



JAMES BROUGHTON · BOX 183 · MILL VALLEY · CALIFORNIA · 94942

16 September 1983

Re: Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh

To Whom It May Concern:

I wish to express my high admiration for the person and the abilities of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh. Here is one of the most extraordinary men of these last decades of this century. He is a teacher and author of exceptional abilities, having brought into the history and understanding of religion a fertile new insight and illumination. I have read most of his many books, and listened to tapes of his talks, and I am convinced that in the spiritual tradition here is a mind of intellectual brilliance and persuasive ability as an author. He has given me new comprehensions of Christian, Buddhist, Taoist, Sufi, and Hindu teachings, mystical practice, and historical significance. It is Bhagwan's special talent, that he helps one to a deeper awareness of all religious experience in a manner that is both necessary and appropriate to present day society. I believe him to be a major force for religious consciousness in our time.

Humbly submitted,

James Broughton

JAMES BROUGHTON is a San Francisco poet, author of many books and plays, and a widely respected pioneer in the realm of avant-garde cinema. He is, in fact, the only established American poet who has been consistently engaged in film-making as a form of poetic statement. In 1975 he received Film Culture's Twelfth Independent Film Award for his outstanding work of thirty years and was cited as 'the grand classic master of Independent Cinema.'

Broughton was an original member of the Art in Cinema group who exhibited at the San Francisco Museum of Art in the late forties. His collaboration with Sidney Peterson in 1946, THE POTTED PSALM, helped launch the postwar experimental film movement in the U.S.A. His first solo film in 1948, MOTHER'S DAY, now considered a classic of poetic cinema, is included in the collections of all major film museums. Other early films include LOONY TOM and FOUR IN THE AFTERNOON. In 1953 under the sponsorship of the British Film Institute in London he created a comic fantasy, THE PLEASURE GARDEN, which was awarded a special jury prize at the Cannes Film Festival of 1954.

During this same period Broughton was active as a poet, writing and reciting and printing poetry. He founded the Centaur Press with Kermit Sheets, launched San Francisco poetry reading with Robert Duncan and Madeline Gleason, and wrote for the Interplayers theater. His first book, THE PLAYGROUND (1949), was a verse play. Since then he has published some twenty other books, including A LONG UNDESSING, a sizable collected poems; SEEING THE LIGHT, a poetics of cinema; and THE ANDROGYNE JOURNAL, a confessional memoir. His recent books of poetry are GRAFFITI FOR THE JOHNS OF HEAVEN (1982) and ECSTASIES (1983), a major collection.

From 1958 to 1964 Broughton was resident playwright with the Playhouse Repertory Theater in San Francisco where six of his plays were first performed, notably THE LAST WORD, WHERE HELEN LIES, and THE RITES OF WOMEN. During 1969 he was Playwright Fellow at the Eugene O'Neill Theater Foundation in Waterford, Conn. where his concurrent play, BEDLAM, was produced.

Broughton resumed active film-making in 1968 with THE BED, a work commissioned by the Royal Film Archive of Belgium. Since that time he has produced a new film nearly every year up to 1983. These include such distinguished works as THE GOLDEN POSITIONS, THIS IS IT, DREAMWOOD, TESTAMENT, and EROGENY, which have won prizes at film festivals throughout the world and received wide critical acclaim. Retrospectives of his work have been held at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the National Film Theatre in London, the Danish Filmmuseum, the Centre Beaubourg in Paris, and the Conservatoire d'Art Cinematographique in Montreal.

For many years Broughton taught in the School of Creative Arts at San Francisco State University as well as at the San Francisco Art Institute. Twice he has been awarded Guggenheim Fellowships (in 1971 and again in 1973) and has also received individual grants from the National Endowment for the Arts in 1976 and in 1982.