

蜜月旅行 HONEYMOON

2021 / Single-channel version / HDV / 1.78:1 / Color / Stereo / Japan / 29'40" / English subtitles

2020 / Installation version (presented with press sheet with holes, 1 book, 2 framed photographs) / 1.78:1 / Color / Stereo / Japan / 29'40"





Video stills



Installation views at Pola Museum of Art, Hakone, JP | Photo: Ken Kato



Installation view (detail) at Pola Museum of Art, Hakone, JP

Short synopsis: Set in a fictitious lunar base Nagasaki, *HONEYMOON* is the Japanese director Yu Araki's take on Japonisme. He re-examines and re-interprets the wedding scene from *Madame Butterfly* (dir. Carmine Gallone, 1954), where B.F. Pinkerton sits in seiza (正座), which is the Japanese term used for the proper, formal traditional way of sitting by kneeling on the floor and have legs folded underneath the thighs. Although seiza-style is widely known as "correct", it didn't permeate until after Japan opened up to the Occident, that is, after the culture of the "chair" had taken hold, hence the formality of what the Japanese thought had long history was only a modern, arbitrary construct. Inspired by this historical fact, Araki connects seiza with another element to contemplate the arbitrariness of humanity: constellation, which, incidentally, is a homonym with seiza (星座) in the Japanese language.

In addition, the aforementioned film *Madame Butterfly* has been known as one of the most iconic collaborations between Italy and Japan, with a strong intention from the Japanese production side to "correct" the twisted imagery of Japanese depiction in which they succeeded. However, Araki critically poses the question of what does it mean to understand another culture "correctly". In Araki's version, B.F. Pinkerton is replaced by a real-life photographer Adolf de Meyer (1868 - 1946), and the matchmaker with an anthropologist Frederick Starr (1858 - 1933), and having Suzuki and Dr. Tatsukichi Irisawa (1865 - 1938), who was known for his essay "On the Japanese Way of Sitting" (1921), joining in as broadcast commentator to describe the situation from a distance. The loose, gossipy dialogue between the off-site personnel ranges from fashion to spies, interweaving various elements while the performers patiently wait in perseverance until their legs fall asleep.

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Director's Statement: This motion picture is based, in part, upon actual events and persons. However, numerous of the characters and incidents portrayed and the names used herein are fictitious. Any similarity of those fictitious characters or incidents to the name, attributes or actual background of any actual person, living or dead, or to any actual event is entirely coincidental and unintentional.

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Biography:

Yu Araki (b.1985, Yamagata City) received his Bachelor of Fine Arts in Sculpture from Washington University in St. Louis, U.S.A. in 2007, and completed his Master of Film and New Media Studies from Tokyo University of the Arts in 2010. In 2013, he was selected to participate in Tacita Dean Workshop hosted by Fundación Botín in Santander, Spain. During 2017-8, he was a guest resident at Asia Culture Center in Gwangju, South Korea, and Rijksakademie van beeldende kunsten in Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

Recent exhibitions include Pola Museum of Art, Shiseido Gallery, the National Museum of Art, Osaka, MUJIN-TO Production; Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona; Dallas Contemporary, Dallas; and Okayama Art Summit, Okayama. His films have been programmed in international festivals such as BFI London Film Festival, International Short Film Festival Oberhausen, Kassel Documentary Film and Video Festival, Rencontres Internationales Paris/Berlin, and International Film Festival Rotterdam, where he won the Ammodo Tiger Short Film Award in 2018. He was shortlisted as one of the 21 artists for the Future Generation Art Prize hosted by the Victor Pinchuk Foundation in Kyiv, Ukraine in 2019. He currently lives and works in Tokyo, Japan.

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Filmography:

HONEYMOON (2021), Fuel (2019), Mountain Plain Mountain (2018), Wrong Revision (2018), Bivalvia: Act I (2017), Road Movie (2014), Angelo Lives (2014), 971 Horses + 4 Zebras (2007)

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Credits:

Starring

Taro Nettleton as Adolf de Meyer

Qinhua Yang as Cio-Cio San

Jack Mclean as Frederick Starr

With

Kosuke Matsunobu as Suzuki

Toshiaki Hicosaka as Tatsukichi Irisawa

Tomoko Inoue as Kyoko Ito

Director of Photography: Kenichi Negishi (J.S.C.)

Camera Operator: Kosuke Haruki

Camera Operator: Daisuke Takase

Camera Assistants: Sota Takahashi, Genki Hidaka

Lighting: Masahiro Tawa

Best Boy: Toru Yagi

Hair and Makeup: Sae Takahashi

Sound Design: Ichiro Fujimoto

Subtitle translation: Stuart Munro

Title design: Yasuwo Miyamura

Editing Support: Yuya Koyama

Management: Hiroki Nishioka

Management Assistant: Masakazu Arai

Location: Omori-Musasino En, Tokyo

Zabuton provided by Midori Koseki

Special thanks: Kenta Nettleton, Arika Suminaga, Susumu Shimonishi, Nobuhito Koseki, Bo Wang, Pan Lu, Min-hyun Kang, Sota Chu, Rivers Cuomo, Chieko Nakagawa, Taiki Tamamura, Hiroaki Nakazato, Nobuki Shirai, the entire staff at Pola Museum of Art, my friends and families.

Produced by Pola Museum of Art, Pola Art Foundation

Commissioned on the occasion of "Connections - 150 years of Modern Art in Japan and France"

Curators: Nami Yamabana, Yoko Iwasaki

Installation: Tokyo Studio Co., Ltd.

Written, Edited, Casted & Directed by Yu Araki

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Screening history:

July 2021, Flash Competition, 32nd FIDMarseille - International Film Festival Marseille, Marseille, FR (World Premiere) - *scheduled*

September 2021, East Asian Experimental Competition, Image Forum Festival, Tokyo, JP (Japan Premiere) - *scheduled*

Exhibition history:

November 14th, 2020, - April 4th, 2021, Connections - 150 years of Modern Art in Japan and France, Pola Museum of Art, Hakone, JP (Group show)

April 29th - May 31st, 2021, Yu Araki: Three Days, Five Nights, Itamuro Onsen Daikokuya, Nasushiobara, JP (Solo show)

July 2021, Home Sweet Home, Castrignano de' Greci, Lecce, IT (Group show) - *scheduled*



Self-Portrait, Adolf de Meyer in Japanese house

1900

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Image source: Art Resource, NY