

# 'The Complete Sculptures of Edgar Degas' lets visitors 'travel back in time'

Athens is the first stop of a major exhibition titled "The Complete Sculptures of Edgar Degas", as the entire collection of 74 bronze sculptures by the French impressionist master embarks on a world tour.

In Greece, the exhibition is hosted at the Herakleidon Museum, where it will run through April 25, 2010.

The Athens venue has many "firsts". Apart from being the first stop on the world tour, it is also the first time Degas' sculptures are exhibited in Greece, and the first time all 74 sculptures are

presented together. But another, important, first is that visitors will have, for the first time, the opportunity to "travel back in time", according to the organisers, who went on to explain:

"We have all heard of scientists using sophisticated equipment to discover a painting of a famous artist, Da Vinci for example, hidden under one of his later works. It was not uncommon for a painter to recycle a canvas, sometimes painting the same subject, but differently. Alas, one cannot access the earlier work without destroying the

later, well-known version. In other words, one may travel back in time, but without the possibility of returning to the present. Nobody is interested in that kind of travel!

"But now we have a unique opportunity. All the bronze sculptures in this exhibition were cast from recently discovered plasters made from Degas' original waxes during his lifetime and with his consent. This is remarkable since all the other bronzes one currently sees in museums and elsewhere were cast from masters made after the artist's death. Therefore, the

bronzes in this exhibition can be considered as the original versions, and all the others as the second versions of the sculptures. Thus, for the first time, it will be possible for experts, scholars and the general public to compare the artist's bronzes in the before and after states, almost unparalleled in the history of art."

The Museum will publish a special edition catalogue in three languages. The fascinating essays in this catalogue by Mr. Walter Maibaum and Dr. Gregory Hedberg detail the history of this discovery

and the differences between the bronze editions. Dr. June Hargrove's essay discusses the relationship between Edgar Degas' two and three-dimensional works so that appropriate comparisons can be made.

"The Herakleidon Museum is very proud to have been selected as the organizer of this travelling exhibition of these extraordinary bronzes. Our purpose is to make the works of this truly first modern sculptor available to a broader audience," say Paul and Belinda Firos, founders of the Herakleidon Museum.



## Wall of ancient Macedonian city of Vergina revealed in excavation

*An excavation by the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH) at the archaeological site of Vergina has uncovered an exceptional fortification structure surrounding the ancient Macedonian city. According to a university announcement, the architectural elements of the enclosure indicate that it dates back to the reign of Cassander, in the early 3rd century B.C, a period when Macedonia was plagued by major turmoil, including civil wars and attacks from outside. The findings are of remarkable importance because the wall is preserved in perfect condition and its height reaches 1.90cm. The archaeological team also unearthed a large number of mobile findings, charred seeds and food dated from the 2nd- 1st century BC.*

# Historian examines the lives of war generation

*AMAC forum a 'curate's egg': good in parts and strange in others*

*A prominent Melbourne academic is researching the impact of memories of WWII in Greece and the Civil War on Greek-Australians.*

Speaking at the Australian Macedonian Advisory Council (AMAC) forum last Monday, Professor Joy Damousi (foto), head of the School of Historical Studies at Melbourne University said that the experiences of migrants who grew up in Greece during the war years of the 1940s is the topic of her next book.

She highlighted the need to "put on the map" the experiences of migrants who lived through the trauma of invasion, a war of resistance followed by internecine conflict.

"There are intergenerational effects of the memories the Greek migrants brought to Australia but also the community and the wider society, said Professor Damousi.

"How they [migrants] relate to their children, what memories they recount and how their experiences shape their identity and that of the second and third generation are important elements of the history of the Greek community, Australia but also Greece" she said.

Professor Damousi is an award-winning historian whose parents



migrated from Florina in the 1950s, in the years following one of the most turbulent periods in Greek history.

She said that in Greece the study of that period has been "polarised" as it focuses on the actions of the two sides. "The actual everyday experiences of the people have not been researched" Professor Damousi said.

During her recent fieldwork in Greece she spoke to survivors of WWII and the Civil War. She found "emotional and challenging" the interviews with mothers whose children were removed from their families. Around 22,000 children were taken into bordering communist nations by Greek left-wing rebels during the Civil War. T

here is bitter argument as to whether these children were forcibly removed, or handed over by their parents in order to save them from the horrors of war.

"Some of those children migrated to Australia and it's important to tell their story," said the professor.

Mr Dean Kalymnios, secretary of the Panepirotic Federation of Australia, another guest speaker at the forum, focused on the Greek lobby's "ineffectiveness" to influence public opinion on the question of Macedonia.

He underscored the need for "generational change" in the Greek community, describing the Greek community today as "fragmented and insular." Mr Kalymniou's said, "[t]he first generation likes to destroy what they don't control" and went on to criticise them for playing "political chess" with community organisations.

The forum broke out into disorder when members of the Pan-Macedonian Association of Melbourne and Victoria exchanged verbal fire with members of AMAC over their position on the question of FYROM's claim to the name Macedonia.

The heated exchange did not last long, but exposed an emerging divide between AMAC and Pan-Macedonian organisations over the FYROM naming issue. There were about 40 people at the forum where, among guest speakers, AMAC representatives talked about the organisation's media monitoring and responses to media representations of FYROM as 'Macedonia'.

James Papadopoulos, from AMAC said that they are a new organisation and "taking small steps, of which this forum is just one small step."