Dear Marlen,

Thank you for your email and all the information provided.

There is a lot of work that has been done and there are ongoing projects on the polychromy of the Parthenon Sculptures, as well as those completed with the archaic sculptures in previous years.

In the galleries of the Acropolis Museum (MA) all visitors are informed about the use of colour in both the archaic and classical sculptures, and there are examples to showcase of different colours, both mineral and herbal, as well as examples on marble of how the paints looked like in Antiquity.

There are also digital illustrations on TV screens in the Museum informing the public on the polychromy of the sculptures

More specifically on the Parthenon’s sculpture polychromy:

After removing the west frieze from the Parthenon in 1992 and during the cleaning of the surface from soot there were detected traces of colour on the himation of the petasos horseman Nr 17 which reinforced the opinions of earlier researchers on the polychromy of the sculptures.

From the 14 metopes of the East side of the Parthenon, 8 bear traces of colour and not only Egyptian blue but reddish colour ocher was also found.

In 2008 not only was Mr Verri’s present, and collaboration with archaeologists and conservators in our Museum but in December 2008 we had participated (Mrs E. Papakonstantinou, Mrs. Chr. Vlassopoulou and Mr. K. Vassiliadis) in the seminar of the British School together with Mr. D. Sanders, Ian Jenkins and G. Verri.

The Visible Induced Luminescence (VIL) was then introduced giving results on colours detected on figures of the East Pediment.

Mr Verri had always close contacts with our museum, and our Conservator’s Department.

A little after in 2010 Mrs. Vlassopoulou has published her article ‘’New investigation into the Polychromy of the Parthenon’’ in V. Brinkmann et al. ‘’Circumlitio’’.

Analysis had also taken place with XRFand RAMAN by Dr. Katsaros and Ganetsos in 2012.

In Dr. Palaggia’s ‘’A Handbook of Greek Sculpture’’ there were hints written of the new research with bibliography.

A little after this, Acropolis Museum bought the new equipment to detect the colour traces, and Mr. Verri came to Athens to talk with our conservators (Mrs I. Farmaki and Mr. K. Vassiliadis) in 2013.

Since 2014 traces of colours have been detected also in metopes of the West side of the Parthenon, not only Egyptian blue and red but also white on the eyes of the horses.

There is also an ongoing project that I am involved with alongside and our conservators on polychromy on sculptures, and has been outlined on a number of different projects and exhibitions presented during the last years in order to understand the painting on ancient Greek marble (e.g. see recently Deutsche Welle article by the journalist Sarah Hucall, 14 January 2023).

Best,

N. Chr. Stampolidis