

YU ARAKI : WORK DOCUMENTATION

WRONG REVISION
2016

Mixed media installation across 5 rooms

Inspired by Martin Luther's encounter with the devil while translating the Bible at Wartburg Castle, Araki wrongly revised the anecdote into Japanese school context. By conceptually merging Okayama's traditional process of drying octopus (a.k.a Devilfish), he recreated a make-believe legend of a janitor who was molested by the devil(fish) in the early 1900s.

Installation view at Korakukan Tenjin School, Okayama

Commissioned by Okayama Art Summit Executive Committee





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Mimesis
Photograph, Type-C print, 114 x 144 cm, 2016

Installation view at Korakukan Tenjin School, Okayama



WRONG REVISION
2016

Handless Virgin Mary Statue
Wood, h.41 x w.16 x d.11.5 cm, 1880s

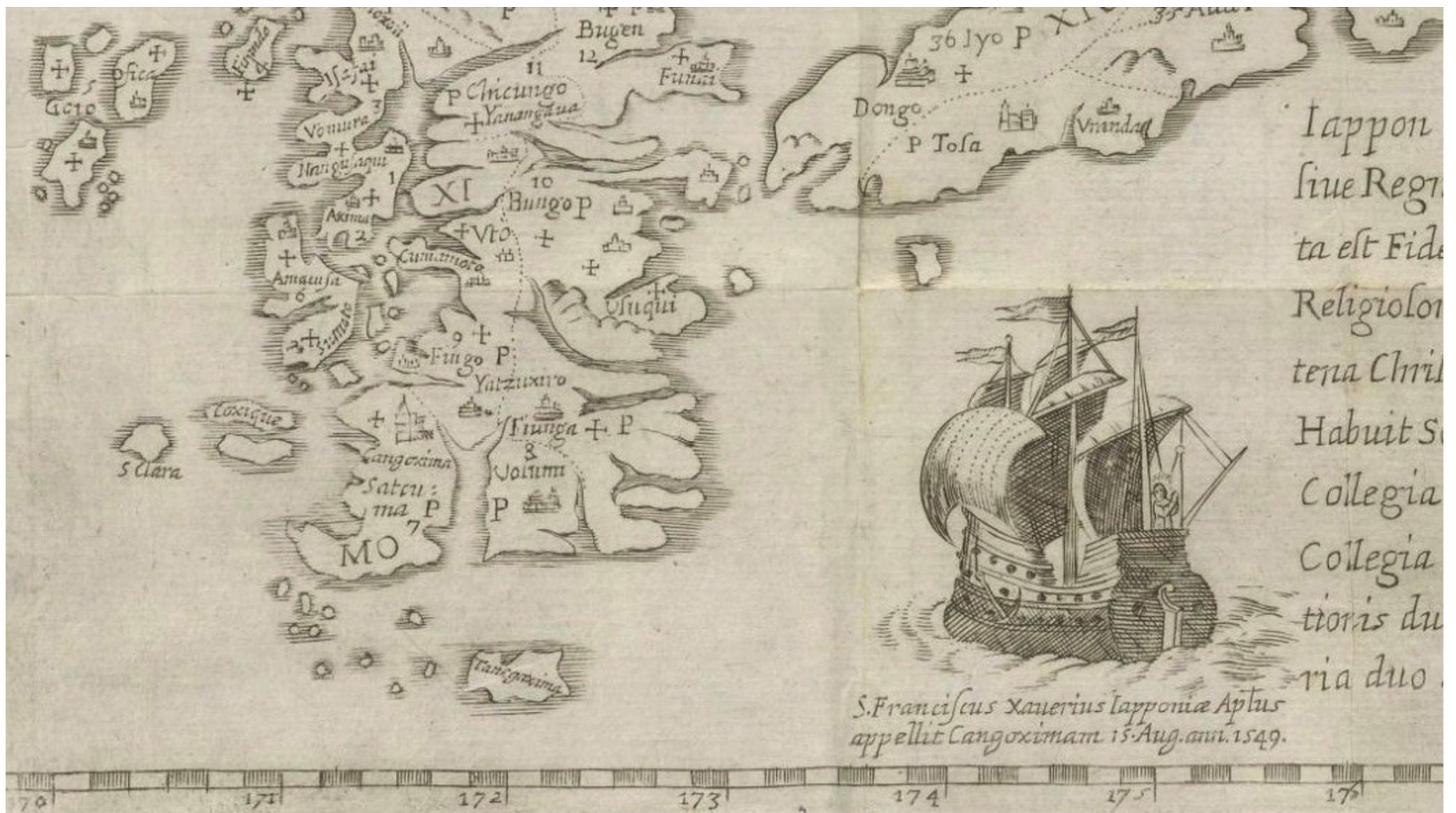
Installation view at Korakukan Tenjin School, Okayama



WRONG REVISION
2016

WRONG REVISION
HDV, color, sound, 15'00", 2015-16

Installation view at Korakukan Tenjin School, Okayama



WRONG REVISION

2016

HDV, color, sound, 15'00" (video still)

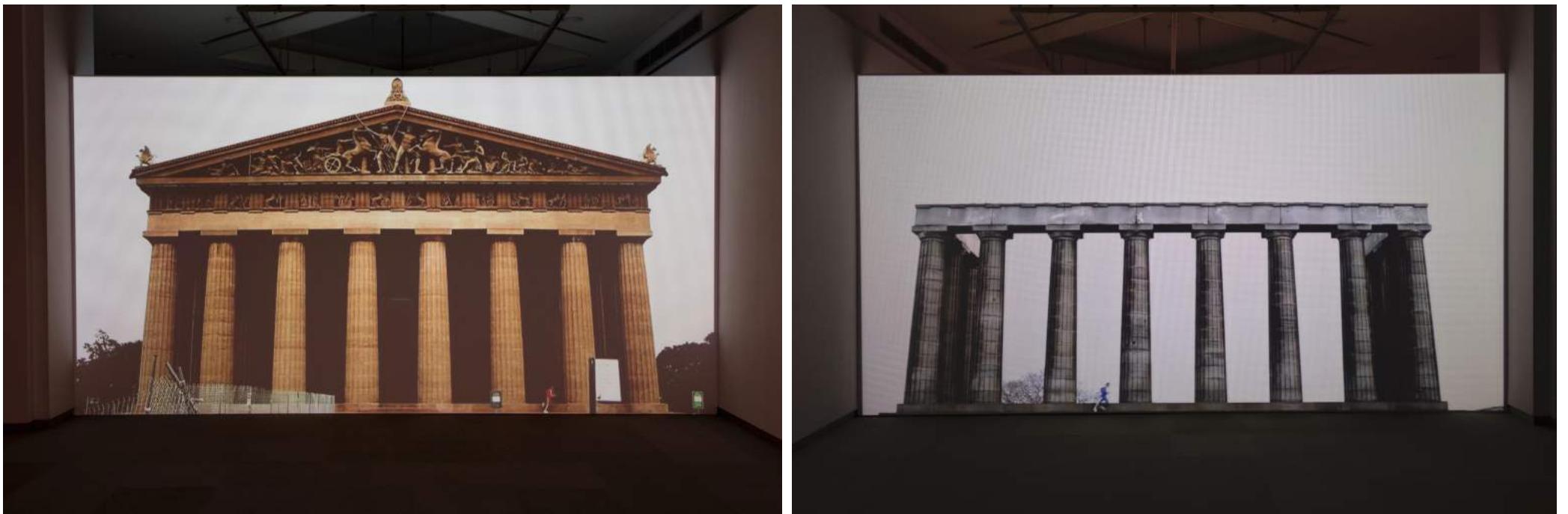
A short narrative film that serves as a centerpiece to the installation. Based on the short story "The Devil and Tobacco" (1916) by Ryunosuke Akutagawa, the film introduces a curious account of devil's entrance into Japan with St. Francis Xavier in 1549, and how the devil transformed himself in the form of an octopus to eventually oppress the Japanese Christians in the 17th century.



TEMPLE OF THE TEMPLET
2016

Solo presentation at Yokohama Museum of Art, consists of photographic and video works produced in Nashville, Tennessee (my second hometown) and Athens, Greece.
curated by Sayoko Osawa

Photo credit: Shintaro Yamanaka



Temple of The Templet
2016

2 channel HD video, silent, loop

A dual screen video projection that virtually connects Nashville (a.k.a. The Athens of the South), U.S.A. and Edinburgh (a.k.a. The Athens of the North), Scotland.

The exhibition begins with Temple of the Templet, a video work of Nashville's Parthenon replica which was the inspiration of the show's concept of embarking on a journey to find what makes something "original." Constructed as the pavilion for the Tennessee Centennial and International Exposition in 1897, the monumental architecture is adorned with recreations of sculptures that were lost in the original Parthenon in Athens. In the video, Araki's figure clad in red adidas originals tracksuit circles its periphery. Projected on the other side of the same screen is another video of a ruin with twelve Doric columns missing its pediment. This architecture known as the National Monument of Scotland is the exhibition's second Parthenon replica. Its construction began as a project to build a full-size reproduction of the Parthenon as a war memorial for the Napoleonic War. The plan came to a standstill in 1829 due to a shortage of funds, leaving the architecture unfinished. This time wearing blue adidas originals sportswear, Araki appears in the video as though to link the two geographically distant points each with a temple replica, but fails to arrive at the original architecture and instead circles the replicas in vain.

- catalogue text by Sayoko Osawa

Photo credit: Shintaro Yamanaka

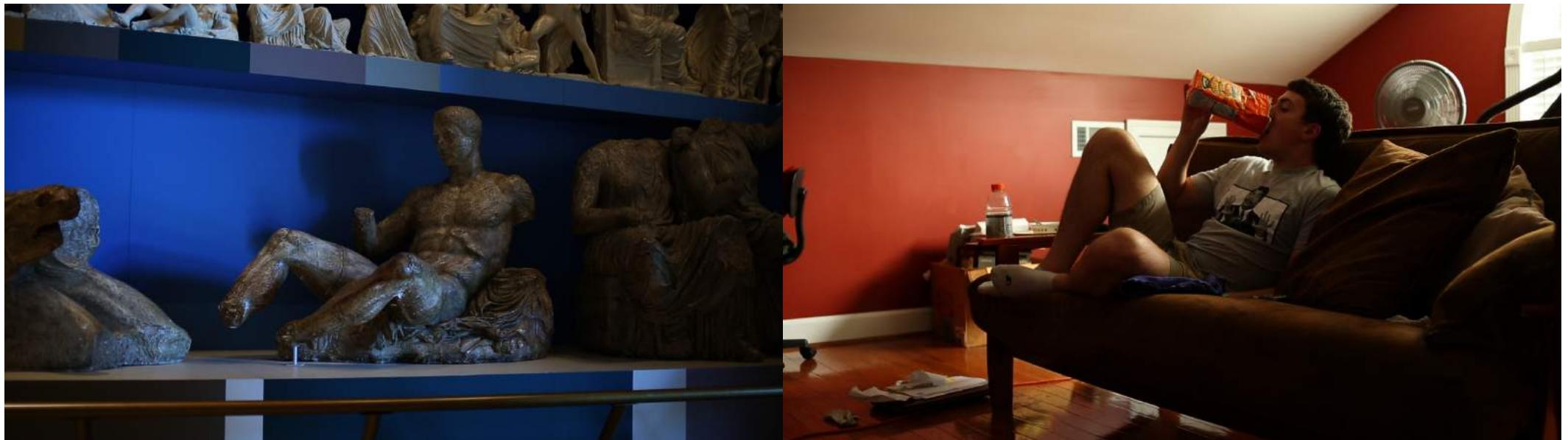


Fig.
2016

35mm slide film, projector

A set of 80 slides which interchangeably juxtaposes family photos which follows my American brother Lucas's growth with ancient Greek and Roman classical sculptures that correspond in their gestures and poses.

Photo credit: Shintaro Yamanaka



Searching the Original
2016

HDV, color, sound, 32'43" (video stills)

Based on Thomas Mann's "Disillusionment" (1896), "Searching the Original" is a tragedy which links Nashville and Athens. The protagonist of the story is Dionysus, the god of wine and theater. In the work, the story of Dionysus' disillusionment unfolds in Athens while Araki himself, disillusioned by the original Parthenon's current and political status, heads to the mountain where the marble used to build the Parthenon was obtained, going further back in search of the origin of the "original." - catalogue text by Sayoko Osawa



Penelope's Hand
2015

HDV, color, original soundtrack, 18'33"

An observational documentary of Penelope, a sculpture student from Athens School of Fine Arts, delicately making a mold of her own hand.

Yu Araki's work is a post-fictitious attempt to capture sculptural process as a paradigm of how the author, - maker is a conduit for passing skills and traditions down the generational lines. As during the process of mould making and then casting, Yu compares the process to that of a film production during which the 'casting of actors' composes the living part of what is to become the end feature itself. It is therefore in the hand of the successor of knowledge that the process might get slightly altered or changed. - introductory text by Augustus Veinoglou, director, SNEHTA Residency

Installation view at SNEHTA, Athens, Greece



Reference image for casting: *Odysseus and Penelope* by Francesco Primaticcio (1563)



Penelope's Hand
2015

HDV, color, original soundtrack, 18'33" (video stills)



Olafur
2014

HDV 08'39" (video still)

During my first visit to Iceland, I was surprised by how Americanized things were. The people told me, with their perfect American English, that they grew up watching Hollywood movies and American TV shows. I then decided to approach a local sculptor to make an Oscar statuette. The video documents the process of translation from the original to the adapted, localized version.



Olafur
2014

HDV 08'39" (video stills)



Oli
2014

Icelandic wood, varnish
h. 34.3 x w.8.5 x d.9.2 cm

An Icelandic interpretation of the Oscar statuette.
The total height is exactly the same with the real Oscar.



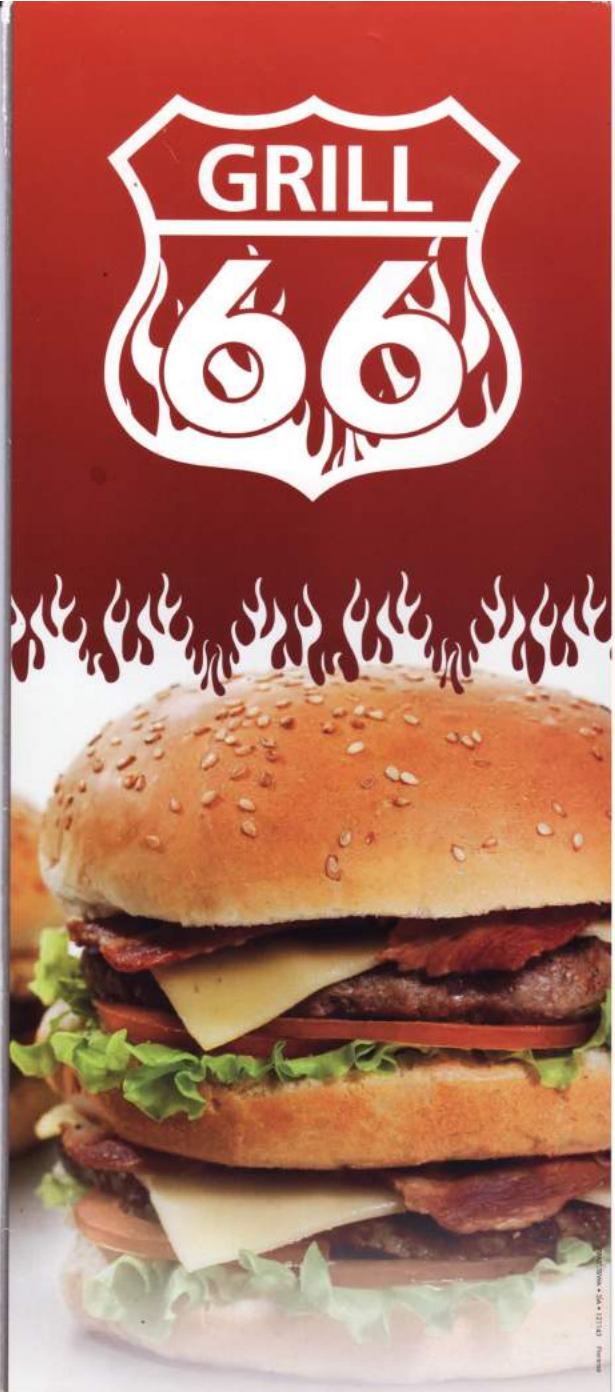
ROAD MOVIE

2014

HDV, color, silent, 15'42"

A video documentation of performance done in Skagastrond, Iceland's only restaurant Grill 66. The restaurant's menu are hamburgers and pizzas all named after cities and towns along the famous U.S. Route 66, which was then very important road for the American industry as well as road trips. Inspired by the Americanization found in a remote fishing village, I coordinated a one-night event at the end of my 3 month filmmaking residency stay, where 4 non-Americans attempt to consume the entire 25 menu in one-sitting, hence, achieving the fastest road trip ever made from Chicago (bacon burger) to Hollywood (beef steak sandwich). A DVD of this video is currently archived in the village's library, as the only record of eating competition that has ever taken place in the history of Skagastrond.

Location photograph



1 Barstow	Hamburgari, jöklasalat og franskars.....	855
2 El Rino	Ostborgari, jöklasalat og franskars.....	990
3 St. Louis	Beikonborgari, ostar, jöklasalat og franskars.....	1.050
4 Pontiac	140 g hamburgari, ostar, laukur, sveppir, jöklasalat og franskars.....	1.350
5 Oklahoma	140 g BBQ-borgari, ostar, beikon, jöklasalat og franskars.....	1.350
6 Chicago	Tvöfaldur beikonestborgari, jöklasalat og franskars.....	1.350
7 Elk City	120 g hreindýrborgari, gráðiostasósa, daíabrie-ostur, jöklasalat og franskars.....	1.350
8 Oro Grande	Fjölskyldutíboð, 4 hamburgarar, franskars og 2 í los.....	3.290
9 Azusa	Barmamáthið, hamburgari, franskars og svall.....	830
10 Joplin	Samloka, skinka, ostar, sinnepssósa, jöklasalat og franskars.....	720
11 Los Angeles	BBQ-grísalamsíloka í hamburgara brauði, sýrður gjómi, rauðlaukur, jöklasalat og franskars.....	1.260
12 Hollywood	Nautasteikarsíloka, sveppir, laukur, sinnepssósa, jöklasalat og franskars.....	1.390
13 White Oak	Baguette-samloka, nauta rib eye, laukur, sveppir, bérnæse-sósa og franskars.....	1.350
14 Buckhorn	Minútulambastéik, sveppir, laukur, jöklasalat, bökúð kartaffla eða franskars.....	1.990
15 Amarillo	Minútulambastéik, sveppir, laukur, jöklasalat, bökúð kartaffla eða franskars.....	1.990
16 Conway	Beinlaus BBQ-kjúklingalæri, jöklasalat og franskars.....	1.850
17 Kingman	BBQ-svinarif, jöklasalat, bökúð kartaffla eða franskars.....	1.550
18 Springfield	Gratíneraður plökfishur, rúgbrauð, smjör og jöklasalat.....	1.230
19 Pacific	Djúpsteikur fiskur, jöklasalat og franskars.....	1.350
20 Tulsa	9" or 12" pizza margarita – ostar og sósá.....	9"820 12"1.350
21 Gardner	9" og 12" pizza – pepperoni, skinka og sveppir.....	9"1.090 12"1.480
22 Fontana	9" og 12" pizza – peperoni og laukur ..9"1.090 12"1.480	
23 Glendora	9" og 12" pizza – nautahakk, sveppir og laukur.....	9"1.090 12"1.480
24 Spencer	Beikon, 2 egg, ristað brauð og smjör.....	1.150
25 Lincoln	Skinka, 2 egg, ristað brauð og smjör.....	1.150
Sósur	Kokteilsósa.....	120
	BBQ-sósa.....	120
	Piparsósa.....	120
	Bérnæse-sósa.....	150
1 Barstow	Hamburger, iceberg lettuce and French fries.....	855
2 El Rino	Cheeseburger, iceberg lettuce and French fries.....	990
3 St. Louis	Bacon burger, cheese, iceberg lettuce and French fries.....	1.050
4 Pontiac	140 g hamburger, cheese, onion, mushrooms, iceberg lettuce and French fries.....	1.350
5 Oklahoma	140 g BBQ burger, cheese, bacon, iceberg lettuce and French fries.....	1.350
6 Chicago	Double bacon cheeseburger, iceberg lettuce and French fries.....	1.350
7 Elk City	120 g reindeer burger, blue cheese sauce, Brie, iceberg lettuce and French fries.....	1.350
8 Oro Grande	Family meal, 4 hamburgers, French fries and 2 l soda.....	3.290
9 Azusa	Kids meal, hamburger, French fries and juice.....	830
10 Joplin	Sandwich, ham, cheese, mustard sauce, iceberg lettuce and French fries.....	720
11 Los Angeles	BBQ pulled pork sandwich, sour cream, red onion, iceberg lettuce and French fries.....	1.260
12 Hollywood	Beefsteak sandwich, mushrooms, onion, mustard sauce, iceberg lettuce and French fries.....	1.390
13 White Oak	Baguette, beef ribeye, onion, mushrooms, béarnaise sauce and French fries.....	1.350
14 Buckhorn	Beefsteak, mushrooms, onion, iceberg lettuce, baked potato or French fries.....	1.990
15 Amarillo	Lamb steak, mushrooms, onion, iceberg lettuce, baked potato or French fries.....	1.990
16 Conway	Boneless BBQ chicken thighs, iceberg and French fries.....	1.850
17 Kingman	BBQ ribs, iceberg, baked potato or French fries.....	1.550
18 Springfield	Icelandic fish gratin, rye bread, butter and iceberg lettuce.....	1.230
19 Pacific	Deep fried fish, iceberg lettuce and French fries.....	1.350
20 Tulsa	9" or 12" pizza margarita – cheese and sauce.....	9"820 12"1.350
21 Gardner	9" or 12" pizza – pepperoni, ham and mushrooms.....	9"1.090 12"1.480
22 Fontana	9" or 12" pizza – pepperoni and onion.....	9"1.090 12"1.480
23 Glendora	9" or 12" pizza – beef, mushrooms and onion.....	9"1.090 12"1.480
24 Spencer	Bacon, 2 eggs, toast and butter.....	1.150
25 Lincoln	Ham, 2 eggs, toast and butter.....	1.150
Sauces	Cocktail sauce.....	120
	BBQ sauce.....	120
	Pepper sauce.....	120
	Béarnaise sauce.....	150

A found restaurant menu which later became the script for *ROAD MOVIE*.



ROAD MOVIE
2014

HDV, color, silent, 15'22" (video still)



ROAD MOVIE
2014

HDV, color, silent, 15'22" (video stills)



MOTHERLANDS

2014

Solo presentation at art space JIKKA, Tokyo, Japan.

A large-scale color photograph installed in a gallery entrance. The photograph depicts the backside of the Viking Leifur Eiriksson Statue plinth, which was given by the U.S. government in 1930, acknowledging that Eiriksson was the first founder of the North America, approximately 500 years in prior to Christopher Columbus's discovery of "The New World". I wanted to approach the gallery space like a one big light box, so then I cut out "AMERICA" and "ICELAND" from the text. Placed (and displaced) in a Japanese gallery called JIKKA (which literally translates to "one's home"), the idea is to superimpose three nations by contextually highlighting their common ground, which in this case, ironically, was the historical presence of the U.S military base in both island nations.



MOTHERLANDS
2014

The Wrong Route

A set of 25 polaroid photos, 54 x 86 mm each, 2013

Installation view



MOTHERLANDS
2014

left: *Victoire de Skagaströnd*
A set of 2 portrait, 50 x 50 cm each, 2013

right: **ROAD MOVIE**
HDV, color, silent, 15'22", 2014

Installation view





ANGELO LIVES
2014

Digital video, color, sound, shipping container, 14'24"

Installation view at The Container, Tokyo.



ANGELO LIVES

2014

Digital video, color, sound, shipping container, 14'24"

Installation view at The Container, Tokyo.



ANGELO LIVES
2014

Digital video, color, sound, 14'24", 2014 (video still)

The propagation of olives to countries around the world is closely related to the spread of Christianity. As a matter of fact, the type of olive trees first planted in Japan is the Spanish cultivar called 'mission.' The indecipherable voiceover that accompanies the montage is dedicated to the ghost of Anjiro, who served as an interpreter for Francisco Xavier and apparently misinterpreted God as 'Dainichi'.



ANGELO LIVES
2014

Photograph, 89 x 127 mm, 2014

A production still filmed in Santander, Spain.



Yu Araki is an artist, filmmaker, and photographer who describes his peripatetic practice as "a form of cultural espionage." He works in various international locations in order to examine the ways in which different cultural, socio-political, and geographical contexts inform his output. With a background in sculpture and new media, Araki approaches each new project with a careful consideration of both site and medium, often allowing production to be dictated by his working environment and the available materials.

Recently, his work has considered the uncertainty of translation and the productive potential of mistranslation. His new multimedia project titled *WRONG REVISION* (2016), a developed continuation from *WRONG TRANSLATION* (2014), considers the history of Japan's relationship to the Western world before the modernization in the 19th century.

He currently lives and works in Tokyo, Japan.

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