

## CHAT celebrates international recognition, from Venice Biennale 2026 to major ICOM award

Takahashi Mizuki, CHAT's Executive Director and Chief Curator, appointed co-curator of the Japan Pavilion at Venice Biennale 2026, while institution wins major ICOM award for their Accessibility Docent Training Programme.



(Left) HORIKAWA Lisa, Ei Arakawa-Nash, TAKAHASHI Mizuki, with Isamu Noguchi's Octetra at Kodomonokuni (Children's Land), Yokohama, Japan; Photo: Hako Hosokawa. (Right) Photo courtesy: CHAT (Centre for Heritage, Arts and Textile), Hong Kong.

**(Hong Kong, 24 June 2025) CHAT (Centre for Heritage, Arts and Textile)** is delighted to share the exciting news of recent international accolades, which highlight their dedication to cultural exchange and inclusivity.

### Takahashi to co-curate Japan Pavilion at Venice Biennale 2026

**Takahashi Mizuki**, Executive Director and Chief Curator of CHAT, has been appointed as co-curator of the Japan Pavilion at the **61st International Art Exhibition – La Biennale di Venezia**. The Japan Foundation, organiser of the Japan Pavilion, announced the participation of performance artist **Ei Arakawa-Nash** in April this year. Takahashi will collaborate with **Horikawa Lisa**, Senior Curator and Director (Curatorial & Collections) at the National Gallery Singapore, to curate an inspiring showcase of the artist's work in Venice in May 2026.

Of the appointment, **Takahashi Mizuki** said, 'This is a truly exhilarating moment. I am thrilled to participate in Venice Biennale 2026 and to collaborate with Ei again after working with him for CHAT's spring 2024 exhibition. I want to thank the Japan Foundation and Ei for their trust, and I look forward to curating the Japan Pavilion with Lisa.'

**Ei Arakawa-Nash** shared his excitement, 'At CHAT's fifth anniversary show last year, Mizuki's commitment to the audience in Tsuen Wan (a local neighbourhood in Hong

Kong) was evident. She is a curator who speaks with each artist honestly for the sake of the community. This is why she has earned so many artists' trust. With Lisa and Mizuki, it is crucial for our pavilion to establish this honest feedback loop to deliver on our ambitious goals.'

**Horikawa Lisa** also expressed her enthusiasm, 'Under Mizuki's groundbreaking curatorial vision, CHAT has come to hold a magnetic presence in both the worlds of heritage museums and contemporary art, unfolding new possibilities for what "textile arts" can mean today. Her daring approach to this loaded medium, coupled with her attention to those on the margins, has always inspired me. I look forward to our collective learning with Ei Arakawa-Nash and Mizuki. Like the warps and wefts in woven textiles, I hope that we can create a dynamic yet resilient voice by involving many others in the process.'

### **CHAT receives significant accolade from ICOM**

In acknowledgement of CHAT's commitment to accessibility, it has been honoured with the **ICOM-CECA Best Practice Award 2025** for the **Accessibility Docent Training Programme**. This annual award, given by the Committee for Education and Cultural Action (CECA) under the International Council of Museums (ICOM), recognises exceptional museum education programmes globally. Launched in 2024, the Accessibility Docent Training Programme prepares Deaf and hearing individuals as museum guides to collaboratively deliver interactive and multisensory tours in Hong Kong Sign Language and Cantonese. First of its kind in Hong Kong, the well-received initiative has resulted in nearly 100 tours for about 1,000 visitors in 6 months, promoting diversity and inclusion while introducing the city's textile heritage to the public at 1:45pm and 3:45pm every Sunday.

Of the award, **Takahashi Mizuki** said, 'I extend my heartfelt thanks to the Deaf and hearing docents in the Accessibility Docent Training Programme – they are the soul of our Accessibility Tour. We are grateful to the ICOM-CECA jury and our supporting organisations, including SLCO Community Resources, Centre for Sign Linguistics and Deaf Studies of The Chinese University of Hong Kong, The Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Hong Kong, and the Hong Kong Arts Development Council. These achievements have not only elevated CHAT, but also encouraged us to continue offering impactful, meaningful experiences for a broad range of audiences.'

Press kit with high-resolution images can be viewed and downloaded here:

<https://egnyte.suttoncomms.com/fl/H3HY4fkfyRqH>

*Image courtesy: CHAT (Centre for Heritage, Arts and Textile), Hong Kong*

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**NOTE TO EDITORS:**

**About CHAT**

CHAT (Centre for Heritage, Arts and Textile) is Hong Kong's textile heritage museum located on 2/F of The Mills, the former cotton-spinning mills of Nan Fung Textiles in Tsuen Wan. Opened in March 2019, CHAT offers new knowledge while nurturing ideas and talents through exhibitions, workshops and community programmes. Committed to preserving local tangible and intangible textile heritage, CHAT invites everyone to experience the innovative spirit of Hong Kong's textile industry and engage in new dialogues and inspirational journeys that interweave heritage, arts and textile.