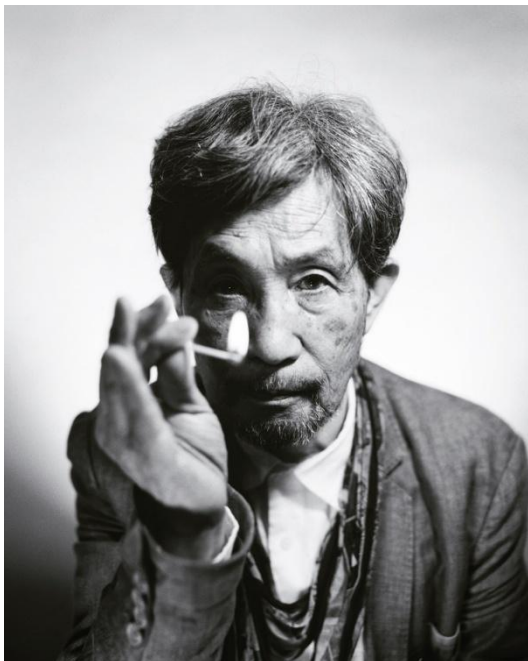


Press Release, Tuesday 12 May 2026

ANNOUNCEMENT

Gozo Yoshimasu selected as the recipient of the inaugural Serpentine x FLAG Art Foundation Prize



Left: Gozo Yoshimasu. Photo by Masashi Asada. Courtesy Take Ninagawa, Tokyo. Right: *Voix I* 2019–21, sumi ink, red calligraphy ink, ink, stamp ink, coloured pencil, pencil, receipt, calligraphy paper and manuscript paper 44.5 x 44 cm. © Gozo Yoshimasu. Courtesy Take Ninagawa, Tokyo.

Serpentine and The FLAG Art Foundation are honoured to announce that Gozo Yoshimasu has been awarded the inaugural Serpentine x FLAG Art Foundation Prize.

The recipient was selected by an official jury comprising Michelle Kuo, Venus Lau, Hans Ulrich Obrist (Serpentine) and Jonathan Rider (The FLAG Art Foundation) and Rirkrit Tiravanija. The jury convened in London on Thursday 23 April to determine the winner.

Over the next decade, a total of £1 million (£200,000 biennially) will be awarded to five recipients, providing unmatched support at a pivotal moment in their careers. This is the UK's largest contemporary art prize given to a single artist.

Gozo Yoshimasu (b. 1939, Tokyo, Japan; lives and works in Tokyo, Japan) will stage a solo exhibition that debuts at Serpentine North in autumn 2027, followed by a presentation



reimagined for The FLAG Art Foundation in New York in spring 2028. This long-term collaboration initiates an ongoing artistic dialogue between the two institutions and underscores their shared belief in the power of collaboration to shape the future of contemporary art.

Having emerged from Tokyo's interdisciplinary avant-garde of the 1960s, Yoshimasu has developed a distinctive practice that combines poetry with performance, audio recordings, photography and his own moving-image form known as *gozoCiné*. The exhibition will mark the first major solo institutional exhibition of the artist's work in both the UK and the United States. It will be accompanied by a dedicated catalogue and a dynamic live programme, developed and produced collaboratively by both institutions.

The prize is intended to provide artists, at a significant stage in their careers, with the time, freedom and resources to experiment, follow new lines of enquiry and develop work in whatever direction feels most meaningful.

Gozo Yoshimasu said: "I'm truly honoured to receive the inaugural Serpentine x FLAG Art Foundation Prize and was delighted to learn I had been awarded it. Upon receiving this great news, a line from one of my poems came to mind: 'Although I am a shadow of a passenger on this planet my soul is always absorbed in play.' I look forward to presenting the exhibition in both London and New York."

Bettina Korek, CEO of Serpentine and Hans Ulrich Obrist, Artistic Director of Serpentine said: "Serpentine and The FLAG Art Foundation are honoured to announce Gozo Yoshimasu as the recipient of the inaugural Serpentine x FLAG Art Foundation Prize. One of Japan's most radical living poets, Yoshimasu has spent over six decades dissolving the boundaries between language, sound and visual art, and at 87, continues to push into new territories. This prize reflects our shared commitment to connecting artists with global audiences and fostering transatlantic dialogue, offering the space and support to develop ambitious new work presented in both London and New York. We cannot wait to bring his practice to both cities."

Glenn Fuhrman, Founder of The FLAG Art Foundation said: "My intention behind creating the Serpentine x FLAG Art Foundation Prize was to not only build a bridge between New York and London, but to create unmatched opportunities for artists of any age, from anywhere around the world. At 87, Gozo Yoshimasu embodies the spirit and possibilities of this prize, and I'm excited for both FLAG's and Serpentine's audiences to have the opportunity to see the breadth and richness of Yoshimasu's practice."

Jonathan Rider, Director of The FLAG Art Foundation said: "Fifteen accomplished and varied artistic practices were presented by this year's jury, any of which would have made for an exceptional first recipient of the Serpentine x FLAG Art Foundation Prize. Gozo Yoshimasu is a prolific and critically lauded Japanese poet, yet his artwork – his 'visual poems' – has yet to be experienced in a more comprehensive way by audiences in New York and London. By continuing to work with and complicate language, Yoshimasu is



representative of a curious and ever-evolving artist reimagining new forms of communication well into his career.”

Notes to Editors

About Gozo Yoshimasu

Highlighting the multiplicity of language, Gozo Yoshimasu’s (b. 1939 in Tokyo, Japan; lives and works in Tokyo, Japan) poems traverse diverse geographic and discursive topoi and test the limits of translation. Written in his characteristic compact scrawl, Yoshimasu’s manuscripts often feature spontaneous applications of mark making, paint, collage elements and fragments from other texts, so as to function as both records of an originary performance and scores for future interpretation.

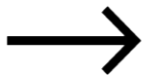
Yoshimasu’s work was recently featured in the 36th Bienal de São Paulo and the 15th Shanghai Biennale in 2026. He was the subject of a major retrospective at the National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo, in 2016. In addition to solo exhibitions at the Maebashi City Museum of Literature, Gunma, Japan (2023) and the Ashikaga Museum of Art, Tochigi, Japan (2017, which toured to the Okinawa Prefectural Museum & Art Museum, Naha, Japan and the Shoto Museum of Art, Tokyo, Japan), Yoshimasu has participated in international group surveys including the Manchester International Festival, UK, *Poet Slash Artist*, curated by Hans Ulrich Obrist and Lemin Sissay (2021); the Reborn Art Festival, Miyagi, Japan (2019); *Sharjapan: The Poetics of Space*, Sharjah Art Foundation, curated by Yuko Hasegawa (2018); and the 21st Bienal de São Paulo, Brazil (1991).

About Serpentine

Building new connections between artists and audiences, Serpentine, led by Bettina Korek, CEO and Hans Ulrich Obrist, Artistic Director, presents pioneering contemporary art exhibitions and cultural events with a legacy that stretches back over half a century, from a wide range of emerging practitioners to the most internationally recognised artists, writers, scientists, thinkers, and cultural thought leaders of our time.

The Serpentine Pavilion is a yearly pioneering commission, which began in 2000 with Dame Zaha Hadid. It features the first UK structures by some of the biggest names in international architecture.

Public art has emerged as a central strand of Serpentine’s programme. Major presentations include a collection of Eduardo Paolozzi’s sculptures (1987); Anish Kapoor’s *Turning the World Upside Down* (2010); Lee Ufan’s *Relatum – Stage* (2018-19); Christo and Jeanne-Claude’s *London Mastaba* in the Serpentine Lake (2018); Yoko Ono’s *I LOVE YOU EARTH* (2021); Dominique Gonzalez-Foerster’s *In remembrance of the coming alien (Alienor)* (2022); Atta Kwami’s *Dzidzɔ kple amenuveve* (Joy and Grace) (2021–22); Gerhard Richter’s *STRIP-TOWER* (2023); Yayoi Kusama’s *Pumpkin* (2024); Esther Mahlangu’s mural *Umuntu*



ngumuntu ngabantu (2024); and Giuseppe Penone's *Albero folgorato (Thunderstruck Tree, 2012)* and *Idee di pietra (Ideas of Stone, 2010–2024)* (2025–26).

Proud to maintain free access for all visitors, Serpentine reaches an exceptionally broad audience and maintains a profound connection with its local community.

About The FLAG Art Foundation

The FLAG Art Foundation is a non-collecting, nonprofit exhibition space that mounts solo, two-person, and thematic group exhibitions centering on emerging and established artists from around the globe. Organised by a diverse community of curators and thinkers within and beyond the art world, FLAG opened to the public in 2008 and has staged over 100 exhibitions celebrating the work of nearly 1,000 artists. Committed to providing education and resources for its surrounding community, and across New York City, all exhibitions and programmes – including artist talks, artist-led workshops, and guided tours for school and museum groups – are free and open to the public.

The FLAG Art Foundation was founded by Glenn Fuhrman, an art patron and philanthropist, alongside his wife Amanda, a Co-Founder of The Fuhrman Family Foundation. During his undergraduate studies, he studied Art History in London at University College London (UCL). Fuhrman is a Trustee of New York-Presbyterian Hospital, New York, NY; The Museum of Modern Art, New York, NY; The Tate Americas Foundation, New York, NY; and is a Board Member of The Institute of Contemporary Art in Philadelphia, PA. He is also a Board Member of the 92nd Street Y, New York, and The Central Park Conservancy, New York, NY.

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