



Spora

Works currently on view by: Raven Chacon, Dionne Lee, Lee Mary Manning, Hendl Helen Mirra, Christian Nyampeta with Cass Nakashima, Uriel Orlow, Jenna Sutela, Vivian Suter, Li Tavor

In May 2023, Swiss Institute launched *Spora*, a curatorial initiative centered in SI's institutional imperative to integrate environmental consciousness and climate action into all facets of the institution. Like spores spreading throughout the physical structure of our building and permeating the immaterial processes of SI, *Spora* is an experiment that explores what a practice of environmental institutional critique could be.

Unfolding and growing over the course of two years, the artworks in the project are on long-term view in the non-gallery spaces of SI. In the stairways, hallways, roof, and other interstitial spaces, artists have contributed to the daily life, maintenance and functioning of the building with artworks that take shape through compost, plants, wall paint, public space and more. These include: Jenna Sutela's earth battery-powered oracle; Vivian Suter's weather-exposed mural; Hendl Helen Mirra's chance-determined background painting; Li Tavor's sound and sculpture installation that draws parallels between infrastructural systems of electrical current maintenance and regulatory social systems of gender identification; Dionne Lee's performative navigation of the local landscape; Uriel Orlow's planters filled with weeds from the surrounding neighborhood; Christian Nyampeta's hosting structure that functions simultaneously as a floor sculpture, stage and outdoor seating furniture; a newly composed score as a large-scale mural by Raven Chacon; and Lee Mary Manning's photographs merging private and public, natural and urban spaces.

The artworks at the core of *Spora* are accompanied by the institution's initial steps towards climate action, begun in 2022, which take form as a thorough analysis of SI's carbon emissions through transport, travel, energy, and other ecological and social factors, and a plan of actions developed with the entire SI team for reducing the institution's environmental impact. SI will publish and share this process with the hopes to sprout inspiration and collaboration across institutional boundaries. *Spora* is conceived as an open-ended approach, which acknowledges that this is a continuous project that will generate more questions than answers. It is an attempt to germinate change while acknowledging context and limitations, with the understanding that this process is imperfect but urgent. *Spora* and the accompanying event series, *These Seasons*, as well as the institutional initiatives of climate action, propose a start to a morphing process of reflection and transformation.

Spora is made possible by Teiger Foundation. Additional support is provided by the Consulate General of Finland in New York City. The project is organized by Stefanie Hessler, Director, Alison Coplan, Chief Curator, and KJ Abudu, Assistant Curator.

Works List:

Raven Chacon, *Vertical Neighbors*, 2024
Large format outdoor score

Dionne Lee, *Walking Stick (St Marks Place, 2nd Avenue, East 9th Street, 1st Avenue)*, 2024
Silver gelatin prints

Lee Mary Manning
A Formal Feeling, 2023
And all the lives we ever lived and all the lives to be are full of trees and changing leaves (For Jenni), 2023
Lifes Rich, 2023
Chromogenic prints, paper, mat board, artist's frame

Hendl Helen Mirra, *Harmless mistake*, 2023
Mistakenly mixed wall paint

Christian Nyampeta with Cass Nakashima, *A Flower Yet To Be Named*, 2024
Natural wood, plywood, paint, fixtures, original composite of salvaged wood with bio and non-bio resin including gelatin, glycerin, potato starch, citric acid, vinegar, resin, salvaged wood shavings, madder root, alum, dish soap, water
Construction and assembly: Ptaceck Home

Uriel Orlow, *Welcome Weeds*, 2024-ongoing
Custom planters, local edible/medicinal weeds including nettles, red clover, plantain, sorrel, lemon balm, nepeta, sow thistle, Canada thistle

Jenna Sutela, *Vermi-Sibyl*, 2023
Acrylic, powder coated steel, polyester, copper, aluminum, environmental sensors, wires, single-board computer and microcontroller, food scraps, earthworms, microorganisms, soil, speaker
Team: Vanda Skácalová and hoyahelper / Thank you: Ertl & Zull, arrit Sattlerei and Elvia Wilk

Vivian Suter, *Untitled (Mural)*, 2023
Mixed media on wall

Li Tavor, *Figures, Doors, Passages*, 2025
Resin, cloth, two-channel algorithmic composition (max msp), electrical circuit board
Electronic components developer: Maximilian Kriegleder
Digital instrument construction: Nikki Buzzi