



ReInHerit WEBINAR



“Narration in the museum context:
when objects narrate their unique stories”

1 June 2023 |



MUSEUM
OF CYCLADIC
ART
NICHOLAS AND DOLLY
GOULANDRIS FOUNDATION



Nefeli Bantela
EU Project Coordinator

Eleni Markou
Head of Educational Programmes

Museum of Cycladic Art

The Museum of Cycladic Art



The **Museum of Cycladic Art** was founded in 1986 in order to host the archeological collection of Nikolaos and Aikaterini (Dolly) Goulandris with works of Cycladic and Ancient Greek Art.

Currently, the collections are organized in four thematic units. The presentation of the collections is setup in contemporary style, with the use of interactive media in the permanent collections (which are accessible by people with hearing loss while the 1st floor is accessible by people with hearing loss and people with blindness):

1. Cycladic Culture (1st floor)
2. Ancient Greek Art – A Story with Images (2nd floor)
3. Cyprus – Ancient Art and Culture (3rd floor)
4. Scenes of Everyday Life in Antiquity (4th floor)



Main Entrance
4 Neophytou Douka Str.



Entrance via the Stathatos
Mansion, Vassilissis Sofias ave.
and 1, Irodotou Str.



The Department of Educational and Community Programs of the Museum of Cycladic Art operates since 1986, the year that the Museum opened. Its activities and programs are addressed to **children, academic professionals, university students, families.**

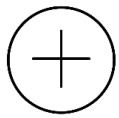
SCHOOLS

Educational programs and tours to schools of Primary and Secondary Education

- ⊕ The programs are inspired by the Museum's permanent collections as well as the temporary archaeological and contemporary art exhibitions that are implemented throughout the year at the premises of the Museum. The subjects and main activities of the programs are directly related to the schools' curriculum. Approximately **10.000 school students** participate in these programs every year, who visit the Museum in different groups and hours of the day.

FAMILIES

Weekend workshops for families



Every weekend, starting in October until May, the museum welcomes children accompanied by their parents into the amusing world of the Museum, through fairy tale narration, interactive tours, artistic workshops, theatre, photography and music.

Every year approximately **3.500 children** participate in these workshops.



ADDRESSED TO:
| children 2 – 12 years old
| families

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

The Museum has made a serious commitment to public engagement and implements programs addressed to vulnerable social groups:

- **Special education schools and people with disabilities**
- **Refugees, and children that come from different countries and ethnic groups**
- **Programs for people over the age of 65**

RESEARCH PROGRAMMES

The Department has participated as partner
in the EU-funded projects on the right:

Erasmus+

Bridging the Gap between Museums
and Individuals with Visual Impairments
(2014-2017)



Erasmus+

Towards a Multisensory and Inclusive Museum
for Individuals with Sensory Disabilities (2019-
2021)



Creative Europe

Museums of Impact (2019-2022)



Creative Europe

Foodprint

The Mediterranean Diet Revisited (2020-
2022)



Horizon 2020

ReInHerit (2021-2023)



RESEARCH PROGRAMMES

- **Bridging the Gap between Museums and Individuals with Visual Impairments (2014-2017)**

The project is based on the changed understanding of museums as places not only for collecting, preserving and exhibiting artworks, but as an audience-oriented spaces with broader educational and social role (Hooper-Greenhill, 2007). From this point of view, of great interest to museums becomes accessibility for disabled people.

- **Towards a Multisensory and Inclusive Museum for Individuals with Sensory Disabilities (2019-2021)**

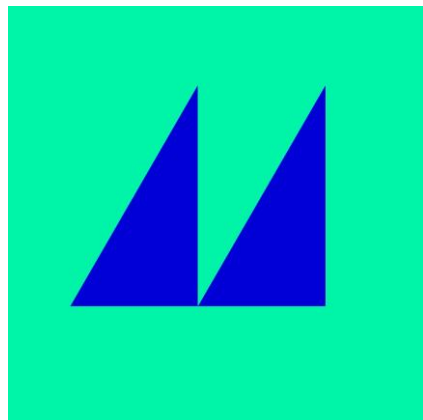
The project focuses on the improvement of museums' accessibility by individuals with sensory disabilities. The project aims at increasing awareness among the museums' staff and enriching their knowledge on techniques and new technologies for an inclusive museum.



Erasmus+



Creative
Europe



RESEARCH PROGRAMMES

- **Museums of Impact (2019-2022)**

The MOI project focuses on the creation of an evaluation framework through a self-evaluation model for European Museums with impact at its core. The evaluation framework is available through NEMO's website: <https://www.nemo.org/about-us/resources/moi-self-evaluation-tool.html>

- **Foodprint - The Mediterranean Diet Revisited (2020-2022)**

The project explores why the Mediterranean Diet is relevant to us today, and how it's the healthiest diet for both our body and the planet. This is expressed through the work of five European photographers and accompanied by texts that explore the themes of sustainability, landscape, health, cooking, sharing, gathering and farming.

RESEARCH PROGRAMMES

- **ReInHerit (2021-2023)**

ReInHerit is an Horizon2020 project that aspires to disrupt the current status quo of communication, collaboration and innovation exchange between museums and cultural heritage sites, in a sense that it will connect cultural heritage collections and sites, and present Europe's tangible and intangible heritage to citizens and tourists in their wider historical and geographical contexts. This will happen through the project's [digital hub](#), smart apps and exhibitions.



Introducing Storytelling in the Museum Context

Storytelling

noun

____ /ˈstɔːriˌtel.ɪŋ/

the activity of writing, telling or reading
stories

Why stories matter?

Museums are places which collect, care for, display and interpret objects. Narration and storytelling places objects into their new context, that of the museum. Objects obtain a new identity and at the same time are accompanied by different perspectives which influence the way we feel and think.

People also use stories to make sense of the world or share their experiences. In a museum context, stories are usually about objects but also people, most of the time their creators or the people these objects depict.

Why stories matter?

Stories inspire people to act, donate, develop their vision and simply become better people.

At organization level, apart from increasing an organization's visibility, stories can make museums part of the local community, can increase visitor rates and at the same time profit.

An interesting example is that of The Santa Cruz Museum of Art and History (MAH) which uses art and history to build a strong community, putting stories centre stage. The Museum's mission statement makes this clear: 'we find, spark, preserve, and trade stories, ideas, and elements of creativity drawn from people across Santa Cruz County'.

Stories can ignite shared experiences and unexpected connections with audience driving audience and visitors' growth.

Storytelling and Narration in Museum Exhibitions

When museums create narratives and stories about objects, they consider the following questions:

- Who is the story about?
- Which is the historical context?
- What point of view are you taking?
- Which events / details will be featured in the story?
- How will it end?

Storytelling and Narration in Museum Exhibitions

There are many ways to tell a story in a museum context and it can take the form of, but are not limited to:

- Exhibitions
- Guided tours
- Educational programmes and workshops
- Podcasts
- Animated stories and videos
- Comics
- Creative activities

Storytelling and Narration in Museum Exhibitions

Apart from events that push the story forward, stories need information that adds context and details around objects and historical periods. Mixing these two elements is a fine balancing act. Too many events and it's difficult to understand what is happening. Too much detail and you reduce your story to a stream of consciousness.

Storytelling and Narration in Museum Exhibitions

Museums are places rich in historical details. Objects also depict the daily life of people who lived and acted in another era. Storytelling about objects reveals what people wore, their traditions, their different roles at home and in public, what they ate, what they thought and their place in the social hierarchy.

The Museum of Cycladic Art: Scenes of Everyday Life in Antiquity

The permanent collection of the Museum of Cycladic Art “Scenes of Everyday Life in Antiquity” presented on the 4th floor of the museum is an indicative example of narration and storytelling which reveal aspects of everyday life in antiquity.

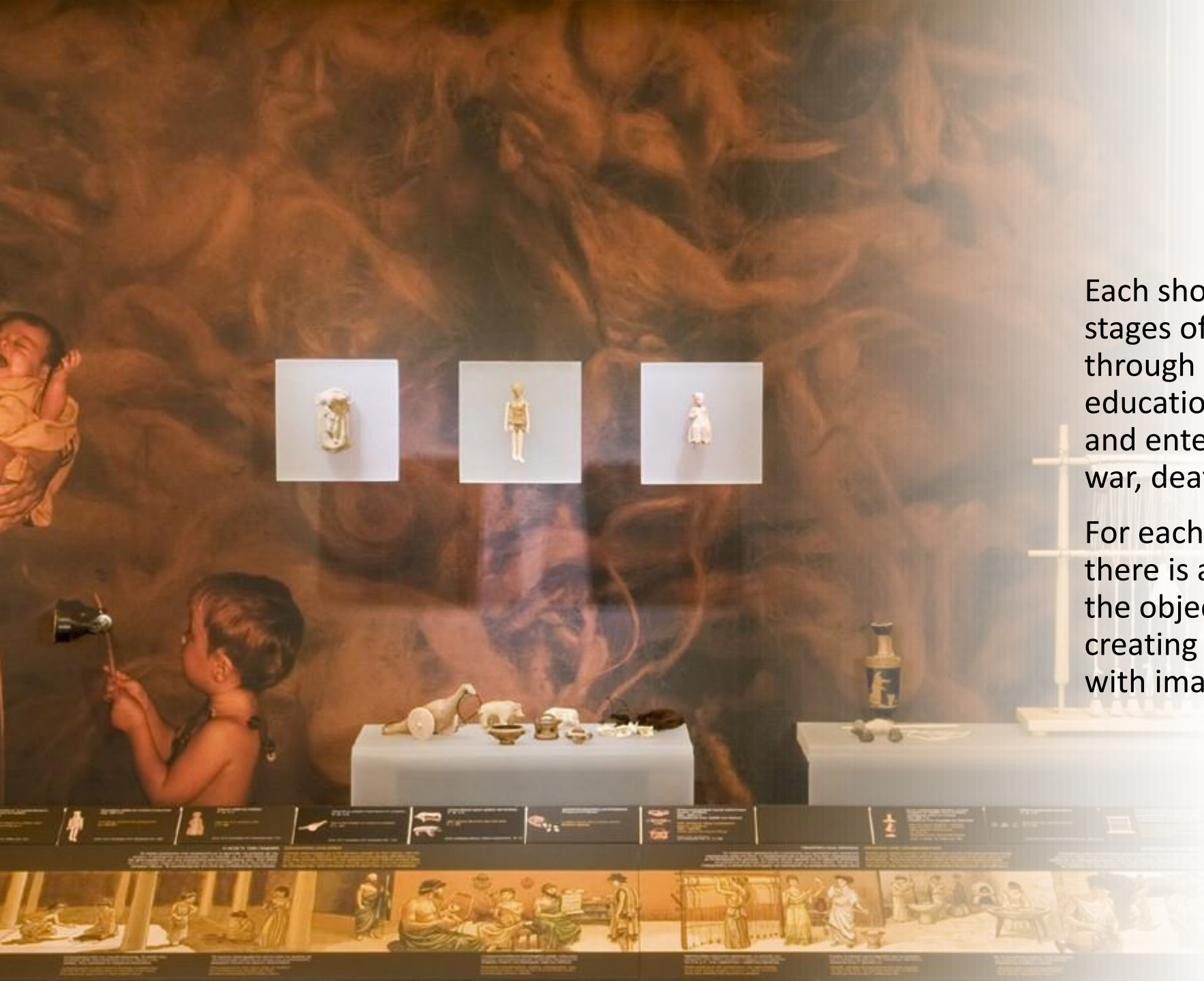
This collection was developed with the aim to create a collection with purely educational character. Based on this permanent collection, other activities such as educational programmes, workshops, podcasts and educational material was created based on narration of historical facts and storytelling techniques.

The purpose of educational material is to train teachers on how to better use the material in order to teach their students in the classroom regarding the classical period in a creative way. At the same time, the material offers a variety of educational material for primary school students which help them develop their creativity and at the same time learn about the Classical Antiquity.



The Museum of Cycladic Art: Scenes of Everyday Life in Antiquity

- The collection “Scenes of Everyday Life in Antiquity” narrates the story of a boy who is born in Athens in the period of Classical Antiquity – in the same period when the Parthenon was built, and the Greek society flourished.
- The narration of this collection follows the different life stages of this boy, from his birth, education, childhood through to adulthood, going to war and death. Through this narration, the visitors are immersed in the world of that time and the everyday life through the daily use of objects, life and death rituals, wedding traditions, social hierarchy and of course the war.

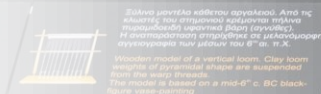


Each showcase follows different life stages of this boy, from his birth through to his childhood and education, sports activities, voting and entertainment and of course war, death and cremation.

For each object of the showcase, there is a picture which shows how the object was used in its time creating a historical representation with images and texts.

The Museum of Cycladic Art: Scenes of Everyday Life in Antiquity

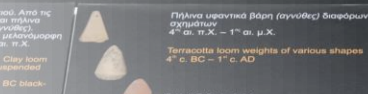
Beyond aesthetic enjoyment, the exhibition offers a fresh look into ancient Greek societies. Visitors are invited to view objects within their historical environment and contemplate upon their symbolic dimensions for the society of the time.



Σύμφωνα με την αρχαία ελληνική παράδοση, η αργαλειοπλοκή ήταν η πρώτη τέχνη που έμαθαν οι γυναίκες. Η αργαλειοπλοκή αναφέρεται στην τέχνη να φτιάχνουν υφαντά. Η αργαλειοπλοκή αναφέρεται στην τέχνη να φτιάχνουν υφαντά. Η αργαλειοπλοκή αναφέρεται στην τέχνη να φτιάχνουν υφαντά.

ΑΙΣΧΟΛΙΕΣ ΕΚΤΟΣ ΟΙΚΙΑΣ

Οι γυναίκες συμμετείχαν ενεργά σε διάφορα θρησκευτικά τελετουργικά δράματα, πολλά από τα οποία συνδέονταν με τη γονιμότητα, όπως το Θεσμοφορία. Στη γιορτή των Θεσμοφορίων, προς τιμήν της πόρνης θεάς, γυναίκες και κορίτσια κτηρούν οικογενειών ύψαινον για 9 μήνες τον τεράστιο κρό πέπλο, τον οποίο μετέφεραν στην Ακρόπολη, με μια μεγαλειώδη πομπή, για να ντύσουν το αρχαίο ξύλινο της θεάς.



Πήλινα υφαντικά βάρη (αγνόες) διαφόρων σχημάτων
4^{ος} αι. π.Χ. - 1^{ος} αι. μ.Χ.
Terra-cotta loom weights of various shapes
4th c. BC - 1st c. AD
(Ελλάδα, Ν.Π. Γουλιερμάκης / N.P. Gouliermakis Coll., 818, 820, 818)

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

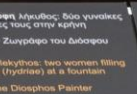
Public fountains were places where women could meet and chat while waiting for their jars to fill with water. The water was fetched either as an everyday chore or for a special occasion, such as a religious festival or the prenuptial bath. The fountains, however, were also frequented by men who - on the pretext of being helpful - tried to harass them sexually.



ReThinking
ΤΑΥΤΟΤΗΤΕΣ • IDENTITIES

ΣΥΜΜΕΤΟΧΗ ΣΕ ΘΡΗΣΚΕΥΤΙΚΕΣ ΕΟΡΤΕΣ

Οι γυναίκες συμμετείχαν ενεργά σε διάφορα θρησκευτικά τελετουργικά δράματα, πολλά από τα οποία συνδέονταν με τη γονιμότητα, όπως το Θεσμοφορία. Στη γιορτή των Θεσμοφορίων, προς τιμήν της πόρνης θεάς, γυναίκες και κορίτσια κτηρούν οικογενειών ύψαινον για 9 μήνες τον τεράστιο κρό πέπλο, τον οποίο μετέφεραν στην Ακρόπολη, με μια μεγαλειώδη πομπή, για να ντύσουν το αρχαίο ξύλινο της θεάς.



Αττική μακροχρόνια αγγείο, δύο γυναίκες γεμίζουν τις υδρίες τους στην κρήνη
520 - 510 π.Χ.
Αναθήματα στον Ζευξάρχο του Αίγινας
Attic black-figure skyphoid kylix, two women filling their water jars (hydriae) at a fountain
520 - 510 BC
Attributed to the Diosphos Painter
(Ελλάδα, Ν.Π. Γουλιερμάκης / N.P. Gouliermakis Coll., 1104)

PARTICIPATING IN RELIGIOUS FESTIVALS

Women played prominent roles in various religious festivals. Many of the rites they engaged were connected with fertility, such as the Thesmophoria. At the Panathenian festival in honour of the city's patron goddess, a large peplos - woven for 9 months by women and maidens from noble families - was carried in a grand procession to the Acropolis to dress the venerable wooden statue of the goddess.

The Museum of Cycladic Art: Scenes of Everyday Life in Antiquity

Introductory and thematic panel texts, extensive captions, and imagery and graphic designs also offer information on the major socio-political, technological, and cultural developments of the classical period with reference to everyday life.

Towards the outro of the exhibition, two videos are displayed as part of the exhibition to complement the narrative. The videos complement the narration and signify the end of the exhibition and the life cycle of the protagonist.

One of the videos on display focuses on death rituals which were of great importance in ancient Greece and more specifically the ritual of the cremation of the dead.



The Museum of Cycladic Art: Scenes of Everyday Life in Antiquity

- Speaking of everyday life, have you ever considered how road accidents happened at the time?
- Let's watch another video together. Yiorgos Tassoulas, an archaeologist and former curator of classical antiquities at the Museum of Cycladic Art, takes us with him to a journey in time and tells us the story of a road accident of the time.



The Museum of Cycladic Art: Educational Programmes and Workshops

- The programs are inspired by the Museum's permanent collections as well as the temporary archaeological and contemporary art exhibitions that are implemented throughout the year at the premises of the Museum. The subjects and main activities of the programs are directly related to the schools' curriculum.



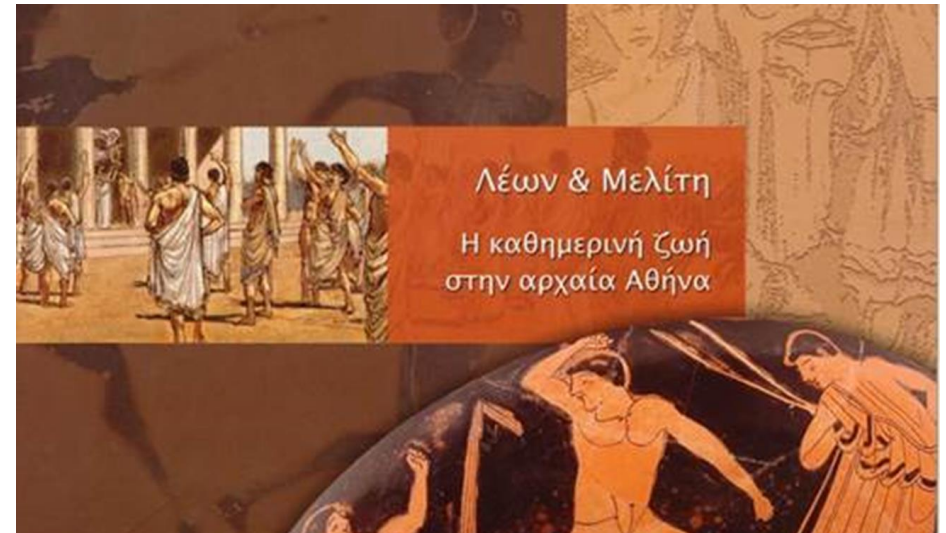
The Museum of Cycladic Art: Educational Programmes and Workshops

- Similarly, the museum organizes workshops which mostly take place during the weekend and welcomes children accompanied by their parents. The themes of the workshops are inspired by the museum's permanent and temporary exhibitions. Children and parents are invited into the amusing world of the Museum, through fairy tale narration, interactive tours, artistic workshops, theatre, photography and music.



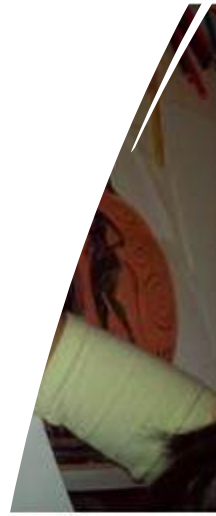
Scenes of Everyday Life in Antiquity: Educational Activities

- A set of educational activities and programmes for teachers to use in the classroom were inspired by the collection “Scenes of Everyday Life in Antiquity”. In the framework of the educational programmes organized, a booklet with educational activities was created featuring the protagonists Leon and Meliti, a boy and a girl who lived in ancient Greece in antiquity.



Scenes of Everyday Life in Antiquity: Educational Activities

- Through their stories, children can understand everyday life in ancient Greece and actively use their imagination.



Scenes of Everyday Life in Antiquity: Museum Kit

- There is also a museum kit inspired by the “Scenes of Everyday Life in Antiquity”. This Educational Museum Kit introduces children to the daily activities of men and women, the wedding ceremony, children’s toys and games, sports, and entertainment, and the obligations of citizens and soldiers in ancient Greece.

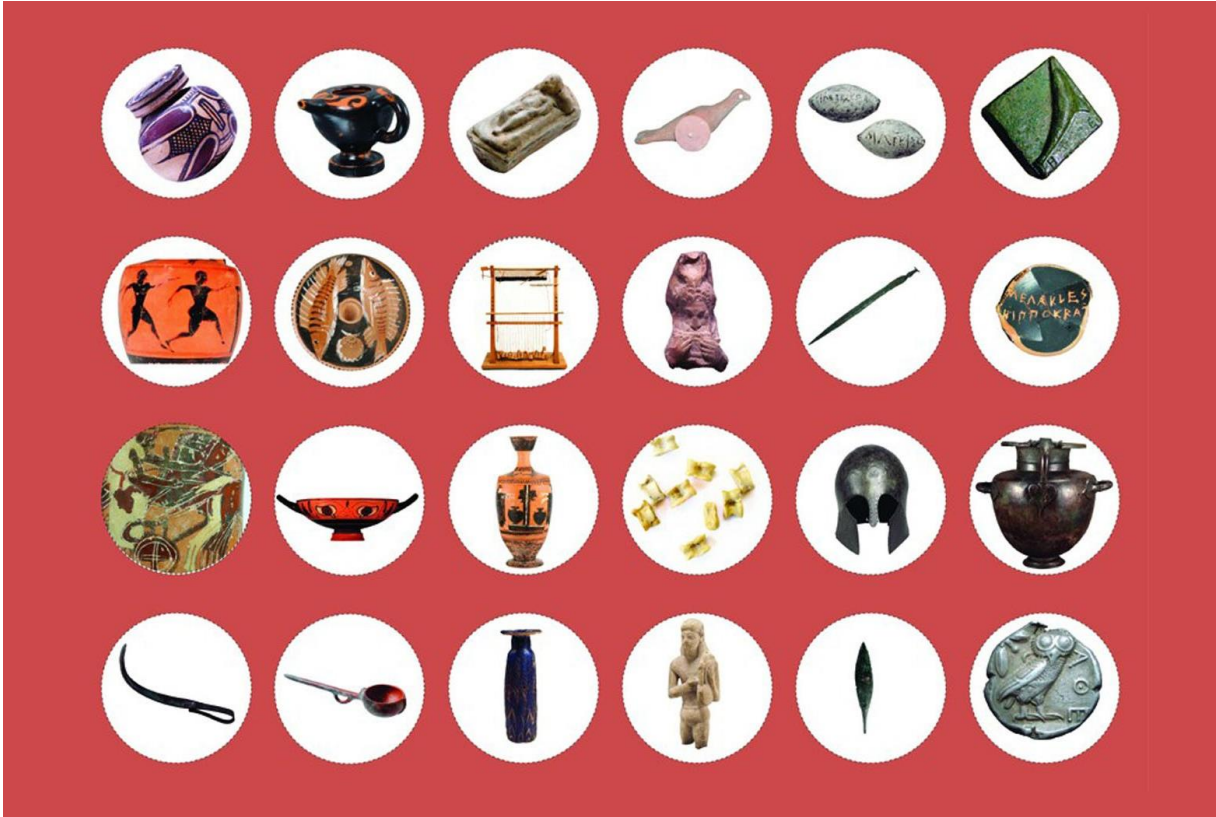


The Museum Kit inspired by daily life in the Cyclades

- This museum kit includes copies of objects used in everyday life, educational games, toys, the educational activities' booklets presented in the previous slide, a book as well as an educational booklet featuring the story of Leon & Meliti as well as other activities and suggestions for in-class activities.



Scenes of Everyday Life in Antiquity: Museum Kit



Scenes of Everyday Life in Antiquity: Museum Kit



Animated stories and videos

- One of the aims of this material was to train teachers on how to teach these subjects to their students and encourage students to learn by doing, through activities.
- The following video is prepared by teachers who used our material and produced animated stories.



Leon & Meliti: Comic Book

A comic book featuring the adventures of Leon & Meliti was also prepared.

But why comics?

"I learned to read before even I went to school, because I wanted to be able to read the newspaper comic strips by myself and find out what happens next without having to wait for my father to read them to me"

Jeff Smith,
creator of the comic book
"Bone"

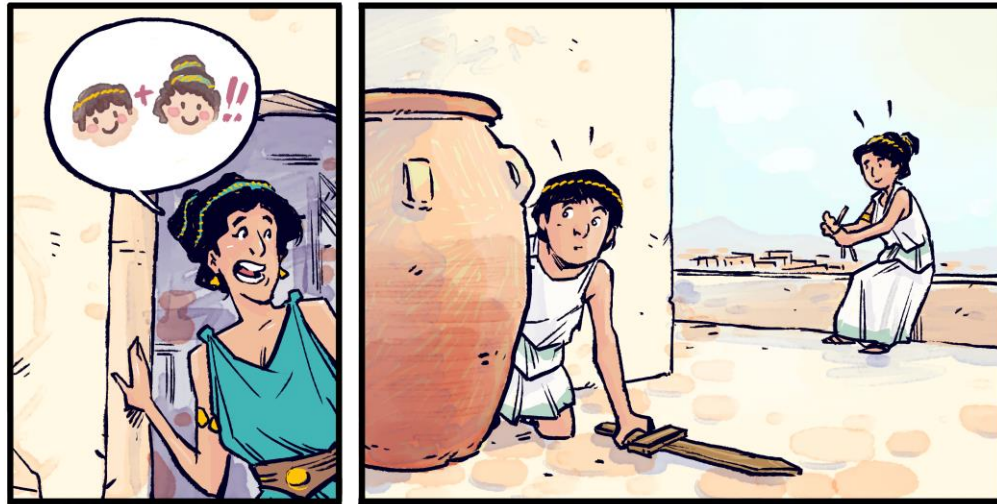
Leon & Meliti: Comic Book

As all forms of storytelling and narration, comics are stories which evoke emotions, and this is the best way for someone to learn. This makes comics an effective tool for teachers and educators.

Reading a comic is a composite procedure of simultaneous reception of words and images, may train children to decode and recode visual messages, and enhances their ability to think in a more complex way.

According to both research and empirical observation, information that is placed inside a wider narrative frame is more easily absorbed and captured by a person's memory, and even more so when it is framed inside an illustrated narration.

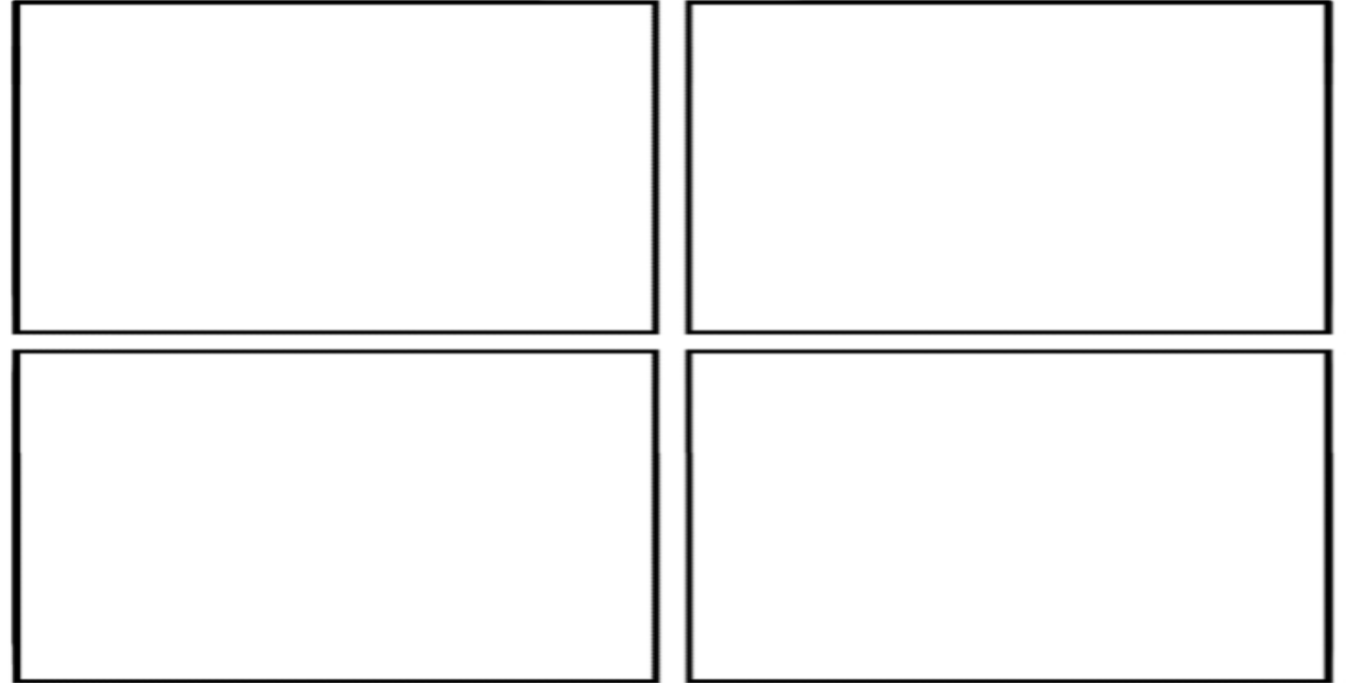
Time Travel with Leon & Meliti: Comics



Mythology, comics and creative activities

-
- The reader of the comic book also participates in the reading process. The space between the panels (called "the gutter") allows each of us to make our own stories inside the given story. It is important of course not to overlook the importance of storytelling in the learning process.

ΚΑΙ ΤΩΡΑ ΕΔΩ ΜΠΟΡΕΙΣ ΝΑ ΦΤΙΑΞΕΙΣ ΤΙΣ ΔΙΚΕΣ ΣΟΥ
ΙΣΤΟΡΙΕΣ ΜΕ ΤΗ ΜΕΛΙΤΗ ΚΑΙ ΤΟΝ ΛΕΟΝΤΑ.



ΜΠΟΡΕΙΤΕ ΝΑ ΦΩΤΟΤΥΠΙΣΕΤΕ ΤΙΣ ΣΕΛΙΔΕΣ ΝΑ ΦΤΙΑΞΕΤΕ ΤΗΝ ΙΣΤΟΡΙΑ ΣΑΣ
ΚΑΙ ΣΤΗ ΣΥΝΕΧΕΙΑ ΝΑ ΤΑ ΔΙΠΛΩΣΕΤΕ ΚΑΙ ΝΑ ΕΧΕΤΕ ΤΟ ΠΡΩΤΟ ΣΑΣ ΤΕΥΧΟΣ!

The Museum of Cycladic Art: Podcasts

The Museum of Cycladic Art podcasts address both adults and children. The podcasts delve into every aspect of the Museum and the themes from its collections, focusing on themes such as marriage in antiquity, sports, everyday activities in Ancient Greece as well as education in antiquity.



The Museum of Cycladic Art: Podcasts

- In each episode, one can hear the fascinating and unique stories behind objects from the museum's collection.
- The scripts are prepared by the department of educational programmes in collaboration with professionals from the field of audio production and script writers.
- Narratives are short, approximately 10 minutes each, and the texts are coherent and easy to understand.



The Museum of Cycladic Art: Guided Tours

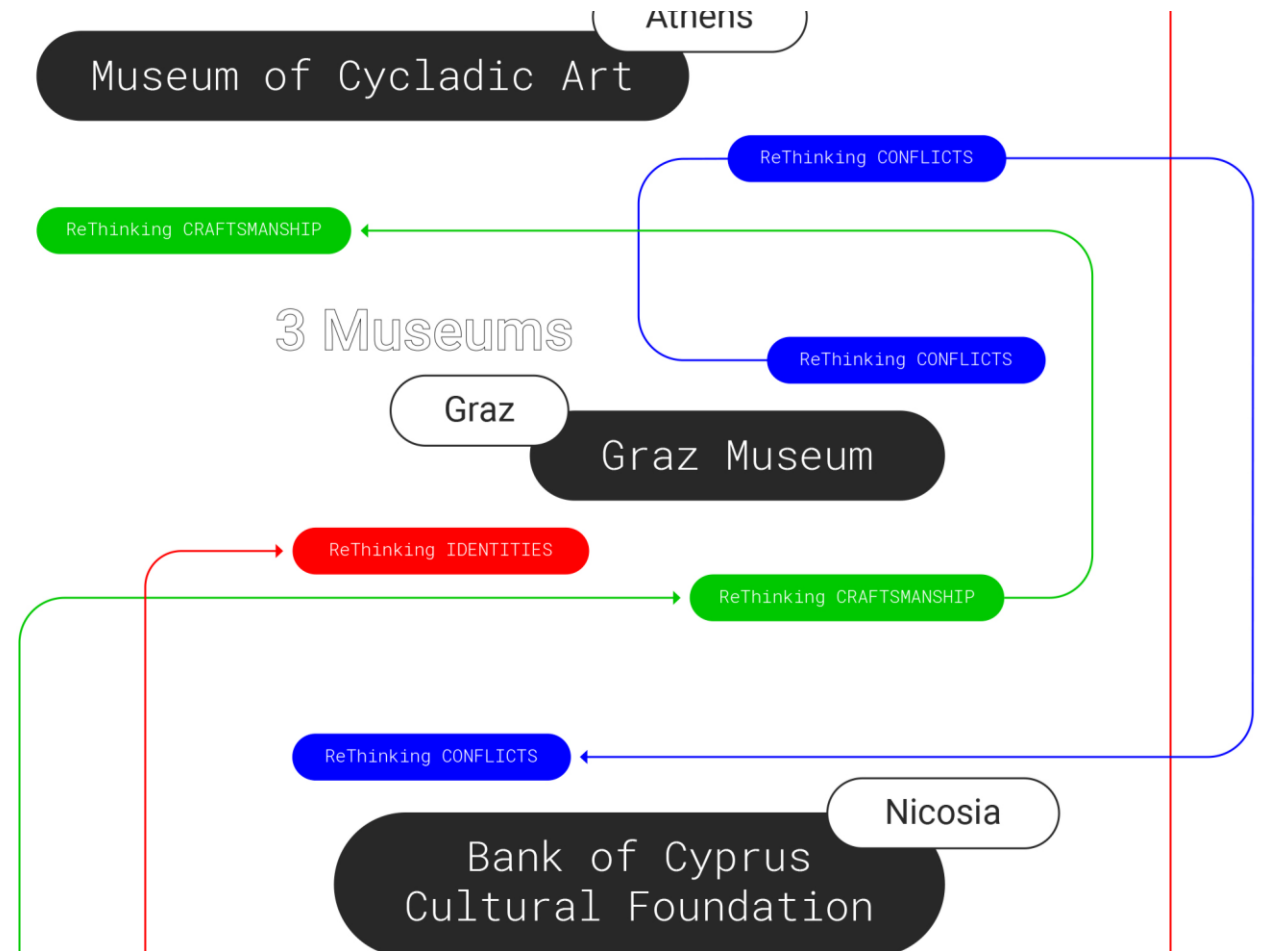
- Guided tours are organized at the premises of the museum and online. Guided tours in sign language are also offered.
- The themes and main activities of the guided tours follow the narration of the Museum's permanent collections as well as the temporary archaeological and contemporary art exhibitions featured throughout the year.
- When it comes to school visits, guided tours are also directly related to the schools' curriculum.

“ReThinking” Exhibitions

- In the framework of storytelling and narration in the museum context, we would also like to highlight a very special temporary exhibition in which narration and storytelling are key.
- It is currently presented by the Museum of Cycladic Art in collaboration with the Graz Museum and the Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation.
- This exhibition was based solely on narration and on highlighting different perspectives and different viewpoints regarding the exhibits.

“ReThinking” Exhibitions

- The “ReThinking” exhibitions, the travelling and digital exhibitions developed in the framework of the ReInHerit project were based on the development of different perspectives spanning over different times and focusing on different social issues that concerned humanity from antiquity to our modern times.



“ReThinking” Exhibitions

- As part of the “ReInHerit” project, funded by the “Horizon2020” program of the European Union, the Museum of Cycladic Art in Athens, the Graz Museum in Austria and the Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation in Nicosia collaborated and developed 3 thematic exhibitions with the title “ReThinking”.
- The “ReThinking” exhibitions focus on social issues which have been relevant to the world from antiquity to the present day: identities, social conflicts, craftsmanship. Each thematic exhibition features three objects selected from the collections of each of the three museums involved in the project. After being presented at the museum where it was originally conceived, each exhibition will travel to Austria, Greece and Cyprus respectively, in order to tell a special story.

“ReThinking” Exhibitions

Under the broad theme of **social issues**, three thematic exhibitions were developed:

- ✓ **ReThinking Identities: Gender, Diversity, Discrimination**
- ✓ **ReThinking Conflicts**
- ✓ **ReThinking Craftsmanship**



The curatorial questions

The design and architecture are central in the „ReThinking“ exhibitions and came after decisions were made about the theme of the exhibition, what to display and why. The storyline informed the amount of space required, the placement of objects and the sequence in which visitors were expected to move around the exhibition, also including the intro and outro stations.

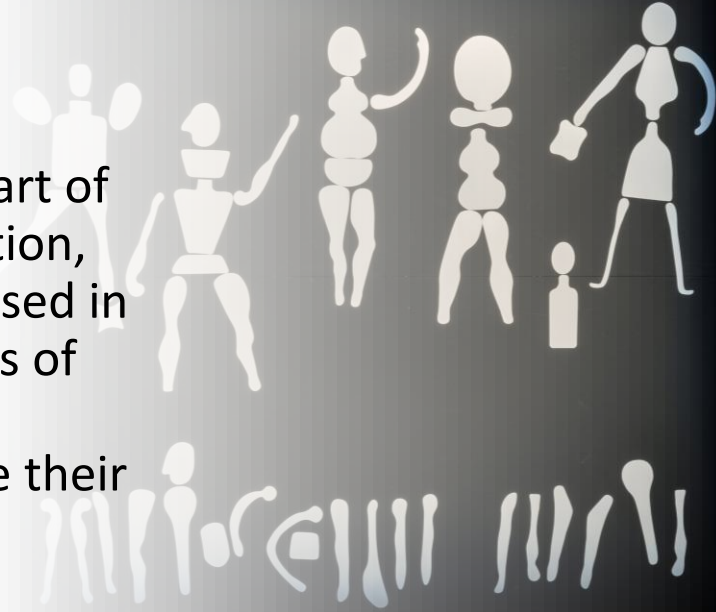
The exhibition's message and curatorial questions were an essential guide for the design. Basic planning considered the set of tasks of each participating partner. The main variables were the length of time allocated to each task, the number of people involved, and whether there was any construction work to be done and by whom.

The „Rethinking“ exhibitions were developed based on the broader concept of social issues. Following that, each participating partner selected one thematic area which they considered more relevant to their collection and objects they would like to feature and developed their own stories.

Immersive Questions

- In order to make visitors part of the narrative of the exhibition, Philomat questions were used in the intro and outro stations of the exhibitions, prompting visitors to reflect and share their own special stories.

touch, play, create



Make it
your own



Thank you!

