

Money!
“Ragged Trousered Philanthropists”:
Financial Rhymes for Financial Times



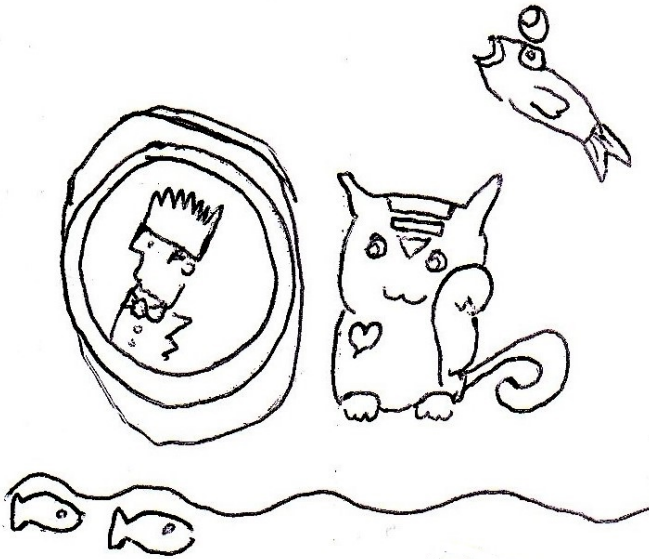
Meets



Arts Event
Everybody's Reading Festival
New Walk Museum, Leicester
3 October, 2017.

Everybody's
READING
FESTIVAL





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<http://brightsparks.wordpress.com/>
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Foreword

Bradgate Writers and People's Arts Collective (PAC) are gathered in a one-day opportunity to contemplate creatively our almost certainly always subjective attitudes to money, financial exchange, industry, global capital, and individual wealth.

It will be in the forefront of our considerations that the event and this companion to it, is formed in the inescapable, context of Brexit and post-Brexit debate. This issue, I wonder, may be divisive partly because of the suspicions we have of large financial arrangements, clashing as they do with the romantic, highly personal hopes we have for our money to represent more than a utilitarian token. It is exchanged to oil the gears of humanity's drive to do good (we hope) or evil, as would be naive not to acknowledge. Part of this debate is that generally as individuals we hope our earnings do good when spent, at least supporting business (and so employees?) as well as wealthy business owners.

We can see the contents of our wallets and where our personal store of tokens is exchanged. Where global politics are concerned, we are rarely so sure. We see arms fairs, and our money going to terrorist – supporting or human rights abusing regimes and have little say in it. As for ourselves as humans, we know to exist, and hold out hope for, our better natures, and the better natures of money to prevail, to sew belonging and understanding as well as trade internationally, to pay employees fairly for their work, and to exchange experience as well as goods, and relieve suffering.

Our uncertainty regarding global trade deals has coincided with distrust of the figures who's job it is, in part, to *explain* money. From economists who have failed to predict our recessions, to presidents, prime ministers and candidates. There is a continued, fevered, search for anyone who might restore our confidence in

money and its functions. You might see the present dangers of rushing to empower inexperienced new figures who may be using this very confusion to create more still, for their own aims.

This uncertainty comes when money is changing. Currencies that are created, traded between citizen-to-online citizen, and made possible entirely through the internet, that have no need of banks nor geographical boundaries; that is, “Crypto-currencies” such as Bitcoin, are in their infancy, but could promise to upend money, shifting power relations as they are, as well potentially alienating further those who are disinclined to computer use by choice or ability, as money and work of all kinds becomes a technology industry.

Money has always been, in a sense, a virtual offering that we have all collectively agreed is the worth of our work, that which allows our play, buys our food and drink, and other items. In the vacuum of deep space, if it had no hope of return to Earth and our culture of money, wouldn't a note just be an elaborately decorated piece of paper, free of importance without someone to elevate it.

We have accepted money - for good, practical reasons - as the only alternative to a barter system where goods are exchanged for other goods made personally with our own hands. Food waste-combatting projects like The Real Junk Food Project in Leicester and the phenomena of “freecycling” unwanted goods to others are examples of how people are returning to some of the values in this system.

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Financial Rhymes

Benjamin White

Worthless financial rhymes
these worthless financial times
whichever side of the coin you choose
winning the rat race only leads you to lose
the truly valuable possessions of life -
whether that be your children, husband or wife
the power of the financial system
decreases humanity's spiritual wisdom
due to humanity's biggest disease
is that satisfaction can never be pleased
so I advise you to truly value
the loved ones you have around you
give gratitude in multitude
allow your attitude to not be abused
and never lose sight of the fact
that money is a leech to only attach
for no other reason to oppress
in the hope that everyone stress
so my motto in life and personal goal
is f*ck the central bank, keep your f*cking money
and I will keep my f*cking soul

Money

Richard Byrt

(Patch-worked from suggestions by People's Arts
Collective Members)

I will write in loathing of filthy lucre.

For Saint Paul wrote that the love of money is the root of all evil.

For Judas sold Jesus for thirty pieces of silver.

For the flowers of the field – the fumitory and ox-eye daisies - toil
not, neither do they spin.

For some people know the price of everything and the value of
nothing.

For there are poverty levels and minimum wages and zero hours'
contracts.

For certain big corporations get away with paying no taxes at all,
while people who are poor
have to use food banks.

For people are still enslaved to toil and spin in fields and sweat shops
and sex shops, whilst
others live off the fat of the land.

For how come Premier Division footballers earn so much, and nurses
so little?

For there's one rule for the rich and another for the poor.

For money is power and knowledge and if you are poor,
People ignore what you know.

But I will also write in praise of lovely money.

For money makes the world go round.

For every young woman and young man loves a Sugar Daddy.

For who doesn't love money plants, money tomatoes, money spiders,
Miss Money penny and penny
farthing bicycles?

For money can buy water, food and medicines for destitute millions.
And for only a quid, you can buy a quarter pound of liquorice allsorts,
reduced carnations close to
their sell-by date, and a Souvenir-of-Skegness-tea-caddy spoon from
a charity shop.

For we can put our money where our mouth is.

For money has enormous value, but metaphysically, doesn't exist.

For Everybody's Reading Festival has kindly given some money for
this event

So we can read our lovely poems

Criticising money.

FUNNY MONEY

(by shantaka)

Money honey, it won't buy you this bunny.

Funny money.

If money was no object,

Every object would be in your hand.

Money is paper, metal in designs that please, that tease.

Funny money,

Worthless.

Until exchanged.

Money talks they say.

What it says ain't good.

What it says about those that crave.

What it says about those that shame.

Paper and metal designed.

Designed to control.

Those who have. Those that crave.

Money honey, it won't buy you this bunny.

If Money Was No Object

Emma Gerrard

If money was no object,
I wouldn't worry so much,
the bills would all be paid,
plans could be made.

No more dread at the bank,
my wealthy benefactor I'd thank.

Now I'm able to help buy my children
a few extra things,
but not spoil them with the noise
of cash till *cur-ching!*

Being happily able to devote to
metal health groups,
And support the homeless with free food
and hot soups.

Money Talks

Maud Pinkowski

I have a problem and don't have money,
no one wants to know about it. If anybody
should help me or look at me, it has to be
driven by what they see on me:
the kind of car I drive, if at all I can afford one.
The clothes I wear, the kind of job I do.
Does it pay good or not? The position I hold
in the company. Whether or not I am a
business individual, and what business I run.

Respect comes from who you are and how people
perceive my world. If I get into trouble and
get arrested, will I have the kind of money to
bail myself out. How many people would
offer to help in accordance with how
much money I possess...

Money, Money, Money

Eleanor Rowell

(After the song lyrics by Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvaeus of “ABBA”)

Money money money
must be funny,
food in your tummy
and a roof over your
jar of very expensive honey.

Money money money
buy more honey,
sweeten up the world.

All the things
I could do
with a little money

I'll try and help
the world.

Money, Money, Money
Isn't really that funny
if its spent on drugs.

Spend more money
on your honey
sweeten up the pain.

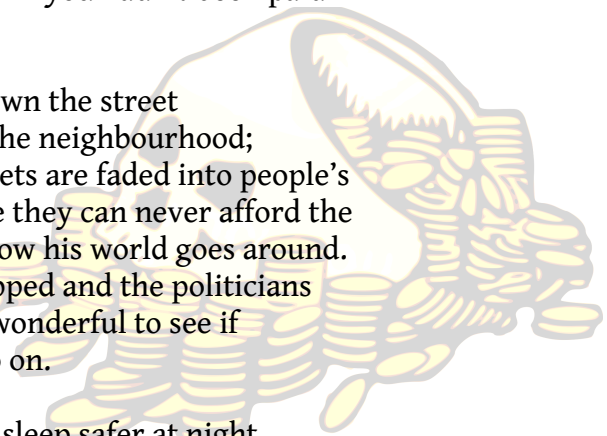
His Kingdom

Brandon

Money talks and bulls**t walks. I can't remember the film where that came from. I think it was about an old cartoon hero bastard watching his kingdom of silver grow into something that had nestled deeply into the blood of everyone is that town. A warm, controlling feeling that if you had a plus sign on your ATM screen then no one will be after your guts. And no one would tell if you hadn't been paid the right amount.

That man walking down the street and scowls through the neighbourhood; he can see when wallets are faded into people's jacket lining, because they can never afford the cab ride home. It's how his world goes around. If the machinery stopped and the politicians slept in, it would be wonderful to see if the world will still go on.

Maybe everyone will sleep safer at night, knowing they don't have to pay their milkman in the morning.



WORKING IN A BOX

(by shantaka)

In a box they work,
Devoid of thought,
Devoid of they.

Told to think,
The box is all.
Told to think,
They think not at all.

Fighting for scraps,
Of inedible food.
Placated by goods,
Not needed at all.

The box appears, as golden.
To those inside.
Golden, if they build, but just,
A little bit more.

As they build,
They moan and gripe.
That others have more,
Of what's inside.

They build the box,
Treading on souls, to reach the top.
Never thinking, to just STOP !

Choose Your Own Adventure

Peter Buckley

A book from 1978,
unchosen on eBay,
“Your Own Adventure”.

Time for any
unemployed spring-cleaning,
in the midwinter
experiment of my place.

Charge into battle,
make change.

Invest yet more hope
where hands quake,
to flicker dust off pages,
alight on irrelevant words.

With big tears to escape,
the drawbridge sunk,
the timely scream
hollowing a tower.

More than ever,
something needs
to hire my senses.

Opt for your own indecision;
after the last book,
you're dead uncertain,
well done.

Choose other titles
in the series.

I thought I had something
to bring to market.
A mouse spat on
for the roast.

£1 raffle tickets to win
the broken inner
of internship
crystal ball.

With BAs, MAs can we use a computer?
Can young artists work for nothing
when the path to the webbed Arena
is littered with past names?

Brown leaves were pressed into concrete soles
of toe-crushing smart shoes.

The CV
requires imagination

to resume.

Not everyone enjoys long pen pal exchanges to Canada
about inexplicable gulfs of time.

Unsure has served me well here.
years of good,
crippling unsure.
I'm glad it's not inspiration
for a poster.

I must be better at it
than those moved to swift action,
quick decision,
jumped guns.

I took the ends of every strand
of adventure,
balled them up in my throat-song,
chose and faked my own.

I don't know why I ever bought
this book.

TODAY

Charlotte Lily Barker

Cigarettes have gone up.
Chocolates have gone up.
Hair dye's gone up.
But there's more choice,
Or it's more acceptable,
To have blue hair has become respectable.
Stamps have gone up.
Deodorant's gone up.
Sanitary towels have gone up.
But everyone's got a mobile phone,
Everyone's on Facebook,
You're never alone.
Clothes have gone up.
Hem's gone up.
Toy's gone up.
Petrol's gone up.
Pint's gone up.
Milk and beer.
Sweat and blood.
Life expenses have gone up.
Queues' gone up,
But we've still got Donald Trump.
Wigs have gone up.
Signs have gone up.
Babies are being born.

Wars still being fought.
Politicians still telling lies.
Cigarettes are going up.
Chocolates are going up.
Hair dye is going up.



Big City Spin

Anonymous

Charity for the Banking class, too big to fail.
A bonus for the underclass to keep them out of jail.

Benefits for the banking class, too big to fail.
Subsidies for the underclass to keep them out of jail.

A black market for the banking class, too big to fail.
A stock market for the underclass to keep them out of jail.

Union for the banking class, too big to fail.
A strike to the underclass to put them all in jail.

Equality for the banking class, too big to fail
Democracy for the underclass, gone off the rails.

A president for the banking class, too big to fail.
A lawyer for the underclass to get them out of jail.

A lottery for the banking class, too big to fail.
A monopoly for the underclass in or out of jail.

Socialism for the banking class, too big to fail.
Capitalism for the underclass, to keep them on their tails.

Food banks for the banking class, too big to fail.

On no account will the underclass get out of jail.

A bank holiday for the banking class, too big to fail.

Cocaine for the underclass delivered to their jail.

Survival of the luckiest for the banking class, too big to fail.

Survival of the trickiest for the underclass, to keep them out of jail.

A bail out for the banking class, too big to fail.

Out on bail for the underclass, in time for the January Sales.

Money For All

Hui-Ling Chen

Give money to everyone.
Let it be shared evenly and equally.

No one would be looked at differently.
Let it be spread far and wide.

Then people only have to earn satisfaction
with creative imagination.

The Boy Acrobat's Villanelle

Debs Tyler-Bennett

Really, you'd baulk at following him home
to a basement's damp, its water-mark,
go there with him – feel the anger come.

Alley, where a cur's hard-pressed to roam,
lonelier than some old miser's clerk,
you'd *really* baulk at following him home ...

Dreams of game-pie, haunting the child alone,
and warnings from the penny-sheets are stark
(go there with him, feel the anger come).

Upstairs, grim Minders belch their beery-foam,
'Keeping a kid? More caging of a lark!'
Really, you'd baulk at following *him* home.

That cellar feels like sun has never shone,
Minders quick to douse that childhood spark,
but go there, with him, feel the anger come.

Boy of the past. His time drops as a stone.
Now migrant children whistle through our dark,
you baulk at T.V. following *them* home
yet go there, with them, as your anger comes.

Money Money Must Be Funny

(After the song lyrics by Benny Andersson and Björn Ulvaeus of “ABBA”)
Graham Connolly

Money money must be funny

In a business world.

You pay the workers low wages, which is totally absurd.

They need money to feed a family. This is true.

Some of them even have a hole in their shoe.

Something has to give. They have to take a second job.

They work themselves into the ground.

So extra money can be found.

Money Under the Bed

Graham Connolly

When Sheila woke up this morning, she looked under her bed. She found large amounts of coins that had rolled under there. Some were English coins, some French. Her wealth was never in doubt.

There was more than just fluff, it really was the real stuff. Last month, she found such a large amount, The Nationwide were glad.

They said, “Thanks, Sheila, we needed loose change. You make the difference to world payments.”

Night's Dream (Croatia)

Not the sleepy-eyed, handsome priest
I imagined was on
the ten Kuna note.

Tired of Romans,
fatigued and nourished by
the sun,

who kissed lotioned hands with kindness,
and who visited the yellow house
with the window, took for a diamond?
to philosophise with a woman
surrounded by sketches of fish,
that moved between blinks of his eyes,
squinting in brightness -
the painted ones that
swam behind water,
in a tank.

As she feeds, floating to sea,
her pet Croatian jellyfish,
her ever-changing
amphibious home;
and while he is afraid of things
floating in his pristine bathtub,

she raids the fridge unseen -
and takes to water,
another somewhere in Istria.

He has a fever,

and has had enough of politics.
He meets a man dressed as a lion,
otherwise tied to an old tree.

As Samson between the columns,
the priest's face from Dubrovnik,
and a tongue for seawater,
met the captive's fur and mane,
and the three of them
would understand
something the same
of suffering's release.

Matko, the man of Faith,
remained in his company
as the bird inside
the green dome of
the tree,
or the dog waiting
outside the supermarket
for his master.

In the yellow room,
while behind the diamond-shaped window,
he and the woman
and formerly the lion,
continued to take notes
for an idea together,
and change shape into the night.

Our Fathers Sold Us

Lesley Clary-Sage Vann

Our fathers sold us
for a mess of pottage,
They were hungry.
Our brothers sold us
For a mess of profit,
they are greedy.
Mining, fishing, hunting
Fast cars, Big guns, plotting
To steal our heritage,
grasping every mote
till our eyes were blinded
by their lies.

We bear the stench of loss,
Agony of souls squeezed,
their words 'good intention'
their vulture eyes
keenly showing their prey
helpless in the desert,
left behind, bereft
lonely crowds, weeping for
lost family.
Angry

My New Little Friend

Lorna Grossner

(About the friendly and inquisitive squirrels at the wildlife
centre in Sussex)

I think I made a new little friend today,
He came a dashing along
Posed so delightfully,
So photographically.
He's small 'n red,
With tufty ears 'n big bushy tail,
He came,
Took a leap,
Sat on my arm.
He scuttled away 'n back again'
So very fast,
His little legs a blur.
Back again he came,
He does so like my coat
Give a look, a tug
And off he speeds,
There're socks to tug on next.

I'm Human

By Malka al-Haddad

I'm from a country at war
I'm from a country that's bleeding
A country of anger
And revolutions
A country of martyrs,
I'm from a country once called Mesopotamia
I'm from the land of black gold
I'm from the richest land on the earth
I'm from the land of sunshine on a golden desert

I'm from there
But I'm not there

I had beautiful dreams
I had friends, brothers, sisters, sweet parents and pink hopes.
I had green gardens, tall palms and olive trees
I had a warm winter
Blue rivers
Red flowers
I was born on land before the crossing of swords on the body
Turned into a banquet table

Before Bush and Blair turned our rivers to blood
Then they donated millions of tents instead of roofs for our
houses

The rain has died in my homeland
They left graves in the green grass in our fields.
Only cacti remain laughing in the barren desert
The sun has become ashamed behind the clouds
Where is God?
Has even God become a refugee in His land?
Where is our ancient law?
Has even this been stolen?

No choice
I crossed the seas of death
Waves of grief have led me here
To the land of my usurpers in an old and narrow shelter
No job
no identification
no dignity.

The victim cannot judge their executioner

I now speak in two languages,
but I have forgotten in which one I used to dream

I have learned all the words to take
The lexicon apart for one noun's sake
The compound I must make:
Homeland

No choice I came here

I'm here
But I'm not here

You are a refugee and
Your choice is not your choice

But remember...
I'm human
I'm human

No Money

Pammy Raymond

I have a nagging memory;
Sometimes it's crystal clear;
Of a youthful life of poverty;
An overwhelming sense of fear.

An infant child my only comfort;
Bright smiles filling life with joy;
An inspiration for my effort;
The arduous work I would employ.

Alone in parenthood was not a choice;
His daddy too drunk or high to care;
Unconscious of my earnest voice;
Our isolation almost impossible to bear.

And shame, oh the shame I felt;
To bring my child into this world;
Through ignorance the hand I dealt;
It was to poverty I thought us hurled.

Yet in old photos, you see our smiles;
Of any deprivation, my child was unaware;
And I concealed those daily trials;
Suppressed, entombed my nightmare.

Our days were packed full of activity;
And music always filled our home;
I would not let a mire of negativity;
Invade to make us grieve or feel alone.

Each year endured gave us strength;
A determination that we would thrive;
Always our heads held high, at length,
We learned with toil, we would survive.

Remembering those years, now cried out;
Parents who chose to turn their shoulder;
They did not brake me with their doubt;
Deprived of support we grew only bolder.

I taught him to be brave and strong;
Although the early years are not forgotten;
I have confidence that it was never wrong;
To know, one day, the wealth of life would blossom.

Mother's Feast

Pammy Raymond

Mother empties out the cupboards,
Determined that every dish is filled;
As uncles, aunts and the normal hoards
Are welcomed warmly through the doors.

It's watched by small hungry faces,
As, yet another miracle of food unfurls;
There's something baking in the oven,
Large pans are spitting droplets on the hob.

Ever eager noses take in the spicy air,
Floating lightly through the living room,
Turning the windows opaque with steam,
as fingers etch faces on misty window panes.

A stew, piping hot, with potatoes to warm
Each of the visitors, who, with rumblings
Are ready to receive these humble offerings;
All most thankful to be fed by my mother's feast.

Money

Sonja Grosser

Money, what is that?
Enough to make you fat!
If you're poor,
You need more.
You can't pay,
To live through the day.
You don't have enough.
You live out rough.
You have no home.
You can't pay for a loan.
Is this right?
We need to fight.
To stop this plight.
It's not right.
The rich have enough.
They don't live rough.
They need to share.
They need to care.
It's not fair.
A world without money!
This is not funny.
It is possible to live without.
Come let's give this a shout.
No more greed.

There's enough for all to feed.
No more poverty.
And we will see,
How good life can be.
A world completely free.
Caring,
Sharing.

Rio Grand 2016.

Spike Pike

Brazil, a country racked with the most appalling poverty, can find the money to stage the World Cup and the Olympics in the space of four years. They, too, must have a magic money tree.

Barefooted
Rag clad
With empty belly
She watches wide eyed
As fireworks
Illuminate
The evening sky

ZOOM
BANG
WIZZ
WOOSH
BABOOM

Sparks drip down
Like confetti
Then fade forever . . .

Spectacular . . .

Her belly rumbles

As she squats
Outside the
City gates

Crowds cheer
Flags wave
Trumpets blare
A fanfare for
The fastest
The fittest
The strongest

Still her belly rumbles
As she squats outside
The city gates

Crowds cheer
Flags wave
Trumpets blare
Medals given to . . .
The fastest
The fittest
The strongest

Still her belly rumbles
As she squats outside
The city gates

The crowds clear
Flags lowered
The trumpets,
No longer blare . . .

The lights go out
Click
Click
Click

Barefoot, rag clad
With empty belly
She squats outside
The city gates.

Farewell to Fenwick's

Steve Wylie

It's quiet in the dying caff,
with its Sixties décor and ageing staff.
The whole store is closing soon,
unable to survive prevailing gloom.
A Leicester landmark is fading fast;
final reductions say the die is cast.
Two whole floors already shut,
stock is leaving, prices cut;
and so it's farewell to Fenwick's.

