

much more and less than one can only be figured by science as the mob. To be held in the mob's embrace, in the wound and blessing of their shared, accursed sensorium, is to be made unaware of one's own invisibility—to feel, to feel more, to feel more than, to feel more than I feel, I feel. Can you hold one another tonight in the blur, so that one and another are no more? A table is prepared for your common unawareness, for the disinheritance you might not know you long to know you share, the share you're blessed to share right now that only unawareness of yourself will let be known. Invisible Man had withdrawn, if only for a moment, into the external world, which responsible subjectivity rightly understands to be no world at all in the brutality of its wrongful attempts to eradicate it. Adrian Piper, pied, in motley, blind, silent in her consent not to be single while, at the same time, loud, and felt, in the intensity of her confession, has been led to lead us out of the art world and into this exteriority with that same pentaphonic song Armstrong was always playing no matter what song he was playing. No matter what song he is playing, they are the ones who are not one who are playing it. That's what this entanglement of Ben Hall are playing. You have to excuse their grammar. DJ Crawl-space's repercussive counterweight is stairwell, in golden light well, in sound booth, in reverberate hold. That Armstrong plex, given elsewhere in Hall's *Some Jokers (For 5 Turntables, basement, ice cream and sloe gin)*, regifted as Paolo Freire, vocoded, digitized into uncountability by an unaccountable sonority Freire now would recognize, is the undercommon instrument whose instrument we'd like to be. In the glow and blur of the collective head's collective embrace, more precisely and properly valued in its fuzzy disruption of valuation, in its radical unbankability, in its inappropriable impropriety, light and sound *are* the materiality of our living, the basis of our revolutionary pedagogy, the ground of our insurgent, autoexcessive feel.

# Irruptions and Incoherences for Jimmie Durham

## 24.

The propensity to dance in America is both corrosive and preservative, both uncountable and accumulable. There's a genocidal braid of sets of qualities and instances that can't be seen as one another's originals that might just be an object you can change. Certainly, it's an object that's always changing. The alternative is everywhere as air, and we're careless with what we breathe and how we breathe, hence this massive problematic of use, which is a kind of worship, if you can change without improving. If we embrace obscenity and contradiction, just in the way we move with them, it's not only because sometimes the terror of resisting earthly terror feels good, it's also because the terror of feeling good is not optional. There's a cloned, drone-like two-faced officer, a doubly-unconscious coin made out of any impossible body, money made out of untroubled performance and unalloyed critique, who says "privilege" and then, when you turn him over, "precarity," while acting like the realities these words are meant to index can be separated because, evidently, you can't see two sides of your art-historical self in the mirror. The piety of not thinking that is given in acting out this one-sided two-sidedness is surreptitiously piped into the general reservoir of normatively thoughtful bullshit, making it ever more noxious. Minted, self-assertion sways like a bunch of empty uniforms, shows like Calvinist branding on disavowed flesh, sounds like screeches, tweets, and chidings simultaneously pseudo-politically and hyper-politically marketing the suffering that exceeds being bought and sold, that can't be calculated because it can't be individuated or packaged in a tranche of torture-backed, countercaressive securities. Such critique is an interminable citizenship test in the world its performers say

they want to disappear. They dance, too, harder and faster, precisely because they are the ones who are supposed to know. They negate everything, with neither joy nor pain, and we are left with them, because we are them, watching them arresting what we are, because that's what we are, suspended between the careless negation of what we are and the careful affirmation of what we are. Is that what we are, is that what we are, this propensity to dance given in the terrible imperative not to celebrate?

## 25.

Is Jimmie Durham an artist? The legitimacy of his claim to the category is undeniable if he just wanted to be somebody, to the extent that any such claim can be legitimate for anybody, if there is some body, if there is any body. And it's just as undeniable that in his enactment of the category he simultaneously refuses its imperative to preserve itself in separation. To be an artist, in Durham, for Durham, is not to be one, as well. To suggest that he works, or that he is in movement, or that he is movement against the separate single being of the artist is to suggest a more general resistance to severalty, to what one might call, in echo of what the Dawes Act cruelly echoes, the allotment of identity, which Durham is constantly, which is to say endlessly unsuccessfully, escaping. Maybe Jimmie Durham is an activity. Maybe Jimmie Durham is a practice. Showing that we are not what we are, that we are not, that we are; saying that to say that is to affirm we as the persistent, militantly preservative practice of no-thingness, of the inveterate changing of every object and every nation, of an open-ended sculpturing of every exhaustively open end, Durham re-presents we as a matter of thought the prison church of privilege and precarity tries but fails to interdict. That we as cuts we are just enough so we don't have to worry about being-consistent or being-coherent is what we study, is all of how we come to nothing in study, finding more than everything in the findings we make. The practice persists, is preserved, only insofar as it is open, radically non-exclusionary, insistently improper in an overturning that laughs at itself to keep from crying. The vast range of violence the ante-national international perpetrates on the verb *to be* in the unholy name of the nominative case of the first-person plural pronoun is a clue that is, at once, both immanent and transcendent.

## 26.

What we be trying to talk about all the time, amongst and against ourselves and all up in the air and under the ground and water, is antegrammatical—a general beyond of the analogy, whose very invocation remains a kind of sterile double entry. The hold, the trail, the trailer, the project, the general antagonism—all that's just the mobile locus of an intensification of every feeling, which is why the way the alternative survives the ongoing genocide—even though the ongoing genocide kills every last body it makes—is so unfadeably chorographic and choreatic, manifest in a dance of vicious colonial mapping and nervous anticolonial muscularity. And all that's special about this or that exclusion, this or that death, is the general refusal of this or that exclusion, this or that death. If the notion that this or that modality of suffering is special requires disavowing the intensity of the entanglement of privilege and precarity (when that entanglement is so crucial to our necessary comportment toward the open end of world and time) then special needs to get let go in a continual enactment of that ceremony we keep finding, where being singular plural is dispossessed in a plain of sēms.

## 27.

Celebration lets being-special go, but under an absolute duress. Escape from the struggle for freedom is required. Celebration in art can't be redemptive because what we have to celebrate is so immeasurably small and large. Art asks how to hand on or hand out the feel and the sense of that against the grain of aesthetic theory's tendency to call the authorities in itself on itself. If I could only get myself to police myself, aesthetic theory wistfully sighs. In lieu of that, the ascription of radical irregularity is the ground not only of art's exclusion but also of the exclusion of every practice of the alternative, which is what we are. We have to celebrate the offness that's been writing on us, which we accentuate in nonperformances of nonportraiture, in we as, as in how we be pretending to be Rosa Levy. We on in putting on, in nothing, which turns out to be all red and black in the absence of the artist, her pencil stache and juicy lips, Duchamp's interminably descending rock bottom. In overloading an already overcrowded rogue's gallery of self-portraiture, Durham makes it seem like art might actually be able to rewrite itself out of making pictures of its selves in severalty all day long. Maybe we write ourselves out. Maybe that's what we are, he says, when we as like that

## 28.

To ask the question of how we get past the imposition of severalty and the self-portraiture that is its imperative and residue is already to bear something more and less than the artist's way of being. For the artist is given in severalty, beholden to what Durham calls the state's violent "immortality," which comes into relief as a spectral projection against the backdrop of patterns of exile and return, of precedent postresidential resistance to the brutally perennial settler state, which proliferates in a bunch of little states of settlement, found(ed) by artists in flurries of anti-loisaida self-picturing on the death march from urban village to east village.<sup>1</sup> "We are parasites of the rich," an artist friend of Durham's once said.<sup>2</sup> In recounting that passively aggressive self-assertion, Durham teaches us that severalty is where racialization and aesthetic theory converge. The individuation of the artist is a kind of massacre. And so we seek out the landed blessings of the landless, neither as a repertoire of countermeasures nor a collection of countersubjective standards but just because to want to dig the transverse earth is what we are. We as this changing object called object changers.

## 29.

This is all about land and use, but it's also all about language and/as material. Does the artist own the materials he uses and, in so using, improves upon? Does the poet own his language and, in so owning, purify the language of the tribe (as T. S. Eliot once said in a beautifully fucked-up western called *Four Quartets*)? On the other hand, is there a work of dispossession in Durham, of resistance to severalty, and even of a resistance to sovereignty given past the claim upon it and moving on in and as a violent unsettling that is at once earthly and divine? If there is it's only insofar as the work of dispossession cannot be contained. It places the artist, having come into his own in and through allotment, in grave danger of having to suffer the immeasurable grace of his disappearance, of her dispersal. See, I'm interested in the work and feel and material presence of dispossession, disappearance, dispersal, and disbursal in Durham's art, which is not his, and I'm thinking that this is something as palpably, audibly, flavorfully visible—as spirit, as breath, as irreducible and ineradicable aroma—in the objects he changes, in the changing of himself as object, and in the objections his changes raise and play not only on the very idea of objecthood itself but also on subjectivity, the

object's evil twin, its 'evilly compounded, vital I.'<sup>3</sup> That's why it's so cool and crucial to check out the itinerary of his thinking on use, on development, and how it turns not only in his writing on artist-driven gentrification but also on the problematic of the very idea of the artist and his world. Durham moves, is on the move, his indigent indigineity in voluntary exile from voluntarism's slough and epicenter. But what's at stake is not in the way he carries himself or keeps carrying himself away; what's important is the way he carries his selflessness, the way he keeps changing that object, like a mobile sculpture in the act of its own making and unmaking, wrapped in the mantle of its own dismantling, continually asserting this refusal of self-assertion, constantly refusing representation and self-representation with a particular wave, an emphatic and insistently gentle kind of greeting and goodbye. The presence of the one who says here I am in not being here is dispersed and more and less than full, given in the air and dirt and water and flesh of a whole other, pre- and postcolonial mathematics. In this old-new math, it's not about figuring out ways to count the uncountable. It's about standing together, in refusal of standing, in praise of all. And let's say that for right now, for just this moment, that the name of all is Jimmie Durham. Now, I'm not saying that we are Jimmie Durham. That's a beautifully terrible thing to say. I'm just saying that in saying that the name of all is Jimmie Durham I'm saying that all don't quite add up. Jimmie Durham practices (the theory of) non-numerical material.<sup>4</sup>

## 30.

Dense and airy earth, let's rearrange the neighborhood again, in curacy. The earth has a future at the end of the world right now. Right over here there's a museum for durational art formed in walking by panthers of care on a wing-tip cruise. There's a vast unincorporated evangelical mission of blur. We trying to get people to practice and people already been practicing. They already knew but maybe just didn't feel it or didn't let it be a bright feeling, a way of strolling glow mutuality. When shift happens we notice the duration of the living. "The music is happening, I don't need to play," Monk says. Duration in Durham is like *Mary Lou's Mass*, monks say, while walking down the street as art taking displacement. Charged with the uncollectible, the museum will have taken aim, like a society for community safety, a defense mechanism of absolute openness for aesthetical Cherokees. Durham's durationally extra-rational art wants to be beautiful, a certain lack of coherence in creativity

and the social process, that ongoing interruption of naturalization that we keep waiting for, the museum as a bunch of lumpen parties, a serially intergalactic swarm of midnight jams. The beautiful that's inseparable from the terrible, that's too nasty to be sublime, to flavorful to be tasteful, to syncopic to be fixed, too red, blur and black for things to persist in residence. The state is a mechanism for the monopolization of violence, its placement in or under reserve, in and as the strict regulation of generativity. And western thought and culture has been the place where this monopolization is theorized and defended, in the name and by way of sovereignty, self-possession, and self-determination. Freaked out over the generativity that destroys order, troubled by savory metastasis, underconceptual cancer, pre- and postconceptual sensing, not grasping but letting go in ripped up anapprehension, embodied viscera sense inevitable fade while the earth laughs sunlight.

### 31.

Bricolage is too charming, Durham says, too comfortable to keep close, too closed for the necessary discomfort.<sup>5</sup> So how do you go from pleasingly putting lots of things together to having nothing quite add up, to letting nothing be so thoroughly in the work that a certain unworking of the work gets done? The work of letting be the nothing in the work that undoes the work till it and the artist are eased with being nothing. The museum of that is walking around in exile and humility, endlessly having to have something to say for itself so it can help you make you strange to yourself. Estrangement, here, is all up in the rub or glance, not in the work, because to be strange to yourself, to be able to have been disabled in the museum, to walk in but not walk out (as you), and then to walk on, aesthetically, is to be unable to have found the work. An eccentric little piece of nothing gestures to the work's not being there. It's like if you can't see it then you can't see yourself in it. Indians love his work, Durham says, because they don't look at it. He says they have no use for it and perhaps it is in this that the work is useful.<sup>6</sup> Out of this nettle, danger, we pluck this flower, safety, which is way too terribly like picking all the goddamn cotton in the world. There's this problematic of how to refuse and to refuse, as well, their refusal, which often takes the form of fusion, of being collected in exclusion, of being brutally, violently wanted—in a libidinal economy of absolutely have to have—when absolutely no one wants you. Because the One can't want these explosive, “eccentric little pieces of nothing,” these tchotchkes made for money by the ones who refuse to be money, these little bits of steal-

ing in stolenness.<sup>7</sup> Viciously, this has all but all been admitted. To let in is to confess where to incorporate is to deny. The whole thing is radically untenable and then there's the fact that we have to take responsibility for it. Europe is our project. America is our thing. You have to say that a million times before blowing them up becomes a necessary option. Jimmie Durham laughs, repeat after me.