The Caryatids for the symposium on Architecture, culture, and identity at the National Center of Contemporary Arts in Athens. Text and images by: C. Katerina Gogou.

The Caryatids: Are they stools or women?

Katerina Gogou is an architectural historian and scholar who has written extensively on the history of architecture in modern Greece. She is the author of several books and articles on the subject, and is currently working on a new book on the history of architecture in the Greek Islands.

In this piece, Gogou explores the Caryatids, a unique and iconic piece of Greek architecture that has captured the imagination of people around the world. She examines the history and significance of these fascinating figures, and discusses their role in contemporary debates about identity and culture.

The Caryatids are a set of six figures that were originally part of the Erechtheion temple in Athens. They are known for their distinctive appearance, with their heads, arms, and legs cut off to make room for the columns of the temple. Because of this, they have often been referred to as "stools" or "women."

Gogou argues that the Caryatids are more than just a decorative feature of the temple. They are a symbol of the strength and resilience of the Greek people, and a testament to their ability to overcome adversity.

In conclusion, Gogou suggests that the Caryatids continue to be an important symbol of Greek identity, and that they remain a source of inspiration and pride for people all over the world.