

PRESS RELEASE

No. 903 June 1, 2013

Japan Pavilion

At the 55th International Art Exhibition – la Biennale di Venezia

Special Mention to Japan

abstract speaking

- sharing uncertainty and collective acts

Artist: Koki Tanaka

Curator: Mika Kuraya

(Chief Curator of the Department of Fine Arts, The National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo)

Organizer: The Japan Foundation



Installation view in the Japan Pavilion
photo : Keizo Kioku

The exhibition (a solo show by Koki Tanaka organized by The Japan Foundation) in the Japan Pavilion at the 55th Venice Biennale's International Art Exhibition has been awarded a Special Mention.

The *Koki Tanaka - abstract speaking - sharing uncertainty and collective acts* exhibition consists of videos and photographs by a group of people who joined forces to capture a common subject. Though the theme of the event is the Great East Japan Earthquake, this is not immediately evident. After seeing people walking up and expressing a sense of resistance, however, viewers gradually realize that the exhibition poses the question of how we might work together to create a new society in the wake of such the disaster.

Many guests, including his Excellency Masaharu Kono, Ambassador of Japan to Italy, assembled for the opening of the Japan Pavilion (held one day before the grand opening of the biennale). The event was greeted with much interest. At 11:00AM on June 1, 2013 (local time), the recipients of this year's prizes were announced in tandem with the official opening of the biennale. Among this year's winners is the Japan Pavilion, which has been awarded a Special Mention.

The Japanese Pavilion also received a prize (Golden Lion) in the Architecture Exhibition at last year's Venice Biennale for an event that also focused on the Great East Japan Earthquake. In the past, a number of other Japanese artists, including Masuo Ikeda (1966), Hiroshi Senju (1995), and Yoko Ono (2009), have also won prizes in the International Art Exhibition.

Comments from the Award Winners

I am extremely pleased to have won this prize. It belongs to all of the people who were involved in creating this project at the Japan Pavilion. With this exhibition, we were trying to suggest in a small way that cooperative activities between people could lead to new potentials. Even if this proves to be a fleeting ideal, I believe that it is essential for us to take a slightly more optimistic attitude and provide encouragement to Japanese society and the world as a whole.

--Koki Tanaka

The process of realizing this exhibition, in which everyone involved cooperated in a variety of ways, was truly enjoyable. The instant we finished installing the exhibition, I think everyone on the team thought, "We did everything we could possibly do here" and "We have discovered a potential that can be developed in the future." I think this young artist's proposal was honored with a prize as an attempt to at least try to affect some kind of change in this society and its future. Thank you very much.

--Mika Kuraya

Notes to editors:

Venue: The Japan Pavilion at the Giardini (designed by Takamasa Yoshizaka, completed in 1956)

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

Exhibition period: 1 June to 24 November 2013

Opening times: 10 am–6 pm

With special support from Ishibashi Foundation

In cooperation with Daiko Electric Co., Ltd.; NEC Display Solutions, Ltd.;ARTISTS'GUILD

Japan Pavilion official website: <http://www.jpf.go.jp/venezia-biennale/>

Images for press use

For press images, please contact mail: venezia@jpf.go.jp



①Installation view in the Japan Pavilion

Photo:Keizo Kioku



②Portrait of the artist

Photo:Keizo Kioku

Press Contact

The Japan Foundation

Att: (Ms.) Masako Taira / (Ms.) Akiko Ohnishi

venezia@jpf.go.jp

Address in Japan

(Ms.) Tae Mori / (Ms.) Yoko Oyamada

The Japan Foundation

Europe, Middle East, and Africa section, Arts and Culture Dept.

4-4-1 Yotsuya Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 160-0004

Address in Italy

(Mr) Kenjiro Abe

The Japan Cultural Institute in Rome

Via Antonio Gramsci 74 00197 Roma