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## Sneak preview: Asian pavilions at the 2024 Venice Biennale

Decomposing fruit, a scent-diffusing figurine and a fantasy dragon ship are just some of the works that explore themes of identity, migration and memory at the prestigious event this year



*Decomposition* (2022) by Yuko Mohri in the Japan Pavilion is an acoustic sculpture  
Photo: kugeyasuhide; © the artist; courtesy the artist, Project Fulfill Art Space, Taipei and mother's tankstation limited, Dublin/London and Yutaka Kikutake Gallery, Tokyo

Since its 19th-century beginnings, the Venice Biennale has invited artists to represent their countries in national pavilions. But art's power to traverse and transcend national—and other—borders is a driving force at the 60th Venice Biennale (20 April-24 November), which focuses on marginalised identities and the Global South. The curator Adriano Pedrosa describes his theme, *Foreigners Everywhere*, as a “call to action” as forcibly displaced people around the world have reached a record high. Many of the Asian artists participating in this year's pavilions appear to have heeded the call. Here is our guide to their boundary-crossing contributions, ranging from the migrant species growing in Singapore's forests to a spectacular sea voyage into Cantonese myth.

### Japan: Yuko Mohri

Electrodes plugged into decomposing fruit will generate power for Yuko Mohri's acoustic sculptures coming to the Japan pavilion, an installation billed as a critical commentary on environmental issues. The artist says she is interested in how a crisis can paradoxically trigger “the highest levels of creativity”. Inspiration came from seeing Tokyo railway workers improvise systems to catch water leaks in their stations, using upturned umbrellas, buckets, tubes and tape. The bigger crises on Mohri's mind include the Covid-19 pandemic, the disastrous 2019 flooding of Venice and the threat of rising sea levels due to the climate emergency. “Sensing the beginning of a fresh era of response to global challenges, I want to present an innovative vision that opens a new path to the future,” she says.