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## Mercouri

## Year of Melina



The Greek Culture Ministry has announced that marking 100 years since the birth of Melina Mercouri on 18 October 1920, Greece will be dedicating 2020 to the internationally-acclaimed and much-loved Greek actress, activist, and former culture minister.

Culture Minister Lina Mendoni declared 2020 as the “Year of Melina Mercouri” in memory of Mercouri, who was the first female to take over the culture ministry, and in honor of her contribution to the promotion of “cultural diplomacy” as well as for her dedication to spearheading the drive for the return of the Parthenon Marbles to Greece.

Mercouri – known lovingly in Greece as “*Melina*” – also laid the foundations for the **European Capitals of Culture** initiative, for which a European Commission prize has been named and awarded in her honor, as well as the biennial **UNESCO Melina Mercouri International Prize for Cultural Landscapes**.

Mercouri was also behind the establishment of the municipal regional theater institution (DIPETHE), and initiated the unification of Athens’ archeological sites.

Among others, Mendoni said on Monday, that the culture ministry would be inviting all the committees established worldwide working for the return of the Parthenon Marbles to Greece, to visit Athens, where a common strategy will be explored.

The 2020 Melina Mercouri year will be celebrated with events organized in collaboration with the Melina Mercouri Foundation, including exhibitions, art shows, film screenings and other cultural happenings.

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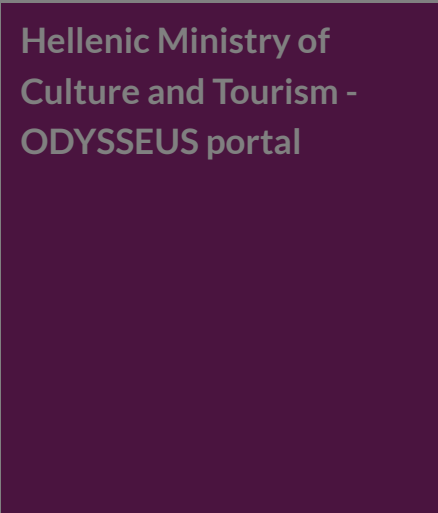
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