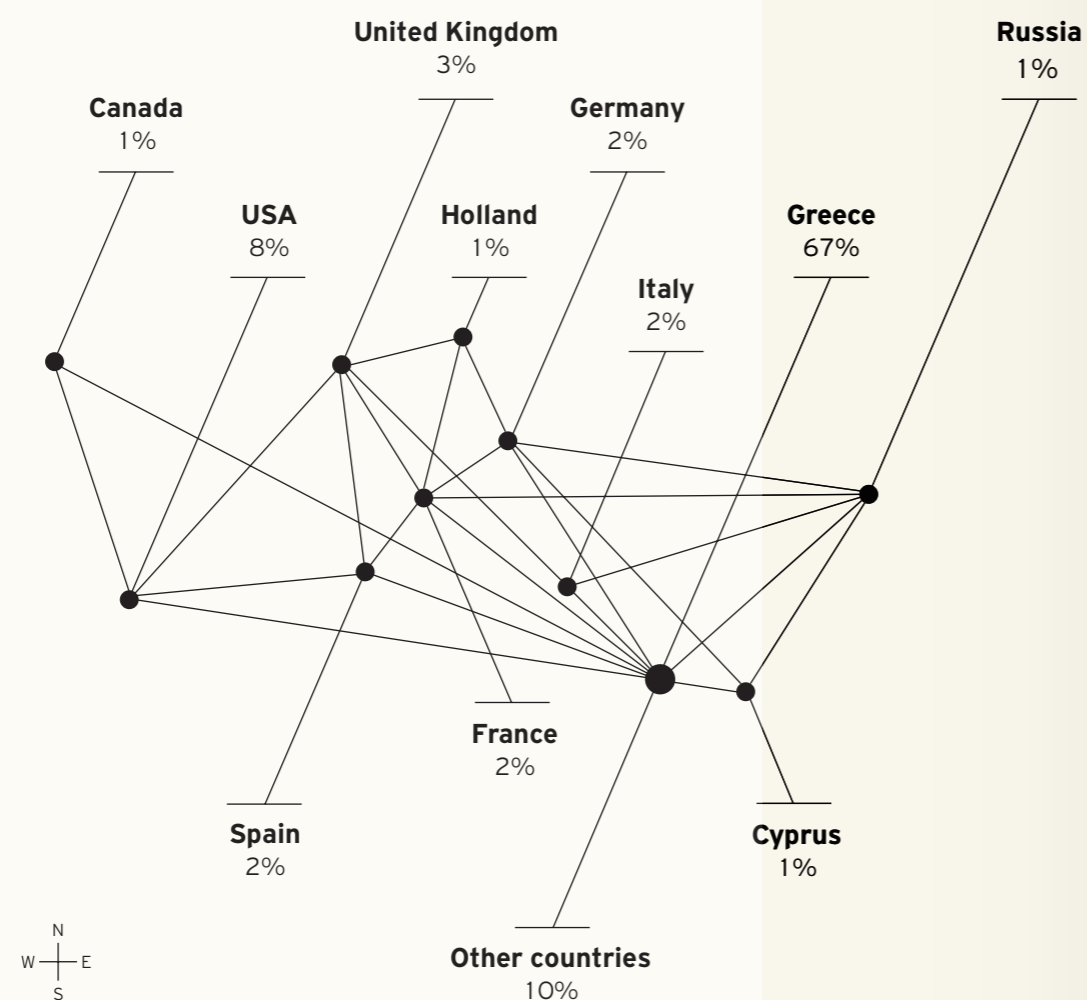
397,656

Total
number of first time visitors

274,383

69%

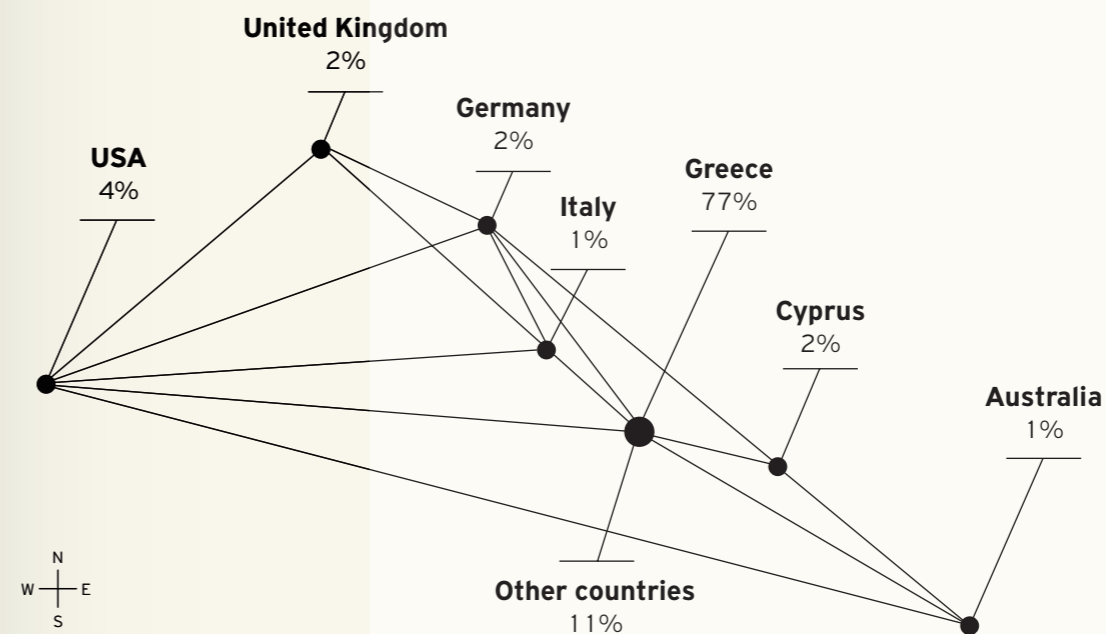
Main countries
of visitors to museum website



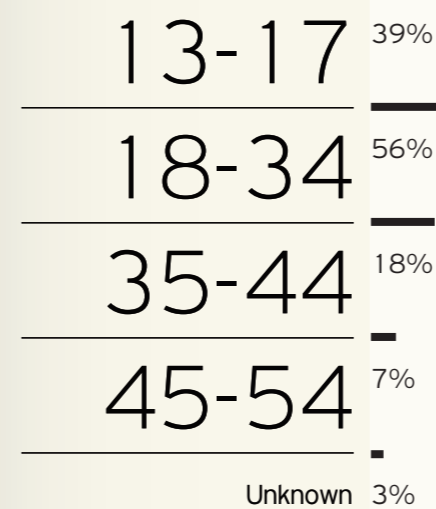
Facebook
total number of friends

271,749

Main countries
of Facebook visitors



Age
of Facebook friends



New Friends
since June 1st 2010

19% 52,230

School visits, virtual visitors,
facebook, museum doctor

On site care provided by museum doctor
total number of visitors attended

1,596

On site care provided by museum doctor
total number of staff consultations

1,128



School visits, virtual visitors,
facebook, museum doctor

Improving quality

Permanent exhibition

While the Museum's collection is established, it is intended that its exhibition will continue to change with improvements in interpretation and display techniques and with the benefit of developments in conservation methods and archaeological research.

This year Museum archaeologists and conservators cooperated in a range of initiatives. The plaster cast shell on which fragments of five metopes of the Parthenon were fixed was replaced with transparent Plexiglas making it possible to better view these valuable sculptures.

In the Archaic Gallery the reconstitution of fragments enabled the return of the 4.68 meter tall monument 'the Nike of Kallimachos' to the public eye after 2500 years. Visitor appreciation of the exhibits of the so called Severe Period has been facilitated with the adoption of greater floor space for these exhibits and an improved display.

In the Museum's Gallery of the 5th century BC to the 5th century AD the exhibits have been moved to present cohesive themes so that visitors can better appreciate the multifaceted significance of the Acropolis and its historical development from the classical period to the end of antiquity.

Restoration works continued in the archaeological excavation at the Museum's base, preparing the area for public access at the end of the year.

Communicating the exhibition

The key Museum 'voice' accompanying visitors in the permanent exhibition are the text labels and panels that provide information about the collection in the galleries.

Exhibit labels and the Museum's large text panels were reviewed, expanded and relocated to provide richer historical, socio-political and archaeological information on the story of the Acropolis as it emerges from the Museum's display of the archaeological site's surviving remains.

Visitors now also have access to information on the materials, tools and coloring agents used by ancient craftsmen and artists to sculpt and color the votive statues of the Archaic Period with the addition of two new information panels in the Archaic Gallery.

Museum Publications

Museum publications are designed to improve access to the Museum for visitors. More detailed information about Museum architecture and collections is provided to visitors in the revised 'way finder' brochure, now available in Museum high demand languages namely French and German (after Greek and English). Similarly the Museum's Short Guide to the exhibition was translated to French and German.

To further explain and promote the role of Museum Archaeologist-Hosts a brief flyer was produced for visitors.

Improving access to the
Museum's collections



Improving service delivery

Listening to visitors

In order to tailor services to the interests and needs of visitors the Museum seeks visitor feedback on many of its new initiatives. Systematic observations of visitor responses to the text panels in the exhibition were undertaken by Museum Archaeologist-Hosts, before and after changes to the exhibition text panels and text labels.

A survey of families borrowing and using the family backpack 'In Search of the Goddess Athena' commenced with the introduction of the program and will continue for the life of the program.

The groundwork for obtaining visitor's comments on their experiences and opinions across a range of Museum services has commenced in cooperation with the Museum Studies Program of the Faculty of Information of the University of Toronto. A statistically significant sample of visitors will be surveyed this summer and coming winter.

Building Staff Skills and Capacity

Museum staff deals with thousands of visitors daily from all parts of the world and all walks of life. Staff behavior, skills and knowledge effect visitors and influence the Museum's performance overall.

From prior to its opening the Museum placed emphasis on the training and development of its staff. In addition to specialized skills training for particular units, considerable empha-

sis was placed this year on improving the management and leadership skills of Unit Heads and middle management staff.

Introduction of a Staff Code of Conduct

To provide a clear framework within which employees of the Museum are expected to conduct themselves with respect to visitors and fellow employees of the Museum, the Museum Board approved the adoption of a Staff Code of Conduct. The Code applies to all staff working at the Museum.

Working with other Organizations

As Museum programs and activities slowly expand to offer a better and broader range of services, so does the need for greater engagement with other organizations, museums and bodies. In the past year the Museum continued its close and fruitful cooperation with the Acropolis Restoration Service (YSMA) in the provision of educational services to schools and other visitor activities. Cooperation also continued with the First Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities.

Through direct funding of the European Union (Seventh Program) the Museum is participating in a project with the University of Athens (Department of Informatics and Telecommunications), the University of Nottingham (Mixed Reality Laboratory), the Fraunhofer Institute for Computer Graphics, the Cité de l'Espace and the technology companies DIGINEXT and Real Fusio on the pilot

Improving access to the
Museum's collections

production of a museum multimedia 'experience' using a range of interactive technologies.

Funding from the European Union Regional Development Fund has enabled the commencement of project co-operation with the Laboratory for Machine Tools and Manufacturing Engineering of the Mechanical Engineering Department of the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki and the engineering studies company Geoanalysis S.A. on the digitalization and reproduction of the frieze of the Parthenon.

The Museum cooperated with the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, the Benaki Museum, the Museum of Cycladic Art, the Fulbright Foundation, the Association of Greek Museologists and other bodies on the organization of a 3-day symposium entitled 'The Acropolis Museum: Ideology, Museology and Architecture' held at the Benaki Museum.

Following an initiative of The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, the Acropolis Museum is pleased to be entering a program of short exchange visits of the scientific staff of the two Museums.

Late night opening

The Museum opens daily 8.00 am to 8.00 pm except Mondays when it closes for cleaning and maintenance. The Museum extended its visiting hours on Fridays to 10.00 pm and the Museum restaurant is open until 12.00 midnight.



Improving access to the
Museum's collections



Innovation

Interpretation

'Vignettes': a new approach to temporary exhibitions

Between June 2010 and January 2011 the Museum presented the temporary exhibition "Pericles Son of Xanthippos". Experimenting with the idea of a 'vignette' presentation of one of the most prominent and influential statesmen of his period, the exhibition introduced an extra dimension to the Museum's permanent collection without claiming all the cost or energy of a large temporary exhibition.

The idea of viewing the exhibits of the Museum's permanent collection from different perspectives, without changes or additions to the collection was the approach taken by the multi-museum program 'The Hole'. Part of the Athens International Film Festival, this initiative explores the significance and meaning of the 'hole' through seven exhibits of the Museum and is explained in the text labels prepared by Museum archaeologists.

Programs


'A Day at the Acropolis Museum'

Influencing community perceptions on the role of museums and encouraging museum visiting is central to maximizing the Museum as a community resource. The program 'A Day at the Acropolis Museum' presents existing museum services and programs together with new initiatives to provide a range of choices for families of all kinds to enjoy a day at the Museum. This is an ongoing Museum program that will shift in emphasis and specific activities but will continue to promote the idea that individuals and families can spend a stimulating, enjoyable and inexpensive day out at the Museum.

This year the program commenced with the new in-gallery family activity 'In Search of the Goddess Athena' developed by the YSMA Educational Service. The program enables families to borrow a backpack containing three activities to be played in the Museum galleries and other areas. The backpack activities are supported by 12 colorful exhibit text labels specifically designed for children in the galleries, but enjoyed by all visitors. As the Day at the Acropolis Museum includes all museum services, the Museum restaurant now welcomes young children with a special children's menu.

Communicating all aspects of the Museum's work is an objective





Gallery talks

Widely known abroad but rare in Greece are regular presentations of individual exhibits in the galleries of archaeological museums. Supported by attractive posters, Museum Archaeologist-Hosts presented the Sanctuary of Asclepios: a sacred sanctuary; the Horse riders: aristocrats of Athens and the Sculptor Antenor in small group discussions with over 1,700 visitors.

Primary school visit pack

Teacher evaluation of last year's presentations to primary school students, identified the need for more interactive learning for younger children. As response to this need the Museum developed a fun pack of activities focusing on 8 individual Museum exhibits now made available to visiting students through the Museum shops.

From laboratory to public space

Communicating all aspects of the Museum's work is an Acropolis Museum objective.

Accordingly Museum conservators have move from their basement laboratory to work in the public eye on the Caryatids of the Erechtheion on the Museum's Balcony of the Caryatids. At close range visitors are able to observe and learn about the laser cleaning process which removes atmospheric pollutants from the surface of these marble sculptures. The laser technology is supported by the Museum's cooperation with the Foundation of Technology and Research of Crete.

Movement and Sound at the Museum

This year both musical and dance performances were hosted in the courtyard of the Museum. The Symphonic Orchestra of the Athens Municipality performed for visitors on the evening of International Museums Day. As part of the Ministry of Culture's 'Athens Every Week Program', Athens Dance Week performances were presented on the courtyard's glass floor above the archaeological excavation.

As part of the celebrations of the 2500 year anniversary of the Battle of Marathon and under the auspices of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, a marathon series of talks entitled 'The Marathon Project' was conducted in the Museum restaurant.


Training Video for Museum Security and Front Desk Staff

Museum management and staff are now able to clearly document expectations of staff performance. Over the past two years Museum staff has continued to document daily work practices in unit procedure manuals. The culmination of this self-knowledge was the production of two staff training videos that visually present expected practices of Museum Security and Front Desk Staff. These videos will be used in subsequent training programs and the induction of new staff.

New Facilities

The possibilities for visitor enrichment in a comfortable and relaxing environment were expanded this year with the introduction of the Museum Reading Area located adjacent to the second floor Museum Shop. A diverse range of reading materials associated with the Acropolis is made freely available to visitors in this quiet area in conjunction with access to free internet access (also available in the Museum Restaurant/Café).

An archaeological storeroom of high standard was established in the -3 basement level in which the finds from the Makriyianni archaeological excavation were transferred. Both fixed and mobile storage units are provided in the over 1,200 square meters of floor space.



Communicating all aspects of the
Museum's work is an objective

Museum recognition

2010

British Guild of Travel Writers Globe Award

2010

*Finalist Grand Prix AFEX, France
(one of the best 10 buildings 2010)*

2010

*Award of Excellence and Sustainability,
International Association of Lighting
Designers*

2011

*Finalist Miles van der Rohe European
Union Prize for Contemporary Architecture
(one of the 6 best European buildings
2009-2011)*

2011

*American Institute of Architects Honor Award
for Architecture
(one of the best 10 buildings 2010-2011)*

Skills training
and development for all staff

Appendix

Staff training and development programs

May 2011

For Museum Shop Staff

Skills training for shop sales staff:
Sales methods – quality of service –
teamwork presented by Business Consultant
Manouso Maropaki from the Mathisis
Consultants

For security staff

Incident prevention & management: tactics
& skills for security staff, presented by the
Director of the Education Department of the
Athens General Police Directorate (G.A.D.A.),
Tsitos Theodosis (Police Captain 'A)

For all staff

A presentation on the audience research
program of the Acropolis Museum, presented
by Costis Dallas, Assistant Professor
at Panteion University's Department of
Communications, Media and Culture,
Associate Professor, Faculty of Information,
University of Toronto

For middle managers of all departments

Developing skills for middle-management
staff, presented by Damianos Giannakis,
Professor of Management & Marketing at the
Hellenic American University

April 2011

For all staff

Presentation of the CHES Program, by
Dr. Maria Roussou, Research Fellow at the
University of Athens

For all staff

Seminar on resuscitation: basic life
support (CPR) and use of automatic
external defibrillators presented by Kyriaki
Papadimitriou, Professor of Anaestheology
and staff of the Hellenic Society for
Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation

For 30 new security staff

Introduction to the Acropolis Museum and
Induction to the Security Unit
Heads of Museum Units, Acropolis Museum

January 2011

For Museum Archaeologists-Hosts

The art of language & communication
presented by Mania Papadimitriou, actor,
director and instructor Part B

December 2010

For Museum Archaeologists-Hosts

Pedagogical methods for guiding, presented
by Billie Vemi Assistant Professor of the
Pedagogical Department of Public Education
at the University of Thessaly

Skills training
and development for all staff

October 2010

For Museum Archaeologists-Hosts

The art of language & communication presented by Mania Papadimitriou, actor, director and instructor Part A

For security and reception staff

First aid, presented by the Health Education Department of the Greek Red Cross

For security and reception staff

Working with people with disabilities, presented by Constantinos Bartzeliotis (Office of the Ombudsman), Lila Patroklou, Evangelos Avgoulas and Elizabeth Kouvarou (Pan-Hellenic Association for the Blind)

For administrative staff

Skills for written communication, presented by Dr. Despina Prinia, Communication specialist and Professor of Strategic Communication and Public Relations at the Hellenic American University

July 2010

For Unit heads

Communication and motivation, presented by Damianos Giannakis, Professor of Management & Marketing at the Hellenic American University

June 2010

For all staff

Introductory demonstration of the use of the automatic external defibrillator, by Iakovos Kivelos Museum Doctor, Giorgos Korlos Cardiologist and Xaris Tsakiris Trainer for the Mantzaris Company.

For security and restaurant staff

English language lessons, presented by the British Council



Skills training
and development for all staff



Board of directors

President

Dimitrios Pandermalis

*Archaeologist, Professor Emeritus,
Aristotle University of Thessaloniki*

Members

Giorgos Kaminis

*Mayor of Athens
(from March 2011)*

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Academic, Artist

Nikolaos Damalitis

*Director of the Construction Project Team,
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Acropolis Museum*

Haralambos Bouras

*Architect, Emeritus Professor, University of
Athens, President, Restoration Committee of
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Julia Iliopoulos-Strangas

Professor of Law at the University of Athens

Stavroula Samartzidis

*Director, First Ephorate for Prehistoric
and Classical Antiquities of the Ministry
of Culture
(from March 2011)*

Aikaterini Paraschi

Architect Engineer

Costis Dallas

*Assistant Professor, Communication, Media
and Culture Department of the Panteion
University
(from March 2011)*

Texts

Niki Dollis

Photos

Giorgos Vitsaropoulos, Nikos Pilos (p. 3)

Design

G Design Studio

June 2010, Acropolis Museum



ACROPOLIS MUSEUM

Address and Contact details

Acropolis Museum,

15 Dionysiou Areopagitou Street,

11742, Athens

Tel.: +30 210 9000900

Email: info@theacropolismuseum.gr

www.theacropolismuseum.gr

