

10/05/2019

Night at the Museum, International Museum Day to be celebrated at Georgia's Vardzia cave city monument



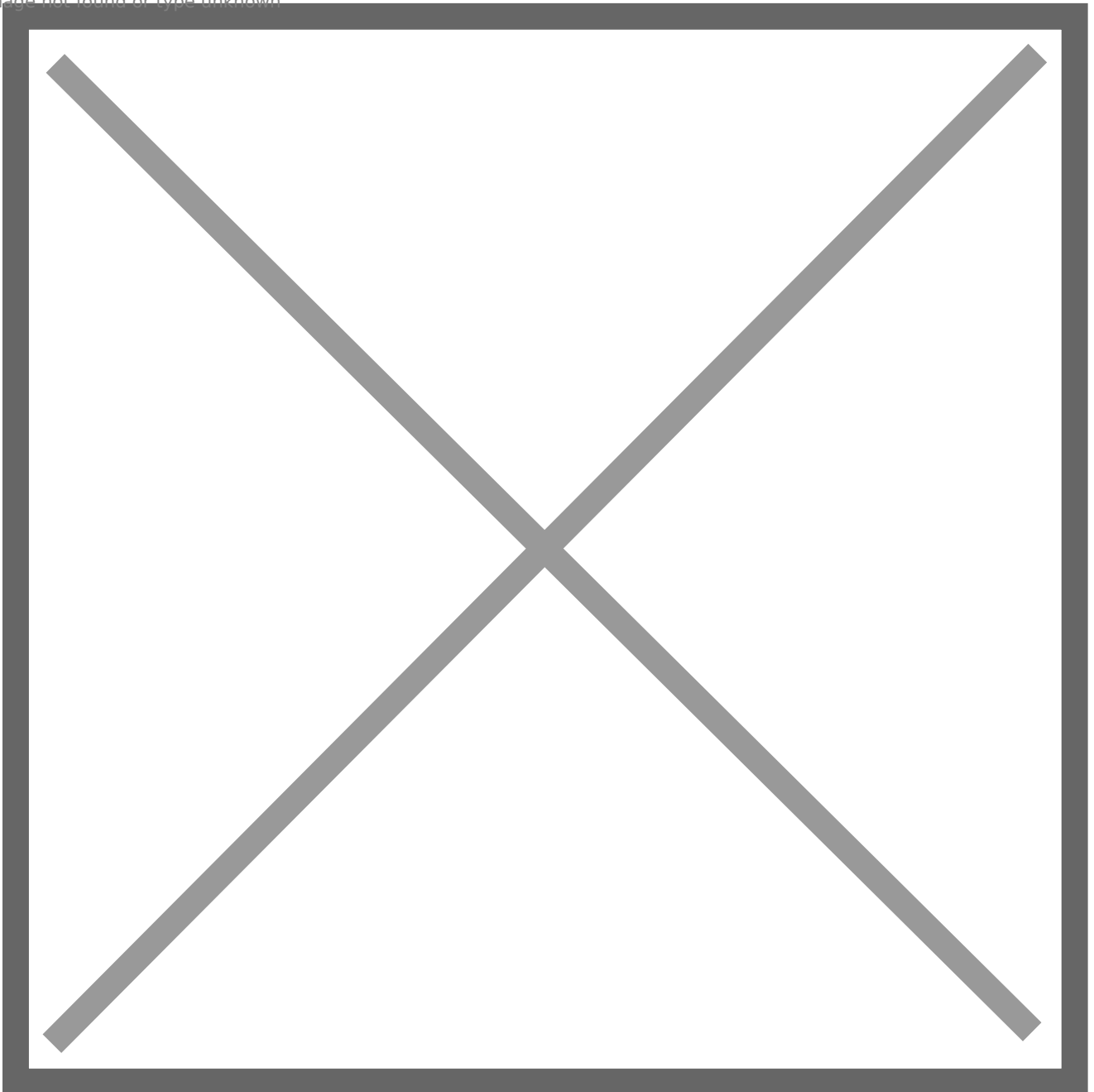
A number of first-time launches and a range of shows will celebrate International Museum Day and annual Night at the Museum date this month at Vardzia, an iconic medieval cave city monument in Georgia's south.

The site of the 12th century monastery complex, under preparations to be nominated for the UNESCO World Heritage list, will host visitors for museum displays, a digital exploration of the cave monument and entertaining performances between 6pm-1am.

The nighttime celebration of cultural heritage will include two launches at the newly opened visitor centre of the site.

First, virtual reality (VR) stands at the centre will break cover to introduce the Vardzia complex, one of Georgia's most recognised cultural heritage sites, to visitors through a digital guide through the site.

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The site will host visitors for the annual Night at the Museum activities to unveil new spaces and tours at Vardzia for the first time. Photo: National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia.

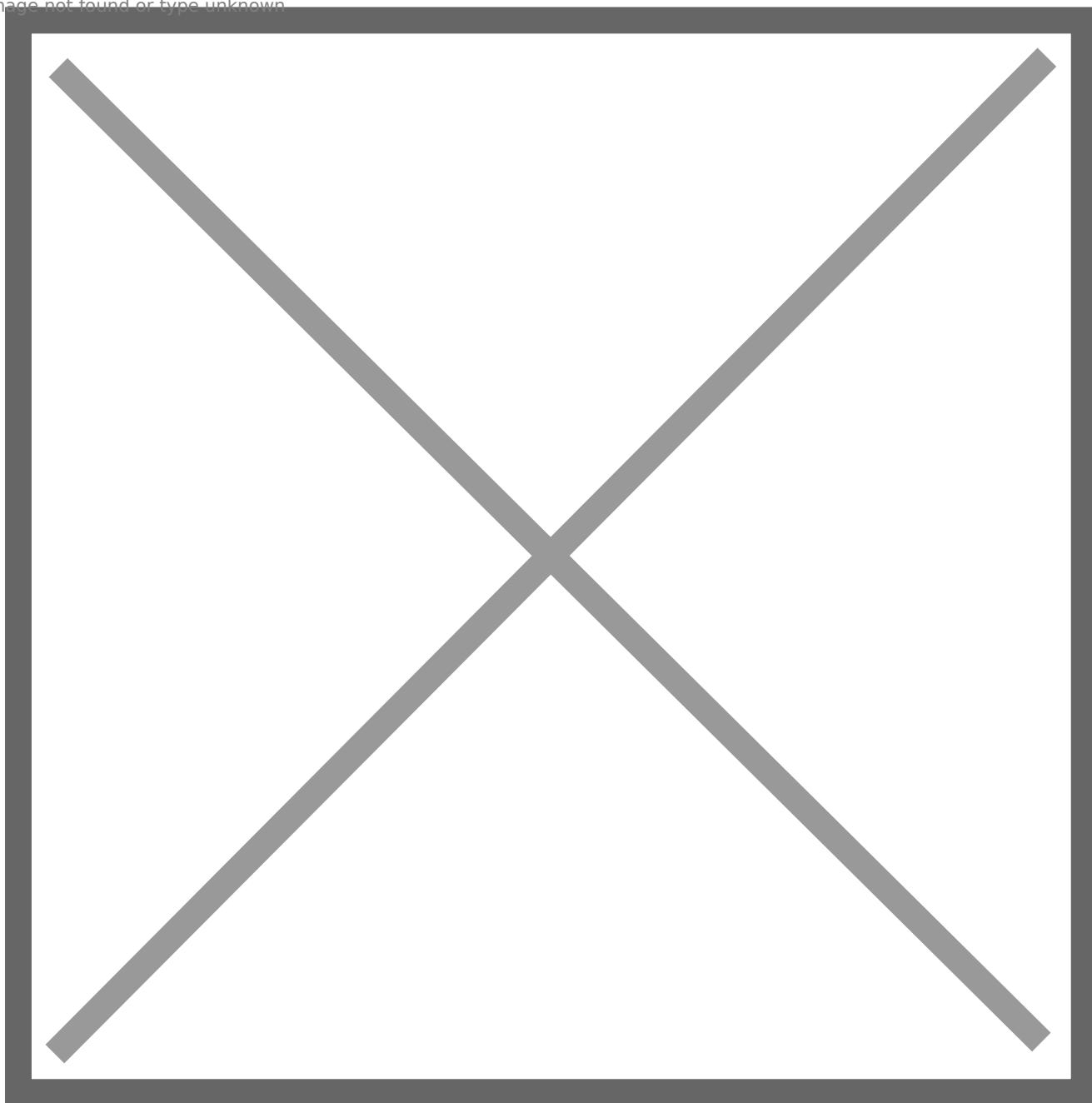
The VR technology solutions used for the tour have been called “unprecedented” by the National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia, which says the digital attraction will also be adapted for disabled visitors.

Another opening will see a museum space unveiled at the centre along with its first exhibits — ornamental stone fragments unearthed at sites in the Aspindza Municipality, in which Vardzia is located.

The fragments will go on display at the new exposition space in addition to a show of photographs illustrating cave monuments across Georgia.

A traditional crafts exhibition and produce by farmers will also be brought to the Vardzia site to be presented to visitors, while theatre groups, bands and other shows will conclude the nighttime event.

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A nomination for Vardzia to join the UNESCO World Heritage list is being prepared by heritage professionals in the country. Photo: National Agency for Cultural Heritage Preservation of Georgia.

The 12-13th Century cave complex of monasteries is one of the primary tourist destinations in Georgia and is visited by thousands every year.

The site features hundreds of rooms and passageways connecting the caves, which were carved into rock formations. Residential, storage areas and wine cellars can also be found throughout the complex.

While Vardzia has been part of UNESCO's [tentative list](#) of World Heritage since 2007, Georgia's Cultural Heritage Agency [announced last year](#) it would work to prepare a nomination for Vardzia to be accepted into the main World Heritage roster.

The Georgian edition of Night at the Museum has been held since 2015, while the wider European Night of Museums celebrations have been held since 2005, with thousands of venues opening their spaces on the day under the patronage of the Council of Europe and UNESCO.

This year's date will be marked at Vardzia on May 18.

— Source: agenda.ge