



Nov. 20, 1992

Media only: Sidney Lawrence (202) 357-1618  
Michele Colburn (202) 357-1618

Press preview: Wednesday, Dec. 16, 1992, 10 a.m.- noon.  
The artist will be available for interviews.

### BRAZILIAN JAC LEIRNER TO EXHIBIT WORK AT HIRSHHORN

"Directions—Jac Leirner," an exhibition of eight works by this 31-year-old Brazilian artist—whose accumulations of once-valued, now useless, mass-produced objects raise compelling questions about contemporary life—will open on Thursday, Dec. 17, at the Smithsonian's Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, and continue through March 14.

Leirner, who lives in São Paulo and has only recently begun exhibiting outside of Brazil, will launch the exhibition with a free, slide-illustrated Focus talk at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 16, in the Hirshhorn's Ring Auditorium. Her talk will be followed by an informal reception on the third floor, near the exhibition.

On view there will be three of Leirner's "Blue Phase" series of works—floor and wall pieces—made from stacked *cruzeiros*, the Brazilian banknotes that have been repeatedly devalued in recent years. Anonymous graffiti appears on some of the paper money.

The exhibition will also include four works from Leirner's "Corpus Delicti" series. Shown on these low-lying platforms, dating from 1992, are meticulously strung-together compositions of airplane ashtrays, used boarding passes and airline ticket stubs on a bed of bubble wrap. "Names," a five-part wall piece of 1992, completes the selection. It is composed of accumulated plastic shopping bags from various museum shops, with diverse logos, typographies and photographic images.

Leirner has also produced work made from empty cigarette packs, mail, brochures and museum labels, among other cast-off materials. Many sources have fueled these investigations, from Eva Hesse's process-oriented, Minimalist sculpture of the 1960s to the varied approaches toward materials, composition and ambiance pursued by other Brazilian artists, including Waltercio Caldas, Tunga, Jose Resende and Cildo Meireles (who has also used *cruzeiros* in his work). There are parallels as well with cast-off, recycled sculptures by such artists as Tony Cragg of Britain.

"Leirner's work is an attempt to salvage the ephemeral, constantly circulating, seemingly meaningless articles that are the testimony of human existence and invest them with meaning and value," says Assistant Curator Amada Cruz of the Hirshhorn, who organized the exhibition.

Born and educated in São Paulo, Leirner has been exhibiting her work in Brazil since the early 1980s. Her credits include numerous solo shows and two São Paulo Biennials. Recently she has begun having solo exhibitions abroad (one in the United States and two in Europe) ,and she has participated in such prestigious multi-national group shows as the Venice Biennial (1989) and Documenta in Kassel, Germany (1992).

The exhibition is made possible in part by a grant from the Brazilian American Cultural Institute. Focus talks are supported in part by a grant from the Washington Post Co.

The Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Independence Avenue at Seventh Street, S.W., is open seven days a week, from 10 a.m. until 5:30 p.m. The nearest Metro stop is L'Enfant Plaza, Smithsonian museums exit. Admission is free.

####

0 a DIC 1987