

D. Areopagitou Opinions

Athens Art Deco gem could be torn down for view of the Parthenon... **USA TODAY**

It was designed by a friend of Pablo Picasso, adorned with mosaics depicting Oedipus and the Sphinx, and described as Art Deco at its Athenian best. But a row about the building that guidebooks describe as a 'must-see' on the boulevard linking the Greek capital's great classical sites is now threatening to eclipse the opening of Europe's most ambitious museum. **GUARDIAN**

Thousands of protesters demonstrated in Athens to prevent the demolition of an Art Deco building near a new museum on the Acropolis. Neighborhood residents, supported by an international petition carrying 8,000 signatures, are appealing plans authorizing the destruction of the building. They are supported by the modern Greek architecture specialist François Loyer, who said in a letter to the Greek culture minister, Michalis Liapis, that the demolitions would be a major "error". **NEW YORK TIMES**

Mobilisation internationale pour defendre un batiment Art Deco a Athenes: Plusieurs milliers de personnes, parmi lesquelles plusieurs universitaires europeens et americains, se sont mobilisees pour s'opposer a la destruction d' un bâtiment Art Deco dans le centre d' Athenes, en marge de la construction du nouveau musee de la Acropole. **AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE**

We declare our opposition for the demolition of the historical listed building on D. Areopagitou st. These buildings form the integral part of the streetscale by the Acropolis rock signifying and symbolizing the harmonic coexistence of several periods and the diachronicity of Hellenic Architecture and history. **ICOMOS, International Council for Monuments and Sites**

That the new museum was constructed without reference to its surrounding is the fault of its architect. However «star architects» and their political protectors sweeping popular opposition before their idiosyncratic confections is depressingly common around the world. **M. Hardy, INTBAU Intern. Network for Traditional Building Archit. & Urbanism**

Athens has successfully countered the British Museum's argument for retaining the Marbles in London. However, we feel strongly that the self-evident moral strength of Athens's case would be seriously compromised if the completion of the new museum were to be marked by the misguided destruction of such an important part of its heritage as 17 Dionysiou Areopagitou. **Judith Levine BA. Hons Arch, Chris Blencowe AADipl. LONDON**

It was with great horror that I read in The Observer that there are plans to demolish the buildings at 17 & 19 D. Areopagitou street. To demolish these in order to improve the view from the New Acropolis Museum is outrageous and a crime not only against Athens but also against all the world citizens who would be deprived from admiring these prime examples of early 20th century architecture. I urge the Greek authorities to stop this act of madness. **Pedro Esterela, PhD CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY, UK**

I am saddened that such a fine example of Greek Art Deco Architecture could be torn down. To think that people from around the globe would have to tell the Athenian Government that preserving their built environment is important, is unbelievable. **R. Cunningham, President ART DECO SOCIETY OF LOS ANGELES**

The demolition of this building, a monument of high aesthetic, historical and mnemonic value, will harm and degrade this sense of diachronic cultural development, and will devalue the Acropolis and its New Museum, as well as the Athenian Cultural Heritage as a whole. **Larry Zimmerman, WORLD ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONGRESS**

Greek government is doing what Mussolini did in the 30's in order to built the infamous Via Della Conciliazione in Rome. If the greek politicians do not have a fascists approach to architecture, they must protect Areopagitou 17 **Max Fazio, ITALY**

The Art Deco era was one of huge change and progress and produced a style of architecture which conveyed the spirit of its age as perhaps no other style has. These buildings, once gone, they are gone forever. Your country knows that only too well and should continue to set an example for us all. **Robert Mc Gregor Director, ART DECO TRUST, NEW ZEALAND**

Indigné par le projet de démolition de la maison Art Nouveau au pied de l' Acropole, un des rares chefs d'oeuvre de l' Athènes moderne, je vous prie instamment de surseoir à ce projet funeste, et indigne de votre pays. **Gérard Regnier, Directeur Honoraire du MUSEE NATIONAL PICASSO, PARIS**

There MUST be an alternative to the draconian measure of destroying the buildings. Please don't act like the current US President, who is unwilling to compromise and to recognize the opinions of others. History will not judge his actions kindly and I'm afraid that future Athenians will judge you harshly as well, if you allow this marvelous building to be destroyed for the sake of some perceived short term gain for the museum. **Patty Morlan, Louisville, USA**

The only reason for destroying these cultural icons would be to create a better view of the Acropolis from the new museum. Yet people visit museums out of respect for culture and human achievement. I doubt future visitors to the new museum would be happy with the knowledge that history was destroyed so that they could take a few pretty photos. **J. Pouloupoulos, QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY, CANADA**

The cultural value of this building is immense and the failure of Mr Voulgarakis to recognize it is shocking. Greek culture is more than an ancient past and a desperate-to-catch-up, modern present. If the current situation is simply a huge blunder by planners, there are other ways to resolve it. The creative challenge to which the planners and architects ought to aspire is the incorporation of these important cultural artifacts into the overall site, not their demolition. The latter is the lazy man's solution. **Neocles Serafimidis PhD, CALIFORNIA**