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## Artists Commissioned for Wormfarm Institute's Farm/Art DTour Bringing Public Art to Farm Fields

Site-responsive artworks will be installed along the fifty-mile route in rural Wisconsin, some working in collaboration with area farmers. The Farm/Art DTour is free and open to the public October 1-10, 2022

REEDSBURG, WI—Wormfarm Institute announced that seven artists have been commissioned to create new artworks for its biennial Farm/Art DTour excursion through rural Sauk County, Wisconsin. The artists—**Austen Camille, Rosalynn Gingerich, Sarah Kavage, Bill Mitchell, Denise Rolland Troyer, Christopher Sweet, and W. Scott Trimble**—include both local and national artists who were selected by a jury from a pool of more than 100 applicants following a widespread call for proposals. Working in a range of media and artistic traditions, the artists will receive funding ranging from \$5,000-\$10,000 to create large-scale, site-responsive artworks which will be temporarily installed in working farm fields along the fifty-mile DTour route. Some installations will be developed in partnership with area farmers and landowners, an example of Wormfarm's longstanding tradition of creating cross-sector collaboration to help build a more sustainable future for agriculture and the arts.

In addition to the commissioned artists, Wormfarm is working with several invited artists and collaborators. Visitors can expect to experience roadside poetry, local food markets, pasture performances, educational Field Notes, "Mystery Spots" and more while traveling along the scenic and winding roads of Sauk County. The event is an invitation to rural and urban residents from across the region to come and engage with the land upon which we all depend. The DTour is free and open to the public from October 1-10, 2022.

**Executive Director Donna Neuwirth stated,** "We're excited to see that the Farm/Art DTour continues to resonate with new artists. At its core, the DTour promotes a sense of curiosity—about art, farming, nature, and each other." Donna continued, "We're thrilled to

present work by this talented group whose work will trigger that curiosity. Whether you're a fellow rural resident or someone visiting from the city on a road trip, we invite you to come out and see for yourself how these artists explore the timeless connection between land and people. Along the way, you'll discover the art of what farmers do everyday, and perhaps even more importantly, consider what they might do tomorrow."

### **About the Farm/Art DTour**

The Farm/Art DTour is a free, 50-mile, self-guided drive punctuated by temporary artworks, pasture performances, local food markets and more. The 10-day event invites visitors to celebrate the contributions and possibilities of the rural landscape that is essential for a thriving region that values both its rural and urban parts. Since its inception in 2011, the DTour has become a beloved tradition that continues to grow in popularity among local folks, as well as visitors from the Central Midwest and beyond. It has also gained national and international attention as a noteworthy example of creative placemaking and has attracted more than 200,000 visitors to Sauk County, generating a positive impact on the local economy. Despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 DTour still drew 18,000 visitors (down only 18% from 22,000 people in 2018) who supported over 100 artists and performers, and connected local farm stands, shops, restaurants, and cottage food entrepreneurs to new customers. With social distancing already built in, the DTour was uniquely positioned to provide an economic boost to area businesses and support artists whose livelihoods were disproportionately affected—a contribution to Wisconsin's hospitality and travel industry that was recognized in 2021 when Wormfarm was awarded the Governor's Tourism Award for Arts, Culture, and Heritage.

Now in its ninth year, the event is again anticipated to attract over 20,000 visitors to the region over the ten-day period. In addition to the seven artwork commissions, other DTour highlights include:

- **Food Chain: A Marketplace of Food, Art & Ideas** returns to Witwen Park, a historic gathering place and former church campground next to Honey Creek with an open-air Tabernacle from 1918. Visitors may enjoy local foods and fermented beverages from an array of popular vendors, as well as live music, an art shop, campfires, and more.
- Artist **Tory Tepp** is returning to expand his **Sauk County ARK**, an earthwork commissioned for the 2020 DTour and situated in a four-acre field of a new perennial grain called Kernza which the artist planted in collaboration with the hosting landowners. Tepp is also creating a new earthwork at the historic Witwen Park as a part of "4Ground: Midwest Land Art Biennial," a multi-site exhibition organized by Franconia Sculpture Park, which will remain on view through the 2022 DTour.
- Minneapolis-based artist **Christopher Lutter-Gardella** is collaborating with community stakeholders in the Village of Plain (a DTour Trailhead) to build a 20-foot tall farmer marionette representing the importance of agriculture to Sauk County's culture and

economy. The giant puppet will, alternately, be used in performances and be featured as a stationary artwork throughout the DTour.

- While the DTour has traditionally been presented as a part of Wormfarm's Fermentation Fest, this year the agri/cultural excursion stands on its own as the banner event this fall. Return visitors can still plan to enjoy the live culture convergence, including some fermented foods and beverages through pop-up fermentation experiences, performances, and panel discussions.

More details about the DTour—including how to see the performances, local attractions, and other activities—will be announced in the coming weeks. Prospective DTour visitors are encouraged to go to [wormfarminstitute.org](http://wormfarminstitute.org) and sign up for the newsletter to receive periodic event updates and recommendations.

### **About the Artists**

Following a widespread call for proposals, Wormfarm received 109 applications—the largest and most diverse pool of candidates since the DTour began in 2011. Proposals were reviewed by a jury comprising regional and national arts professionals, past DTour artists, and members of Wormfarm staff. Eighteen artists working in a range of media and from eleven states across the country, as well as from Indonesia and Canada, were chosen as finalists and invited to an artist orientation where they traveled the DTour route, met with landowners, and were able to further refine their proposed idea for the site. From this pool of finalists, seven artists were selected based on criteria such as artistic excellence, visual impact, site or community responsiveness, and the artist's demonstrated ability to realize their proposed concept within the scope of the DTour. In selecting the winning artists, the jury was impressed by the breadth of ideas submitted and excited for the opportunity to support some artists experimenting with new methods or otherwise expanding their art practice through this project.

The 2022 Farm/Art DTour artists include:

#### Austen Camille

Occasionally residing in rural Texas, Austen Camille is an interdisciplinary artist whose practice investigates her itinerant state as it relates to land ecology, and is informed by and intertwined with her work as a builder and gardener. Camille seeks new relationships between built and natural environments in her work. Each site is encountered slowly and quietly, in all its complexity, in order to create work that is in conversation with its place. Camille received her MFA in Painting at the Tyler School of Art and Architecture in 2020. Alongside her studio practice, Camille also works to bring the visual arts into diverse and publicly accessible spaces.

#### Rosalynn Gingerich

Rosalynn Gingerich is a Chicago-based artist who creates site-specific installations and sculptural objects. Her experimental art practice focuses on developing work for non-traditional spaces, while probing how spatial relationships impact perception. Gingerich's work has been featured in WTTW Chicago Tonight, Newcity Chicago, and Bad At Sports, among others. She is the recipient of grants from the Illinois Arts Council and the City of Chicago. Gingerich's

recent exhibitions include: The Residency Project, Pasadena, CA; Site: Brooklyn Gallery, NY; and Terrain Exhibitions, Chicago. Gingerich currently teaches at the School of The Art Institute of Chicago.

Christopher Sweet is a Native American artist born and raised in Wisconsin. He is an enrolled member of the Ho-Chunk Nation and is also a descendant of the White Earth Band of Ojibwe in Minnesota. Sweet developed an artistic practice at an early age and is mostly self-taught. He also studied at the Institute of American Indian Arts in Sante Fe, New Mexico. With an interest in both abstraction and realism, his vibrant paintings and large-scale murals often focus on Native American culture. In 2021, he and his wife opened Blue Bear Studio in Baraboo, Wisconsin. Sweet was recently selected to participate in the Eiteljorg Museum Indian Market and Festival in Indianapolis, one of the nation's top Native American art markets.

Bill Mitchell is an artist living and working in Lancaster, Wisconsin. His sculpture and site-specific installations utilize natural materials and explore systems, patterns, connections, and environment. Mitchell received his BFA and MFA from Northern Illinois University and also developed a career as a landscape designer and woodworker. He has exhibited work regionally and nationally in numerous group exhibitions, including the 2021 Terrain Biennial. His work was presented in a solo exhibition at the community-run Rountree Gallery in Platteville, Wisconsin where, since 2016, Mitchell has served as its President and Gallery Director. In 2020, he was commissioned by the Platteville Community Arboretum to install sculptures along the trail. Mitchell will participate in *4Ground: Midwest Land Art Biennial* with an installation at Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center in Sandstone, Minnesota.

### Sarah Kavage

Sarah Kavage is a Seattle-based visual artist who creates public projects that call attention to land, ecology, and place. Kavage was born into a family of DIYers, makers, and nature lovers in 1970s rural Ohio. She came to Seattle from NYC with a BFA and a sense of burnout from waiting tables, seeking a new vocation through grad school in urban planning. Urban planning unexpectedly turned her art practice inside out, away from studio work and towards outdoors and community. Much of her work since has taken place along Seattle's Duwamish River. In 2021, Kavage built 16 functional ecological artworks as lead artist for Lenapehoking~Watershed, an ambitious project about the Delaware River watershed, with sites centered on Philadelphia and spanning 3 states.

### Denise Rolland Troyer

Denise Rolland Troyer is a ceramic artist based in Indiana whose work focuses on various, persistent growth forms such as fungi, lichen, and mosses. Troyer's current research has led her to explore how fungi and fungal networks can beneficially affect the ecosystems in which they live. Her sculptural work speculates about how these growths may evolve in the future. Troyer is influenced by observations of natural treasures surrounding her home, as well as while traveling to other environments. While primarily working as a ceramicist, she is also Associate Faculty at Herron School of Art – Indiana University/Purdue University in Indianapolis.

### W. Scott Trimble

W. Scott Trimble is an artist based in Seattle, whose work tends to straddle the worlds between architecture, art, and the surrounding environment. His practice has varied from highly interactive to stand-alone public art and his art forms have ranged from delicate and ephemeral (often using reclaimed and natural materials) to stately and more permanent installations. Trimble obtained an MFA in Sculpture from the University of Washington in 2003 and has created numerous site-specific works on the West Coast including Greg Kucera Gallery, Schneider Museum, Bumbershoot, and University of Washington. He has also participated in many artist residencies including Bemis, Anderson Ranch, and Sculpture Space, and received grants from the City of Seattle, and King County, Washington.

### **About Wormfarm Institute**

Wormfarm Institute is a nonprofit organization working to build a sustainable future for agriculture and the arts by fostering vital links between people and the land. An evolving laboratory of the arts and ecology and fertile ground for creative work, Wormfarm explores the links between rural and urban communities within and beyond the food chain, creating opportunities for cross-sector collaboration. For more information, visit [wormfarminstitute.org](http://wormfarminstitute.org).

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