



JM Mouskos Foundation

MOCA Cyprus

Proposal for an International Bi-Communal Museum of
Contemporary Arts within the Walled City of Nicosia, Cyprus.

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'If you look into the sands of time and say which grain will grow, and which will not then speak to me'. William Shakespeare.

Nicosia and the Buffer Zone

Seen from the sky, the Venetian Walled City of Nicosia looks like a sunflower. It is the only divided city in the world.

A United Nations controlled 'buffer zone' commonly known as the Green Line runs east to west across Cyprus, directly through the centre of Nicosia's Walled City. Here buildings and streets of outstanding cultural heritage dating back to the 16th century have been abandoned and are rapidly becoming crumbling remnants. Generations of Greek and Turkish Cypriots have freely walked among these buildings, within these streets, freely lived within the city walls.

For several years bi-communal initiatives have evolved with the aim of creating a positive atmosphere of reconciliation trust and cooperation; the principle being The 1984 Nicosia Master Plan, which seeks to control development within the walled city and reverse its decay. More recent initiatives under the umbrella of this Plan seek to remove traces of the conflict and encourage people from both sides to re-inhabit neglected neighbourhoods.

Context

Cyprus is located at the eastern most point of the Mediterranean, where 3 continents meet. It measures 240 kilometres (149 miles) long from end to end, and 100 kilometres (62 miles at its widest). The Cyprus conflict of 1974 divided the island: The Turkish Cypriot community now live in 36% of the area north of the buffer, while The Greek Cypriot community now live in 59% of the area to the south of the buffer zone. More than 2 million tourists visit the island each year. The combined population is approximately 800,000. Nicosia, the island's capital city is visited by approximately 5% of tourists.

Art Museums – Revitalization of the economy

Art rises above everyday prejudices, is enjoyed by everyone. When art is combined with world-class architecture, it has the potential to economically and socially transform cities. London, Bilbao Los Angeles, Stuttgart, Paris and soon Abu Dhabi have all benefited from hosting major International Museums, exhibitions and collections.

The Guggenheim Museum Bilbao was opened as part of a revitalization effort for the city of Bilbao. Almost immediately the Museum became a popular tourist attraction, drawing visitors from around the world.

In its first three years, almost 4 million tourists visited the Museum, helping to generate €500 million in economic activity. The regional council estimated that the money visitors spent on hotels, restaurants, shops and transport allowed it to collect €100 million in taxes, which more than paid for the building cost. The so-called 'Guggenheim Bilbao effect' refers to how the museum transformed the city.

Nicosia is in urgent need of social and economic regeneration; our proposals have the potential not only to transform the fortunes of Nicosia, but of Cyprus.

Our Vision

Our initiative seeks to advance the Nicosia Master Plan with a proposal for an International 'gateway' Museum that reaches into the buffer zone and unites communities; created by a partnership of experts from both communities, collaborating with Foundations and Institutions worldwide.

The proposed International Museum of Contemporary Art **MOCA Cyprus** will be located in the cultural quarter of the walled city in Nicosia, built on the buffer zone as a symbol of trust and belief in the future, a metaphor for a new beginning in Cyprus.

Our vision is to create a 'Museum of light,' a place where people from both communities step into the future among outstanding collections of international contemporary art in an environment that combines elements of historical and contemporary architecture. It will be a place where we challenge what a Museum can be. As a museum of the 21st century it will address issues of how the public interact with art and explore ways of taking art out into the wider world. **MOCA Cyprus** will draw reference from exciting initiatives in progressive Museums of our time such as TATE Modern, MOMA, among many others across the world.

MOCA Cyprus will draw reference from exciting initiatives in progressive Museums of our time such as TATE Modern where Olafur Eliasson brought an artwork powered by solar energy. His *Little Sun* project launched with blackout evenings when the gallery lights were switched off and visitors illuminated paintings and sculptures using specially designed solar-powered lamps.

These events highlighted that 1.6 billion people worldwide have little or no reliable access to electricity. Through the sale of the lamps, the project is on-going and will enable communities to use solar-powered light in their homes and business. In his blog for Tate's website, Eliasson said, "Everyone in the world should be able to hold a bit of sunlight in the hand".

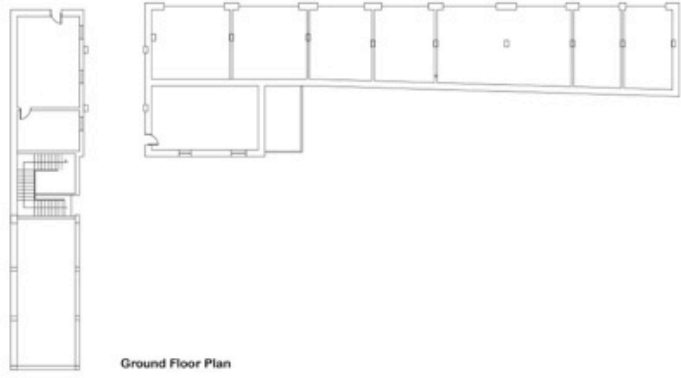
Location/Context for the Proposed Museum



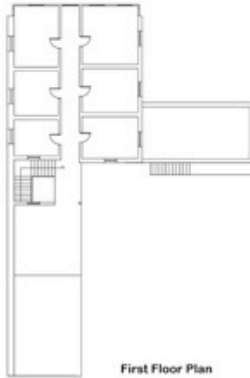
The site for the proposed Bi-communal Museum is located within the walled city, near the narrowest point of the 180.5 Kilometer long Buffer Zone.



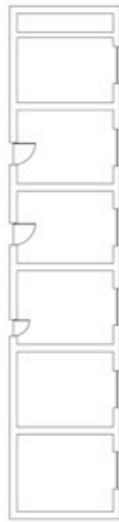
The highlighted area in yellow is the Symeos Khan that used to function as an inn for the travellers to Nicosia.



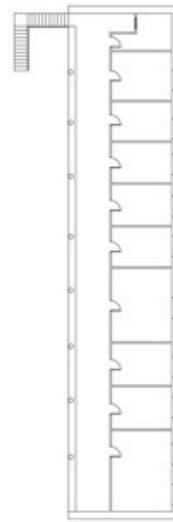
Ground Floor Plan



First Floor Plan

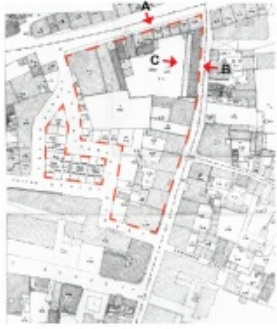


Ground Floor Plan



First Floor Plan





A



B



C





MOCA Cyprus - Proposed Outline Floor areas

MOCA Cyprus will have a total internal and external floor area of approx.

20,000 sq m including:

Gallery suites for display and exhibitions of 8,000 sq m

External Courtyards where works of art may also be shown 4,000 sq m

A special exhibition suite MOCA Cyprus Project Space of 1,300 sq m

A 240-seat auditorium 1,000 sq m

Three cafés to seat 200 and two to seat 100 plus a bar area

Three shops: Level 1: 500 sq m); 1500 sq m

Exhibition Shop: 150 sq m

A learning centre of 700 sq m

A Members Room of 300 sq m

Offices and support services/art 1350 sq m

A handling area of 1,000 sq m

9 passenger lifts of which 4 are for public use (capacity of each 16 people)

2 escalators

MOCA Cyprus - Alliances

We are developing a series of alliances and partnerships with Collectors, Governmental Departments and Art Institutions and Foundations. Our proposals seek to attract interest from the Guggenheim Foundation and other Internationally recognized Art Foundations and Collectors. We are seeking investment from companies and individuals who currently investment in Cyprus and who seek to support a 'social infrastructure' project that is inspirational, particularly for the young.

Fitzwilliam College - Cambridge University

We are in preliminary discussions with Lefkos Kyriacou and Wendy Pullan who head the Cambridge University Research Team and have expertise on conflict in cities worldwide, in particular Nicosia.

Mayor of Nicosia

Our proposals have been discussed with the Mayor of Nicosia, Constantinos Yiorkatzis who is broadly supportive of our initiative and shown a willingness to engage.

Department of Antiquities of the Cyprus Museum

Our proposals have been discussed with the Department of Antiquities of the Cyprus Museum who are broadly supportive of our initiative and shown a willingness to engage.

Technical Department of the Municipality of Nicosia

Our proposals have been discussed with the Head of the Technical Department of the Municipality of Nicosia Agne Petridou who is broadly supportive of our initiative and shown a willingness to engage.

Turkish Cypriot Counterparts

Our proposals will be presented to our Turkish Cypriot Counterparts in Nicosia in early in 2014.

UK-CYPRUS Enterprise Council

Our proposals are currently under consideration.