

The iconic 'Atatürk Cultural Center' reopens to enliven Istanbul's art and tourism offerings

Anticipated to be a major attraction for the city's residents and thousands of tourists visiting from around the world, Istanbul's Atatürk Cultural Center reopened its doors to art lovers on October 29, 2021, the 98th anniversary of Turkish Republic Day. Known as Atatürk Kültür Merkezi (or AKM in short) by the locals, the newly built contemporary structure is one of the most important investments of the Beyoğlu Culture Route project, established by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism as Turkey's one of the largest arts and culture project to date.

Team TTJ

President of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan and the Minister of Culture and Tourism, Mehmet Nuri Ersoy, inaugurated the Istanbul Atatürk Cultural Center in an opening ceremony attended by prominent figures from the business, arts and academic spheres, as well as representatives from non-governmental organisations, and local and foreign media outlets.

Completely reconstructed in 2.5 years by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism at a cost of TL 2 billion, the AKM welcomes visitors throughout the year to a 49,000-square-metre, 2040-seat Opera House equipped with state-of-art technology. The Centre also features a 16,300-square metre, 802-seat Theatre Hall, the 410-square-metre AKM Gallery, an AKM Multipurpose Hall and a pathway called "Culture Street".

In addition to the aforementioned halls, the AKM offers an indoor area of approximately 100,000 square metres, consisting of a Gallery, a Multipurpose Hall, a Children's Art

Centre, a music platform, a music recording studio, and a library designed as an information centre for specialized topics such as music, art, architecture and design. The renewed complex also includes the AKM Yeşilçam Cinema and spaces such as the Design Shop, along with rehearsal areas, soloist and orchestra study rooms, restaurants, a cafeteria, book cafes, workshops, and administrative and technical units.

On the occasion of the opening of the AKM, the world premiere of the Sinan Opera was held. Composed at the request of President Erdoğan, and staged by the Istanbul State Opera and Ballet, the opera, an original work by a Turkish composer, was brought to the stage by the renowned Italian director Vincenzo Grisolomi Travagliani. The Center also welcomed the London Philharmonic Orchestra during its opening week, which is considered one of the finest symphony orchestras in the world and featuring almost 100 musicians.

The New AKM will be Istanbul's cultural heartbeat which plays a vital role in Istanbul's goal of becoming a globally leading arts centre, will continue its mission of cultivating, supporting and presenting art, drawing visitors from all walks of life to experience rich content. The new AKM will serve as an example for similar structures in Turkey.

Resident institutions in the



new Atatürk Cultural Center include the Presidential Classical Turkish Music Choir, the Istanbul State Opera and Ballet, the Istanbul State Theatre, the Istanbul Symphony Orchestra and the Istanbul State Turkish Music Ensemble affiliated with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

The AKM Gallery is on the facade facing Taksim Square, next to the main building housing the iconic sphere. Featuring a soaring, prismatic design at the entrance to the Culture Street, The Gallery also fulfills the need for an exemplary exhibition hall in Istanbul. The space will host exhibits by selected contemporary artists.

The Beyoğlu Culture Route Project highlights Istanbul's international value, and its historical, architectural, economic, and touristic assets. The Beyoğlu Culture Route which features the newly-rebuilt Atatürk Cultural Center, also has the Galata Tower, Atlas Cinema, Galata Mevlevi Lodge, the Mehmet Akif Memorial House, and the Tarık Zafer Tunaya Culture Theatre, along with numerous other historical, cultural and architectural assets restored by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism.

The Atatürk Cultural Centre thus marks the start of the culture avenue, and its reopening also featured the International Beyoğlu Culture Route Festival, which took place from October 30 to November 14, 2021, featuring the participation of more than one thousand artists across 60 locations. Developed by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism of Turkey, the festival will be held annually to ensure that this project, designed to contribute to the brand value of Istanbul, is showcased on an international level.

