

THE MUSEUM

The **Museum of Marble Crafts** in Pirgos, on the island of Tinos, was created by the Piraeus Bank Group Cultural Foundation (PIOP), which is also responsible for running it. It belongs to the Foundation's Network of Thematic Museums and is the first of its kind in Greece. The museum is housed in modern, fully equipped installations that include a multipurpose hall and which were built so as to tie in harmoniously with the island's characteristic landscape. Included in the 2000-2006 Regional Operational Programme of the Southern Aegean, the project was financed by the **Third Community Support Framework**, as well as by the Piraeus Bank.



The museum presents the **technology of marble**, a material with a particular place in the architecture and art of Greece, from ancient times to the present. At the same time, the intricate meshing of tools and techniques is described in detail. In parallel to the above, the emphasis given to the pre-industrial and proto-industrial periods in Tinos, the most important centre of marble crafts in Modern Greece, brings to the fore the social and economic context in which the local workshops evolved.

The **permanent exhibition** comprises a variety of original works in marble: mundane, ecclesiastical, funerary and everyday objects (door lintels, fountains, family crests, corbels, shrines, mortars, etc.), clay models and plaster-of-Paris copies, as well as quarrying, cutting and carving tools, mechanical equipment, archival material and the richest collection of sketches of old marble carvings of the whole of Greece.

This impressive number of authentic objects was collected essentially thanks to people's sensitization, but also that of public entities, which donated or bequeathed them to PIOP. Moreover, in combination with the representations of a quarry, of a marble craft workshop and of the assembling of a bishop's throne, visitors have the opportunity of familiarizing themselves with traditional techniques and processes regarding the quarrying, initial hewing and transportation of marble, as



well as those concerning the shaping and positioning of a work in marble, thus following the entire trajectory from the raw material to the finished article. At the same time, the exhibition's audio-visual material brings to life the traditional working methods of the quarryman and the marble craftsman, while the travelogue's photographs record the intense presence of marble across the width and breadth of Tinos and incites visitors to go on their discovery missions of the island.

Finally, the exhibition extends into the museum's **outdoor areas**. In the square in front of the museum's entrance, a hoisting machine for blocks of marble and a trolley for their transportation from the quarry of Vathi are on show, while on the balcony a wagon-truck for chippings and rubble, a bend corner and rails from the quarry of Patela are exhibited, together with finished and in-process marble works. The historical mechanical equipment presented in the outdoor exhibition was salvaged, repaired and restored to function by PIOP and reconstructs typical images of the corresponding *in situ* working environments.



Members of the workshop of Ioannis Filippotis, 1957.