

A WORK IN PROCESS

BY FRANK MOORE, '83

part 1

A word about how I am writing this. You are reading this linearly. But I am not writing this in a linear manner. Thanks to the computer, I skip around in the framework I have created...whenever I get bogged down in one period I skip to another period. That explains the choppiness of reading this until I finish this as a book.

We need the freedom to switch back and forth between being silly and being serious...freedom to be seriously silly.

Lusty is love of living. It is the way of looking at life, living life, enjoying life...liking to look, to touch, admitting to your enjoyment, daring to do what you enjoy, daring things just because it is silly not to. This is where intellect finds its rightful place...grasping and playing with ideas but in an earthy way. Lusty automatically projects sexy. Lusty does what feels good. It breaks taboos, therefore discovers things...it risks being "bad". It is a rogue. It dares to look, to touch, to get turned-on. It looks down blouses and up dresses just to look.

Until recently I didn't know what to call what I did. I am kind of using you as an excuse to go back in my own mind and see where what I am doing now came from.

I have always been lusty...and lucky...always lucky.

In Morocco, when I was eight, I had a beggar boy friend who always came to my house with his monkey. He had it do tricks for me. I saw Arabs shitting in the empty field across the road and eating from our garbage cans. I wanted to give these people something. I was into Jesus at the time. I told Mom, who was the only one I could talk to, because I didn't have any communication device, that I would write the Bible in Arabic for these people. She had the nerve to laugh. So when she was busy in the other room, I slid out of my chair, rolled to and out of the screendoor and down the steps...I ran away from home. I made it to our gate before she got me.

My first performance piece.

Teenagers in a special class made up of all ages and mental levels...teenagers needing to protect teenage cool while being treated like kids or worse. Three of us, boys, wrestled everyday on the P.T. mat. Fun even though Merrill, the bully, always bit. One day even a pro wrestler from T.V. came to wrestle with us. We three guys had a secret club that the school let meet in the O.T. room once a week. Nobody was even allowed in the hallway where the room was when we met. We had masks, a box with a secret compartment, and a 12 year old girl to take notes. This feeling of something that is nonsense intimacy is what, at least in my work, is the undercore of performance.

In my memory, I was able to talk during that time. Obviously that ain't real. I remember riding in the car. Mom and my teacher sitting in the frontseat, me and the girl who wrote the club's notes sitting in the back. I got her to show me her budding tits. That is how I remember it. But I don't believe it because I couldn't talk. Maybe I just looked into her armhole. More of the mood of my pieces. One time our teacher took off her blouse to show us a deformity in her breastbone. I had names for each part of my body; my left hand was Mike. I lay on my bed for hours, singing along to the rock'n'roll radio, pretending I was the singer. But I couldn't sing when other people were around. Once the girl next door, who was a year older than I was, babysat me. She brought two

teenage friends with her. They turned me facing the wall and danced sexy behind my back to rock'n'roll.

I said awhile ago that I have always been lucky. My 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, toward my isolation period of five years, 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.

When my parents talked about sending me to a boarding school while they and my brother moved to Germany for three years, I broke out in hives. They got my message. I went to Germany. But the air base school would not take me. So my mother had to teach me at home. That, combined with the huge flight of stairs and the ever-lasting German rain, isolated me. And the isolation took the form of loss of vision and hearing...neither of which improved until I came out of the isolation when we moved to Redlands and I could go back to school. I will be damned if I will ever go back into isolation. The main thing that held my sanity during those years was the English broadcast of rock on Radio Luxembourg from 7pm to midnight every night.

During those five years of isolation, all I could do during the day was to read at home...all kinds of books...and listen to the women talk philosophy. Mom had one friend...Jane Petagrew...always wore skimpy hot pants and tiny tops. She was a free thinker and a radical in a time and place where that was dangerous and lonely...maybe that is why I connect sexiness and the inner qualities together. She spent hours and hours at our apartment, talking about things that most people, especially men, didn't talk about. She kept giving me books to read...books that questioned the normal morality...normal everything.

At night, my brother, who was five years younger than me, pushed me to the movies or the teen club where I watched people, kids...even played chess to make them see I wasn't a M.R....getting turned-on watching girls lift up their dresses at the sock hop with Bill Haley and the Comets. I got my brother to get me dirty magazines...and I even got our German maid to take off her blouse for me...I don't know how because I still couldn't communicate.

I was a radical in high school and college. But until the second year of college, I was still pretty much isolated. So I still read everything I could get my hands on. I was in the Grove Press book club. So along with the dirty books, I started reading French Surrealist novels and plays. I tried my hand at stream of bullshit bad poetry. Definitely not like Howl or Naked Lunch or Bob Dylan. I read about the hippies in S.F. and the "Happenings" with nude bodies in body paint, and the lightshows like they showed in Playboy. (Years later, the people who put on those happenings interviewed me.) But all I had were my fantasies. What if somebody really could do what happened in The Magus or Steppenwolf...or live like Huxley's Island! I wished I could be a hip artist living in S.F. in a commune. But there was no way. All I could do in high school was put out an underground paper with my friend, the first long haired kid in our school...and write a political column for the real school paper...getting stoned by other students with milk cartons for handing out SNCC and CORE buttons in the lunchroom.

Things started I was in a funny position. In my column I had a written debate with a guy fighting in Vietnam...basically, my position was he was dumb for being over there. This was 1966. I am sure if I wasn't in a wheelchair, I would have gotten into a shit load of trouble. All I got was a lecture from my teacher about how I was giving the handicapped a black eye...ruining things for those handicapped who would come after me. What she didn't realize was I was refusing to be a handicap representative, a handicapped writer...whatever. I started making fun of the handicapped position. I as a joke entered a painting in the school art contest. I had been playing around with oil paint for a year...mostly painting the pin-ups in Playboy. But this picture was of a gold chinese gate on a pink-purple swirling background. So it cracked me up when it won a prize for a seascape. My teacher demanded me to act appreciative. That was hard. At graduation day,

Mr. Morton, my ex-marine, cigar smoking journalism teacher, came and gloated..."Well, Frank, in a few years, I'll bet you will be as conservative as me!" I hoped he would be wrong. This is when I began to realize that I had nothing to lose. Face it. I would never have a job, never be good at anything...maybe writing...that's what everybody told me...at least, you have your writing. One problem. I didn't especially like writing. It was too isolated, so was reading. I longed to be with people.

I read L. Halprin's book about his wife, Ann...how she scored dances and other happenings. It sounded great. But I didn't think I could get people to let me direct them. I hung out with the arty-poetry-political tiny group...I wrote except for singing on my bed to the radio and imagined I was the lead singer of the band, The Blue Unicorn. Except for some anti-war demos, my next performance was trying to get the ok at U.C. at San Bernardino to produce my all-nude play on campus. To my surprise, the college said yes. But I couldn't get actors. Being at the stage where I was over-focused on sex and a virgin, I wasn't really into sex itself in my art (I didn't see it as art at the time), I just wanted to see nude bodies on stage...not sneak it in a love scene...and do things like paint their bodies with babyfood...I learned it can be hard to get people for weird things.

My next piece was running for the V.P. of the student body (the V.P. had the real power)...running on a surreal platform, I did things like drop acid and giggle while my friend read the speech I had written.

I almost won, except I dropped out of college and went to Santa Fe to be a hippie...counseled in crisis centers...grooved out...read old books on the occult and wrote poetry and underground cultural columns as The Unicorn. I lived with an older woman, Louise, a hippie son-mother relationship, who encouraged me to see my paintings as art. But I saw them as playing around. I still do.

Louise also started making me see my body as a tool. She said I could get away with things that others can't.

I may as well start talking about this now. I can stare at people, laugh at them, touch their asses on the street...because they don't think I understand. I can park myself next to them and observe them close-up without them realizing or changing. That is being so visible that it creates invisibility. I used that one when I had my mom leave me for an hour or two on a sidewalk so I could watch people.

But Louise pointed out other advantages of my body. People project onto me certain mystical powers...like seeing through their fronts to their real selves...see the past and the future...and what they should do. They are reacting to some symbol of the deformed medicine man. They use me as a medium for getting through to other dimensions. It had little to do with me at this time...because of the slowness of my communication board, they were forced to slow down. They could project whatever they wanted, misread me when it fit them. I was an object as a symbol. And because they gave me as a symbol, they were afraid of me...according to Louise. At this point, I didn't fully believe this. But I have always known I didn't want to be in a normal body.

Of course I did a lot of dope. Once I attended a peyote meeting at Taos...they dug a hole in the teepee for me to sit in. I began to see that friends who had loose sexual relationships were not that happy. I did not have the nerve or the smarts to cash in on a free love environment. I helped organize the first People's Fiesta. But I was looking for something...actually for two things...a girl and a way to work with people. A year later, I hitched to Mass. to live on a big commune, The Brotherhood of the Spirit, a cult of 350 people, for people, for a year. There I observed the dynamics of people in a community, of a guru and his followers...the pitfalls of the leader and the traps that his followers laid for him.

Life at the commune was a performance piece...people walking around saying they were King Tut in some past life, and other nonsense. For the first month, I felt like I would lose my mind because it was a reality warp where for everything I saw going on, 350 people were telling me it wasn't going on. But at a certain point, I decided to go with my reality. One day, Dale, the second in command...a big guy with long red hair....his character was a fiery indian with two big dogs. In performance, there are characters in you, who are you but in a different form. That is one difference between performance and regular acting. In acting, you take a character from the script into you and fill it with whatever of you that fits that character. But in performance, you let the characters who live in you out. So Dale was an indian even when he was a wasp.

Anyway, he whooped down on me.

"I've been watching you...how people use you...I wouldn't stand it if I was you. You could break that if you use your body and movement and gestures and intensity. But you have to stop hiding in your crip thing. Even little things like if you look over your glasses...like a bad dude...and laugh...let me see you do that. Great. That will break things wide open for you."

This planted seeds in my mind. Before this, I had not been touched erotically. Now I started to use being erotic and outrageous. I started playing with people (both men and women) erotic on my bed (rumors flew that I was gay and/or carnal).

I wanted to be with people in sexy, lusty, erotic, playful, child-like, curious, physical, exciting, turn-on, direct, open, touch, exploring, warm, petting, looking, sharing, communicating, skin, together, melting, moving, laughing, non-verbal, rolling, moving. These are the qualities of what we are writing about. When you have good sex you have these qualities coupled with sex. But you can have these qualities as a unit without coupling them with sex. I think we humans have a need for this unit.

But the important thing was I was starting to deal with how can the erotic unit in the nonsexual everyday living.

I started doing what I wanted to do, like performing in a rock band, Spirit In Flesh...dancing in my chair on stage, touring on the east coast. In the community I got in the role of Peck's bad boy who breaks the rules, even laughs at the sacred cows, all with the blessing of the leader. So I, with my two buddies, hitched everywhere...spent weeks exploring N.Y.C. and Boston without a dime. After putting down a community fad of automatic writing, I started developing three spirit characters of my own; Reed, Wandbua, and Shad. I really don't know if they are real people. But I used them for years.

But I still at this point had no sex. But then the leader made a public announcement that I needed sex. Overnight I had a few sexual experiences. It wasn't satisfying. I wanted more. I decided to stop thinking I was ugly...started thinking I was beautiful, started acting the part...and started going after what and who I wanted...who was Debbie...after six hard months, we were married.

When the commune's "spiritual" goals ran into conflict with our relationship, we left and went back to Santa Fe. There, we got involved with Silva Mind Control. Because of my three spirit characters, I started doing "readings" for people...which I see now were performances.

...We lived in a house with four others in Albuquerque. But I wanted more intimacy than these were willing to live. We met a girl who was willing to give us that nonsexual intimacy. We finally got a new house with this girl in Santa Fe. After a few months of living together, getting closer, we three admitted we were married. Soon after, we met Ray. After an on/off again relationship, he married us. I am only outlining things here because it is getting late. I was supposedly studying English at U of NM. But in reality, I was taking an intensive film making course in which I did my

first erotic film, which had things like me sucking a girl's tit turning into a baby...and me rolling down a hill with an almost nude girl. Again, it wasn't sexual that I was after.

After I finished this course...and got my B.A. in English, I had no money to make real films. So I started looking for a way to work with people. I wanted to see people nude, and touch them, and to create an intensity between us. Painting was the first attempt. I used to sell papers on a corner to find people to paint. But once the person was posed, the situation was still, not moving.

So I did what I called nonfilms...for which I asked people I met when I was selling newspapers to act out intense erotic scenes with me. These were the closest in my pieces to sexual rather than erotic. Because of these scenes, the people started talking about their lives during these sessions and said it helped their other relationships. Not one person minded that there was no film.

But I was not satisfied with these nonfilms because they were brief relationships that did not go anywhere. What I wanted to do is create intimacy – that is, a situation in which anything is permissible, where people feel that secure. I didn't want to connect this intimacy with romance or sex because that would set limits. But that "anything is permissible" did mean a wide open erotic freedom.

So I started looking for some other way to work with people. I tried to cast a play, but I couldn't find enough people. I started thinking of an intimate theatre where the line between audience and actors would be erased. I wrote a paper, The Conman Human Theatre, about if that line were erased, it would place much more responsibility on the actors. They would have to dare to trick the audience into the intense magical state.

I divided my work ... the word "work" is weird ... it is playing ... into two parts. The first part is played in "real life" ... for instance, I go up to a person on the street and ask him to be in some project which may contain some nudity and physical play. The nudity and physical play as an idea in this context is a great tool to get under the polite chatter surface to the more meaningful things, and often more intimate, more personal stuff ... which is after all the aim of the piece. I said I could see this kinds of a piece lasting anywhere from a few seconds to several hours.

The second part is a piece in a controlled space such as my studio in which there is a form going on, giving the person a reason to be there with me.

This kind of theatre ... I called it theatre because I hadn't heard of performance art ... this kind of theatre was different from normal theatre. In this kind, there is no real script. Even if you have a script, it is really a prop. The real course of action is shaped by the performer so the flow of the piece will go forward and deeper.

Of course the main reason for writing this paper was to have an excuse to work with people, so I said the people who took my workshop would learn how to do this.

I saw that the format of the performance was not the important thing ... you have to always be willing to scrap your original concept when it doesn't fit your audience and create a new one on the spot. The important thing in performance is not the "play", the "film" or "video" or whatever else I have to use to get people involved in my performances. Almost no one has ever heard of performance art ... and you can't define what is performance art to them ... especially the kind that has no passive audience and is done in the real world. So you tell them you are doing a video, for example. It is not a lie ... I will make a video to be able to tell them I am doing a video. But the video is not important to me. I must remember that.

What is important is what happens between the performer ... that's me ... and my audience, how I change them and how they change me, that magical state in which we interact with each other

... I, as the performer ... this sounds pompous, but what the hell ... I, as the performer, must create around the people, by playing for and to them, by letting the performance take me over and guide ... even when it looks like the other people are doing all of the action. The ultimate goal in my performance is to create a reality, not an illusion, of the performance which I and the person play in, even if I have to use illusions to get to this reality.

This raised, when I was writing the paper, the question of manipulation. Almost anytime you perform to an audience, you manipulate the audience. Let's get beyond the negative connotation of the word "manipulate". People go to the theatre, movies, concerts, dance companies, etc. to have their emotions manipulated. They come into the performance area with a willingness to be manipulated by the artists up to certain limits. But in my performances, the ones which are not divided from the rest of life by a theatre or a stage, there is no way to tell the person he is entering a performance. "What the hell are you talking about!?!?" And even when I have a formal structure, a theatre space, and a set time ending ... what is really going on is not what is said to be happening. Also it is a reality that is hopefully being created ... people will be affected, infected and effected by this reality. I knew this was radically different from normal theatre.

It is rooted in the primitive and mystical ceremonies of initiation which I had read about years before. The goal was to call the magic state from the people. The shamans knew how to do this ... they drew their audience into a feeling of unity. I wanted to do that. Their audience knew they were participating in real events.

I was tired of going to movies and plays which said being happy and having fun is impossible ... or at least very hard. I wanted to do a Magus or a Steppenwolf. And to pull that off, I had to trust myself, my motives, and the rightness of my performances. This is idealistic performance ... there is a strong case against this kind of performance ultimately working. But I have made my choice ... like for me, if I admit my idealist performance is doomed, I would sit in my recliner and watch I Love Lucy!

Anyways, once the self-trust was in place, the next issue was vulnerability. As the performer, I have to be vulnerable ... even in pieces where it appears I am totally in control and have complete power. Without this self-trust and vulnerability, what I am trying to do would fall flat.

That is the difference between theatre and performance art. In regular theatre, you can climb up onto to the altar of the stage (even if the stage is a rug or other defined area), and you don't have to interact with your audience, you are cut off from them. You don't relate to them directly ... which is the main goal of my performances. In theatre, what also blocks the magic that I am after is the system of rules of aesthetics.

The theatre paints pictures of "realities," both inner and outer realities. The audience just watches from the outside, watching a moving picture created by actors. The audience suspends disbelief, sits, and watches with their mind. The actors act. Everybody is comfortable and safe. Everyone has defined roles ... and when the audience left the theatre, they knew it had been just pretend. Actors just have to put on a good show.

As the audience, I am rarely satisfied in theatre ... including rock and dance ... because of this.

Of vulnerability, responsibility, and self trust

As a performer, I have to be able within myself to do anything that I feel necessary to create the magic of the performance without stopping to check my motives. This is the self-trust. This self-trust creates vulnerability.

The performer has to take responsibility for his audience. This runs from their physical well-being while they are in the performance ... to not taking them out on a limb and leaving them there. There is a moral grey area after the performance, and they go back to the normal world, and they freak out because of the conflict between the two realities. In my mind, the freak out is an opening of doors ... which is the aim of the performance. But what the person does when the doors are opened is his responsibility.

In the performance, I have to involve myself with the audience, person-to-person. I have to follow whatever feeling I have in the moment, doing whatever it takes to draw the audience deeper. This is what I mean by vulnerability. It does have a certain ruthless quality to it.

I was reading *Environmental Theatre*. I took the exercises in that book, changed the focus to intimacy, and called it the workshop which was focused on developing intimacy, using erotic and nudity. I was also starting ritualistic plays which pulled the audience into the magical state of intimacy. After drawing together by doing a 2-month drop-in workshop which was made up of performance pieces, I did a 24-hour piece. It started out at 8 am at the University of New Mexico with us stopping people on campus, inviting them to an audition at 8 pm. We did that all day. Then at 8, we did the workshop exercises with the people who came to the studio. Then at midnight, we moved everything to the University of Albuquerque and continued until 8 the next morning.

But I was still not satisfied. The workshop was a drop-in kind of a thing, which placed limits on the intimacy that could happen.

Because of the nonfilms, the group marriage, the nudity in the workshop, etc., I got a reputation in Santa Fe that made it hard to meet and work with new people. So we, with some people who had been in the workshop, moved to N.Y.C. There, I did a workshop, formally an acting workshop, with a 2-month commitment. I got people for it by sitting on 5th Avenue ... and on the side, I made a lot of money because as people passed by me, they threw money on my board. We did another ritual play, *Inter-Relations*, which was chanting, moving in slow motion, dressing and undressing a lot, etc. We did it for two nights. The same audience came for both nights.

But after the two months, the workshop people did not stay to continue the friendships, which was what I wanted, or to absorb the workshop's philosophy.

So after the kids were born, we moved. After a brief stay in San Bernardino, we moved to Berkeley ... with Bob and his ex-wife, who was in the Santa Fe workshop, joining us. I was still doing the workshop, with the same problems. It was a not so good time because the girl who I was working with left because things were not happening.

Then I met Linda. She had been a Fischer-Hoffman teacher. For something to do together, we rewrote the Fischer-Hoffman process, coupling it with the workshop. We got an office in the Baptist Church on Dwight, and put up posters for our process. We only got one guy ... a psychic teacher ... he didn't want to do the process. But he did want to get together with me each week to talk about his relationships ... and paid me for it. He started telling his students to see me. What developed was a pattern in which a person came to me weekly for relationship counseling and also took the workshop. At first this was faddish. At one point I had two workshops going at once. It gave me the freedom to develop my performing style. The workshop had the seriousness of the growth movement. There were a couple of years in which I counseled nine hours a day. This seriousness kind of buried the playful performance quality in the workshop for a while.

But the people who wanted a serious guru faded out ... leaving the people who wanted friendships and fun. The workshop got more erotic and wackier and playful ... or intense and surreal. It came back to the performance. We started doing *Inter-Relations* again at local theatres.

I also gave philosophy and psychic classes. I also gave Marx Brothers Zen, in which I used the trance as part of the performance. We started moving in with one another and forming companies with one another. We got a storefront on Haste, and a small theatre. I started going to shopping malls and Mill Valley to poll people with questions like, "If it was ok to show your breasts in public, how would you show them?" We started doing events like costume parades, free outdoor concerts, and a multimedia party called the Erotic Test. I started using eroticism and surrealism in training singers and actors. I also used this in my 48-hour processes, in which a person paid \$500-700 to create a 48-hour piece that

PART 2

We are like in a mountain climbing adventure. The mountain is the erotic unit. We are in the testing/training period. We have divided erotic from sex. In my counseling, I have found most of the so-called sexual problems are really to do with confusing erotic need with sexual need. We are moving onto focusing on purely erotic. In a way, it would greatly help in what we are doing if you focus on using erotic in your everyday life. I am risking sounding really weird now ... but I think it is very important. Erotic is like dancing, judo, acting, or singing. It is natural, but we have forgotten how to do it and how to use it. So we have to at first train ourselves in it, willingly focus on it, practice it, observe it and its effects. It sounds weird, but it will take a ruthless discipline to do it. Like for me, it is again a split vision. I never think when I go up to a person for the film ... now I am using erotic ... but in my other vision, I know I am. If you just practice eroticism as a thing like dance just when we two meet, there is a danger that it will get kinky weird. I want to ask you to start with an aware will to use eroticism in your daily life as a focus ... without telling anyone you are doing it. And observe what it does. In general it will make everything easier and more fun. Of course, this is hype, but it is also true.

Also focus on it when you are alone. It will turn you on. Feel your body, feel your humor, feel your giggling. I want to now describe the process. In the beginning, there was politeness ... safe but unsatisfying, intellectual ... but behind that was attraction curiosity, wanting to play. Then there was ... we want to play. Saying that was a risk. But it opened up pushing back limits ... which in itself is an erotic turn-on. But between that time of stating the desire of play and actually physically playing there is usually a tension. And whenever a new limit is being crossed, it seems forced, unnatural ... at the same time there is a release which leads to comfortableness. This is what stops most people from getting to the comfort. This is why there needs to be a committed discipline like studying dancing or judo to get beyond the being uncomfortable by freedom. Sexy is something that somebody projects from within. It has almost nothing to do with the body type ... what someone looks like. It is rather a nonverbal, nonvisual signal to others that you are ready and willing to get involved on some level with them. It is a nonrational quality that it is advertising. So people who do not have the quality and would not naturally project sexy can learn how to project it. The sexy signal attracts and excites and turns on people ... including yourself. But the willingness to get involved with people is what satisfies and maintains. Sexy can be, should be used in all communications. It is a signal, not what will get him his goals.

I wish I could even remember all of the pieces in the workshop and the 48-hour processes.

I have to step back for a minute. It is time to get to details of my work. That's scary for me, like attacking a huge twisting snake. Where to start. Start with Gross. That was her real name. I will probably change the name if this ever gets published because she is the kind that would sue. But her name fits her. She was a fat bundle of bad Jewish jokes wrapped with Freud. She came from Primal Scream ... with her lover Sabina in tow. Gross was a kind who would never change and never leave. So while Sabina went from someone so unsure of herself she never ever finished a sentence to a fairly strong and solid person ... Gross didn't change ... maybe got worse. She drove everyone up the wall. Finally, after years, I had an idea ... kill her! When she came in for her meeting, I asked her if she trusted me. She said yes. I had her then drink a bad tasting mixture. Then I told her in great detail how it was a slow but deadly poison that would kill her by

Saturday. She had better get a coffin built, a grave dug, and her Will written before then because she was going to die. The people she lived with got permission from their landlord, an understanding fellow, to dig a grave in their backyard. Saturday, they dressed her in black and laid her in the coffin on the front porch. People arrived wearing sexy outrageous black costumes. After looking at her in the coffin, they went inside to wail, pound their chests, and in general have a good time. When everyone had arrived, we carried her to the grave, nailed the lid closed, lowered the coffin into the grave and threw a few shovelfuls of dirt on the lid. Gross knew if she freaked out or otherwise blew it, I would leave her in for a very long time. That put teeth into the ritual. We read her Will and made speeches. Then I said I heard some new spirit in the ground. We dug her up and acted like she was a new person whom I named Grace. After having her sit in a parked car with the windows up and the engine running, to see if her paranoia had vanished, we had a junk food party. It was amazing. For several months, she acted like a new happy person.

But then something happened. Or nothing happened. It was like she was bored with happiness, so she went back into her Golem existence, into being a black hole that sucks everyone around her into a slimy suffering. The people living with her could not stand it. I could not understand it because I would always choose going forward, even forward into an unknown which appears to be filled with risks, rather than going back into something that I know I didn't like in the past. What Gross did didn't fit into my logic. But since a shock had worked before, maybe another shock would work. I had been toying around in my mind about long periods of time create an intense surreal state in which things changed radically. I was remembering the Santa Fe 24-hour play. So I asked her if she wanted a sort of an exorcism. For it I needed a special prop. I needed a wooden box, as big as a queen sized bed, 4 feet deep, with air holes and a top that locked. The box had to be strong enough to withstand many shocks and poundings. The box would hang in a metal framework ... hang in such a way that the box could swing in any direction, with a 2-inch clearance off the ground. She paid for the building of this device and agreed that I would own it after the piece. We erected it in her backyard.

The piece started around 5 pm. The first order of business was for me to get into the box and let Gross do whatever she wanted with the box. One of my rules of my pieces is never have the person do what I am not willing to do myself. This isn't as much for protection of the person as to keep me honest. When they locked the top closed, it was pleasant in the box ... sunlight and cool breeze came through the big airholes, and the smell of pine of the box was calming. Even when she started swinging the box, it was like a big swing.

But she quickly began swinging the box hard, banging the box on the metal structure, and laughing. The people kept asking me if I was alright, if I wanted to stop. I just laughed like it was fun ... in fact, it wasn't bad.

But I should have stopped the process when I got out, because if you treat the person that will have control over you for the next 48 hours ... if you treat that person violently, you are not playing with a full deck, you want to be the center of attention, even if you have to suffer. This was Gross. I should have stopped, refused to be a part of such a trick of attention-getting behavior. But for me, the 48-hour process as an idea was attractive ... and for those people who did want to be with her but were at the point of total desperation, this seemed to be the only hope.

So the process went on. She signed a paper saying she was doing it by her own will, that she could say stop at anytime without something bad happening like being kicked out of her living situation. She got into the box and it was locked. I convinced her of the premise that if she stayed in the box for the 48 hours, she would be automatically returned to Grace, the person called Grace ... automatically ... all she had to do was lie there for 48 hours ... but if she fought the process, I would make it harder and harder for her to stay in the box. I didn't think, given what kind of person Gross was, that she would do it the easy way. But I thought if we reached and created such a depth of hell, she would start fighting her way back to Grace, almost to show us

assholes. What I had not counted on is her liking hell. Somebody was always beside the box. I gave directions that every time she went toward Grace, we should make her more comfortable ... but every time she went the other way, we should make her less comfortable. She was in control. She did things that could not be interpreted any other way than as going the other way from Grace. For example, she at one point claimed it was really Sabina who caused Gross to bite Sabina on her pussy, drawing blood, when they were making love at some time in the past when Sabina asked Gross to eat her out. The point I am raising is that we appeared to be in control of Gross. But in a very real sense, she was controlling us. She liked to be the focus of attention. Don't read this as me blaming Gross. I was the one who created the situation that gave her a hidden power ... hidden by our obvious power and control over her. I was the one who put Gross in the spotlight. It took weeks and weeks after this piece ... weeks and weeks of her sitting in the center of the workshop circle with a smirk on her face as everyone busted their asses trying a way to get her back to Grace. I finally had to have her bodily picked up and removed from the workshop.

But at the box process, Gross would have had to be someone who she was not to avoid using her hidden control. So the process was doomed to fail ... in terms of Gross.

But if we remove Gross and the element of therapy ... the process of the Gross swinging box was wetting my taste. One thing was, over the 48 hours, in the house, there developed a party feeling, a brotherhood ... a slumber party between the people who were working the piece. There were about 7 people with me. There were two-hour rotating shifts of people being outside with Gross, swinging the box, talking to Gross, in general being in control of the piece. Whenever the person thought I should be out there, I went out. But inside of the house, we talked about what Gross was going through, what we should do next with her. We played cards, music playing ... we ate snacks ... these things don't sound like much on paper ... but coupled with not sleeping except for short catnaps ... with focusing on the woman in the box ... would she make it? All of these things created a special feeling ... that was maybe the real piece.

The box process was designed so that if Gross went away from Grace, it would get gross. We are talking primeval, get down, get funky, no bars, no limits, get back to nature. There was no God, no law, no civilization to save Gross from our grossness. There was one point, where the whole world was cold black, flood lamp fire, pissing demons, pissing into the airholes of the box, foul-mouthed witches pouring dish soap and mashed potatoes into the box. This was something intense and magical that I wished I could focus on without the excuse of getting Gross to Grace.

Gross was not harmed or brainwashed by the process ... just gave her an excuse to spread nasty stories about me. I don't feel anything about the process in terms of Gross. But the fallout was on the people who helped me in the process. Years later, they looked back in doubt at what they did. And that doubt turned into the acid of guilt.

Performance is dangerous. There are risks involved. It is like taking a strong drug. I think the risks and dangers are worth taking. But doubts and guilt after the fact are pointless. They invite mental disaster. As long as you are in the piece, you are responsible, there is no point in second guessing yourself. But it does make me sad seeing people who did what they thought right at the time, beat themselves for it later.

Looking back, there was a style and a form of performance developing. My role in the form was the director. There were the helpers. In the New Mexico and New York City days, the helpers were the cast. In the counseling, the helpers were Linda or Nina who read my board and in general actively aided in the movement of the session. In the 48-hour processes, the helpers were divided into known staff and unknown actors ... this is also true of the pieces I do now. I have an intimacy and a trust with the helpers. The third element or role of my performances is that of the focus person. In the ritual play, the focus is the audience, the people who came to the play. In the first box piece, Gross was the focus. The focus is always what controls the piece ... in

the way we saw Gross controlling the box situation. The format of the piece is that the focus is to follow the director's instructions and the directions of the helpers in their role of arms and feet of the director. But the director is totally controlled by the focus person ... I have to base everything I do around him, around his personality ... I can do this because I have the brotherhood and trust with the helpers. Why am I saying this at this point in the book?

From there we tried somewhat more formal productions. After intense rehearsals in which the actors were forced to become the character they were playing, we changed the theatre into a strip joint for Glamour. Then we destroyed a traditional play by doing it in our style.

Today I was sitting in a café ... a coffee house ... I spend hours sitting in coffeehouses, playing cards ... anyway, this older political-type woman leaned over from the next table and asked if I had been involved in an East Bay theatre group about six years ago. She had seen something that I had forgotten doing. After Meb, I started directing Lysistrata. I had always wanted to do it because it is lewd and bawdy ... I even rewrote it to get back to the original dirt. I cast it with a mix of workshop people and new people. I also had Barry and Peter who are in wheelchairs play regular, normal, traditional characters. We did it in the same over-the-edge style as Meb. One night, I decided we needed an audience, so I took us to the Berkeley UA movie theatre which has a great outside foyer. There were long lines for four movies. There we rehearsed. As the woman in the café six years later described it, these people were talking funny, in Greek style obscene ... pretty girls humping guys in wheelchairs right there next to the lines. This was at the height of the disabled human rights movement ... we crips had sat in the S.F. Fed building for a month, blocked buses, picketed Jane Fonda's movie, Coming Home ... this woman was aware of all of this ... then she comes to a movie (she can't remember what it was) and she sees women and crips doing strange obscene things. She said for her, the piece made the disabled more human and added humor to it.

I don't think you have to worry about making a comment about the social, political, or whatever condition. I don't think you can help making a comment. It is automatic. What you do is always colliding with what is going on.

What impressed me about the woman in the coffeehouse is she remembered 5 minutes of obscene silliness after six years. I didn't remember it.

Then the OBR. You can see the scrapbook. It was a great format to always do new pieces.

There is a film in France today in which we re-enacted some of our pieces, including when we buried someone alive. For that film, the director hired a couple to act as people who were taking the process. He had a coffin built and gave money to buy the ingredients for my body mixture. We filmed the burial and the rebirth of the guy in Tilden Park, ducking cops because it was illegal to dig a hole on government property. It is hard to duck cops when you are filming a parade of brightly, but sexy dressed people carrying a coffin, making a lot of noise. But we did it. We also filmed me covering the girl's nude body with a trashcan of my bubblegum color mixture ... covering myself as well ... chilly dusk ...

Since the OBR ended, and I have done my Fairytales Can Come True, I have been trying to get back to pieces that have no passive audience.

1. Approach. I go up to a person. He reads the sign on my board. Here is the sign:

I am looking for people for my film.

I would like to shoot you for my film that I am doing for my masters in performance/video at the San Francisco Art Institute. I am asking people who I find attractive ... although maybe not in Hollywood's concept of attractiveness, beauty, sexiness. Then I and my wife, Linda, shoot these people almost like in paintings in different poses, different clothes, sometimes nude (when the person feels comfortable with that), focusing on different parts of the body as abstract forms. Then I will edit these pieces into a series of collage shorts which will be funny, but also hopefully expand the concept of beauty. One of these shorts will show people just playing and having fun; another will show the different types of bodies; a third will poke fun at the pin-up concept of beauty.

I have been dealing with this same subject in my oil paintings and plays ... and especially in my rock comedy, *The Outrageous Beauty Revue*, which ran for four years in S.F., and in my film, *Fairytales Can Come True*, which will be used in Special Education classes.

I have been shooting all kinds of people, from little babies to old people. It is fun.

If you will pose, write down your name and phone number for me, and Linda will call you to set up a time for us to get together. It usually takes two sessions. The first time, which usually takes between 1-2 hours, we will just play around and talk about ideas for us to film, costumes and poses ... and in general, have fun. Then the second session, which is usually between 1 and 3 hours, we will video you.

Frank Moore

Hopefully he writes his name and phone number down. I ask what he does. I leave.

I have been doing this approaching for over ten years. Before I had my motorchair, I sat on a streetcorner and people who stopped to talk were generally the kind of person I wanted ... a natural screening process. The motorchair places me in a more active role. To do this approaching in my motorchair, I need a special setting in which a large number of people are sitting, relaxing ... and also a somewhat quick turnover rate. A café is good. U.C. Berkeley Sproul Plaza is my people supermarket. What is happening socially-politically-economically effects the approach. At times it is hard to get men, at other times it is hard to get women. In the late 70s, when the women's movement was going through its radical phase, it was almost impossible to involve a woman in this approach.

Now something different is going on ... I go onto U.C. ... and almost everybody is dressed conservative ... which in the past meant no way, don't bother asking ...but with everybody dressed like that, it forced me to ask people whom I would not have asked. And to my surprise, there is a new eagerness to be outrageous.

2. I get together with the person to talk about ideas for what to do in the private piece. In one way this is true. I get ideas from the person for what to shoot (he usually doesn't have any.) And I tell him what others have done which I will want him to do. I also slip in how the people loosened up and did amazing things. This is really more to the point of this meeting ... because I really don't know what will happen in the private piece (one thing I learned in this class is what what I do is called). I am more concerned in this meeting in setting the mood and trust. I give him the framework of the video piece ... now we are getting to the more formal work. This framework of what I ask the person to do keeps changing depending on what the previous people have done. If someone takes a bath, I ask people after to take a bath ... to have something to edit with. The framework gives the person something to hold onto. It is also a scale ... of increasing

risk/erotic/whatever. When and if we reached on the scale the persons' threshold of where he thinks no way can he do it ... I tell him he can do whatever he feels comfortable doing, and it will be great. This reduces the pressure and fear in him, putting the control in him. But I also tell him that even straight people have come in very uptight to be shot, and within minutes have done very outrageous erotic things ... things I would not ask them to do. By telling him these things, I put the seeds in his brain the suggestion that he can do the same kind of thing in the safe, playful, sexy but nonsleazy space of the private piece.

3. The private piece is perhaps the most vital part of the process for me. It is unpredictable. Anything can happen. A person who looks like he is an exhibitionist may clam up, and the Suzy cream cheese may let her hair down and amaze us. At the time of the private piece the video is just a prop. What is really going on is the person changes before our eyes, or the mood gets sillier and sillier, or it gets tense and intense. The framework ... miniskirt, costumes, shower, exercises, pin-up poses, erotic play. I use the framework to get the action going and keep it going. I keep my direction to the minimum. My laughing is my best direction.

4. The document video of the individual private piece then becomes a thing in itself. Some of these ... why I am writing.

5. Video made up of images from the library of the document. Doing about 2 people a day, 5 days a week, is creating a big library.

I am starting to move away from video back to live, small, and intense performances in my studio. I have found that video as an end product lacks the direct intimate magic that I do art for. Anyway, if I am showing you this part of my book, I am probably asking you to be a focus person in one of my performances. These performances are usually done in my studio and last from 3 to 12 hours or longer ... the longer, the better. What you as the focus person would do is let me guide and direct you during the agreed upon time period. I promise you will like the performance ... although you may find some parts hard and perhaps strange. I always keep my promise.

The following letters should give you more of an idea of what I want to do with you. Linda Burnham was one of my teachers in performance at the S.F. Art Institute and is the publisher of the magazine, High Performance. She agreed to be the focus of a piece. Rob, a fellow art student, agreed to be my helper.

This first letter was handed out before the day of the piece.

A LETTER TO LINDA BURNHAM AND ROB

This is one of the ways I am trying to make the piece that I am doing with you on Friday, March 4, 1983 somewhere in Berkeley starting at 2 pm. Of course this letter was written after this piece and after that date. Anyone who reads this letter after this date will never know if this was written before or after this date ... will never know for sure if this piece ever happened. In that piece, we agreed that we could tell anyone anything about the piece ... but we must add that we may be lying ... even when we aren't. So you can show this to anyone anytime. But give the address of the piece only to those who you want to be intimate with. Don't knock on the front door. Walk back on the driveway. Never walk on the grass. Except when you are with me.

I am excited about the piece ... because it is the first time I am doing this kind of a piece with someone who I just met ... you know what I mean ... but doesn't come into the piece with any limits or goals ... who understands the powerful magic that is released through these pieces ... magic of eroticism and tacky grossness and play and unromantic love ... magic that shoots out

from the ritual space and affects and effects the outside world before, during and after the piece. I am talking about you, Linda. And you wouldn't get bored if all the piece was, was us three playing cards for 3 to 12 hours. No matter how many came ...no matter who came ... no matter if Paul McCarthy came (he should have cleaned up that mess!) ... no matter if Barbara Smith came (her eating sex was great!) ... I hate the name-dropping in the art world ... Anyway, as I was saying, the piece will be between you and me, Linda.

You project the female sexiness with the energy vigor of a male in a male world ... and I am seen like an uppity woman who will not stay in her place ... I have started noticing I have more in common with women artists than men. This is an over-simplification. But it gets the feeling across. We two threaten some people's sexuality by just who we are. The piece will play or did play with this fact. Is there a piece?

Linda, I have been thinking about this, preparing for this since we set this up. Thinking about the piece. I have no idea what will happen. Although I am the director of the piece and it will be important for you to follow my directions, I promise you will like the piece. This put your liking the piece into the controlling factor in the piece. I always keep my promises. Also, the piece will last at least for four hours. After four hours, you have the power to end the piece. But you will have to give me an hour warning before the piece ends.

Using words, people, ideas, arousal, erotic excitement, images, messy fun play to fight the plot which has been brewing ever since the Roman days. For women, the plot has gone on longer except for whores and sex priestesses ... ever since the cave days when she lost her equality. The plot of ... of what ... of romance, of thinking you can't do something because you have no talent or no money ... the plot of not trusting, not trusting yourself and not trusting others ... the media, politicians, churches have been pushing it. You are not good enough. He is not good enough for you. Buy Topol because smoking is a sexy front to hide your unworthiness, but yellow teeth and bad breath give it away. This is about trust. It will get pretty gross, fun, intense, boring, sexy, turned on, everyday ... do you trust yourself? Do you trust me ... I am a dirty old man who wants to get your clothes off, roll around with you naked ... and other disgusting but fun things like making the whole universe disappear by playing cards. But trust is where the magic comes from ... so will you revolt by trusting?

There will be an hour warning, given by you before the piece ends. Just you and I are needed to create the magic that will slow the dragon. But others can add power to this magic. I am the director, I like to direct, I like women, I like to be turned on, I like to scream and be a spoiled bastard ... I hope I have not forgotten any bad things ... all the rumors about me are true ... if all of these things are ok, stay. If not, go. If they become not ok during the piece, leave. But don't interrupt or interfere with the piece. I may be lying. I am saying these things to save time. Time is a vital element of this magic. The longer the time that we are in the piece, the greater the magic. Don't tell anyone about anything that went on in this piece, except if you add that you may be lying.

I will use bits and pieces which I will channel, not knowing why, not knowing how an individual bit fits into the whole. So I can not explain them. In some of these bits I will use some of you, using who you are, sometimes sending you to places outside of the cave of the studio. Some bits only you and I can do alone. Nobody will see all of the parts. But in the end, there will be a whole. I will not use violence to create this magic. You will not be hurt.

We are putting an arrow in the dragon; we are tripping up the plot which has been trapping us for so long. One obvious way is the piece will change us who are involved, changing our lives and relationships ... and that change, no matter how small, will cause a chain reaction in the outside world.

But there is another way that what we will do here will effect and affect the outside world. Science has just come up with a theory which explains why one group of a species in another part of the world, with no physical or material contact with the first group, pick up the change. In the past, it would have been called magical. But what some scientists are now saying is that in DNA there is what amounts to a broadcasting unit which both sends out and receives data to and from every member of that certain life form ... and perhaps to other life forms and maybe even to unliving material as well. It also has been long known that the observer effects what he observes.

The core of this piece is you and I will set a power erotic wave with each other which will be transmitted on the DNA network. It does not matter if you believe this. But the bits ... or rather one of the bits ... which I will have people other than you and I do, will create an open channel for our broadcast. So what the other people do in the piece is very important. Now I am talking to every else except you. If you feel threatened and want to leave, do so. Don't argue, or judge. Don't try to protect other people in the piece. If you do leave, I am counting on you to honor your commitment to not tell anyone anything about this piece without stating that you may be lying.

Back to the plot which we are fighting against today. If we had freedom to touch each other erotically without limits, without romance, they could not control us, they could not have power over us. They know this. If we know we can do anything we want ... that we don't have to wait for enough money before doing what we want ... that it ain't true that we have to have talent to do things that we do ... then their power over us would vanish. That is why they make commercials promoting ideals and images that you can not fit unless you use their product. "It's so easy to get their attention ... it's so easy to lose it ... use Head and Shoulders." That is why they keep changing fashions. That is why they say wait for Mr. Right. That is why they say art takes talent and skill ... which most people don't have, and say those who are blessed with it must refine it before using it ... why they say films must have a certain technical quality before people will see them ... why they say don't touch your cock in public, don't stare, don't ask, don't need, don't rub. The people who are on the top and the people who have accepted that they cannot do what they want, have ganged up to preserve this plot of snobs, experts, and morality. It is easy to see why those who are in power want to keep the plot going. But why the schmucks who spend their whole lives not doing what they want, thinking they aren't good enough ... why do they want the plot to keep going? Imagine someone like this seeing someone who ... like me ... is not as smart, skilled, good-looking as they are ... so dumb that he don't know that the plot of everything is hard ... stumbling through life doing what he wants, making movies and art ... playing with sexy girls ... all easy. They want to kill him because he, as a symbol, says they could have done what they wanted all along. A fact:

Hitler promoted pornography to promote jacking-off to discourage erotic contact between people to promote isolation to promote his control to promote violence.

A Statement:

Yin and Yang are not connected to what physical sex you are, but to what mixture of energies you are.

A Statement:

This paper is the only explanation you get of this piece. I am getting old. Talking hurts my neck. Any other explanation may be a lie.

A History:

Before the cave, men and women were equal. Men and women were equally good at hunting when that was the name of the game ... except for the very short period of childbirth. There were no mates in this period. It was catch as catch can. Catch from the back. Impersonal sex. Because of the backdoor position, the human female, like in the cave, men figured out that they were a part of making babies. This was the start of marriage ... an ownership of women as machines to make your own sons. And you had to make sure your sons were really yours. Thus Jewish morality.

When the division of labor occurred ... men took hunting and herding, leaving child manufacturing and farming to women. When you are herding, you have time to think, imagine, discover. This sealed women to lower worth.

In Greek society, there was a sexual freedom and a lusty life, except in marriage, which was a son-factory. Whores and the sex priestesses, if they were high class, were smart, sexy, powerful. If you want fun and love go to your lover or a whore ... if you want a son, fuck your wife.

Rome perverted the Greek healthy outlook on life. The Roman women had only clothes and fashion to invest their energies into.

The Christian Church was a reaction to this perversion. To them, women were evil. I am talking not about Jesus, but the men who came after him. To them, sex was evil and woman was Eve. If they could have figured out how to make babies without sex, they would have banned sex totally. Instead they banned sexual pleasure ... they banned eroticism. This is the beginning of the Dark Ages. At the end of the Dark Ages, things got so perverted, the Church was running whorehouses to protect decent women and kids from men's sexual desires.

Then the Crusades came to remove the macho type men from Europe. This left the running the castle's affairs to women.

The Arabs had developed the harem system. They rounded up the most desirable women and put them in the King's harem. The only men to see these women were the King and his Eunuchs. The Arab poets started writing romantic love poems about these Ivory Tower women. The poets projected high virtues on these unattainable women. Romance is thus historically based in not seeing the person.

This romance slipped into Europe, along with Mother Mary as a symbol of woman ... putting women out of reach ... imprisoning them in virtue as Eve had condemned them to guilt. But romance had to change ... one reason was because in Europe, women were not isolated into harems. Also, the church also had a perverted influence on this perversion. What developed was a game of going after the unattainable virtuous – usually married – women. It was sexual in that everything was leading to sex. But if you had sex with your ideal woman, it proved she was not worthy of your romantic love. This was a padded trap for women. At first, the women did not buy into the virtue woman symbol. Romance was a fun and exciting game. But as time went on, they started believing they were better than men morally, that they did not like sex ... dirty, disgusting sex ... that they are too clean to get involved in worldly matters. In a big way, the women's movement has not yet shaken this off yet. From the Tempterion movement (forgive my spelling) to any erotic stand of the feminists, this false morality traps them.

Men have fared better. Romance has created a male symbol as a beast raping virtue. The kinky cult of fucking virgins came out of this romance in the late 19th century, as did S&M as a fashion. Violent porn and the kinky cult of kid sex came out of it in the 20th century.

We are back to the present.

Premises:

Pleasure, arousal, excitement are good in themselves.

Curiosity is good.

Religious-political-business-establishment is keeping its power over us by promoting romance through the mass media.

There is no Mr. or Miss or Mrs. Right.

We can fight the plot through magic.

This letter was written after the piece. About the piece. In my mind, my talk with Paul McCarthy was a part of the piece, even when it happened a day later. Control, reputation, family buffer, release. All issues. I like Linda, Rob, Paige. So in a way, the piece was thus insured ... I like Paul. The issue of control first came up. Control was regained by surrendering. Those who were there will understand. Those who were not there may get the feeling. But what was really controlling the piece was where Linda was at in her life on that day. I had to let go of plans, magic, erotic ... The piece was very verbal for two not talking. Erotic was there in the background, like the motor. I can't do away with erotic in my work. It is like Paul's need to be messy. When erotic is even there as a possibility, it makes things happen, creates a tension, a powerdrive. Off. I like to see people's bodies, playing, touching. The more up front in the performance the more intense the magic. For these reasons, I can not see me dropping eroticism from my performance. I do not fully understand how the magic works. It never quite felt like the magic kicked in. But Linda said that after the piece she had a great release of pressure off of her. I don't understand it, but I accept it as the result of the piece, of the magic. Seeing results, seeing the effects of the magic, is one of the things that keeps me going, not burning out ... even if I don't understand the link. This is one of the things that burns people out ... not seeing the effects of what they do. This was one of the things I talked to Paul about because it was one of the things that broke my group ... they did not see the effects of the performance. You should too, Linda ... I wanted to tell you, but 3 hours was not enough time. But the magic took care of that. You looked great a day after. Holding hands, crying, talking about fairies, copping feels did some good. And what Paige and Rob did on their walk did much to put forth that magic ... although I can not say how in words, even in my mind. But I can say the magic was only beginning.

Rob pointed out in a great talk, that he and I have a base outside of the art world ... our marriages and friends, which allows us to go out on the limb in our art. I think Paul falls into this too.

It was interesting talking to Paul ... he said he got seduced by the crowd ... trying to take them with him as far as he could ... which is good ... but he didn't go as far as he wanted to ... which is

bad ... but what is worst is he did not even take them as far as they would go. I figure if a bad reputation is intense and active, it means you are doing at least something right.

I asked Paul if you have a big name in the art world, does that make it easier to get people to come to weird things our kind do. He said yes and no. Half of the art people will come because of your name; but the other half will never accept what you do.

Linda, thank you for what you are and for what you are doing.

Frank

Robert Birle

Review of Frank Moore Work

Frank asked me to come to his performance piece in Berkeley, and being familiar with his work, I knew that this was the beginning of the work. This is the first thing about Frank's work that I like and find interesting. That is that it does not allow for passive viewing, even if I choose not to go or not to participate, I have to interact with the work. I have to ask myself why I would refuse to go and not participate and this decision then puts me into a face-to-face interaction with Frank. Its not that saying no is so terribly hard, but that answer has to be conveyed to Frank one-to-one, and there is more of an emotional involvement in that than there is sitting anonymously in an audience or deciding not to go to a performance without having to face the artist. This aspect of the work I find interesting because it makes the audience or participant (or non-participant) an active element in the work no matter what he chooses to do.

I thought a lot about what might happen, what Frank had in mind, and I did a lot of thinking about my motives, my enthusiasms or hesitations. This process of thinking about what was going to happen told me two things. The first was the importance of hype. What I mean by that is, the participants involvement with the piece is influenced a great deal by factors preceding it, like rumors and information about previous work, or information hinting at possibilities for this piece (will Rachel Rosenthal or Paul McCarthy be there). This also says to me that the limits or frames of the performance are not defined by "Be there 15 minutes early," or "It will last as long as Linda Burnham says it will", but that the work is part of a continuum and is dependent on this body of work for some of its power. What I have just said is true of most work in some degree but I feel that in Frank's work it becomes much clearer. Frank asking me to read his life history at the beginning of the piece was very appropriate in my opinion in establishing the nature of the continuum.

Since hype and expectation are so important to the involvement of the audience and their appreciation of the work, there must be something extremely rewarding or gratifying that the audience gets in return for their participation. In other words, the work needs a big carrot. Quite honestly the trade off in the work, the return for the involvement, which was supposedly the destruction of one's inhibitions, is not enough, considering the situation Frank asks his audience to put themselves to elicit much enthusiasm.

On to the core of the piece, I showed up at 1:45 as asked, and was prepared to help Frank, with my understanding being that this was done as a participant. No one else was there except Frank and Linda when I arrived. I found the atmosphere to be fitting. We were all in a garage in Frank's

backyard which had been turned into a studio of sorts. There was a bed in the corner, a heater, a monitor and tapes, chairs – I couldn't help thinking about kids playhouses and all the fooling around in secret places like this I used to do as a kid.

After Linda Burnham came I felt as if the main axis of energy was between Frank and her. I felt very much like just another fixture which was fine with me, I kind of enjoyed being safely invisible.

Then the woman came, I can't remember her name, she was the person that Frank supposedly dragged off the street during the Graduate seminar. He sent her off to UC Berkeley to recruit people (specifically women) to be in his "film", with me going purely as an observer. She did ask a few women if they would be interested in being in the film with Frank, but mostly we talked about Frank, his work and how she and Frank met. We also talked about this performance and we both agreed that we felt very much connected to the work even though we were blocks away from Frank and his "clubhouse". I think that if Frank had said go on and live your life as part of this piece, I would have accepted that in some way. This reminds me of Ives Klein signing people and making them sculpture. For this alone, I felt the piece was somewhat successful. The work continually asked for evaluation and made repeated references back to itself and to art in general.

The piece ended after three or four hours when the energy between Linda Burnham and Frank had run its course. Another person came near the end but I felt that he did little more than speed Linda's departure. Frank and I talked about the piece and what had happened and then I left for points east.

I think that Frank's work in general is very fragile and is dependent on many different elements which if they are all brought together create a very special kind of experience and a very powerful kind of artwork.

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The Day I Met A Living Sculpture

Sunday was bright and beautiful in Berkeley. A week before Easter the flowers were just beginning to bud. Tricia and I decided to go to the U.C. Museum to see some art work. Tricia is an art student and her enthusiasm carried me through the upper floors. We saw Chinese ink drawings and remarked on their serenity, yet in the background we heard a mechanical voice nudging us back to modern times. I told Tricia it must be a work of art that talks. We walked on through Flemish painters and a Toulouse Latrec imitator, but still heard that mechanical voice in the background. I said that they must have really gotten their quarters worth. As we walked back to the first floor, we came into a room of surrealist modernism. In the farthest corner, between two blobs of canvas, sat a living sculpture that talked to people as they walked by. I laughed when I saw him dressed in harlequin tights, and a red construction helmet. My curiosity moved me to talk to him. His computerized talk-box told me his name was Frank Moore and asked me and Tricia to read the notice taped to the front. I read in amazement at his accomplishments and he asked if Tricia and I would like to appear in his new movie. We anxiously said yes and gave our phone number. As we walked out into the busy spring day Tricia and I both remarked on how like a piece of art Frank was. We both looked forward to hearing from him.

On Frank Moore's "Sculpture – A Live Performance"

by Jeanne Brick

I have been to the Berkeley Museum a couple of times and quite frankly it was enough for me. I find myself quickly bored by looking at most art exhibits - I do get turned on by art but most often I get bored quickly unless it's something I'm going to see specifically or have already developed a taste for.

But this Saturday morning was different because the museum was having its annual T-shirt sale - which I missed and had known about last year. I like the idea of going to the museum and a T-shirt sale sounded interesting - if not for the T-shirts, then for the fun of watching the people buying them. Besides, I was at the Café Roma and done with my coffee. Also, it was free admission.

One thing that does sustain my interest for awhile in the Berkeley Museum is the architecture-concrete ramps jutting out in a circular pattern.

I had been hanging out watching the T-shirt buyers on the lower level for a few minutes when I noticed there was an electronic computerized voice wafting in from above. It took a few seconds for me to have the recognition that it was Frank - having been introduced to his computer talk board just the day before. So that's when my museum excitement began! I ran up towards the sounds and found Frank sitting between two other art pieces - only they were on the wall. There he was beeping out some messages and it was just obvious that he was a human art piece - with which people could actively participate. It just made complete sense, for reasons my mind

couldn't quite articulate at that moment, that Frank was the art and the artist performing by interacting. The effect it had on me - was fascinating, mind boggling, completely natural, fun and exciting. In fact, the only other museum experience that I can compare it to in terms of engagingly interesting was when I was seven years old my parents took me to the museum to see the Faberge Easter egg collection. My child in me delighted! And so too with Frank.

Well, I stood and watched Frank through several pieces as he received museum browsers into his performing act. I even recall hearing one small boy wanting to see the "mechanical man".

At one point a woman carrying a balloon approached Frank with her two children. There was something very vulnerable, very human, very moving as I watched. It was like watching the metamorphose of interaction - like the way a dog sniffs things out, or someone tests to see if the ice will hold if I take another step - the thing with Frank is that the ice always holds.

In this woman I could see kindness, curiosity, politeness turning into strong interest, fascination, laughing and openness as she kept taking one more step out on the ice. I watched her discover fun and then enjoy playing. I think I was having as much fun watching as she had being there.

A year later, I was back in New Mexico, attending the University of New Mexico, from which I received a B.A. in English. I started painting bright oil paintings for children ... pictures of animals, storybook characters, etc. I also began to paint nudes using live models. I took an intensive four-month, 60-hour a week film course at The Moving Images Laboratory in Santa Fe. The course, taught by Carroll Williams, covered all areas of film production. After I finished this course, I started doing performance pieces which I called Non-films (because I had no money to do real films). After these pieces, I directed the people in the workshop in a 24-hour original piece called Audition both at the University of New Mexico and at the University of Albuquerque.

In 1974, I, with my wife, Debbie, and a few people who were in the Santa Fe workshop, moved to New York City. There I formed another workshop which performed a 4-hour ritual play which I called Inter-Relations ... of course, off-off Broadway. In New York, my painting centered on comics' superheroes and monsters ... with a few pictures for children and a few live nudes.

Nine months later, and after an unsuccessful attempt at getting a class based on the workshop started at Redlands University, we moved to Berkeley where we have stayed since. I received a M.A. in psychology from the University Without Walls in Berkeley. I started counseling people on relationship issues.

I also started The Theater Of Human Melting, which was based on my workshop and which grew over the years to 30 members. I directed the group in Inter-Relations ... performing it at our storefront on Haste Street in Berkeley, at Ashkenaz, and at the Cat's Paw Palace for the First Annual East Bay Theatre Festival. I organized two costume parades through Berkeley, ending up with free rock concerts in the park. In the storefront, I directed my play, Glamour, about strippers. At The Farm in San Francisco, I produced a multi-media event, the Erotic Test. In the middle of this period, I started doing a series of private 48-hour performance pieces called The Process.

This period was also the time when I started showing my paintings in local galleries and cafes. I have had shows in Moishe's, Café Vin, The Creative Growth Gallery in Oakland, Espresso Roma, the United Cerebral Palsy Office in San Francisco, The Blind Lemon, Au Coquelet, and Edible Complex. I started selling my paintings and getting commissioned to do paintings. I continued to do nudes and superheroes.

Five years ago I started directing works at the Mabuhay Gardens, a nightclub in San Francisco. The first play I directed there was Meb, a comedy by Rick Foster. My next production was The Outrageous Beauty Revue. It quickly became a rock comedy revue, which played at the Mabuhay Gardens new each week for four years. It received International Press coverage. I also took the show to other clubs and local college campuses.

I have appeared on T.V. shows such as Videowest and films including a European feature film about America. The last two years, I have been working on films. Last summer, I wrote, co-directed, co-produced, co-edited, and acted in a small film, Fairytales Can

Come True. It is for young adults with physical disability and is distributed by the Multi-Media Center in San Francisco.

For awhile I managed the Berkeley nightclub, The Blind Lemon. I recently received my MFA in performance/video from the San Francisco Art Institute. While I was a student at the S.F. Art Institute, I did two 12 hour pieces and The Outrageous Beauty Revue. I was also in the rock band, The Superheroes, which came from the Revue. I am also writing a book on Pop Culture.