

GLITTER MANI FESTO

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1.

According to researchers from the University of Houston and Ghent University in Belgium, our desire for shiny things stems from an evolutionary instinct to seek water. The shimmering allure of rivers and streams, essential for survival, has left humanity with an innate yearning for shimmer—a desire for life itself, refracted through light.

2.

Mica and pyrite, ancient precursors to modern glitter, have bedazzled humanity since the Paleolithic era. These materials, chipped and mixed into pigments, adorned Mayan temples and illuminated cave walls.

3.

Nancy Deihl, fashion and textile historian, reminds us that glitter evokes the wealth of jewels and metal. From Tudor silver threads to pewter embellishments for the less wealthy, sparkle has historically been a currency of status and power.

4.

Glitter's association with wealth has been subverted in the modern age, democratized and made accessible through mass production.

5.

Some manufacturers have been documented producing glitter under exploitative labor conditions, implicating it in global inequalities and the hidden costs of aesthetic consumption.

6.

Glitter is a paradox: a material of luxury and kitsch, simultaneously devalued and beloved.

7.

Throughout history, shimmering substances have been tied to rituals, myth-making, magic, the supernatural, and the divine.

8.

Glitter is insurgent: it infiltrates, sticks, and refuses to leave, endlessly agitating.

9.

Institutions fear glitter, revealing its power. It is banned in prisons for its ability to conceal drugs, and in art galleries and museums for its potential to disrupt the pristine order. Glitter is a threat to order and control.

10.

Glitter is a weapon: During the fight for marriage equality, LGBTQIA+ activists wielded glitter bombs in protests and demonstrations. Headlines warned of the so-called "dangers" of glitter as a political tool, alongside other forms of queer civil disobedience, such as twerking and the use of rainbow paraphernalia.

11.

Loose glitter poses a risk: it marks you as infected, fabulous, or complicit. A single speck of glitter can shift your status.

12.

To engage with glitter requires shedding cultural biases.

13.

Glitter is a nightmare to clean, refusing our attempts at sanitation and purity. Attempts to rid oneself of glitter often spread it further.

14.

Glitter is toxic: Often tied to microplastics that contribute to environmental harm, it infiltrates ecosystems, inhabits both our bodies and the environment, resisting metabolization and reminding us of our own toxicity and forcing us to deal with it.

15.

Glitter is viral: a material contagion proliferating through objects, humans, animals, and air. The rules of pandemic control—masks, distancing, handwashing—prove futile against this super spreader.

16.

Glitter is a ghost, lingering in the dark corners of perception and reality, eluding detection and proliferating beyond cognition. Unnoticed yet ever-present, it reminds us of what escapes our control and perception and confronts us with the limitations of our bodies—our own unknowability.

17.

Glitter exists in a different temporality—simultaneously here and not here. Its shimmer collapses time, pulling us into moments of past, present, and future.

18.

Glitter defies form. It conforms to its container only to exceed it, challenging notions of boundaries, rigidity, and permanence, thriving in formlessness.

19.

Glitter has an indeterminate relation to color—reflecting and refracting any color of the spectrum in its environment.

20.

Glitter's visual transformations occur without reproduction or durability, rejecting fidelity and embracing ephemerality. It rejects representational unity, singularity, depth, or integrity.

21.

Glitter is anti-essentialist.

22.

Glitter triggers dopamine responses, evoking wonder, joy, and sometimes anxiety, overwhelming our senses.

23.

Glitter demands performance: it de-privileges a singular viewpoint, forcing one to move and engage with its multiplicity.

24.

Glitter reflects our gaze, making us aware of our positionality and attunement to limiting ways of viewing and interpreting the world.

25.

Glitter is erotic: experimentality and desire beyond sexuality, beyond prescribed boundaries, and toward potentiality.

26.

Glitter seduces everyone, including children.

27.

Glitter is play and forces us to question the societal dismissal of play.

28.

Glitter is virtual, from sparkly GIFs, AR filters, and memes, transcending the physical.

29.

Glitter evokes the cosmos, in which humans are infinitesimal.

30.

To work with glitter is to shift perception, embracing alternative ways of seeing and sensing—a practice rooted in care and meditation.