

SI

Swiss Institute/
Contemporary Art

Cultbytes

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Cement Greenberg
Jac Leirner
July 10, 2023

Contemporary

Cement Greenberg #7: Suspended

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Jac Leirner. "Tape Forever," installation view, 2023. Courtesy the artist and Swiss Institute.

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Jac Leirner. "Towers," installation view, 2020.
Courtesy the artist and Swiss Institute.

Jac Leirner: *Jac Leirner at the Swiss Institute*

This summer the Swiss Institute took upon itself the challenge of battling cynicism. On view in the basement, Lap-See Lam's shadow play can at first be mistaken for a corny fairy tale but soon reveals itself as a complex project which calls for critical reflection on culture and race. Despite Jac Leirner's work being what it seems, it is surprisingly convincing. The viewer is asked to be open to an artist's practice of collecting found objects and arranging them together. This mode of work has been around for decades and I expect audiences to long since be numb to the magic of exhibiting a multitude of different pencils or rolls of tape (or other things collected over the artist's odd forty-some year career) next to each other. Leirner's attraction to objects has the naivete of a tourist who collects tickets from shows, matches from coffee shops, and pens from famous museums around the world. Despite the odd simplicity of the gesture—to collect mundane cheap stuff—Leirner has faith in their practice and is intelligent enough to channel their care of it through their

work. As a viewer, I believe it. The exhibition shows that there is still is magic in looking closely and inviting material things to make stories and jokes alongside one another.