



Money to Burn

A performance artwork enacted on Wall Street, June 22, 2010

I am burning \$250—singles, fives and tens, one bill at a time, while encouraging traders and others on The Street to join me with their own money.

Talk about money is everywhere from headlines to barbershops from music videos to bedrooms. It's an obsession. This is a world where some have money to burn and most others are burned by those very fires. Traders on Wall Street have six and seven figure incomes while half the planet tries to survive on less than \$2/day. "Dow falls 1,000 points then Rebounds, Shaking Markets", "Blacks in Memphis Lose Decades of Economic Gains".

Money to Burn explores a taboo. But at the same time this performance only makes physical what happens regularly on stock markets around the globe every day—billions vanish when the market dips—an activity that is normally very abstract. In a transgressive act of burning my own money, some of which was generously provided by a grant from the Franklin Furnace Fund, this performance alludes to the absurdity of a system based on profit. It's crazy to burn money on the street but it is the height of rationality to have a market where billions of dollars can vanish on a bad day and where even houses and food can evaporate. Unlike the "irrational exuberance" behind closed doors of trading firms, *Money to Burn* takes place in public for all to see. It is the ultimate act of destruction of value—this money will not be exchanged for anything.

This unsettling immolation highlights the profound polarization of wealth and income that exists. You have the option of joining the act. Do you recoil at something that goes against principles that we have learned from our earliest age or will you ignite you own Ben Franklins?

This performance is part of *Rate of Change*, a suite of street performances.

Documentation of the first of these is available at dreadscott.net/IAmNotAMan.html

Dread Scott

Dread Scott first received national attention in 1989 when his art became the center of controversy over its use of the American flag. For over two decades his work has addressed significant social questions. The 2006 Whitney Biennial included his art in the Down by Law section and his work was included in recent exhibitions at PS1/MoMA, the Aldrich Museum and MoCADA.

Money to Burn is made possible, in part, by the Franklin Furnace Fund supported by Stimulus funds from the New York State Council on the Arts, a state agency; the Lambent Foundation; and Jerome Foundation.

2010 is the 25th anniversary of the Franklin Furnace Fund. Selected annually by peer panel review from among proposals received from all over the world, Fundwinners invariably produce socially engaged works of art which touch upon "hot button" themes of our time. The Fund has consistently identified emerging talent in advance of wider artworld recognition: Karen Finley, John Fleck and Holly Hughes received support before the "culture wars" made their names household words; artists of color such as Tanya Barfield, Patty Chang, Papo Colo, Pamela Sneed and William Pope.L received support at crucial, early points in their careers.

franklinfurnace.org

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