

GETTY CONSERVATION INSTITUTE ANNOUNCES SHORTLIST FOR DESIGN OF PROTECTIVE SHELTERS FOR ANCIENT MOSAICS

Shelters will protect two of the most significant Roman mosaics at Nea Pafos, a UNESCO World Heritage site in Cyprus



Left: General view of the southwest part of the Villa of Theseus and House of Orpheus closer to the sea. CIMS (Carleton Immersive Media Studio) for the GCI, 2018. Courtesy of the J. Paul Getty Trust
Right: The Theseus mosaic. Photo by Scott Warren. Courtesy of the J. Paul Getty Trust

LOS ANGELES – The Department of Antiquities in Cyprus (DoA) and the Getty Conservation Institute (GCI) announced today the shortlist for a competition to design protective shelters at the World Heritage site of Nea Pafos (alternately known as Nea Paphos) in Cyprus.

The shelters will be used at the Villa of Theseus and House of Orpheus, two Roman residences with some of the best-preserved and important mosaics on the island. The competition is part of a larger DoA/GCI effort to advance the conservation and management of this important archaeological site. The shortlisted firms will now create conceptual designs for their proposed prototype structures, with a final design to be selected in 2021.

The six shortlisted architecture firms are:

- Carmody Groarke
London, UK
www.carmodygroarke.com
- Studio Gionata Rizzi
Milan, Italy
www.studiogionatarizzi.com
- Cullinan Studio
London, UK
www.cullinanstudio.com
- Hugh Broughton Architects
London, UK
www.hbarchitects.co.uk

- Machado Silvetti
Boston, Massachusetts, USA
www.machado-silvetti.com
- Sela Jaymes Architects (working in association with Gort Scott)
London, UK
www.selajaymesarchitect.design

For their initial expressions of interest, architecture firms were asked to address how they would approach the design of a protective shelter. Those selected will now be asked to create a concept design that meets several requirements, including ensuring the protection of the mosaics from human and environmental threats, connecting the design to the site and setting, using materials and skills that are locally available, and creating conditions for viewing the mosaics and facilitating circulation of visitors. A single firm will be selected from this shortlist to develop a detailed prototype design. The prototype will then be monitored to assess performance, and revised as needed before finalizing a design that can be used to protect selected mosaics on the site.

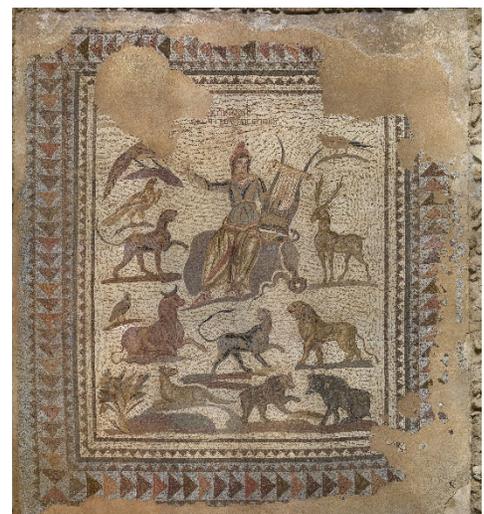
The evaluation committee for the competition includes members of the DoA, the GCI and an interdisciplinary group of external experts.

“The GCI has a longstanding relationship with Cyprus and the site of Nea Pafos, which was the focus of one of our first field projects some 30 years ago,” says Jeanne Marie Teutonico, associate director for strategy and special initiatives at the GCI. “Our enduring cooperation with the Department of Antiquities in Cyprus has allowed us to return to the site and engage with these talented architects to create long-term protection for the site’s extraordinary ancient mosaics — and to develop approaches to sheltering that will benefit other archaeological sites worldwide.”

Located in the Eastern Mediterranean, the island of Cyprus has been a major cultural and economic crossroad for over two millennia, absorbing and transmitting influences between Africa, Asia, and Europe. The World Heritage site of Pafos in Cyprus includes two ancient cities, Nea Pafos and Palaepafos. Nea Pafos and its Necropolis are the current focus of the DoA/GCI project. The Nea Pafos site includes significant remains from the Hellenistic, Roman, early Christian, and Byzantine periods, which include important figural and geometric mosaics pavements, as well as medieval monuments.

Today, the site is valued by locals and tourists alike as an escape from the bustle of modern Pafos and a place of historical and cultural importance. It is also home to many rare plants and a refuge for migratory birds, and offers picturesque coastal views of the Mediterranean Sea. However, the site faces a number of challenges, including modern development and potential hazards due to tourism and climate change.

Among Nea Pafos’ most important Roman residences are the Villa of Theseus and the House of Orpheus. The Villa of Theseus is by far the largest and most fully intact of all the excavated houses in the residential quarter of the ancient city. One shelter will protect a number of significant mosaics in the southeastern part of the Villa, including a surviving panel from the life of Achilles, a depiction of Theseus and the Minotaur in the Labyrinth, and a bath complex with several beautiful geometric mosaics.



The Orpheus and the Beasts mosaic post conservation and prior to its reburial. Photo by Vassos Stylianou

The House of Orpheus is the closest of the excavated houses to the sea, and is the much smaller neighbor to the Villa of Theseus. A shelter will be used to protect its Amazon and Heracles mosaic, which depicts in one of the panels the moment before the battle between Heracles and the Lion of Nemea, and the Orpheus and the Beasts mosaic, in which every living animal is gathered to listen to Orpheus' divine music.

The Nea Pafos Conservation and Management Project is part of Getty's [Ancient Worlds Now: A Future for the Past](#), a decade-long global initiative to promote a greater understanding of the world's cultural heritage and its value to global society, including far-reaching education, research, and conservation efforts.

For more information about the GCI's work in Cyprus, visit:
https://www.getty.edu/conservation/our_projects/field_projects/paphos/.

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The Getty Conservation Institute (GCI) works internationally to advance conservation practice in the visual arts—broadly interpreted to include objects, collections, architecture, and sites. The Institute serves the conservation community through scientific research, education and training, field projects, and the dissemination of information. In all its endeavors, the GCI creates and delivers knowledge that contributes to the conservation of the world's cultural heritage.