Ravish the Republic: The Archives of The Iron Garters
Crime/Art Collective

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TWELVE AND ½ THINGS
IRON GARTERS
KNOW WE NEED NOW

PROPOSALS FOR THE
TRANSFIGURATIONS OF
SOCIAL & PSYCHIC RELATIONS

1. More Danger, risk, hazard, venture—our hearts and minds, what’s left of them, strewn in glocal melee,—but adulterated, banalized, compartmentalized for passive consumptions, incapacitating paranoias, repetition-compulsions and stifling ego-conveniences. These are the political forces constitutive of earth, our newsworthiness, our exemplary losses, our pre-ideological howls, our Heraclitean shit storms, our tabloid spasms. Still we move brutally mediated, inept at energizing, becoming. We grow inculcated and fortified off. Our fears are never ridden out as passages. Nor do we enter into theatrics for healing. So to actualize and imagine: a craft that coincides with these fires, fears, fixations. A talismanic way to chaosophize, to live. How is the vessel coextensive with the sea? How is contingency architectonic? Human challenges are not necessarily reasonable ones, so our responses must become extraordinary.

2. Fiction, poetry, artistry/artfulness, theatrics, in subtle & extreme ubiquities. How does ART help negotiate/invoke number one (danger)? How can ART build/steer the
craft? How to contrive Chaos, thru ART in advance of Chaos’s unspeakable insinuations? How can one make a city out of seductive ploys? For that is the demiurge in the arts: making cities or assemblages, establishing contexts that are radiant and magical and that for the moment eliminate the anxiety of entering them. Most cities now don’t.

3. **Knowing: Fiction and Artistry, Theater and Poetry are never really telling lies about us, nor are they ever really telling truths about us; they are doing something else that is not even telling.** Rather, it is *listening*: molecularly assembled of all genera of lies and truths, while also outstripping them, fleeing them, re-fertilizing in the Outside. The earth and stars provide the hints. Listening radiates the Proximity of the Other like nothing else. Art is Play that Animates Matter, to paraphrase Elizabeth Grosz, eminent Deleuzian. And play is not interested in veracity or falsehood, décor or veritas, but rather *Decoverite*.

4. **While Knowing, however that the worst, most destructive lies being told are about us.** When the people with the most power tell the biggest lies so that the most people suffer: history. Hence, what are the banal, taken-for-granted relationships between truth and fiction, and how are they used to consolidate power? How can one sabotage such distinctions? Who is an Us? What is a Category good for? Who benefits from its use/abuse? What are the benefits of categories that develop lacunae, trapdoors, embrasures, passages, way stations, hybrid offspring, and tributaries?

5. **The most injurious liars are the ones who speak exclusively in “non-fiction,” which is a marketplace term for “truth.”** These liars prefer the medium of the report or the
history or the memorandum, to that of the sermon, the essay, the poem, the rant, the novella, the love letter, the erotic comedy, the hermetic pants-splitter and the riddle-song. They prefer a system because it gives them something to shove themselves inside of, organs and all: sexual? In its tawdry way, perhaps.

6. **Authenticity and vitality felt, especially in the places where they seem most absent and where life seems most spent.** But the seeming world is an orchestrated world, right? Who makes things seem? Who orchestrates my vacillations? What helps us feel? Can I feel my way to a better-seeming, more pleasurably orchestrated world? How do we reawaken/recognize the unspent? Here we establish that ruins are flush with the cosmic continuum, so how can ruins be unspent? And here, again, we turn to the craft.

7. **Nature, or Sex, in terms of the babbling but all-irradiating libidinal substrata of What’s Real/This Is.** When Eros comes exploding or streaming or gurgling through us, what do we gain? What do we lose? What if it’s a neither force? What are the syllables/symbols/logics for this neither-Eros? If the Panic is Creative, why must we hide from it in Tact and Avoidance? When Eros is no longer Sex but another darker, sulkier, more strident ringing in the trees, what warrens are we lost in? When it articulates as Love, are we saved; if so, why does it seem we’re never saved? The Garters know no salvations but in energies, Love being one of the Major Ones.

8. **Interminable, intricate, deviant, quite possibly ecstatic/kenotic conversations**—starting with breath/pneuma & words/syllables, eye piercings/loaded looks; and their sincerities, deflections, their crypts and their crafts—
that build “things” on earth. Auden said, “We are on earth to make things”—and he wasn’t wrong. Instead of ceaseless and increasingly more futile, self-reflexive “commentary” or the narcissism inherent in our so-called “sharing” economy that dominates/stultifies/petrifies information communities and social media sites, we advise free-feeling and playfully-meandering gifts and exchanges of words, stories, ideas, spells, clues, that become the raw material for physically embodied, person-to-person projects and experiments.

Truthfully, much of what we espouse already happens on the Web, for which we give praise; but too much of what we don’t like tends to drown it out.

Remember:
A Gift is Never Shared.
A Comment is Never an Exchange.
A Conversation is Always an Incantation.
A Gift Becomes Always a Passage.
(Obssession Is a Stadium: Many, Noisy, Consequential)


Nobody is done when they come; and coming is never done. Here we leap from Deleuze and Guattari’s “plateaus” and “rhizomatics” by way of Gertrude Stein’s temporal current of vibrant things, and Virginia Woolf’s painstaking molecular attentions, to the nomadic nerve-bibles of Jean Genet and Kathy Acker where the perpetual breakaways of desire, the endless comings (and goings) create unquantifiable intensity-enthusiasm nodes that make cartographies of the present. We also swoon for the art-prayers
of Dorothy Iannone and her lifelong search for “Ecstatic Unity,” whether through another’s Eros, or through her own blood-lantern soul-maps, or even through the wanderings and ordeals and bereavements that constitute a quest for ecstasy in the first place. This is the realm of the Tragic, certainly, but which can be expressed only in Joy, which is far stealthier and more versatile than you expect. Here too, apropos of the Tragic, we enter a world of incredibly injurious economic-driven distortions, where terms like bliss, union, happiness, serenity, harmony and contentment are paraded, parodied and exploited as buyable destinations, panaceas, eternal bunkmates, validating credentials. Our position is simply that life brings no relief, only paths to possibly more exciting, intense, harmonic, loving, galvanizing and pleasurable ways to be unrelieved. And also, not to forget: “Enthusiasm” once meant “taken by divine frenzy, or enraptured by a god” so just as there is no cure for life, there is no room just for the individual, for he/she/they(it must contend with the forces that pass through, out of and are already formative of their seemingly isolate subjectivity. So by necessity philosophy enters into inextricable relations with sorcery and the old gods and the Numinous, i.e. The Invisible.

Border work is also bridge work even with wars ongoing inside & out.

10. New/flexible social contracts based on real social flux. Freedom is already a theatrical and ludic proposition that binds us hearts, minds, & props into myriad situations/scenarios with divergent players, many of whom are wildly different than our selves. How can our necessarily incomplete and ever-pending and always-diluted freedoms work and fuse together, i.e. con-tract, to secrete new assemblages, forms, imaginaries, encounters? Jean-Luc Nancy’s “Being
Singular Plural” is a useful phrase to leap from and out of—right into the music of Richard Hell when he was the first person in New York to wear black jeans.

11. **The Outside.** We grow encumbered by trending stances, the secured positions, the lullabying analyses, the perspectival hair-splittings, the nervousness to *belong*, the hunger to *affiliate*, the tic to *represent*, and the accelerating, repetitive technological Interiority that puppeteers and faux-validates us—but we know it when we feel it, gust of green wind, shore-glass, broken pylons in a quiet field—and it’s lost to us, this Outside, inextricably snarled inside where those systems have tyrannized our movements into repeating knots of stifled communication, compromised desire.

12. **The Sacramental Approach to Reality.** As criminals, we surprise people, like critics and academics, by advocating tirelessly for this apparent religious tactic; however, many crime-seeking outcasts take “vows” that unite them with the folds of the Outside, among the darkly-grooved forest realms where matter still makes ritual demands of us, where each pinecone resonates like a temple bell, every leaf scintillates in crystalline hints and the oasis we wash our toes in is fed on chthonic shadows. And you’d be surprised by what we mean by criminal too: it’s a peculiar and devoted relation with the Outside. It’s also romantic realism and the advancements made by *rock n’ roll* into the unchecked territory that drove both Jesus and Nietzsche to early deaths.

12½. **The Sacramental Approach to Irreality, Surreality, Unreality.** This methodology is explored in our theories, fictions, manifestos, and their oddball bastardizations. Here we entertain a theology of the fragment—in so far as
the Whole has been called God, now each fragment is now called god—but also new ways of making sex work in the name of reason. Eros is the ultimate game of fragments become godly. Is this god a criminal, too? It’s certainly up for experiment. For more in this vein, consult the works of ’pataphysics. Consult as well the pending, transmedia fictions of *Noctula*, the mythopoeic ecosystem that keep Gar-ters politically and ethically aroused as they negotiate the more circumscribed grids of the Real.
In every era, the Harlequin-Fool is made an Example of by the Fear-Adoring All-Categorizing, Perpetually-Commenting Congress of Tepid Force that takes the Wilds out of our Hearts, replacing them with Tics, Fears and Pettiness. But the Forest King perseveres in her mayhems, even when she is caught, even while her woods are burned down.

**REMAIN A FOOL-KING**

**JOIN THE IRON GARTERS**