

# about play

(playing)

BY FRANK MOORE

FROM MY BOOK *CHEROTIC MAGIC*



Frank Moore began doing private, erotic performances in the early 70's, which have developed into long ritualistic pieces, public events, experimental theater, and tacky and outrageous cabaret, as seen in the film "Mondo New York". Moore creates books, videos, and musical recordings as well. He has taught at U.C. Berkeley and is an N.E.A. Fellowship recipient.

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Enjoying playing unlocked every possibility.

Schechner defines performance as “ritualized behavior conditioned (and) permeated by play.”

We will get technical in this. But we should always remember that at the root, the student comes to the teacher, the audience comes to the performance, the person comes to the bodyplay to be deeply and intimately with a flesh and blood person or a group of flesh and blood people in a way that is usually denied to her in normal polite social life. She comes for touching, holding, rocking, playing, having fun, and healing. This has been usually forgotten under rigid serious rituals, techniques and theories. Again, western medicine is a prime example of this forgetting. But even spiritual methods of healing in our culture have put the rituals and techniques over the playing and fun.

This is why, before we get into the techniques of chero bodyplay, we have to be clear about what we are doing. By doing the apprenticeship, by doing performances, by doing bodyplay, we are calling forth the liminal state of controlled folly. Controlled folly is liminal because it is a combination of the awake reality and dream reality. Rituals make this combination possible.

In the state of controlled folly, the activities of playing and creating fun are intensified and expanded, because rituals take the place of the normal rules, taboos, fears, and inhibitions. This makes it possible to go into the unknown where anything is possible. Ritual is what makes this magical playing safe by giving the playing a living, breathing structure. Playing is only possible within a structure. But when ritual becomes important in itself, rigid and serious, it starts limiting and killing the play and fun. So it is important to remember that the ritual is just the channel of the play and fun.

Playing is a primal state in which things are drained temporarily of their normal meanings. Life goals for a time fade in importance in this state. Tensions and stresses of normal life are safely transmuted into creativity. In play, newness appears. This newness is translated into inspiration, into new ideas, new ways of doing things. The young, both in the higher animals and humans, learn the most through the state of play. Both man and the higher animals use play to transform violent energy into safe acting out. The human mind and civilization were evolved by playing.

In bodyplay, chero is aroused by playing with the body. Fun is created and released by this play into the world directly. Fun is energy focused upon itself, rather than upon some goal. The fun we are talking about in this work is a deep, intense fun that corrects imbalances and induces newness. This kind of fun comes from risk taking and work. This deep fun feels very different from the surface, light, fast fun of the world of politeness, glamour, romance, and social rules.

Through bodyplay, erour is slowly reached by calling forth chero in all parts of the body by eroplaying. This is true not only in the “receiver,” but also in the “healer.” Moreover, through the energy released through these magical sessions, a collective social erour is gradually created for the general world. This is the ultimate reason for this work. The chero released as focused fun “writes” upon the place in which this magical play is performed. It transforms the place into a magical site. The more play is done in a place, the more chero is stored in the physical site. The more chero that is contained in a physical site, the easier it is to perform more intense play.

Cherotic bodyplay releases, frees, creates new possibilities. This is true for the people who are actually directly playing together. But this is also true for the society, the people, the world, the outer reality surrounding the eroplaying people. This makes bodyplay not just an individual problem solving therapy. Instead, it is a playful but powerful ritual that has effects on many different levels. There is a danger in focusing too much on what it will do for the individual, how it will affect his life, what does it mean in terms of his life, how it will help him. This kind of focus can turn bodyplay into encouraging individualism which keeps the person in the prison of fragmentation.

To be successful, bodyplay has to be intensely personal between the playing people, but should not be individualistic. It should not push the people inward onto their “selves.” Bodyplay should expand them outward into others.

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