

Ei Arakawa-Nash's *Grass Babies, Moon Babies* is set to permeate the peripheries of Japan Pavilion through a constellation of voices and practices

In *Grass Babies, Moon Babies*, 200 baby dolls invite visitors to imagine a future shaped within the long shadow of historical and social forces – both within and beyond Japan.



Grass Babies, Moon Babies exhibition logo,
designed by Mori Daishiro and Koike Toshiki

March 19, 2026 – Commissioned by the Japan Foundation, the Japan Pavilion will present *Grass Babies, Moon Babies* by Japanese American queer artist **Ei Arakawa-Nash** at the 61st International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia (Biennale Arte 2026) from 9 May to 22 November 2026 at the Giardini di Castello, Venice, Italy. This will be a co-curatorial collaboration between **HORIKAWA Lisa**, Senior Curator and Director (Curatorial & Collections), National Gallery Singapore, and **TAKAHASHI Mizuki**, Executive Director and Chief Curator, Centre for Heritage, Arts and Textile (CHAT) in Hong Kong.

Grass Babies, Moon Babies creates an immersive journey activated by visitors through acts of care and movement. Upon entering the Pavilion, visitors are invited to hold and carry one of 200 baby dolls through the Pavilion's pilotis, gardens, and interior spaces. Visitors participate in a final act of collective care by changing the dolls' diapers and activating a QR code that delivers a "diaper poem" based on each baby's assigned birthday. These birthdays are shaped at the intersection of the artist's intimate, personal experiences and the long arc of historical and social forces within and beyond Japan.

The exhibition's identity takes the form of a minimal, AI-assisted calligraphic logo, reflecting the dual imagery of "moon" and "grass," while subtly alluding to a landscape from the point of view of infants.

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The Pavilion unfolds over the full seven months of the Biennale as an evolving platform shaped by the participation of visitors and collaborators alike. Preparation, maintenance, and care become integral components of the exhibition itself, blurring the boundaries between rehearsal and presentation, private labor and public performance. In this way, the flow of audiences through the Pavilion continually reshapes the work, transforming the space of visual art into a site of lived choreography.

The project also reflects the artist's own experience of becoming a parent in 2024. For Arakawa-Nash, care is not only emotional but also structural: a form of labor that is socially distributed and historically gendered. Through the simple yet demanding act of holding the dolls, visitors are invited to engage physically and emotionally with the often-invisible labor of caregiving.

Born in Japan and now working transnationally, Arakawa-Nash approaches the Japan Pavilion from a diasporic and queer perspective. The exhibition foregrounds collaboration and multiplicity rather than singular representation, expanding the framework of the national Pavilion through a constellation of voices and practices.

Beyond the previously announced institutional partners—J. Paul Getty Museum (Los Angeles), Kestner Gesellschaft (Hanover), and The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum (New York), each contributing through separately commissioned projects—*Grass Babies*, *Moon Babies* further expands through collaborations across art, architecture, literature, and performance:

ARAKAWA Miwako and her friends in Fukushima
Art Climate Collective Japan (Arts Initiative Tokyo)
CHOI Jae-Eun
Department of Asian and North African Studies (DSAAM), Ca' Foscari University of Venice
End of Summer
FAC XTRA RETREAT (Ei Arakawa-Nash, Patty Chang, Pearl C Hsiung, Amanda Ross-Ho, Anna Sew Hoy, Shirley Tse, and Amy Yao)
ISHII Yukari
The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum (Children's Workshop, Japan Pavilion 2026)
IZUMI Reijiro (SABIÉ)
Korean Pavilion 2026 (Binna CHOI, Goen CHOI, Heyree RO)
MORI Daishiro and KOIKE Toshiki
NAKAMURA Yuko and SAEKI Eiko
NUNO
PeM architects studio
R. Kikuo Johnson
Sergei Tcherepnin

Detailed introductions for each collaborator will be available in the "Notes to Editors" section at the end of the release.

■ Onsite Performances

Daily (Except Monday) from 9 May to 22 November 2026

Audience Activation Grass Babies, Moon Babies

May 8, 2026

FAC XTRA RETREAT (Ei Arakawa-Nash, Patty Chang, Pearl C Hsiung, Amanda Ross-Ho, Anna Sew Hoy, Shirley Tse, and Amy Yao)

May 10, 2026

FAC XTRA RETREAT (Ei Arakawa-Nash, Patty Chang, Pearl C Hsiung, Amanda Ross-Ho, Anna Sew Hoy, Shirley Tse, and Amy Yao)

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November 22, 2026

Ei Arakawa-Nash and End of Fall

Please follow the exhibition's official Instagram account (@japan_pavilion_vb2026) and below website for performance times and additional educational tour:

<https://venezia-biennale-japan.jp/e/art/2026-en>

– END –

■ **Press Kit:** <https://egnyte.suttoncomms.com/fl/Gt7KyMwdrc6C>

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■ **Exhibition Details**

The Japan Pavilion at the 61st International Art Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia

Title of Exhibition: Grass Babies, Moon Babies

Dates: Saturday, May 9 – Sunday, November 22, 2026

Venue: The Japan Pavilion (in the Giardini, one of the Biennale venues)

Artist: Ei Arakawa-Nash

Co-curators: HORIKAWA Lisa (National Gallery Singapore, Senior Curator and Director (Curatorial & Collections), TAKAHASHI Mizuki (Centre for Heritage, Arts and Textile, Hong Kong, Executive Director and Chief Curator)

Organizer/commissioner: The Japan Foundation (JF)

Special support: Ishibashi Foundation

Exhibition website: <https://venezia-biennale-japan.jp/e/art/2026-en>

Official Instagram: @japan_pavilion_vb2026

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NOTES TO EDITORS



Clockwise from left: HORIKAWA Lisa, TAKAHASHI Mizuki and Ei ARAKAWA-NASH with Isamu Noguchi's Octetra at Kodomonokuni (Children's Land), Yokohama, Japan; Photo: Hako Hosokawa

■About the Artist

Ei Arakawa-Nash (born 1977 in Fukushima, Japan) is a Japanese American queer performance artist based in Los Angeles. Since the early 2000s, Arakawa-Nash has been at the forefront of expanding the international visibility and possibilities of performance art, drawing on—and reworking—its historical lineages, from Japan's Gutai to New York's Fluxus, Happenings, and Judson Dance Theater, as well as Viennese Actionism. After becoming a queer parent to twins in 2024, *Grass Babies*, *Moon Babies* marks their first major performance installation, framing care as a collective practice.

By continuously working with others, they destabilize the subjective "I." Their group performances emphasize the ever-present precarity of art objects and artist subjectivities. They are a professor in the Graduate Art program at ArtCenter College of Design in Pasadena, Los Angeles. They recently participated in exhibitions at Haus der Kunst (Munich, 2025), National Art Center, Tokyo (2024), CHAT - Centre for Heritage, Arts and Textile (Hong Kong, 2024), Tokyo Photographic Art Museum (2024), Kunsthalle Friart Fribourg (2023), Museion Bozen (Bolzano, 2023), Artists Space (New York, 2021), Tate Modern (London, 2021), Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean (Luxembourg, 2021), Honolulu Biennial (2019).

■Co-Curators' Biographies

HORIKAWA Lisa is Senior Curator and Director (Curatorial & Collections) at the National Gallery Singapore, overseeing the strategic development of collections including artworks and archives. Her current research interest is on the comparative examination of intersecting modernisms in Southeast Asia, East Asia and beyond, particularly in the 1930s to 1940s. She was a lead curator of "Between Declarations and Dreams: Art of Southeast Asia since the 19th century," 2015, "(Re)Collect: The Making of Our Collection," 2018, and co-curated "Reframing modernism: Painting from Southeast Asia, Europe and Beyond," 2016, and "City of Others: Asian Artists in Paris 1920s-1940s," 2025. Prior to joining the

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Gallery, she was curator at Fukuoka Asian Art Museum in Japan from 2003 to 2012 and a part of the Long March Project's curatorial team in Beijing from 2002-2003.

TAKAHASHI Mizuki is Executive Director and Chief Curator, Centre for Heritage, Arts and Textile (CHAT) in Hong Kong, taking charge of supervising the museum's institutional direction, organisation structure and curatorial programmes since 2020. From 2017 to 2020, as co-director, she was in charge of setting CHAT's mission, vision, and artistic direction and management as well as executing exhibition, co-learning and public programmes. In Japan, she worked for Mori Museum Project Office (1999-2003), Contemporary Art Center, Art Tower Mito (2003-2016). She has curated numerous exhibitions in and outside Japan including at CHAT, "Jakkai Siributr: Everybody Wanna Be Happy," 2023, "Yee I-Lann: Until We Hug Again," 2021, "Sudō Reiko: Making NUNO Textiles," 2019, "Unfolding: Fabric of Our Life," 2019, at the Contemporary Art Center, Art Tower Mito, "Tadasu Takamine's COOL JAPAN," 2012, "8 Days : Beuys in Japan," 2009.

■ About the Commissioner

The Japan Foundation (JF) is an independent administrative corporation that promotes exchanges of culture and art, Japanese-language education, and Japanese research and international dialogue based on its mission: "Cultivating friendship and ties between Japan and the world." The JF has been the organizer/commissioner of the exhibition in the Japan Pavilion at La Biennale di Venezia since 1976.



The Japan Pavilion at Giardini, Venice ©PEPPE MAISTO

■ About La Biennale di Venezia

La Biennale di Venezia is a festival of the arts that uses locations in the island city of Venice as venues. It has made its mark on history for almost 130 years, starting with the first art exhibition in 1895. In recent years, international arts festivals focused on art have been held around the world—La Biennale di Venezia is the most celebrated of these, and has served as an ideal model for the others. "Biennale" means "once every two years" in Italian, and many similar arts festivals are said to be named "Biennale" or "Triennale" (once every three years) because they took La Biennale di Venezia as their example. In the present day, La Biennale di Venezia embraces its art exhibition, architecture exhibition, music festival, cinema festival, theater festival, etc. as independent departments; among these, the art exhibition draws the attention of the global art world as a place to get an overview of current artistic trends and as an unusual international exhibition where each country adopts its own method of participation.

Japan officially participated in La Biennale di Venezia for the first time in 1952, and has continued its involvement in every exhibition following the completion of the Japan Pavilion in 1956. The JF has organized the Japan Pavilion exhibitions from 1976 to the present day. See the Japan Pavilion's official website for more information about its previous representative creators.

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About the Collaborators

FAC XTRA RETREAT (from left: Patty Chang, Amanda Ross-Ho, Shirley Tse, Amy Yao, Ei Arakawa-Nash, Anna Sew Hoy, and Pearl C. Hsiung), 2026, photo by Keegan Holden

ARAKAWA Miwako is the mother of Ei Arakawa-Nash. She has been solo parenting since Ei was 12. Together with her friends in Fukushima, she hand-sewed 200 baby garments for this exhibition.

Art Climate Collective Japan (ACCJ), led by Arts Initiative Tokyo (AIT), a nonprofit organization, is the country's first arts-climate initiative. It shares accessible information about the climate crisis and its impact on the arts in Japan, while raising awareness, deepening understanding, and encouraging meaningful action.

CHOI Jae-Eun is a contemporary artist. In 1976 she moved to Japan where she studied the Sogetsu style of ikebana. She worked as an assistant to Teshigahara Hiroshi, the third-generation master of the Sogetsu school on numerous installations and his film. She participated as one of the representative artists of the Japan Pavilion at the 46th Venice Biennale in 1995. She has been working on a project to restore destroyed forests as an extension of the "Dreaming Earth Project" in the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) on the Korean Peninsula since 2015.

Department of Asian and North African Studies (DSAAM), Ca' Foscari University of Venice Founded in 1868 as the "Royal High School of Commerce," **Ca' Foscari University** is a leading Italian institution renowned for its excellence in languages, economics, and international studies. Within the Department of Asian and North African Studies, the Japanese Studies program, with more than 1,000 students, stands out in Europe for its transdisciplinary approach, ranging from language and literary studies to the social sciences and visual and performing arts.

End of Summer is a transpacific artist residency and lecture series based in Portland, Oregon since 2016. The residency will plan a workshop with the Japan Pavilion in Summer 2026 on themes of translation and cross-cultural relations. It will relaunch in 2027 as part of the Art J Foundation.

FAC XTRA RETREAT (Ei Arakawa-Nash, Patty Chang, Pearl C Hsiung, Amanda Ross-Ho, Anna Sew Hoy, Shirley Tse, and Amy Yao) is composed of members Ei Arakawa-Nash, Patty Chang, Pearl C. Hsiung, Amanda Ross-Ho, Anna Sew Hoy, Shirley Tse, and Amy Yao. All are artists who teach in

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various art schools and universities. In 2022, they connected through the Asian American Pacific Islander Arts Network (AAPIAN), a group of artists and art workers based in California.

Patty Chang is a contemporary artist working across performance, video, text, photography, and sculpture. Her practice explores connections between the self and larger ecological systems. Recent projects—Learning Endings, Abyssal, and Stray Dog Hydrophobia (with David Kelley)—examine scientific labor, Chinese immigrant histories in porcelain, and oceanic entanglements of mining, colonialism, slavery, and geoengineering.

Pearl C. Hsiung (born in Taichung, Taiwan) is an artist based in Los Angeles. She creates paintings, videos, and installations that explore places and themes of change and transformation. Her artwork has been shown in both solo and group exhibitions in the Americas, Europe, and Asia. Hsiung also teaches as an Assistant Professor at California State University, Long Beach.

Amanda Ross-Ho is an interdisciplinary artist and Professor of Sculpture at the University of California, Irvine. Her sculpture, installation, performance, and public works have been exhibited widely, nationally and internationally. Her work reshapes the collateral of time into experimental archives, monuments, and discursive tableaux. She lives and works in Los Angeles.

Anna Sew Hoy (born in Auckland, New Zealand) is a Los Angeles-based artist. Sew Hoy brings together sculpture, public art and performance to connect with our environment, and to demonstrate the power of the fleeting and handmade. Her work has been at the forefront of a re-engagement with clay in contemporary art, and is identified with a critical rethinking of the relationship between art and craft. She is a Professor at University of California, Los Angeles.

Shirley Tse (born in Hong Kong) lives and works in California. Tse is known for her innovative, research-driven installations that merge sculpture, photography, and video to examine materiality and social relations. Her work combines everyday materials, found objects, and fully fabricated forms to explore how material social worlds are continuously negotiated. Rooted in experimentation and adaptation, Tse's practice raises timely questions about sustainability and the interconnectedness of contemporary life.

Amy Yao lives and works in Los Angeles and New York City. Yao is a visual artist making work in many different mediums informed by ideas of waste, consumption, and identity. Her recent work reconsiders the relationships between critique in artistic practice and generative production. In the early 1990s she formed the Asian American femme band Emilys Sassy Lime (Riot Grrl era) with her sister Wendy and her best friend Emily Ryan. She is regular faculty at Calarts and associate chair of Sculpture at Bard MFA.

ISHII Yukari is one of the most influential writers and astrologers in Japan. She identifies herself as a writer, finding the movements of the stars not fortune-telling, but words for living. She is highly acclaimed for her empathetic, yet logical prose, which provides insight into the present while encouraging her readers through her writings on magazines and digital platforms.

The Isamu Noguchi Foundation and Garden Museum (Children's Workshop, Japan Pavilion 2026)
Isamu Noguchi (1904–1988) was a groundbreaking Japanese American artist who redefined the limits and social impact of sculpture, modelling a life and practice grounded in hybridity, openness, and experimentation. Over a six-decade career, he created works in stainless steel, marble, cast iron, balsa

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wood, bronze, aluminum, basalt, granite, ceramics, and water. He also designed gardens, playgrounds, plazas, furniture, lighting, and stage sets—all within his expansive definition of “sculpture.” Though unaffiliated with any single movement, Noguchi collaborated widely across disciplines. At once traditional and modern, organic and industrial, playful and profound, his work set a new standard for reintegrating the arts. Isamu Noguchi represented the United States Pavilion in the Venice Biennale in 1986. A children’s workshop inspired by Noguchi’s work will be held during the exhibition.

IZUMI Reijiro (SABIÉ) is a renowned tea master as Sorei, and researcher of the history of tea kettles. Born and raised in Kyoto, Izumi is the grandson of the 15th-generation head of the Urasenke school and serves as Deputy director of Chado Research Center and Vice principal of the Urasenke Gakuen Professional College of Chado. With contemporary artists, thinkers and various cultural experts, he has promoted the philosophical concept of the Way of Tea through “SABIÉ” project, which was founded by his father, Izumi Soko.

Korean Pavilion 2026 (Binna Choi, Goen Choi, Heyree Ro) has been in discussion with the artist and co-curators of the Japan Pavilion regarding a meaningful collaboration. The exhibition will pursue a collaboration between the only two Asian national pavilions in the Giardini—marking a first in history.

Binna Choi brings two decades of experience working internationally while sustaining deep connections to her roots in Korea. She has been at the forefront of shaping new institutional models through her directorship of Casco Art Institute: Working for the Commons in Utrecht, the Netherlands. Her recent curatorial projects include the 2025 Hawai’i Triennial and the 2022 Singapore Biennale. Choi has also worked with the Doosan Curator Workshop (2024-ongoing), Gwangju Biennale International Curator Course (2025), and Dutch Art Institute (2008-2022).

Goen Choi works primarily with hard metals often used in domestic infrastructures, creating site-specific sculptural interventions that integrate entire sites into a single organic context, traversing the boundaries between interior and exterior. Recent projects include new commissioned works for the 2nd Frieze Seoul Artist Award (2024) and the 7th Changwon Sculpture Biennale (2024), Cornering, a solo exhibition at Amado Art Space (2022), and Vivid Cut at P21, Seoul (2021).

Hyeree Ro is an artist based in Brooklyn and Seoul, primarily working with hand-crafted sculptural objects and structures to create multilingual fractured narrative-based performances. A perennial migrant, she interweaves family history, place, language, body, movement, and story into her practice. Recent projects include solo exhibitions August is the Cruellest at Doosan Gallery(2025), Niro at Canal Projects (2024), and Jinhee at Project Space SARUBIA (2022). Ro is also an Assistant Arts Professor at NYU Tisch School of the Arts.

MORI Daishiro is a Japanese graphic designer, specially known for his design work for contemporary art exhibitions and artists’ monographs. His insightful design based on his keen interpretation of concepts, materials, colors, and techniques of contemporary artists’ works has earned strong trust from the artists Mori collaborated with.

KOIKE Toshiki is a graphic designer and specializes in editorial design, focusing primarily on books and printed media. His designed artist monographs are acclaimed for experiments in printing technique as well as binding.

NAKAMURA Yuko (Filmmaker /Writer) is the director of *Memories of Origin: Hiroshi Sugimoto* (nominated for an International Emmy Award in Arts), and *A Room of Her Own: Rei Naito and Light* (officially invited to Hot Docs). She is the author of *Mothering: Our Voice, Our Care in Modern Society*, and *I don't know who I am: My Journey to Young Carer*. Her forthcoming books include *Why Have Children in This World?: The Future of Hope* and *When Women Go Crazy*. She teaches art and body theory at Rikkyo University.

SAEKI Eiko is a sociologist at Hosei University, Tokyo, and visiting scholar at Uppsala University (2025–

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2026), specializing in family, gender, and reproductive justice. She is also a co-founder of Famiiro Network for Unconventional Kinship, an advocacy group for families created through donor conception in Japan, bridging scholarship and social change.

NUNO — the Japanese word for "cloth" — is a world-renowned textile design studio. Founded in Tokyo in 1984 and led by SUDO Reiko, the studio collaborates with local Japanese artisans to merge traditional dyeing and weaving techniques with cutting-edge technology. Their innovative fabrics utilize unconventional materials like metal, paper, and recycled fibers. NUNO's experimental works are held in permanent collections at major museums, including MoMA and the V&A.

PeM architects studio was established in 2024 by Fukuda Junpei (formerly with Tadao Ando Architect & Associates) and Makihara Takuya (formerly with Architectural Studio Works). Their practice begins with the surprises and joys discovered through the act of assembling, engaging broadly in various forms of object-making.

R. Kikuo Johnson is a cartoonist and illustrator born on Maui in 1981. His drawings and stories regularly appear in books, periodicals, animation, and on the cover of *The New Yorker*. Johnson teaches at the School of Visual Arts and lives with his wife and daughter in Brooklyn, New York.

Sergei Tcherepnin is an artist and composer whose practice spans music, visual art and performance. Using uniquely composed speaker placement within existing architecture, and often building speakers into sculptures, his intermedial installations propose a precarious dance between perspectives. What is seen, heard, felt, and imagined mix together in a sensual and perceptual interplay, a form he calls "Sonic Theater."

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