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TAIYO ONORATO / NICO KREBS
THE WHOLE SHEBANG
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Taiyo Onorato and Nico Krebs, "The Whole Shebang"



Swiss Institute, through July 19
(see Soho)

At its best, Taiyo Onorato and Nico Krebs's collection of sculptures, "The Whole Shebang," looks a bit like the storage room at the Etruscan Museum in Rome—a gathering of forgotten and deliciously primitive items. The most successful of the 32 objects, which are created collaboratively by these young Swiss artists, harness the pervertible qualities of the materials used to make them, imbuing each with its own unfathomable *raison d'être*. *Mean Machine*, made of plastic industrial drill parts and a substance resembling molten lava, is rendered all in black, and seems to scowl threateningly like some malignant breast pump. *Turning Skirt*, in which three brooms form a teepee-like frame for a skirt of egg cartons twirled by a fan, takes a page from the contingent dynamics of countrymen Fischli and Weiss. The choice of mounting the sculptures atop a rough, unpainted pine pedestal encourages the tendency to view these works as a by-product of some activity rather than as an end in itself, a refreshing take on making



art and possibly an expression of the best aspects of collaboration. This mode of presentation operates marvelously for the most part but can be somewhat stultifying in the case of a piece like *Vase 1 & 2*, in which a heavy anthropological tone makes the piece less mysterious and hence less interesting. When the functionality of the materials supersedes effect, the magic falls a little flat. But overall, the whole reads satisfyingly as a lively conversation among objects.
—T.J. Carlin