

An Open Letter To Senator Jesse Helms

1990

Enough is enough. I have read in the L.A. TIMES and THE VILLAGE VOICE that you have the General Accounting Office investigating Karen Finley, Johanna Went, Cheri Gaulke, and myself. Why are you going behind our backs? Why aren't you talking directly to us artists, instead of having the G.A.O., at the taxpayers' expense, going to the galleries and the theaters we have performed in to ask veiled questions about us?

Here I am. Let's talk, man to man. It is the American Way. What do you want to know about me? You had my address because I sent you my article about how I think what you are doing is patently offensive to the Bill of Rights. After all, it is the American Way to directly confront your opponent, giving him a chance to answer, and giving the people a dialog. But you did not send me a letter. You sent the G.A.O.

This is not an investigation for information. It is an investigation for extortion. It is part of the campaign to smear us four artists -- as well as Holly Hughes, Tim Miller, Annie Sprinkle and John Fleck -- as untouchable, unfundable, unbookable. The paint that is used to smear is that of "obscene artists". Are you trying to find out whether or not our work falls into the legal definition of obscene? Have you seen my performances or even talked to anyone who has? Have you read my writings on art in professional and scholarly journals, or my resume of over 20 years? I think not.

I think you know you can not show that any of us untouchable eight are even remotely legally obscene. So you and your ilk are trying to create the atmosphere of fear by using the extortion tactics of the mafia. The N.E.A. chairman, Frohnmayer, used this atmosphere of fear, under the catchy phrase "certain political reality", to take away the N.E.A. grants from Finley, Hughes, Fleck and Miller. Your extortion is what has created this political reality.

This extortion is an attempt to blacklist us untouchable eight and other artists who have the nerve to do difficult art. This so-called investigation is really the extortionist's message to galleries that, if they book us or artists like us, they are risking the possibility of funding being cut off,

of being audited, of being closed down by the fire department, of being hassled by the vice squad and other governmental agencies. All of which has occurred to the galleries that have booked us untouchable eight.

Why are you closing channels of expression and of funding to me without due process of law? It is a political and cultural blacklist under the cover of obscenity. Extortion and blacklists are against the American ideals and spirit.

If you have anything to say to me or to ask me, come to talk to me man to man. Otherwise, get your big brother foot off my back.

In Freedom,
Frank Moore

TOO CONTROVERSIAL FOR THE BAY AREA CANNOT FIND A PLACE TO PERFORM IN THE BAY AREA

AMONG THE CITIES/PLACES MOORE HAS

- SCHOOL OF THE ART INSTITUTE, CHICAGO
- PAINTED BRIDE, PHILADELPHIA
- FRANKLIN FURNACE, NYC

PERFORMED/LECTURED:

- UCLA • NYU
- LOWER LINKS, CHICAGO
- VANCOUVER, BC

OF FRANK MOORE'S PERFORMANCE WORK:

"SURELY WONDERFUL AND MIND-GOOSING EXPERIENCE."
L.A. READER

"...HE'S WONDERFUL AND HILARIOUS AND KNOWS EXACTLY WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT AND HAS EARNED MY UNDYING RESPECT. WHAT HE'S DOING IS IMPOSSIBLE AND HE KNOWS IT. THAT'S GOOD ART..."
L.A. WEEKLY

"RESISTING 'THE EASY AND SUPERFICIAL DESCRIPTIONS...', MOORE'S WORK CHALLENGES THE CONSENSUS VIEW MORE STRONGLY IN WAYS LESS ACCEPTABLE THAN... ANGRY TIRADES AND BITTER ATTACKS ON CONSUMER CULTURE."
CHICAGO NEW CITY

"FRANK MOORE ISN'T YOUR AVERAGE ARTIST...ONE OF THE MORE PROVOCATIVE WRITERS, FILM DIRECTORS AND YES-PERFORMANCE ARTISTS AROUND SINCE THE EARLY '70'S."
THE ORGONIAN



"TRANSFORMATIVE..." MOORE "IS THWARTING NATURE IN AN ASTONISHING MANNER, AND IS FUSING ART, RITUAL AND RELIGION IN WAYS THE EUROCENTRIC WORLD HAS ONLY DIM MEMORIES OF, ESPOUSING A KIND OF PAGANISM WITHOUT BITE AND AGGRESSION, FRANK MOORE IS INDEED WORTH WATCHING."
HIGH PERFORMANCE MAGAZINE

"IN PERFORMANCE, MOORE TAKES ADVANTAGE OF HIS DISADVANTAGE, BECOMING AN UNLIKELY GUIDE INTO THE PLEASURES OF THE BODY, TAKING AUDIENCES WHERE THEY WOULD PROBABLY NEVER GO WITHOUT THE EXAMPLE OF HIS VULNERABILITY AND TRUST...THAT MOORE SHOULD BE THE ONE URGING US TO STAY CONNECTED TO OUR PHYSICAL SELVES IS BOTH IRONIC AND POETIC..."
VILLAGE VOICE

"IF PERFORMANCE ART HAS A RADICAL EDGE, IT HAS TO BE FRANK MOORE."
THE CLEVELAND EDITION

**IF YOU KNOW OF A PLACE IN THE BAY AREA WHERE FRANK CAN PERFORM WRITE TO:
Frank Moore P.O. Box 11445 Berkeley CA 94701-2445**