

swiss institute

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Heart to Hand
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'Heart to Hand'

Swiss Institute
18 Wooster Street, near Grand
Street, SoHo
Through April 15

Organized by the curator, art-restitution lawyer and salon hostess Pati Hertling, this group show was "conceived of in the wake of the #occupywallstreet movement and the Republican primaries," the news release says. But the art doesn't look any more political than what you can find in other galleries or the studio-centric Whitney Biennial.

That is to say, themes of struggle and resistance play out on the level of process, as in an ambitious intervention by Oscar Tuazon and Elias Hansen. They have reconfigured the main gallery's elevated floor, removing a section of the platform and salvaging the wood for pyramidlike sculptures. Unruly drips of blue and yellow paint highlight the freshly exposed portions of the walls.

Rumblings of dissent grow louder in Klara Liden's large-scale photograph "Untitled (Bierbank)," which faces the graffiti-etched top of a picnic table straight on. Better yet are Zoe Leonard's smaller shots of tree trunks that have accommodated chain-link fences and barbed wire by growing through, or around, them. Next to these works Adam Pendleton's appropriated Bauhaus photographs, screen printed on mirrors and modified with partly erased text, look incongruously slick and uncommunicative.

The focus on wood, whether in nature or architecture, gives "Heart to Hand" an agenda that may not be explicitly political but is very much about engaging with one's surroundings.

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DANIEL PEREZ/SWISS INSTITUTE

Oscar Tuazon and Elias Hansen at the Swiss Institute.