“WHAT CAN PEOPLE DO TOGETHER THAT WE CAN’T DO ALONE?”

WHAT CAN WE DISCOVER IN OURSELVES ONLY BY WAY OF OTHER PEOPLE?”

Gabrielle Civil's *Experiments in Joy* celebrates black feminist collaborations and solos in essays, letters, performance texts, scores, images, and more. Following her explosive debut *Swallow the Fish*, Civil now documents her work with *From the Hive, No. 1 Gold*, and *Call & Response*—whose collaborative Call inspired the title. The book also features her solo encounters with artists and writers, ancestors and audiences. Here you will find black girlhood, grief, ghosts, girls in their bedrooms, lots of books, dancing, reading, falling in love, fighting back, and flying. With lots of heart and the help of her friends, Civil keeps reckoning with performance, art and life.

Experiments in Joy is a transformational literary work of material magic. [T]his collection enacts (rather than professes) trans-disciplinary theories on inter-being, interruption, and inter-becoming for the subtlest, hungriest and wisest organ of admittance – the mind-heart, which will not suffer bullshit.

—ANNA JOY SPRINGER, author of *The Vicious Red Relic, Love*

Civil has made a book into a performance space and living archive. Words dance and bodies speak: together they invent languages of keen pleasure and ardent thought… Read, watch, listen and dream. Be transformed.

—MARGO JEFFERSON, author of *Negroland: A Memoir*

Civil’s Experiments in Joy invites readers to trace the idea of ‘gesture’ from the body to the page and back, to follow her footsteps to the various entryways into *Black Girl Studies*, and to witness the role of friendship in the making of art and survival. Reading it, we are also reminded that the blues is not just a document of trouble, but also a journey to the pleasure on the other side of it.

—MENDI + KEITH OBADIKE, creators of *Four Electric Ghosts*

**Experiments in Joy**

by Gabrielle Civil

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