Custom Repository or Resolver Implementations

There has been a few quoted use cases for using an alternate way to locate artifacts, rather than using a repository. For example:

- gentoo packagers
- gump
- as an alternative to file based jar overrides

The situation is that in each case there is already a way for them to obtain a complete set of artifacts for a project that are built, verified, signed, etc.

While a workaround is to use a file based repository, structure in the Maven way, this might be too inconvenient.

> Given there is a workaround, this may be something we delay until Maven 2.1, but if it can be facilitated while the artifact code is being cleaned up, that'd be great)

The questions to resolve:

- ~~is just a custom repository format required (and they still provide poms, etc), or do they need their own resolver~~
  - we will encourage different wagons, but maven-artifact should stay the same
- ~~should repository formats be pluggable? Via configuration, or code additions?~~
  - too risky, no need
- ~~should the resolver be more pluggable? Does the design of the current one do most of the real work under the covers so it can be replaced safely without losing functionality (like transformations)?~~
- ~~how should users alter components used in maven? Do they provide a plexus.xml/components.xml file as part of their m2 installation?~~

For this, we will work with those that need it (in particular the linux distros) to see what they want, what compromises we can reach to get it working. Maven's architecture should be unaffected.