

**JAPAN PAVILION**

**At the 19th International Architecture Exhibition - La Biennale di Venezia**

**IN-BETWEEN**

**Curated by Jun Aoki**

***IN-BETWEEN: Jun Aoki’s curation brings to Venice***

 ***the timeless spirit of a nation that has long embraced nature***

Press Release

*In-Between*, the exhibition curated by architect Jun Aoki and commissioned by the Japan Foundation, for the Japan Pavilion, presents a new—and at the same time, ancient— attitude and vision that replaces the long-standing human-centric perspective, in line with the theme proposed by the Biennale Architettura 2025 curated by Carlo Ratti~~.~~ The exhibition explores the ambiguous intersection and dialogue between human and non-human, natural and artificial elements, proposing an idea where humans and the environment stand on an equal level, transcending the dualism of subject and object. In the old Japanese language, this concept is expressed as *ma*, meaning “in-between.”

*In-Between* presents an architectural installation responding to two urgent questions:

* How should we relate to the world amid existential threats like the climate crisis?
* How should we engage with rapidly evolving AI?

**Exhibition Overview** Two teams—Taichi Sunayama + Toshikatsu Kiuchi and Asako Fujikura + Takahiro Ohmura—explore these questions through the Pavilion’s two levels: the open-air pilotis and the upper gallery, unified by a central square “Hole” piercing the floor above. This Hole becomes a symbol of fragmented knowledge, linking spaces and serving as a conceptual core.

Seven architectural elements (the Hole, Wall Columns, Outer Walls, Brick Terrace, Pensilina, Tilted Loop Path, and Yew Tree) engage in a speculative dialogue with five humans. This imagined exchange forms the basis of an audiovisual installation, presenting these “things” as protagonists envisioning the Pavilion’s future.

**A Fictional Dialogue with AI** Rather than using current AI, the dialogue is a scripted fiction by Fujikura + Ohmura—an imagined interaction with a future, more relational AI. In the upstairs gallery, as a work by the Fujikura + Ohmura team, synchronized videos present this speculative world: a monitor suspended from a Wall Column gives voice to the elements, while projections show five humans dining and a reactive visual landscape, suggesting a reversal of the human–nonhuman gaze.

**Generative Web Variations** This online automated dialogue, developed by Sunayama, is expanded into infinite variations through generative AIs customized for each “actor,” and streamed on a special website at the same pace as the performance unfolding upstairs during the exhibition period. These are continuously updated online and voiced by synthetic narrators. One version is streamed on an iPhone in the pilotis, creating a mirrored experience with the upstairs gallery.

**Making the Invisible Visible** An elliptical reflective saucer in the pilotis, designed by the Sunayama + Kiuchi team, reflects spotlight beams to the gallery ceiling, materializing the Hole’s presence. The Tilted Loop Path—formed from 3D-printed, soil-filled ceramic rails—hosts growing plants, tended daily by staff, enacting the convergence of human care and ecological time.

**“In-Between” as a Future Possibility** This exhibition proposes a hybrid, “in-between” subjectivity—between human and nonhuman, natural and artificial—echoing both the Japanese concept of *ma* and Donna Haraway’s cyborg. Rather than universal knowledge, AI (like humans) operates through entanglement and context. As we face a “Cambrian” moment of AI evolution, *In-Between* offers a hopeful vision shaped through mutual coexistence.

The Japan Pavilion is collaborating with kolor (established in 2004), a brand renowned for its unique worldview created through subtle balances and color combinations that leave a lasting impression, and which has gained a large following both domestically and internationally. The costumes for the five actors appearing in one of the video works exhibited at the Japan Pavilion, as well as the uniforms worn by the staff responsible for monitoring and explaining the works, are all created using materials from kolor's archive. Additionally, as a special benefit for supporters of the Japan Pavilion, we are producing 400 limited-edition commemorative tote bags.

On the occasion of the Biennale Architettura 2025, the Japan Pavilion will reopen to the public renovated thanks to a donation from the Ishibashi Foundation. In fact, renovation and energy efficiency work, directed by architect Toyo Ito, has just been completed to make it environmentally friendly.

**IN-BETWEEN**

10 May to 23 November 2025

**CREDITS**

Commissioner: The Japan Foundation

Curator: Jun Aoki

Exhibitors: Tamayo Iemura; Asako Fujikura + Takahiro Ohmura; SUNAKI (Toshikatsu Kiuchi and Taichi Sunayama)

Venue: Giardini della Biennale di Venezia

**Full press kit available here:**

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1TfbajFmO8FQdXbSDEPedRL4p4VOy9Qy-?usp=drive_link>

**Related exhibition of In-Between**
Organizer: anonymous art project
**Kengo Kito "LINES"**
Exhibition Period: Saturday, 10 May – Sunday, 28 September, 2025
Venue: Courtyard and exhibition rooms of the Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Venezia (Piazza San Marco, 17/52, Venice, Italy)
**Mika Ninagawa with EiM "INTERSTICE"**
Exhibition Period: Saturday, 10 May – Monday, 21 July, 2025
Venue: Palazzo Bollani (Riva degli Schiavoni 3647, Venice, Italy)
Details: <https://anonymous-collection.jp/2025-venice/>

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