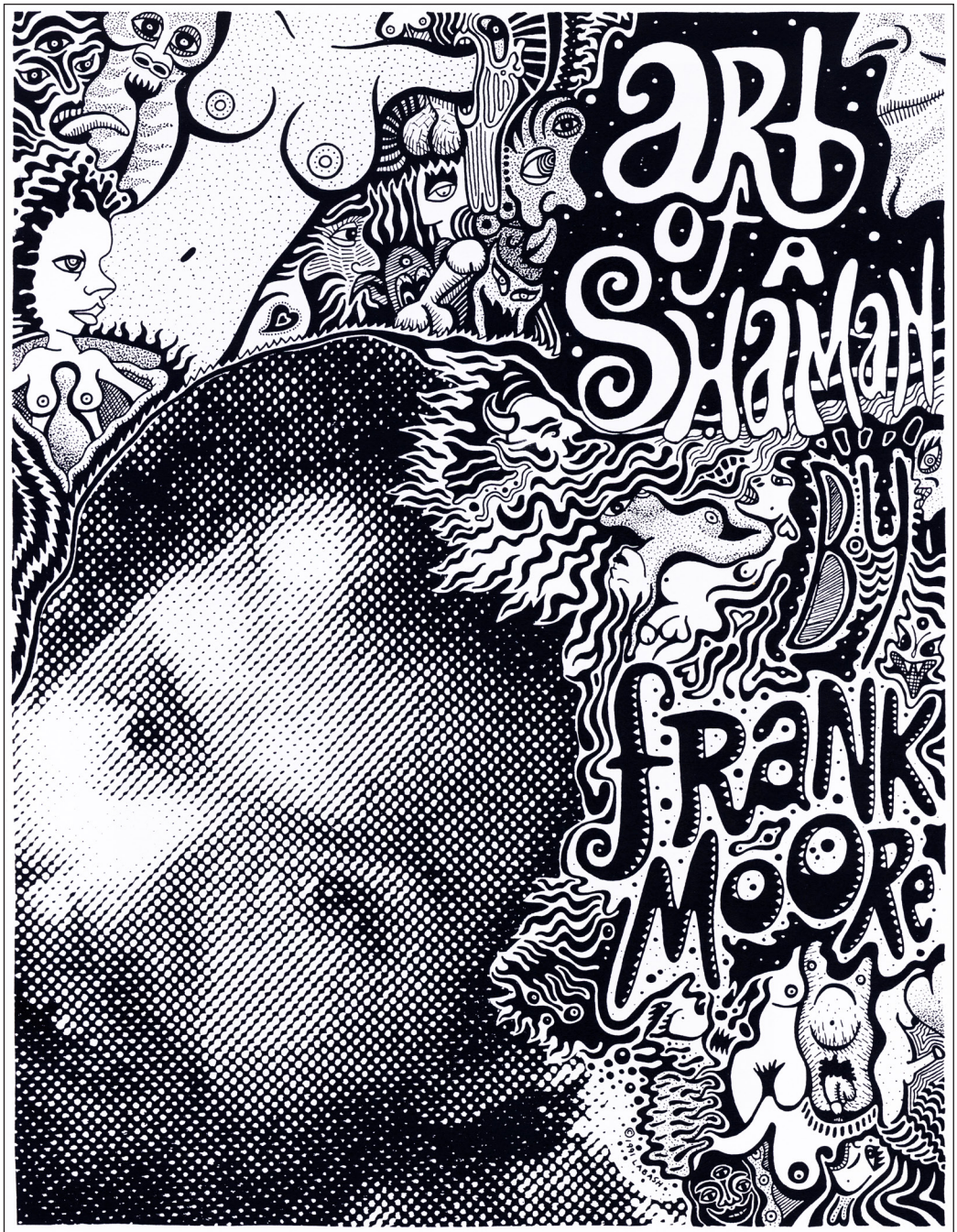


# ART OF A SHAMAN



FRANK MOORE



▲ *Original photocopy cover. Artwork by LaBash.*

## WHAT PEOPLE ARE SAYING ABOUT FRANK MOORE:

“His stamina is unrelenting, and the music goes on and on. I am repelled but stuck: I can’t turn away.”

*San Francisco Weekly*

“Best of the Bay Area!”

*S.F Bay Guardian*

“...San Francisco’s legendary Frank Moore... (is among)...the best and most influential artists in the discipline.”

*L.A. Weekly*

“One of the few people practicing performance art that counts.”

*Karen Finley, performance artist*

“Frank Moore is one of my performance teachers.”

*Annie Sprinkle, performance artist*

“...one of the U.S.’s most controversial performance artists,....”

*P-Form Magazine*

“...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*

“If performance art has a radical edge, it has to be Frank Moore.”

*Cleveland Edition*

“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*

“Surely wonderful and mind-goosing experience.”

*L.A. Reader*

“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...”

*The Village Voice*

“(The Cherotic All-Star jam) was frighteningly original!”

*Dirty Dave Sanchez, “Rampage Radio”  
KUSF, San Francisco*

“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 Oregonian*

“...the most oddly affecting performance I’d ever seen.”

*Jim Testa, Jersey Beat*

“(Frank Moore is a) master reality bender”

*Magical Blend Magazine*

# ART OF A SHAMAN

FRANK MOORE

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Art of a Shaman was delivered as a lecture at New York University in 1990 as part of the conference “New Pathways in Performance”.

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▲ *Frank Moore as Feisto, 1985. Photo by Debbie Moore.*

# 1. A Lucky Guy!

I always have a problem when someone who has not experienced one of our performances asks, “Well, what was your performance about?”. Within this question, there are a number of concepts about performance which are undermining limitations.

I became sucked into performance not to tell stories, not to paint pictures for others to look at, not even to reveal something about myself or about the state of things, and certainly not for fame or fortune. It was simply the best way that I saw to create the intimate community which I as a person needed and that I thought society needed as an alternative to the personal isolation....

I have always wanted to bring dreams into reality.

My first stroke of good luck was I was born spastic, unable to walk or talk. Add to this good fortune the fact that my formative years were in the sixties -- my fate was assured!

When I was born, doctors told my parents that I had no intelligence, that I had no future, that I would be best put into an institution and be forgotten. This was a powerful expectation with all the force of western science and medicine, as well as social influences, behind it. It would have been easy for my parents to be swept up into this expectation. Then that expectation would have created my reality. I would have long ago died without any other possibilities.

Instead, my parents rejected this expectation for the possibility they saw in my eyes, for what for them should have been true. This rejection of the cultural expectation of reality could not be a one-time choice. They had to passionately live their choice every day, every minute, or



▲ *Poetry Bash, Fort Mason, San Francisco 1988.*  
*Photo by Linda Mac.*

the cultural expectation would have sucked them and me into it. It fought them at every new possibility they opened to me. Their passionate commitment to how they thought things should be attracted people to me who kept opening new possibilities for me. Of course, these were in the minority. But I focused on them, making them how people should be, how I wanted to be. So I expected people and myself to be like that. So people were for the most part that way...at least

I saw them that way. This opened up to me what is called luck. It also gave me the ability to trust and the ability to use opportunities.

This is the level that saved me, protected me, guided me. On this level, my parents won over the cultural expectation. By their winning, I won. By my winning, you win.

Yes, I always have been lucky. I have a body that is ideal for a performance artist. And I have always wanted to be a performer. When I was a kid, my younger brother used to get mad when people looked at me when he pushed me to the movies or to the teen club. He cried. But I liked people looking at me. That is what I mean by 'I am lucky'. I am lucky I am an exhibitionist in this body. One time, I was working out on the jungle gym outside of our house -- a kid came by and asked if I was a monster. I just roared like a monster. It was fun.

But on another level, the cultural expectation had won by shaping reality, making me into a physically ugly cripple, a burden that no woman would want. No matter what I accomplished, no matter how smart or warm or giving I was, I would still be an ugly black hole always taking more than I gave. I was stuck in that piece of the cultural frame

that I had accepted. The cultural expectation had won. I and everyone had lost because I bought into it. But there was a point when I was around 28 when one day I decided that I did not want to be in a reality where I was ugly, where I could not give all I needed to give. It simply was not how things should be, not just for me, but for everyone. So I decided to act and think as if I were beautiful. I did not tell anyone of my decision. But within two weeks people started telling me that I had physically changed. I used this feedback, this sign, to deepen the reality shaping. This new reality opened up new possibilities for everyone.

I was lucky. I was never under pressure to be good at anything, to make money, to make it in “the real world”, to be polished -- and the other distractions that other modern artists have to, or think they have to, deal with. So I could focus on having fun, on going into taboo areas where magical change can be evoked.

In fact, a major reason why I am writing this is to encourage artists, who have not been so blessed with bodies that mark them as misfits, to aspire to be misfits anyway, to do misfit art anyway -- even if you are handicapped by your normal body. Your road is definitely harder than my road. But that's life.



▲ *Bubblehead Por.trit by Lee Kay, 1991.*

## ABOUT FRANK MOORE

Frank Moore is an American performance artist, shaman, poet, essayist, painter, musician and internet/television personality who has experimented in art, performance, ritual, and shamanistic teaching since the late 1960s.

Moore is perhaps most well known as one of the NEA-funded artists targeted by Jesse Helms and the GAO (General Accounting Office) in the early 90s for doing art that was labeled “obscene”. He is well known for long (5-48 hours) ritualistic performances with audience participation, nudity, and eroticism. But he has also become well known for his influential writings on performance, art, life, and cultural subversion, for his historical influence on the San Francisco Bay Area music and performance scene, and more recently for his 24/7/365 pioneering webstation, LUVeR (Love Underground Visionary Revolution) at [www.luver.com](http://www.luver.com).

Moore coined the word, “eroplay” to describe physical play between adults released from the linear goals of sex and orgasm. He has explored this, and similar concepts in performance and ritual as a way for people to connect on a deep human level with each other beyond the social and cultural expectations and limitations, and as a way to melt isolation between people.

Moore has been an underground counter-culture hero and artistic inspiration for decades. He was born with cerebral palsy, can not walk or talk, and has written books, directed plays, directed, acted in and edited films, regularly gives poetry readings, plays piano, sings in ensemble music jams, and continues to lead bands in hard core punk clubs up and down the west coast. He also has a large collection of original oil paintings that have been shown across the country and in Canada. Moore communicates using a laser-pointer and a board of letters, numbers and commonly-used words.

Performance artist Annie Sprinkle considers Moore one of her teachers and Frank has performed with a host of performance and punk figures of the underground since the 1970s like Barbara Smith, Linda Sibio, The Feederz, and Dirk Dirksen – “The Pope of Punk”.

Frank Moore first came to be known in the 70's as the creator of the popular cabaret show, the Outrageous Beauty Revue (to watch, go to The Intimate Theater). In the 80's he became one of the U.S.'s foremost performance artists. In 1992 he was voted Best Performance Artist by the San Francisco Bay Guardian. In the early 90's he was targeted by Senator Jesse Helms. From 1991-1999 Frank Moore published and edited the acclaimed underground zine, *The Cherotic r(E)volutionary*.

In addition to his book, *Cherotic Magic* and numerous other self-published pieces, Frank Moore has been widely published in various art magazines and other periodicals.

Frank Moore's video works are award-winning and have shown throughout the U.S. and Canada, and since 2001 Frank Moore has been producing shows for Berkeley's Public Access Channel, Berkeley Community Media, Channel 28. His shows play weekly, throughout the week.

Frank Moore's *Web of All Possibilities* at [eroplay.com](http://eroplay.com) features his and other artists' audio, video and visual artwork. He founded Love Underground Visionary Revolution (LUVeR) in 1999, a webstation combining live streaming and on-demand libraries of audio and video programming, described by Moore as a "non-corporate, d.i.y., totally uncensored, noncommercial, nonprofit internet-only communal collective with 24-hour 'live' programming (by amazing people) with 'no-limits' content." In 2011, Moore expanded LUVeR to two channels, adding *Frank's Deep Roots Music* channel.

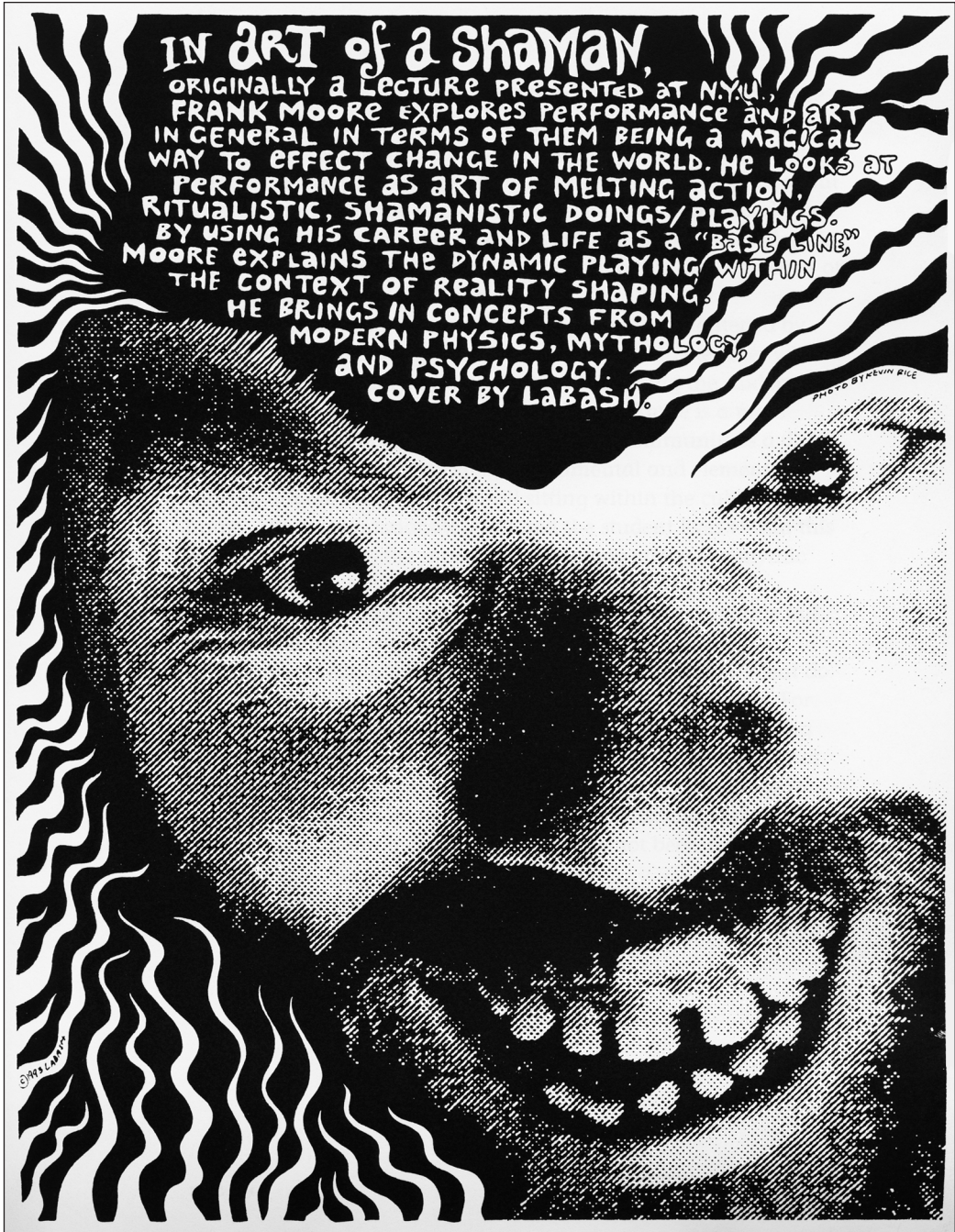
In 2006, Moore announced his candidacy for the 2008 election for President of the United States. His campaign website can be found at [frankmooreforpresident08.com](http://frankmooreforpresident08.com). His platform videos are available on YouTube.

Frank Moore continues to perform regularly in the San Francisco Bay Area. For more information, see: [eroplay.com/events.html](http://eroplay.com/events.html)

Frank Moore also continues to host his regular internet show, *Frank Moore's Shaman's Den* on [luver.com](http://luver.com). Moore describes it as a show that "will arouse, inspire, move, threaten you, not with sound bites, but with a two hour (usually longer) feast of live streaming video show. You might get an in-studio concert of bands from around the world..."

or poetry reading...or an in-depth conversation about politics, art, music, and LIFE with extremely dangerous people! But then you may see beautiful women naked dancing erotically. You never know, because you are in The Shaman's Den with Frank Moore.”





▲ *Original photocopy back cover. Artwork by LaBash.*

## FRANK MOORE ONLINE

*Frank Moore's Web Of All Possibilities*  
<http://www.eroplay.com>

*Frank Moore's Upcoming Events*  
<http://www.eroplay.com/events.html>

*The Shaman's Cave*  
*Performance archives, writings, articles and more*  
<http://www.eroplay.com/Cave/shaman.html>

*The Intimate Theater*  
*On demand video archive that includes Frank's videos*  
<http://www.intimatetheater.com>

*Frank Moore's Painting Gallery*  
<http://www.eroplay.com/Cave/painting-slideshow/paintings.html>

*The Cherotic (r)Evolutionary*  
<http://www.eroplay.com/contents.html>

*LUVeR (Love Underground Visionary Revolution)*  
*Live streaming media portal*  
<http://www.luver.com>

*Frank Moore's Shaman's Den Archives*  
*Archive of his weekly live online show*  
<http://www.luver.com/underground/shamden.html>

*Frank Moore's Shaman's Den Archives Podcast*  
<http://shamandsen.blogspot.com/>

## CREDITS

*Cover painting*  
"Self Portrait" by Frank Moore, oil on canvas.

*Book design & layout*  
Michael LaBash Graphic Design  
<http://www.designbymikee.com>  
<http://www.lavapen.com>



*Sonny & Cher*  
*(Frank Moore and Linda Mac),*  
*"The Outrageous Horror Show",*  
*Al's Bar, Los Angeles, 1989.*  
*Photo by Thomas Lane*