

## Finally, a Real Candidate for President

### Frank Moore

*Frank Moore signs off on his emails with the phrase "In Freedom." Coming from another artist the gesture might be interpreted as ironic commentary on the American government's abuse of the word since 2001; coming from Moore, it's completely sincere. Freedom and the power of free speech has become the signpost of his work from the 1960s to today. Best known for his performance art (he faced Jesse Helms' ire in the early '90s as part of the culture wars debates), Moore's work truly spans disciplines. Born with cerebral palsy and unable to walk or talk, his career's work has been to burst through the barriers of social isolation that separate people.*

*Given these qualities, it wasn't so shocking when Moore declared himself a 2008 presidential candidate. Moore's campaign slogan is "Finally A Real Candidate For President!" For this essay, NYFA Current offered the Bay Area-based Moore a platform for an early campaign address.*



Frank Moore (left) and friend

I have been running for president for about a year now. I started running basically because none of the prominent candidates are talking honestly and directly about the state of things, are committed to fundamental change, and have a clear plan to create a humane, sustainable, and just plain enjoyable society. So I took on that role. When everyday people in the "real world" hear about my candidacy, they become extremely excited. They don't see a performance artist in a wheelchair. They don't check the odds of my winning. Instead they see someone who they could excitedly vote for... somebody who shares their dreams, who talks deeply about what really affects their lives. And *then* they read [my platform](#). Then they got more excited at how possible it is to bring our dreams for our society into reality... to remove fear and isolation; to get the boot of big corporations off our neck; to provide everyone health care, life-long education, a minimum income, and a livable wage; to restore our rights and freedoms; and to bring our troops home now! We everyday people know the real state of the union! But more importantly, we have the sense of what is possible! We need leaders who share our dreams and who do not sell us short. Or sell us out!

So for most of the year, I have been running way below their radar. A performance artist in a wheelchair "pretending" to run for president is no threat... just a weird piece of conceptual art. But now I'm beginning to be a blip on the radar. Just a blip, mind you. But it is amazing that we have gotten to the blip stage this early... or at all! A blip who talks about the issues seriously and who gives real alternatives is dangerous. So the gatekeepers are beginning to say that I am not a "real" or "serious" candidate. What they are really saying is that I'm not a part of the political system that has been corrupted by big bucks; that I'm not playing by the unwritten rules, etc. And of course this is true. It is one of the reasons why everyday people are excited about my running. That big bucks political system has been divorced from the everyday reality, hijacked by the addicts of obscenely huge profits. I am a real, serious candidate. I'm just working outside of their boxes. Outside of boxes is where the new possibilities are. Inside the limiting boxes is where political power is created. This is why the normal politicians stay in the boxes. This is why fundamental, humane change rarely—if ever—has come from power politics. I hope they keep saying that I'm not a real and serious candidate because each time they

say that our blip gets brighter and more intense. I also hope they keep saying I am the candidate of the fringe, of the margins. Consider who they have marginalized... the poor, the working poor. In fact, most of the labor force: the disabled, gays, seniors, the uninsured, women, the middle class, artists, family farmers, racial minorities, immigrants, etc. Hey, I may win by a wide margin!



Frank Moore

True, I do have my problems. As one "art expert" once wrote, I, "Seem to have a compulsion not to take no for an answer under any circumstances." I do have this disability of not knowing what is "impossible." So, I just figure out how to do it. When I was born, the doctors told my parents I had no IQ. Obviously the doctors were wrong. So I don't pay any attention to the supposed limitations. I just do what is needed. When I was growing up, I struggled to get educated, struggled against discrimination and prejudices. I really enjoy the righteous struggle. This enjoyment of struggle gives me an advantage when struggle is needed. When Senator Jesse Helms tried to blacklist me, when the Berkeley City Council tried to ban my public access cable show... there have been so many struggles! My enjoying righteous struggle has been a winning element. I also enjoy when struggle is successful. I'm looking forward to the huge struggle of taking away controlling power from of the big corporations, of reclaiming the rights and freedoms that have been stolen from the people of this country, of creating a new post-oil social order in which we will eliminate fear of getting sick, of getting old, of the future, of the Other.

In reality, as president, I will be able to do a lot to start the process of change. And I will! I get results! I deliver! But realistically, I will be working with a Congress full of people heavily invested in the old power system. I will need you! Writing me in on election day will be just the first step. I will need you to get involved in your local community. I will probably need you to put pressure on Congress—and on the press—to enact our dreams. It may take you coming to Washington DC a few times as you did for civil rights and to stop the Vietnam War. But together we will get this done! If it takes me throwing a giant party on The Mall every three months, then that's what I'll do!

It will be an exciting, fun four years! Just imagine a world in which somebody like you or me could really become president. Now keep imagining it and we just may win! Do not throw your vote away on a candidate who does not share your dreams, who is not committed to bring your dreams into reality! Go for it! It is the only practical thing to do because if we don't go for it, we will never get what we need, what we want, what we are dreaming. Hey, it just makes sense... right? So write Frank Moore in on election day!

**Frank Moore** (born Frank James Moore, June 25, 1946) 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.

For more information on Frank Moore, visit:

<http://frankmooreforpresident08.com/>

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