architectural fact sheet

Client
Organization for the Construction of the New Acropolis Museum
Dimitrios Pandermalis, President

Architect
Bernard Tschumi Architects, New York/Paris
Bernard Tschumi, Architect and Lead Designer
Joel Rutten, Project Architect
Adam Dayem, Aristotelis Dimtrakopoulos, Jane Kim, Eva Sopeoglou, Kim Starr, Anne Save de Beaurecueil, Jonathan Chace, Robert Holton, Valentin Bontjes van Beek, Liz Kim, Daniel Holguin, Kriti Siderakis, Michaela Metcalfe, Justin Moore, Joel Aviles, Georgia Papadavid, Allis Chee, Thomas Goodwill, Véronique Descharrières, Christina Devizzi

Associate Architect
Michael Photiadis, ARSY, Associate Architect, Athens
Michael Photiadis, Principal George Kriparakos, Nikos Balkalbassis, Philippos Photiadis, Jaimie Peel, Niki Plevri, Maria Sarafidou, Makis Grivas, Elena Voutsina, Manoulis Economou, Anastassia Gianou, Miltiadis Lazaridis, Dimitris Kosmas

Consultants
Structure: ADK and Arup, New York
Mechanical and Electrical: MMB Study Group S.A. and Arup, New York
Civil: Michanniki Geostatiki and Arup, New York
Lighting: Arup, London
General Contractor: Aktor S.A.
Glass Consultant: Hugh Dutton Associates (HDA)

Site
Located in the historic area of Makryianni, the Museum stands some 300 meters (980 feet) southeast of the Parthenon. The top floor (Parthenon Gallery) offers a 360-degree panoramic view of the Acropolis and modern Athens. The Museum is entered from the Dionysios Areopagitou pedestrian street, which links it to the Acropolis and other key archeological sites in Athens.

Program
With exhibition space of more than 14,000 square meters (150,000 square feet) and a full range of modern visitor amenities, the New Acropolis Museum will tell the complete story of life on the Athenian Acropolis and its surroundings. It will do so by uniting collections that are currently dispersed in multiple institutions, including the outdated Acropolis Museum (built in the 19th century with gallery space of 1,450 square meters, or 15,500 square feet). The rich collections will provide visitors with a comprehensive picture of the human presence on the Acropolis, from prehistoric times through late Antiquity. Integral to this program is the display of an archeological excavation on the site of the Museum itself: ruins from the 4th through 7th centuries A.D., left intact and protected beneath the building and made visible through the first floor. Other program facilities include a 200-seat auditorium.

Architectural Description
Three concepts turn the constraints and circumstances of the site into an architectural opportunity, offering a simple and precise museum with the mathematical and conceptual clarity of ancient Greece.

First, the conditions animating the New Acropolis Museum revolve around natural light—more than in any other type of museum. Light for the exhibition of sculpture differs from the light involved in displaying paintings or drawings. The new exhibition spaces could be described as an museum of ambient natural light, concerned with the presentation of sculptural objects within it, whose display changes throughout the course of the day.
Second, the visitor’s route through the museum forms a clear three-dimensional loop, affording an architectural promenade with a rich spatial experience that extends from the archeological excavations to the Parthenon Marbles and back through the Roman period. Movement in and through time is an important aspect of architecture, and of this museum in particular. With over 10,000 visitors daily, the sequence of movement through the museum artifacts is designed to be of the utmost clarity.

Third and finally, the building is divided into a base, middle, and top, which are designed around the specific needs of each part of the building. The base of the museum floats over the existing archaeological excavations on pilotis to protect and consecrate the site with a network of columns placed in careful negotiation with experts so as not to disturb sensitive archaeological work. The orientation gently rotates as it rises so that the main galleries in the middle form a double-height trapezoidal plate that accommodates the galleries from the Archaic period to the Roman Empire, and is shaped to respond to the contemporary street grid.

The top, which is made up of the rectangular Parthenon Gallery arranged around an indoor court, rotates gently again to orient the Marbles exactly as they were placed at the Parthenon centuries ago. The glass enclosure provides ideal light for sculpture in direct view to and from the Acropolis while protecting the gallery against excessive heat and light, thanks to the most contemporary glass technology.

The three major materials of the Museum are glass for the facades and some of the floors, concrete for the core and the columns, and marble for some floors. The east and west facades and the Parthenon Gallery columns are made of steel.

Text Bernard Tschumi Architects