This is the crucial political question: how to host a table of strangers. Both are essential parts of a public table, and both lack customs. We need to develop customs or forms of hosting; and we need to engage strangers; in Guy Davenport's terms, “get alongside them in the right way.” Not make strangers feel like family; not love thy neighbor. No one owes you that. The challenge is how to host strangers as they are, as strangers.

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