

## ARTS & CULTURE

# 'Serenity, NOW'

*"Treat yourself" becomes accusation and threat at "SPACORE"*

by **Annette LePique**

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The group exhibition "SPACORE" situates "wellness within the horror genre."

Credit: Courtesy Co-Prosperity

“S PACORE,” a group show curated by Serena JV Elston and Rudolf Lingens, is anarchically funny. Currently up at Co-Prosperity, the exhibition’s 45 artists utilize humor to reveal the hollow white supremacist capitalist fantasies that uphold the personal wellness industry. Through the collective’s desire to “situate wellness within the horror genre,” they present a model of group-making and pointed critique that pulls the wax strip off of capitalism’s plucked, primped, and necrotic vision of life.

Throughout the space, visitors can find a check-in station for “SPACORE” services, where they let the collective know their credit card numbers, sexual histories, and biggest secrets; a shrine to a dead employee of a month; and a mise-en-scene of a midwestern wine mom’s kitchen, where people mimic chopping off their fingers alongside “SPACORE”’s explicit instructions to take a selfie of the scene and send it to your boss to receive a long, overdue day off. In the performances that accompany the installation, artists perform the role of ersatz wellness “staff.” They are an off-kilter, pink polo-ed crew with mascara dripping down their faces and a collective vibe not dissimilar to cult members, Juggalos, or Brandon Lee in *The Crow*.

“SPACORE” rightfully asks why—when faced with barriers to access the resources that ensure the health, safety, and flourishing of poor, working class, LGBTQ+, Black, Brown, Indigenous, AAPI, undocumented, and disabled communities (with intersections between them all)—is self-actualization, self-improvement, self-whatever, a burden hoisted upon the individual? Why struggle to pay for or decipher the American health care system when \$60 scented candles exist? It’s your fault for not being able to afford it, and it’s called tranquility, sweetie. “Treat yourself” becomes accusation and threat under “SPACORE”’s gua sha-ed and hyaluronic acid-glazed gaze. “SPACORE” is a much-needed breath of fresh air; come sit in the steam room, drink some juice, and give them all your money. You’ll be better for it.

## ▣ “SPACORE”

Through 4/21: Sat noon-5 PM, Co-Prosperity, 3219 S. Morgan, [coprosperity.org/chicago](http://coprosperity.org/chicago)