

**P H E N O M E N O N**

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**PRESS KIT (JULY 2015)**

PRESS RELEASE

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Phenomenon is a biennial project for contemporary art held in the Aegean island of Anafi, Greece and it includes a weeklong residency/event series, an exhibition and a publication. It is organized by the Association Phenomenon and the Collection Kerenidis Pepe, Paris. The first edition took place in July 2015.

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THE RESIDENCY (JULY 6-10th)

During the residency, a program of lectures and events were organized with the participation of the invited artists, scholars and open to the public, as well as a video screening night.

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THE EXHIBITION (JULY 11-19<sup>th</sup>)

The exhibition explored the notions of invisibility and visibility and the moment of passing from one to the other. The artists invested the Anafi's High School as well as outdoor spaces throughout the village with many works that were specifically conceived for the project. In addition, each artist created a poster that was glued inside each of Anafi's bus-stops, opening the exhibition to the entire island.

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THE PUBLICATION

The documentation of the residency events and the exhibition will be the starting point for the creation of a publication, at once catalogue and artistic object, which will extend the project's existence and connect it to the following edition.

INVITED ARTISTS

Kostas Bassanos  
Alejandro Cesarco  
Daniel Gustav Cramer  
Angela Detanico/Rafael Lain  
Haris Epaminonda  
Nina Papaconstantinou

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INVITED SCHOLARS

Theodora Domenech  
Kostas Ioannidis  
Wendy Tronrud

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TEAM

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Supporting Creativity

NEON

THE RESIDENCY

During the residency, a series of events were organized with the participation of the invited artists, scholars and open to the public: a reading of Apollonius Rhodius's *Argonautica* and narration of connected myth while visiting related sites along the island coastline; a series of lectures on art, philosophy and science; a video screening night; and a sound installation at the Kastro.

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BOAT TRIP/NARRATION

- *Apollo appearing*, Piergiorgio Pepe (lawyer)

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LECTURES

- *Screens and Phenomena in the Public Space* (Athens, ca. 2009-2013), Kostas Ioannidis (art historian)
- *The feeling of isolation in a place of exile*, Sapfo Tavouti (photojournalist)
- *Ways of Looking at Rocks*, Wendy Tronrud (writer)
- *An idea of phenomenon, a journey through the history of philosophy*, Theodora Domenech (philosopher)
- *Quantum light: visibility and statement*, Iordanis Kerenidis (quantum theorist)
- *Art and politics*, Open discussion

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VIDEO SCREENING

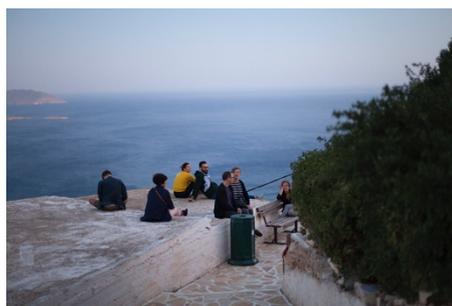
- Anthony McCall, *Landscape for White Squares*, 1972
- Ignasi Aballi, *Vision I/II*, 2014
- Mario Garcia Torres, *What Happens in Halifax Stays in Halifax*, 2006
- Michael Snow, *Snow (de, à, pour) Thierry*, 2002-2007
- Douglas Gordon, *The Making of Monster*, 1997
- Robert Barry, *Intimate*, 2004
- Dora Garcia, *Film (Hotel Wolfers)*, 2007
- Douglas Gordon, *A Moment's Silence*, 1998

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SOUND INSTALLATION

- *One Million Years (957 Philosophical Years)*, Sound Installation by On Kawara

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## THE EXHIBITION

A phenomenon is something that is made appear or brought to light, but that can, as easily, fall back into obscurity or oblivion. On this remote island, the exhibition attempts to reveal the invisible, blur the apparent and offer alternative ways of looking at the world around us.

The works of the seven invited artists examine what makes things visible or invisible and how we overcome such binary distinctions. Rather than providing authoritative answers, they engage in an open, non-hierarchical dialogue, where the audience is invited to play an active role, experiment and experience the exhibition as a creative process.

Anafi became visible to the Argonauts when Apollo's arrow slit the darkness and shed a light onto it. The notion of visibility/invisibility, thought of as the existence/absence of light, is not a property of the object itself but of its environment. It is the observer that renders something visible or invisible, depending on their methods of observation. However, according to quantum mechanics any observation intrinsically changes the state of what is being seen. We reach, then, a definition of light not as a revelator of a hidden truth but rather as an enabler of interactions.

Simple acts that go beyond our established interaction with light can make us look anew at everything that is around us and incite us to pay attention to things that until then passed unnoticed.

Nina Papaconstantinou's installation dims the natural light in a classroom and creates an environment between day and night, between now and then, where the light interacts with the text to create a dream-like experience.

Kostas Bassanos' works examine the horizon as the spatial and temporal point of passage between light and darkness. By blowing up photographic films at the limit point of the image, he creates fictitious horizons at once dazzling and dystopian.

Anafi was also a place of exile between the two wars. Entire communities had been built by the exiles that had given names to streets, had their own governing bodies, newspapers and celebrations. This part of history is all but forgotten today. They have become invisible. Invisible is also how the current inhabitants often feel, when the island remains disconnected from the rest of Greece for days on end.

The struggle of the periphery is often a struggle between a place in history and oblivion. It is a constant renegotiation with the master theory that dictates what is worth remembering. The breaking of this dominant narrative can be achieved through experimentation and proliferation of local knowledges and webbed accounts.

Haris Epaminonda creates fragmented narratives by invoking elements that voluntarily defamiliarise us and produce lines of flight. Defying simple interpretations, they work as hints of other times and places freed from the burden of signification.

Daniel Gustav Cramer tells open-ended stories with images and texts that hide and reveal at the same time. Elements can be in clear view or hidden, like a small iron ball constantly moved during the exhibition or a book containing the names of Anafi's residents. The audience is presented with whispers and indices, and is left to construct their own experiences over and again.

Whether we are looking at something or remembering the past, we do it through language. What we see is shaped by the name we have already attributed to it. The experience of staring at the Aegean is more than just *looking at the sea*. What we talk about is not exactly what we see, and what we see is not exactly what we talk about. An investigation of the visible/invisible cannot disregard the relation between language and the world around us. It is, in fact, in the interstice between the discursive and the visible, in this "slender, colorless, neutral strip", where creative processes occur.

Angela Detanico and Rafael Lain invent new ways of writing based on scientific or literary data, that enable us to see the world with different eyes. The established hierarchy between the word and the object is blurred and the world opens up to its multiplicity and fluidity.

Alejandro Cesarco creates indices of books that have not yet been written or lists that work as a network of personal references. The audience is invited to imagine their own books, make illicit connections, bring their own experiences to transform what they see and what they feel.

The works in the exhibition, as well as the posters that each artist conceived specifically for this project and were glued on the island's bus stops, create a universe with multiple entry points, where the audience is invited to wander around, question the apparent and invent worlds previously unimaginable.

EXHIBITION PHOTOS (© Eleni Mouzakiti)

KOSTAS BASSANOS

- 20:38/20:38/20:37/20:37/20:37/20:36, 5 C-prints,  
90 x 130 cm, 2015  
- 25.4mm, Video, 3:17 min, 2015

Kostas Bassanos examines the notion of the horizon, this in-between moment and place where light meets darkness, where our vision is confronted with its limit. His photographs of blown

up photographic film at the point where the printing of the image begins, create fictitious horizons at once dazzling and dystopian. These floating images dialogue with the video *25.4mm* where the artist uses tools and sculptural materials to elevate and level a stone in order to look a little higher, beyond the horizon, towards a fleeting sun



## ALEJANDRO CESARCO

- *Allegory, or, The Perils of the Present Tense*, 2015  
Video installation, 9:30 minutes.

Cesarco's most recent video is composed of a fragmented text, appearing as inter-titles, interspersed with syrupy-snapshot-like images of memories (both personal and cinematic). Throughout the work conjectures about the past are

balanced against promises of the future. The work flirts with the possibilities of memory as being both the object and instrument of our desires. By talking about the past the artist is also talking about his wants or desires. In this sense, talking about the past becomes a way of talking about the future; of fashioning a future.

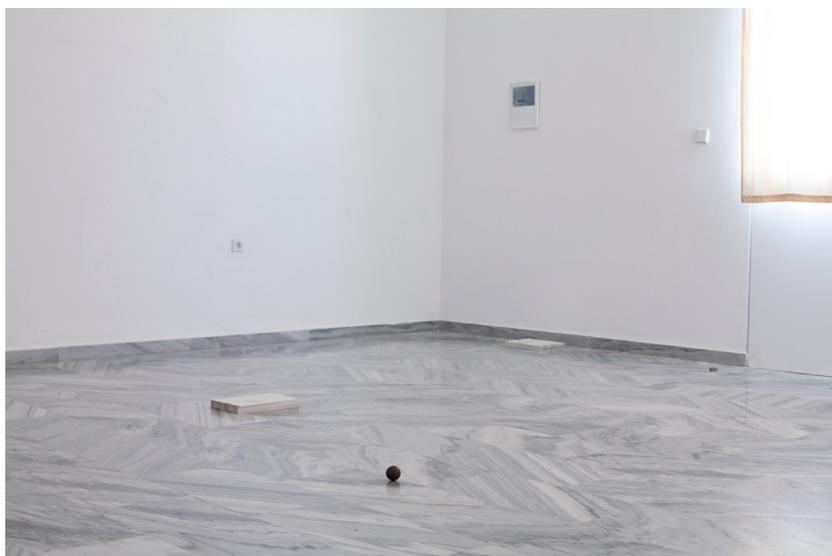


## DANIEL GUSTAV CRAMER

- *Vernazza, Italy*, five stacks of paper, each 29.7 x 21.0 x 5.5 cm, 2013
- *XXIII*, iron sphere, 3.5 cm, 2015
- *Tales 05 (Perada, Greece, April 2008)*, 2010
- *Anafi*, book, 540 pages, 2015

Daniel Gustav Cramer's text work *Vernazza*, a story written in the first person of a man lying in a hotel bed at night gazing at the reflection of the water on the ceiling above him, is made of five stacks of paper. Each stack describes a fragment of this scene, overlaps with another, creating a continuous loop of

elements appearing and disappearing with the rhythm of the wave reflections. *XXIII*, 2015, an iron sphere, is located on the island for the duration of the exhibition. The sphere's position, as long as it remains on Anafi, is not fixed. For his second site-specific project Cramer brings together all personal names of the residents of Anafi in a book, creating a portrait of a place. *Tales 05*, a photograph depicting the silhouette of a man standing on a rock near Pireus harbor from which one departs from the mainland to travel to the island.



ANGELA DETANICO / RAFAEL LAIN

- *Lexicon (Kallistos Kosmos)*, vinyl, 250x250 cm, 2015
- *Archipelagos*, stones and sound, 2015
- *Pilha (Longitude/latitude)*, granite tiles, 2015

In *Lexicon (Kallistos Kosmos)* Angela Detanico and Rafel Lain transform the stars of the sky into Greek letters. The alpha-stars are the most luminous, all the way to the faintest omega-stars. They use this new map to draw new constellations, here, by

writing Heracleitos' phrase "Kallistos Kosmos", the best of worlds. In *Archipelagos*, they use found stones to write Archipelagos, the ancient name of the Aegean Sea, in a system that uses human steps as a measure: one step for alpha, two steps for beta, etc. In *Pilha (Longitude/Latitude)* the simple writing system Pilha, where alpha corresponds to one granite tile, beta to two tiles, etc., puts a mark in Anafi, displacing the focal point to the periphery.



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HARIS EPAMINONDA

- *Chronicles XVIII* (excerpt), super-8 film transferred to digital, 06'01", silent, 2012

- *Chronicles XIX*, super 8 mm film transferred to digital, duration: 6'32", silent, 2014

Haris Epaminonda creates a webbed narrative throughout the island using heterogeneous

elements that defy easy significations: a text describing a maritime scene on a Chinese porcelain vase hangs in a bus-stop; a video projection of odd page numbers counting the time that passes alternates every day with a video projection of the moon. Fragments creating an open, non-hierarchical universe.



# PHENOMENON (1)

NINA PAPACONSTANTINO

- *Alphabet: the good kids*, text carved on blue paper, 2015

Nina Papaconstantinou used sheets of blue paper, like the one students use as book cover, where she carved the text from the book “*Alphabet: the good kids*”, the book from which generations of Greek kids learnt to read. The text, partially discernable

only from specific angles, at once dims the light in the classroom and lets the sunrays through small holes in the text, opening up the words to new light and meaning. It creates an environment between day and night, between now and then; a fading memory of childhood, where our first perception of the world was formed through language.



# PHENOMENON

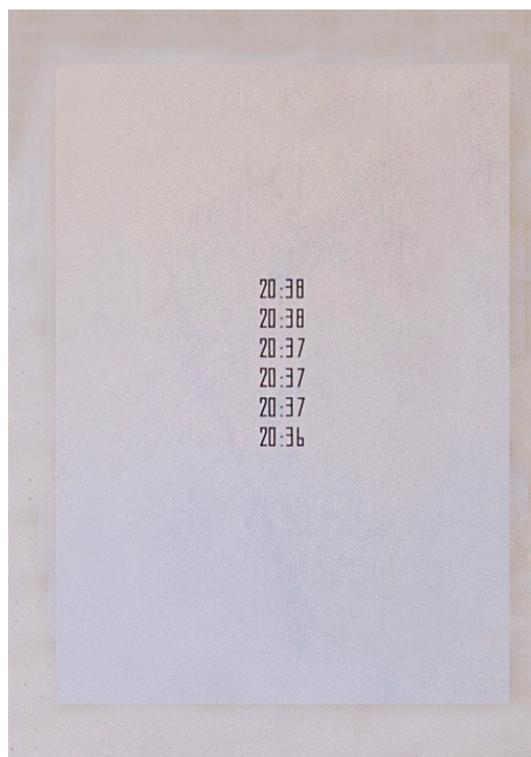
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## THE BUS STOP PROJECT (© E. Mouzakiti)

For the bus stop project, every artist was asked to conceive a poster specifically for Phenomenon. Each poster was put in one of the six bus stops around the

island. The bus stops, as open white cubes, extend the exhibition throughout the island and offer a dialogue both with the works at the High School and also with the island's landscape.

## KOSTAS BASSANOS



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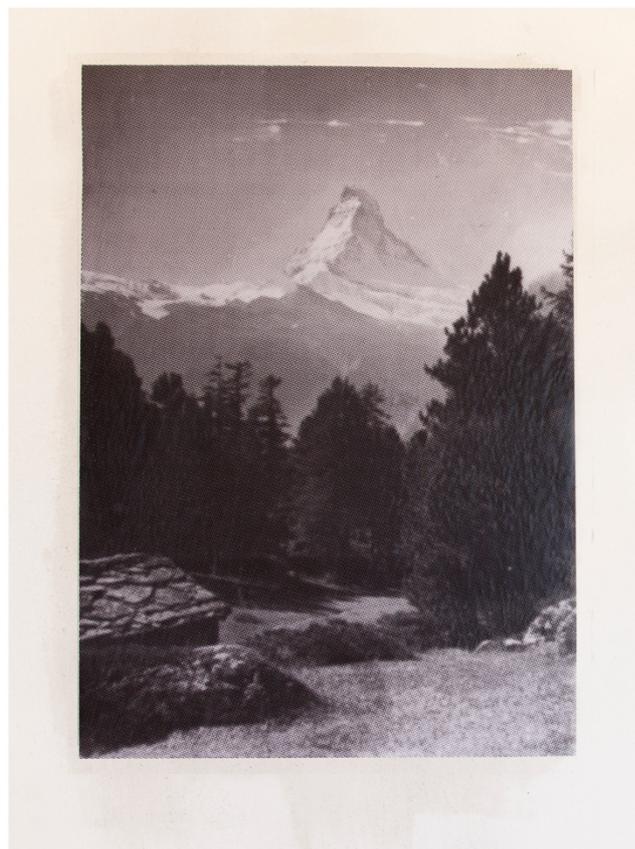
ALEJANDRO CESARCO



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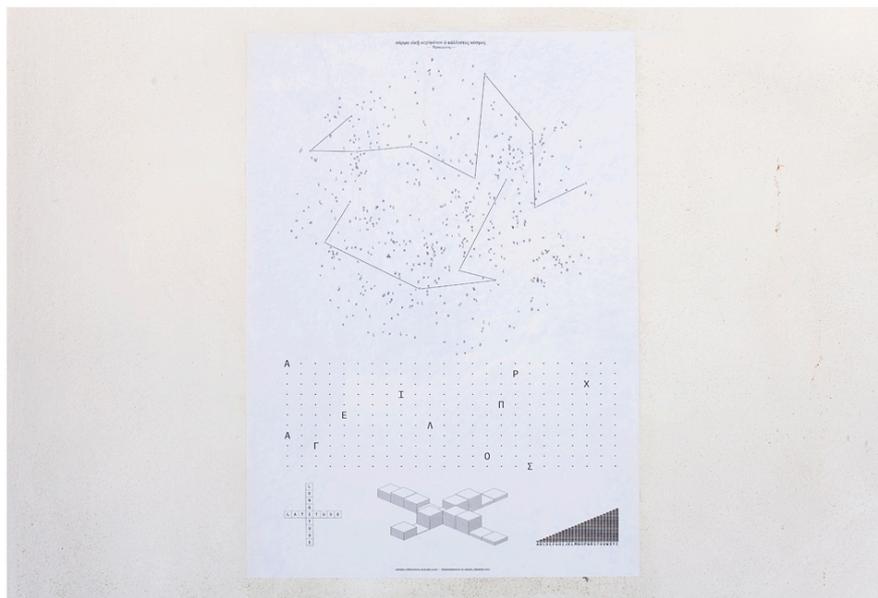
DANIEL GUSTAV CRAMER



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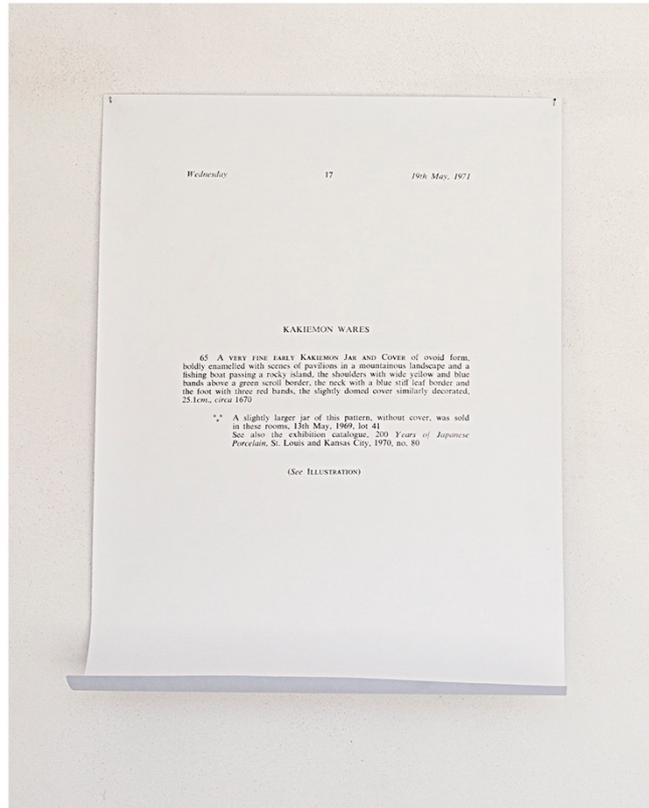
ANGELA DETANICO / RAFAEL LAIN



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HARIS EPAMINONDA



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NINA PAPACONSTANTINO

