



OPEN CALL APPLY UNTIL 30 SEPTEMBER 2023

A nine-day intensive artist residency on the Mysteries of art in energizing Athens & Elefsina European Capital of Culture 2023

THE RESIDENCY, WORKSHOP AND PRESENTATION PROJECT ADDRESSES JEWELRY MAKERS, VISUAL ARTISTS, DESIGNERS, PHOTOGRAPHERS, CRAFTERS, CERAMISTS, PERFORMERS, FILMMAKERS, ART THEORISTS WHO WISH TO DIVE INTO THE GREEK MYTH OF DEATH AND RESURRECTION. THE MYTH OF PERSEPHONE ALSO HIGHLIGHTS THE MOTHER AND DAUGHTER BONDING, AND THE CHALLENGES OF GROWING UP.

The Road To Elefsina aims at expanding the artists' spectrum of cultural experiences, and offering insight into the beginnings of civilization. The learning program enhances artists' understanding of how art and poetry may have a soothing effect on human agonies.

The open call addresses artists from various disciplines, placing emphasis on objects, performance, jewelry, textiles, and their special connection with mysteries of transcendence.

The residency in Athens includes intensive workshops in storytelling, performance and video, and promotes the artists' work through presentation, catalogue and participation in video festivals. The physical residency follows an online introduction to the significance of Greek heritage for contemporary artists.

CONTEXT

For 2,000 years, a farming community close to Athens was the spiritual center of the ancient world. Pilgrims from all over came to Eleusis* (modern-day Elefsina) to be initiated to mysteries befriending them with death. Men, women, free people, and slaves, Greeks and foreigners watched the myth of Persephone staged and revived in the sacred site of Eleusis, and witnessed the young goddess returning from Hades.

Sacred rituals including recitation, performance, and presentation of sacred objects taught initiates the secret of immortal bliss. If it were not one of the most important religious ceremonies of the ancient world, it could have been one of the most glamorous art events of all times.

The Road to Elefsina focuses on the myth of a girl becoming a woman and the art representations connected to it, as well as on the social background, history and concepts of the Eleusinian mysteries, also called "orgies". Residents are challenged to explore the myth of Persephone, her abduction, sacred marriage and death, and give their own interpretation of eternal flow.

The artists residency also aims at making contact with the past through a ritual walk; a ritual performance inspired by illustrations on vases, murals, statues, objects is also part of retrieving an elusive experience through the body. The program offers insight into the vast history of Greek civilization that manifests itself, often unnoticed, in the most unusual and tacky places of modern Athens topography.

Last but not least, the residency program teaches participants how to make their art work's presentation meaningful, surprising and irresistible through words, plot, performance and video.

** Elefsina is European Capital of Culture 2023, and offers a wide range of events and shows throughout the year.*

THE CHALLENGE OF ELEUSIS FOR CONTEMPORARY ARTISTS, DESIGNERS & CRAFTERS

The mysteries of Eleusis were also taught by revealing the sacred objects to the initiates during the ceremony of the midnight sun. What kind of objects were shown to illustrate the meaning of life and the antidote to death is a question that remains to be answered. We can only speculate how the sacred objects would look like today to reflect sustainable values. Contemporary artists can find meaning and inspiration in the concept of *Philokalia* according to which truth and beauty are one and the same.

The Road to Elefsina encourages the participants to imagine answers to this question. It addresses the need of individual artists and artist communities for an *ethical* restart; it also takes into account that applied art and jewelry - art objects that can be used - can play an important role in reshaping standards and status quo symbols in times of climate change, social and political unrest.

Residency details:

The residency program includes accommodation, guided tours in Athens and Eleusis designed for artists, three workshops on storytelling, performance, communication and video, as well as an online introduction on Greek heritage and on the importance of interdisciplinary approach for the artist's work promotion.

Videos created by the residents will be screened in SMCK ON REEL 2024 at *Schmuck* Munich.

Services included:

- 9 days/8 nights accommodation in downtown Athens (see options below)
- Guided tours and open air workshops in Athens and Elefsina
- Workshops & e-workshop on the history and mythology of Elefsina + narrative and storytelling + concept and storyboard + video art and photography
- Concept, idea and design of objects; performance practice; video script and shooting
- Promotion & publication of the participants' work in SMCK Magazine For Independent Artists (issue 10).
- Video presentation for SMCK On Reel 2024 at Schmuck - Jewelry Week of Munich 2024
- Jewelry and small objects online sales
- The residency project will be documented on FaveLAB Athens and KLIMT02 website.

Full timetable:

A. e-workshop before arrival:

Why Greek mythology and heritage is still inspiring; the myth of Persephone, and its multiple interpretations (2 hours).

The e-workshop takes place before the residents' arrival in Athens.

B. Nine day residency in Athens:

- Sunday: Arrival, short introduction; small guided tour through the neighborhood and downtown Athens (1 hour).\
- Monday: Walk and Ride to Elefsina: Experiencing the stages of the myth; visiting the sanctuary and the local museum. The role of art in Ancient Greece. (8 hours).
- Tuesday: Workshop I: Myth, Culture, Plot (3 hours)
- Wednesday: Acropolis and Agora visit: Democracy, Spirituality, Theater and Healing (8 hours).\
- Thursday: Workshop II: Plot and performance. Outstanding artist presentations - how to? Why narrative? Shooting a video (4 hours).\
- Friday: Curated visit to the National Archaeological Museum of Athens. Customized selection of treasures to view, analyze and understand. (3 hours).\
- Saturday: Workshop III; Canalizing inspiration in new work. New formats for presenting and promoting art and design. An overview of exhibition opportunities. (3 hours). Presentation of artists' concepts and work.\
- Sunday: The „flea market“ on the Sacred Way or social rituals revisited! Experiencing one of Athens most authentic places; Lunch at the oldest „locals only“ taverna of Athens. (3 hours).
- Monday: Departure of residents.

Residency dates, fees & accommodation

Artists may choose their accommodation in various downtown studios offering the best options for different budgets. Each residency unit can be followed by seven participants simultaneously. If desired, artists have the possibility to extend their residency by more days.

The residency fees (see below) are payable in two or three installments.

OPTIONS:

A. Kolonos: size 200m² / max. 4 residents / individual room/shared facilities

B. Exarchia: size 102m² / max. 2 residents / individual room/shared facilities

C. Kypseli: size 52m² / One artist only / Exclusive use of bathroom and kitchen

1. Sunday 19 to Monday 26 November 2023

A. Kolonos – 630,00 euro

B. Exarchia – 690,00 euro

C. Kypseli – 730,00 euro

2. Sunday 4 to Monday 11 December 2023

A. Kolonos – 630,00 euro

B. Exarchia – 690,00 euro

C. Kypseli – 730,00 euro

Detailed information about the studio apartments in Athens can be found on our partner website >>> [FaveLAB](#).

HOW TO APPLY:

Please send your application to magazine@smck.org, including a cover letter with your motivation, CV, and your website and/or social media link(s). Also send us your desired residency date(s) and accommodation preference.

Application deadline is **30 September 2023**.