

## **eleusis the great mysteries**

*temporary exhibition*

*26/2/2018 – 31/5/2018*

The Acropolis Museum started in 2015 a series of temporary exhibitions displaying important ancient artifacts, deriving from significant archaeological sites of the Greek periphery. The Museum's goal is to present unusual subjects that will intrigue the current visitor and at the same time urge him to visit the places the exhibits originated from.

After "*Samothrace. The mysteries of the great gods*" and "*Dodona. The oracle of sounds*", the third exhibition of the series concerns Eleusis and the great mysteries. Eleusis (Greek: *Elefsina*) is a town and municipality in West Attica, Greece. It is situated about 18 kilometres (11 miles) northwest from the centre of Athens. It is located in the Thriasian Plain, at the northernmost end of the Saronic Gulf.

The exhibition presents the most important artifacts brought to light by the archaeological excavation in Elefsina, such as the unique statue of the "Fleeing Persephone", the votive relief depicting Demeter and *Kore* (Persephone) and ceremonial vessels, such as *kernos*, *plemochoe* and *thymiaterion*, as well as monuments depicting the leading figures of the great mysteries, *Hierophant* and *Dadouchos*.

The exhibition includes archaeological findings from the Athenian *Eleusinion* and the Sacred Way, as the religious procession started from Athens with a host of Initiates and candidates for initiation and ended up in the Eleusis *Telesterion*. For this reason, a votive relief from the area of *Eleusinion* and distinctive findings from the Sanctuary of Aphrodite, which is located next to the Sacred Way at the area of Dafni, are on display before the entrance to the exhibition.

The exhibition area has the form of the Eleusinian *Telesterion* including a small-scale version of the dark *Anaktoron* where visitors can watch a 15-minute video presentation with aerial photographs of the Sacred Way, representations, models, the archaeological site of Eleusis and many emblematic exhibits.

The exhibition is conducted with the collaboration of the Acropolis Museum and the Ephorate of Antiquities of West Attica. The exhibits are on a loan from the Archaeological Museum of Eleusis and the National Archaeological Museum.