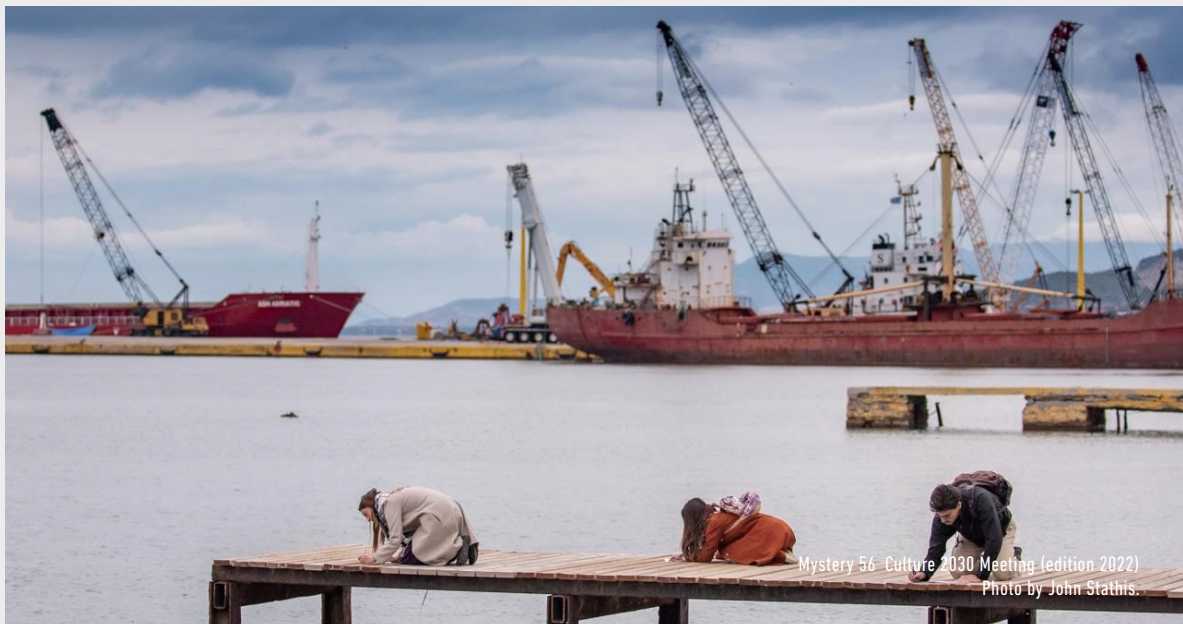


2023 ELEUSIS MYSTERIES OF TRANSITION



Mystery 56 - Culture 2030 Meeting (edition 2022)
Photo by John Stathis.

AGENDA 2030 - SDGs



CULTURE 21 ACTIONS - COMMITMENTS

1. CULTURAL RIGHTS
2. HERITAGE, DIVERSITY AND CREATIVITY
4. CULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT
5. CULTURE AND ECONOMY
7. CULTURE, URBAN PLANNING AND PUBLIC SPACE

ARTS, PUBLIC SPACE, CREATIVITY, COMMUNITY,
ENVIRONMENT, PARTICIPATION, INTERNATIONAL,
MIGRATION, STRATEGY



1. Elefsina and culture

2023 ELEUSIS: THE ARRIVAL OF A NOTABLE SOMEONE | PERSON, THING, OR EVENT.

The city fabric comprises exceptional traces of antiquity, contemporary tales of population movement, industrial development, and trade unionist / labour movements, but also of de-industrialisation and unemployment. The importance of Elefsina as the birthplace of Aeschylus, the special status of women through time across the city's long lifespan, its distinct place within *laikó* (Greek folk) songs that speak of emigrant displacement, unrequited love, and working-class toil – thanks to the accomplishments of the legendary popular singer Stelios Kazantzidis, that incomparable exponent of the form – all imbue this city with hues and facets that are unique.

Drawing inspiration from the rich history of the city 2023 Eleusis forms a comprehensive artistic, research and educational programme. Its Mysteries of Transition focus on three distinct and interconnected central programme themes – People | Society, Environment, and Labour – reflecting the unique features of the city and the contemporary challenges facing both Elefsina and Europe. Through the artistic programme, the city is led away from its prevailing public perception as a disadvantaged industrial city and into a next phase, strengthening its position on the cultural map at a regional, national and international level. This is being realised through wider synergies within the national and international contemporary cultural field, turning the city into a thriving cultural destination, one undoubtedly remarkable for the visitor.

Much like every city chosen to be a new Capital of Culture, Elefsina seems to constitute a field of research, a Model for studying contemporary European issues concerning society, people and relationships, Labour, the Environment, and sustainable Development, as these all appear to connect, collide, or cross within a modern-day city.

MYSTERIES OF TRANSITION SEEKS TO UNVEIL THE INVISIBLE SIDE OF ELEFSINA, MARKING A NEW ERA FOR THE CITY AND ITS TRANSITION TO A NEW MODEL OF DEVELOPMENT, FOCUSING ON ITS DYNAMIC CULTURAL ASSETS.



2. Project goals and implementation

2.1. Main goal and specific objectives

The main objective of the programme is to create a strong tangible and intangible Legacy, to build a new cultural identity for Elefsina by introducing new institutions – in cultural and infrastructural terms – as well as by strengthening and expanding the existing ones.

The goals of 2023 Eleusis European Capital of Culture are:

1. To strengthen the sense of identity, belonging and community among citizens, encouraging them to “dive” as a society into their shared collective memory and bring it to light.
2. To encourage and stimulate interdisciplinary dialogue in the fields of culture, science, technology and society.
3. To promote the city as a regional centre of cultural education and creativity through innovative activities, residency programmes, training and practical learning programmes, platforms and networks for connection with other cities of similar dynamics at the national and the international level.
4. To expand the possibility of using public spaces in attractive and unpredictable ways designed to invite all the different communities, integrating their different experiences into a new way of using public spaces.
5. To shape a collective ecological consciousness and enhance the already high level of environmental awareness.
6. To strengthen and expand the city’s cultural assets and infrastructure.
7. To create institutions and enhance cultural collectives.
8. To contribute to the development of new – or the strengthening of existing – infrastructure that improves the quality of daily life and makes full use of the city’s advantageous location and uniqueness.
9. To develop the use of public space.



2.2. Project development

We have brought together around 345 partners and organisations – from national institutions to non-profit organisations of the local independent scene, as well as embassies involved in our programming. We have achieved a diversification of our local and international partnerships, leading to a total of 137 European and international partners (including stakeholders from more than 20 European countries, the USA, Colombia, Japan and others).

Because of these meaningful partnerships, it is possible to present a diverse, profound, and engaging programme that includes a plethora of artistic projects.

In order to shape a sustainable, strong and international cultural capital in the city of Elefsina, we have launched collaborations with such national institutions as the National Museum of Contemporary Art Athens (EMST), the Benaki Museum, and the Greek Film Archive and have developed an international networking strategy with an emphasis on forging strategic partnerships with such European networks and organisations.

WE CONSIDER THE CITY TO BE A STAGE, WITH ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT OF ALL ITS HUMAN POTENTIAL. THE WHOLE ARTISTIC PROGRAMME IS DISTRIBUTED HORIZONTALLY, SPREAD ALL OVER THE CITY, SO THAT IT CAN EMBRACE THE NEIGHBORHOODS AND THE PLACES WHERE THE MOST VULNERABLE POPULATION GROUPS ARE LOCATED.



3. Impacts

3.1. Direct impacts

Data collection and monitoring of the progress of 2023 Eleusis, carried out by Panteion University, is an essential part of our programming. In addition, important evidence for the monitoring of the cultural activity of the city of Elefsina emerged in January 2019 through a self-assessment workshop held in collaboration with UCLG and CAE, leading to the update of the overall long-term cultural strategy of the city through participatory processes.

3.2. Assessment

In collaboration with 2023 Eleusis, the evaluation team of Panteion University has created a multidimensional database for the continuous monitoring of qualitative and quantitative indicators. Most were set with reference to the guidelines of the European Commission, while some additional ones are based on the findings of previous ECoC assessments.

3.3. Key factors

The project acts as a catalyst at a local, national and international level for:

- The goal of keeping the young people in the city, establishing an attractive environment for young people with know-how and innovative ideas.
- Developing the dynamism, creativity and social cohesion of the city, reinforcing the optimism, dynamism and creativity of its citizens.

- Changing the stereotypical image of Elefsina as an industrial, polluted city and establishing Elefsina as a dynamic cultural centre in the region.
- Mutual understanding, promoting Elefsina to become an effective interlocutor in the European and international dialogue.

3.4. Continuity

The city of Elefsina is outwardly changing thanks to the delivery of the infrastructure needed to host the events and actions of the European Capital of Culture programme, coming to a head in the title year of 2023.

These renovated buildings, not to mention the improvements made to urban infrastructure, will also live on as a legacy for the city, driving sustainable development and helping to expand the cultural economy of the area.

4. Further information

Elefsina was a candidate for the fifth “UCLG – Mexico City – Culture 21” International Award (February – June 2022). The jury for the award drew up its final report in September 2022 and requested that the Committee on Culture promote this project as one of the good practices to be implemented through Agenda 21 for culture.

This article was written by Angeliki Lampiri, Director of Cultural Training | 2023 Eleusis European Capital of Culture, Elefsina, Greece.

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