



The work of Katsunobu Yaguchi, a Japanese artist, reflects his passion for repurposing objects and places that would otherwise have been abandoned, lost or discarded. He pays particular attention to townscapes, old houses, and traditions that are decaying. Since 2008, Yaguchi has confined himself into his own project, titled “Café Washingtown”, which was initiated by reinventing an old abandoned house, found in Mito City, in Ibaraki, Japan, as a café and a community hub where local residents come to connect, share, and create together. The house, a two-story building, was built from scrap wood and other salvaged materials, and by the late owner’s hands in the aftermath of World War II. Yaguchi’s artistic practice had been centered around Café Washingtown, involving a wide range of work, from production of newspaper, management of a local festival, to creation of collaborative art with surrounding neighbors, until the building faced demolition in 2013.

The deconstruction of Café Washingtown took great strides towards its own transformation, making significant changes to Yaguchi’s choice of the medium and the method. His work has encompassed photography, film and video, painting, drawing, sculpture, performance, and installation since then. He produced large amounts of photographs and footage of the house demolition, titled “Washington Documentaries (2008-2015)”, many of which were showcased in the Prism sector, Paris Photo, Paris, in 2017. The house was deconstructed by the artist’s own hands, and all the architectural elements were carefully preserved. Two years after the demolition, he started to self-build an alternative space for art by reusing those elements at the same location. He was also entrusted with full refurbishments of two other vacant houses next door to the space, where he set up his own studio in 2016, and re-established “Café New Washingtown” in 2018, which marked the next phase of his professional development.

Yaguchi was born in Ibaraki, Japan, in 1978. He moved to the UK in 2002, and completed Postgraduate Diploma in Drawing at Camberwell College of Arts, London, UK in 2004. He presented a number of experimental performances in Europe from 2004 to 2008. He exhibited a large-scale installation “Washington Documentaries”, an introduction of his activities during the last decade, at Prism sector / Paris Photo, Paris, France, represented by Keiko Ogane Gallery (2017). Solo Exhibitions include “The progress of Café New Washingtown”, Keiko Ogane Gallery, Ibaraki, Japan (2018), “Tomatoravel”, Art Tower Mito, Ibaraki, Japan (2009). Group Exhibitions include “Imprisoned, Jailbreak, Imprisoned, Jailbreak”, multiple locations, Tokyo, Japan (2016), “HongoNoShow”, Hongo, TWS Hongo, Tokyo, Japan (2012), “Otomo Yoshihide / ENSEMBLES”, Art tower Mito, Ibaraki, Japan (2010), “Transit station”, Royal Danish Academy of Fine Art, Copenhagen, Denmark (2010), “Spectre vs. Rectur”, The Resi- dence, London, England (2007), “Cross Polly nation”, General public, Berlin, Germany (2006).