

DANAE IO
RECORDING ANGEL

April 26th – June 14th, 2025
Wednesdays four to eight p.m., Saturdays
two to six p.m.

The Recording Angel is a symbolic figure in various religious and literary traditions, believed to document every person's deeds, thoughts, and words for judgment or remembrance. Often depicted as a celestial scribe, the figure serves as a metaphor for conscience, divine memory, or the inescapable record of one's life.

Danae Io's film Recording Angel, shown for the first time in this exhibition, unfolds through the ordinary mirrors of a car driving through Thebes and the surrounding countryside, capturing perspectives not head-on but sidelong—fragmented and fleeting, seen only through passing reflections. As the vehicle moves, a radio show plays in the background, introducing the topographical watercolors and travel writings of James Skene, the 19th-century Scottish painter, explorer, and chronicler of Greece as it emerged from Ottoman rule. Skene's works quietly parallel the film's own cadenced act of observation, each offering a partial, mediated record of a landscape at the edge of transformation. Thebes, once the setting for myths of prophecy, madness, and divine intervention—where Oedipus met his fate, Dionysus caused frenzy, and Cadmus sowed dragon's teeth—now presents a modern life where agricultural fields give way to industrial decline. As the town passes by, the film evokes a present-day recording angel: not celestial, but mechanical—driving, listening, observing—while the landscape itself becomes an alternate recorder, inscribing histories through its accumulated marks, transformations, and absences.

The act of recording in the film extends into a series of sculptural works in the exhibition, each engaging with obsolete recording devices and optical illusions.

In the first room, Dial II (2025) reanimates a series of telephone cards produced in 2003 by OTE (Hellenic Telecommunications Organization) and the National Historical Museum of Greece, which feature Skene's panoramic watercolors of 19th-century Greece. Mounted within a hand-assembled, motorized praxinoscope—an early optical device invented in 1877 that used rotating mirrors to create the illusion of motion—the cards form a looping sequence. The praxinoscope's circular movement echoes cinematic mechanics and camera pans, offering a low-tech meditation on visual sequencing and apparatus, while suggesting that it is movement itself, rather than the act of recording, that animates history.

Within the vertical shaft of the 1930s lightwell in the corridor, Untitled (hours) (2025)—a periscope—is installed, its mirrored interior angled toward the building's uppermost window. A periscope, an optical instrument designed to see over obstacles, directs the viewer's gaze upward, bypassing the constraints of the surrounding architecture. Referencing both the Renaissance Book of Hours, with its structured meditations on time and light, and the polemoscope—a 17th-century variant of the periscope originally used in military and theatrical settings to observe discreetly from concealed positions—the work transforms a utilitarian aperture into a contemplative device.

In the main room, Dial I (2025) assembles five of the same commemorative telephone cards, arranged diagonally so that their mirrored reflections create the impression of a continuous, unfolding panorama.

Together, these works animate the processes of recording—not as neutral acts of preservation, but as gestures shaped by the material tools, optical devices, and atmospheric conditions through which histories are filtered. The exhibition proposes that every record is also a speculation, imbued with the intangible elements of the recorder's inner landscape and subject to endless reinterpretation. Within this recursive cycle, the recording angel—whether celestial, mechanical, or embedded within the landscape itself—begins to lose its definition, dematerializing into atmosphere.

Danae Io is an artist based in Athens and Rotterdam. Through moving image and sculpture, her practice focuses on how collective and personal histories are narrativized. Her films have been screened at Doclisboa (2024), the Athens Avant-Garde Film Festival (2024), the Institute of Contemporary Art in London (2023), and the International Film Festival Rotterdam (2023), among others. She had her first solo exhibition at State of Concept, Athens, in 2023. Some of her recent group exhibitions and performances include: 'out of my mind with pleasure' at Nobel Building (2023), Open Systems at UKS, Oslo (2023), and I am inside who I was at PuntWG, Amsterdam (2022).

WORKS

FIRST ROOM

Dial II, 2025, praxinoscope assemblage with 10 telephone cards featuring James Skene's panoramic watercolor of Pnyka (issued by OTE and the National Historical Museum of Greece, 2003); bookbinding cardboard, stainless steel, motor

CORRIDOR LIGHTWELL

Untitled (hours), 2025, PVC pipe, mirror, metal clamps

MAIN ROOM

Dial I, 2025, assemblage of 5 telephone cards featuring 19th-century watercolors, issued by OTE in collaboration with the National Historical Museum of Greece, 2003; bookbinding cardboard, stainless steel

Recording Angel, 2025, single-channel video, exhibition cut, 17min 30 sec

*Directed, written, produced, and edited by Danae Io;
Voice: Marilena Maragou; Director of Photography:
Dimitris Lambridis; Original Music: Viki Steiri; Sound
Design & Re-recording: Aris Athanasopoulos; Sound
Mixing: Thimios Kolokousis; Grip: Christos Tsakonas;
Driver: Aristotelis Nikolas Mochloulis; Colourist:
Manthos G. Sardis / A10 Post Production; Song featured:
Enkidu (2012), composed by Antonis Anissegos,
performed by Prodromos Symeonidis and Sawami
Kiyoshi, published by Ensemble Berlin Piano Percussion;
Consultant: Rachael Rakes; Supported by Mondriaan
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Moustakas and Rabbeats, Aristotelis Nikolas Mochloulis,
Wyatt Niehaus, Rebecca Glyn-Blanco, Maya Tounta,
and Nick Rauh.*

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