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Japan Pavilion at the 58th International Art Exhibition  
– La Biennale di Venezia

# Cosmo-Eggs

Curator: Hiroyuki Hattori



La Biennale di Venezia

58. Esposizione  
Internazionale  
d'Arte

Partecipazioni Nazionali



Motoyuki Shitamichi, "Tsunami Boulder 2" (2015~),  
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Installation drawing by Fuminori Nousaku (2019) ,  
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Japan Pavilion at the 58<sup>th</sup> International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia

Commissioner : The Japan Foundation

Curator : Hiroyuki Hattori

Exhibitors: Motoyuki Shitamichi + Taro Yasuno + Toshiaki Ishikura + Fuminori Nousaku

Venue : The Japan Pavilion at the Giardini

Exhibition period: 11 May to 24 November, 2019

Opening reception: 8 May, 4:00pm

Address: Padiglione Giappone, Giardini della Biennale, Castello 1260, 30122 Venezia

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# Cosmo-Eggs

## Questioning the Ecology of Coexistence through the Overlapping Resonance and Discordance of Collaboration

This project facilitates a collaboration between an artist, composer, anthropologist, and architect with aims to create a platform to consider the ecology in which humans and non-humans coexist, as well as questions of how and in what places we can live within our world. The Japanese archipelago, which is an area that frequently suffers from natural disasters, had experienced the distortions of modernization reflected through the significant damages to the nuclear power plant due to the tsunami caused by the Great East Japan Earthquake of 2011. While capitalism continues to permeate our entire world, discussions on the advent of the “Anthropocene,” a new geological era brought on by the explosive growth of human activity, is also becoming increasingly active. In times when we as humans have expanded the theater of urban life across the limited space of the earth, how must we consider the significant impact that our actions have on its environment?

This exhibition takes as its starting point the *tsunami boulder* artist Motoyuki Shitamichi came across in the Miyako Islands and Yaeyama Islands in Okinawa, which he has continued to photograph over the past several years. These large natural boulders have been washed ashore from beneath the ocean. While they exist within close proximity to everyday human life, some become home to new plant life and colonies for migratory birds.

Taro Yasuno presents a composition reminiscent of bird song through *Zombie Music*—automated sounds played mechanically on a series of recorder flutes. The balloons extending from the Japan Pavilion’s pilotis through to the exhibition room fulfill the function of lungs that supply air to the instruments.

The title *Cosmo-Eggs* is derived from the various myths throughout the world concerning the birth of humans and non-human existences from the Cosmic-Egg. Toshiaki Ishikura, an anthropologist who specializes in comparative mythology, references local beliefs, mythology, and folklore related to tsunami in various parts of Asia such as the Ryukyu region and Taiwan to develop a new mythological allegory that reconsiders the relationship between humans and nature.

The Japan Pavilion designed by Takamasa Yoshizaka, takes on a structure comprising a square floor plan and a skylight in the central roof, a hole in the floor, and four columns spirally arranged along its periphery, bringing to mind Le Corbusier’s “Museum of Unlimited Growth.” Architect Fuminori Nouisaku interprets the various elements of this architecture, linking together the collection of works across different genres, and developing a reciprocal relationship between them and the architectural space to create a unified spatial experience.

Footages of individual *tsunami boulder* each loop in their own distinct cycle, while the self-generated *Zombie Music* constantly changes as it is performed sporadically, causing various narratives of coexistence to be engraved into multiple places. At times the video, music, text, and space as a whole come together in harmonious resonance, and conversely there are moments of dissonance when everything conflicts and fiercely clashes against one another. Through a “collaboration” that opens up a place for continuous generation and change by means of overlaying heterogeneous creations by individuals of different areas of expertise as they are, we serve to question the ecology of symbiosis and coexistence.

Hiroyuki Hattori

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Taro Yasuno, “The MAUSOLEUM I” (2017)  
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