



THE AMERICAN COMMITTEE FOR THE REUNIFICATION OF THE PARTHENON SCULPTURES, INC.

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March 15, 2007

PRESS RELEASE

Re: ANNOUNCEMENT OF WASHINGTON, D.C. LECTURE APRIL 14, 2007

The Board of Directors of the American Committee for the Reunification of the Parthenon Sculptures, Inc. (“ACRPS”), are pleased to announce our first lecture event to be held on April 14, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. at the Frosene Education Center at Saint Sophia Greek Orthodox Cathedral, 36th and Massachusetts Avenue NW, Washington, DC. This event has been made possible, in large part, due to the support of The Hellenic Society Prometheas of the Washington Metropolitan Area and is co-sponsored by the American Hellenic Institute and the Society for the Preservation of Greek Heritage. The main lecture, titled: “The Looting of the Parthenon: Why the Parthenon Sculptures Now in London Must be Returned to Athens,” will be presented by ACRPS’s President and Legal Advisor, Michael J. Reppas, Esq.

Mr. Reppas has published several Law Review, magazine and newspaper articles on this topic and has lectured extensively for the return of the Sculptures over the last decade. His work has been cited as legal authority by dozens of the top Law Journals and International Reviews throughout the United States. His unique presentation will provide those in attendance with an emotional and visually dynamic experience, wherein the historical, philosophical and legal aspects of the debate will be presented for consideration. A brief summary of the lecture is provided below.

The Parthenon Sculptures, a/k/a the “Elgin Marbles,” are a collection of some of the most acclaimed and symbolic sculptures that the world has ever known. For generations the Parthenon and her Marbles have served as a paradigm of modern art and architecture and, without question, are the cultural property of Greece. The sculptures were an integral part of the temple that adorned the walls of the Parthenon for nearly 2,500 years until they were forcibly removed between 1801-1810 by the British Lord Elgin. The taking is the foremost example of 19th Century looting that has filled the trophy cases of the British Museum with looted treasures and spoils of war

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amassed at the height of European Colonialism. The taking occurred at a time when Greece was occupied by the Ottoman Empire, as she had been for nearly four centuries prior thereto; at a time when she was without the power to stop the pillage. The circumstances surrounding the taking, the documented bribery and extortion employed by Elgin and his men to effect the dismemberment and to box and ship Greece's most prized piece of cultural property is what has made this debate the *cause celebre* amongst all restitution claims in the world.

Attendees of this lecture will be afforded the opportunity to hear the story of the Parthenon Marbles from an international litigator's perspective. More than this, attendees will be provided with intellectual fodder to consider and answer some of the most basic questions posed in the looted artifacts debate, such as "who can own the past," "who has a right to keep looted treasures," and "can anyone *own* someone else's history." In short, this lecture is much more than just a summary of the historical taking and a moral plea for the Marbles return. It is a thought-provoking event that will challenge your beliefs and compel you to act.

ACRPS has joined the ranks of 16 International Committees world-wide to campaign for the return of the Parthenon Marbles from London to Athens. The American Committee works extensively with our international counterparts, the Greek Ministry of Culture, and legislators from the United States and abroad to challenge Britain's *defacto* ownership of the Marbles. This first event is an opportunity to hear our message and understand how we are diligently pursuing our goal. It is also an opportunity for those in the Washington D.C. Metropolitan Area to participate in this global campaign and to make the American Committee the leader in the international movement.

We sincerely hope you will not miss this opportunity and we look forward to meeting you at our inaugural event.

On behalf of the Board of Directors,

Λεφτερις Καρμιρις

Lefteris Karmiris
Secretary