

## The Japan Pavilion Exhibition at the 18th International Architecture Exhibition La Biennale di Venezia (2023) “Architecture, a place of mind” Maki Onishi is chosen to be a curator

The Japan Foundation, commissioner and organizer of the Japan Pavilion of the Venice Biennale is pleased to announce that outline of Japanese participation in the Biennale has been decided as below:

### ■ The Japan Pavilion at the 18th International Architecture Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia

Title: Architecture, a place of mind  
Commissioner/Organizer: The Japan Foundation  
Curator: Maki Onishi (Architect | Director and Co-founder, onishimaki+hyakudayuki architects / o+h)  
Deputy Curator: Yuki Hyakuda (Architect | Director and Co-founder, onishimaki+hyakudayuki architects / o+h)  
Project Members: Akane Moriyama (Textile Designer, Artist)  
Futoshi Mizuno (Architect | President, Mizuno Seitoen Lab)  
dot architects (Architecture collective)  
Yurika Kono (Photographer)  
Yuma Harada (Designer | Representative, UMA /design farm)  
Tomomi Tada (Editor | President, MUESUM)

### ■ Outline of the 18th International Architecture Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia

Dates: May 20 (Sat) – November 26 (Sun), 2023  
Venues: Giardini di Castello, Arsenale, and various other venues  
Director: Lesley Lokko  
Theme: The Laboratory of the Future  
Official Website: <http://www.labiennale.org>

#### Press inquiries :

Kumakura (Ms.), Harada (Ms.), Public Relations Department, The Japan Foundation  
Tel: +81-(0)3-5369-6075 / Fax: +81-(0)3-5369-6044  
E-mail: [press@jpf.go.jp](mailto:press@jpf.go.jp)

### ■ About the Curator

#### **Maki Onishi**

Born in Aichi Prefecture, Japan in 1983, Maki Onishi graduated from Kyoto University's Undergraduate School of Architecture in 2006, completed a master's degree at the University of Tokyo in 2008, and launched onishimaki+hyakudayuki / o+h the same year with co-director Yuki Hyakuda. Onishi became a Visiting Professor at Kyoto University in 2016, a Guest Professor at Yokohama National University (Y-GSA) in 2017, and in 2022 was appointed Professor at Yokohama National University (Y-GSA).



Major works include Shelter Inclusive Place COPAL (Yamagata City Southern Children's Play Facility, 2022), Taga Community Center (2019), Good Job! Center KASHIBA (2016), and Double Helix House (2011). Awards include the ADAN prize, Grand Prix in 2018 for Good Job Center KASHIBA, the JIA Young Architect Award in 2018, and the AIJ Young Architect Award for Selected Architectural Designs 2019 for Good Job Center KASHIBA.

### ■ Curator's Statement

Since the Great East Japan Earthquake, people in Japan have become more aware of local links and of the importance of building things together. In cities, new development projects are reproducing homogenous and controlled spaces. Project owners and architects may never get to know each other or even see each other's faces. Construction has become more complex, with greater specialization, and the work is performed by people who you are unfamiliar with. As a result, architecture is moving away from people, and seems to be leaving people isolated. Do people still love architecture like they used to?

At the same time, there are signs that more inclusive thinking—recognizing and respecting differences—has begun to emerge. Rather than everything being subject to a single set of values, our values now start out from the individual, with small circles of empathy that overlap with circles centered on other individuals, eventually transforming society so that it becomes inclusive of all. Such a society surely needs individualistic and tolerant architecture, shifting away from homogenization and efficiency. Such architecture could perhaps be called “place of mind” architecture.

Architecture is generally thought of in terms of artificial man-made objects detached from humanity and nature, but there are occasional moments when it seems to come to life. For

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instance, when you think about the pit-house dwellings of prehistoric Jomon Japan, or the country's thatched-roof farmhouses, it is easy to envision hairy animals of some sort huddled against the walls, or a traveler with a straw rain cape taking shelter under the eaves. Such houses are more than an assemblage of construction materials. They seem to encourage you to pat them and feel their warmth. They may not always do what you want them to do, but they are more like living creatures. It should be possible for us to rethink our view of architecture to focus on characteristics like these.

The aim of this exhibition is to bring our thoughts together and to join in thinking in more depth about the potential for place of mind architecture—architecture with a presence that gives the impression of having its own mind, being tolerant, warm, and drawing in large numbers of people to become involved with nature.

Architecture, a place of mind

- Organic rather than segmental
- Grown rather than assembled
- Loved rather than admired
- Individual rather than anonymous
- Alive rather than artificial
- A place for living rather than just existing

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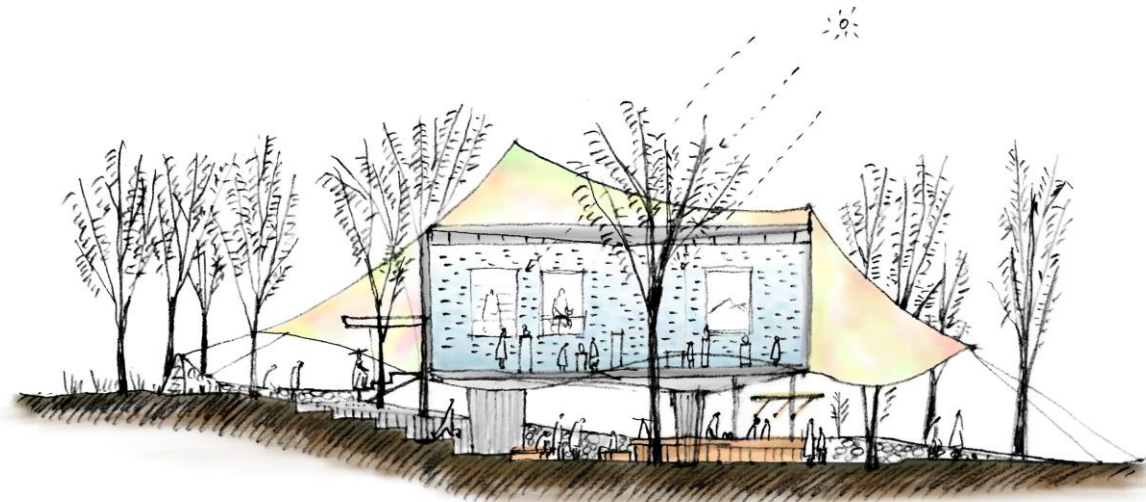
■ Images for press use of the Japan Pavilion at the 18th International Architecture Exhibition  
– La Biennale di Venezia

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Rendering for *Architecture, a place of mind*

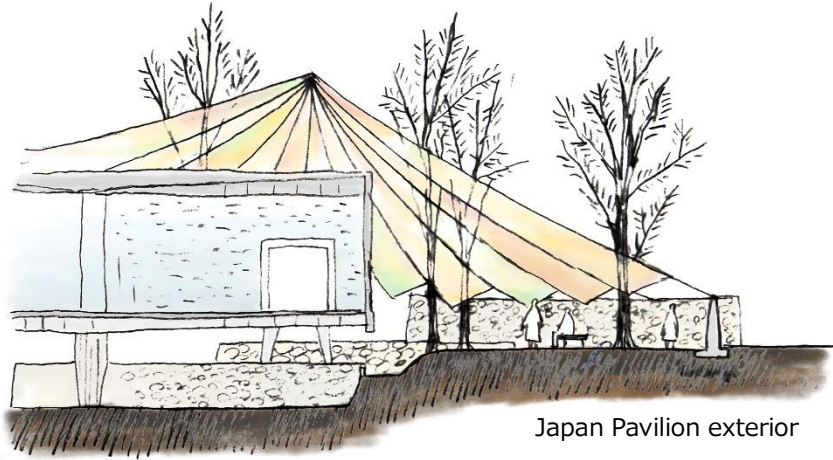
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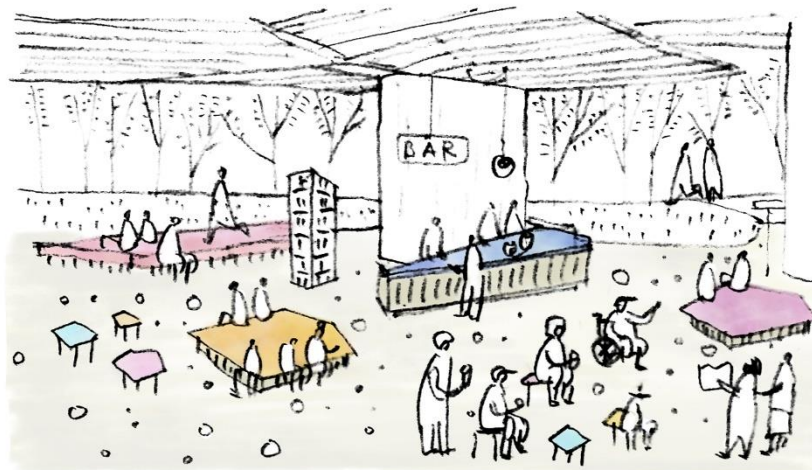
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Japan Pavilion exterior



Japan Pavilion interior



Japan Pavilion pilotis

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