

Preserving Acropolis artifacts

The thoughts of Socrates and his ancient Greek contemporaries are a foundation of western civilization. The Acropolis and its most famous building, the Parthenon, are physical reminders of our debt to these philosophers. Moly helps to sustain the legacy of these sites in the beautiful new Acropolis Museum, which contains many components made of moly-containing Type 316 stainless steel. The longevity of stainless steel ensures the museum will serve its purpose well for years to come.

High above the city of Athens, bathed in Mediterranean sunlight by day and floodlit by night, the Acropolis represents one of antiquity's greatest achievements. The Parthenon, crown jewel of the Acropolis, was built between 447 and 432 BCE during Socrates' lifetime (469-399 BCE). This revered temple attracts millions of visitors every year. Dedicated to the city's patron goddess, Athena Parthenos, it originally featured a grand roof, Doric columns, an inner room, and fine sculptures and friezes. It remained well preserved until 1687, when a gunpowder magazine located inside the temple exploded during a cannon bombardment of the city. In tribute to its immeasurable historical and cultural value, the Acropolis is today a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

A new museum

The rich historical legacy of classical Athens is being preserved at the new Acropolis Museum which holds a stunning collection of sculptures and artifacts found at the Acropolis. The museum is connected to the Acropolis by the Dionysios Areopagitou, a pleasant, marble-paved pedestrian street featuring excellent views of the many nearby archaeological sites.

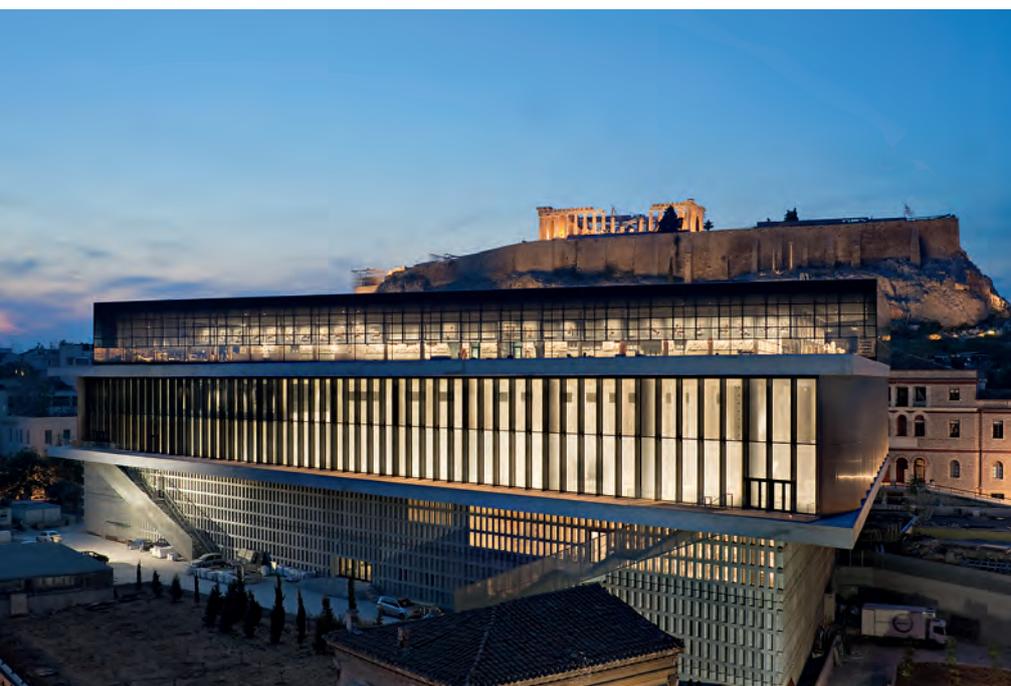
The principal architect for the museum was Bernard Tschumi Architects of New York & Paris. Every day thousands of visitors come to see the displays in the €130-million structure which opened to the public in 2009. With over 14,000 square meters of exhibition space, the

museum offers a comprehensive picture of human presence at the Acropolis from pre-historic times to late antiquity. It houses a 200-seat auditorium with projection facilities, two gift shops, a café, and a large second-floor restaurant that opens onto a public terrace with a splendid view of the Acropolis.

Modern materials used throughout

Structural steel and reinforced concrete make up its core structure, but the museum also contains large amounts of glass and stainless steel. It presents a wonderful modern monument that maintains strong ties with the fabled past of the site. Upon entering the exhibition space, visitors find themselves in a beautiful gallery lined with display cases and a gently sloping floor of heat-strengthened, laminated safety glass panels. These transparent panels allow visitors to see marvelous ruins from the 4th to 7th centuries BCE, which have been left intact and protected beneath the building. The glass panels are set in corrosion-resistant Type 316 stainless steel frames. The top floor of the museum houses the spectacular Parthenon Gallery, which reconstructs, in full size, the layout of the preserved friezes taken from the famous temple. All 46 of the replica's columns are made of Type 316L stainless steel with a semi-bright surface finish, offering visitors an excellent look at the Parthenon's famous depiction of the Panathenaic Procession. >

The new Acropolis Museum in the foreground has a splendid view of the Parthenon on top of the hill.
 © Peter Mauss/Esto





The Parthenon Gallery in the museum displays a mixture of the original frieze blocks and reproductions. It has the same 39 m x 84 m footprint as the actual site. © Peter Mauss/Esto

The museum's exterior facade is distinguished by large Type 316 stainless steel fins made from corrugated sheet cladding. By selecting molybdenum-bearing Type 316 and 316L stainless steels, each alloy containing 2% Mo, the architects, designers, and engineers of the Acropolis Museum have chosen materials of

construction that will provide corrosion resistance, strength, durability, and low maintenance for many decades to come. Though it would be nearly impossible to duplicate the splendor of the Acropolis in its heyday, the new museum provides a worthy companion to the Parthenon's famous profile in the renowned Athens'

skyline. We know of Socrates because his legacy was preserved by Plato's writings. Should we be so bold as to say that moly will play the role of Plato and help preserve and sustain this new worthy addition to the legacy of the Acropolis for another 2000 years? (Frank Smith)