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To whom it may concern

I first heard of this remarkable figure in 1976 through my friend Dr. Myron Helfgott (Helfgott, Silverstein & Towne - New York City) on his return from having visited Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh in India. Dr. Helfgott was sufficiently moved by his meeting with Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh that he recommended that I try to locate the ten recently available western publications of His discourses, and predicted that Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh would surely prove to be the most controversial religious figure of this century.

At that time I was a resident of New York City, actively involved in a career as a music journalist and critic. The publications for which I served as music editor and/or frequent contributor (from 1975 - 1981) included Cue Magazine, After Dark Magazine, New York Times, Music Journal, Musical Quarterly, Music & Musicians, The Instrumentalist, Musical America, HiFi Stereo Review, Opera News and others. My reviews and feature articles on classical music and musicians in New York and Europe were widely read and admired.

My education was completed at Texas Christian University in 1969 when I was awarded a Bachelor of Music degree in piano performance (as the protégé of the noted pianist, Mme. Lili Kraus, and the international opera director Dr. Walther Volbach) and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Journalism. My secondary field of study was comparative religion, which introduced me to a variety of Eastern thought including Hinduism, Buddhism, Zen Buddhism and Taoism. From 1970 until relocating in New York City in 1975, my professional activities were as a classical pianist - solo and chamber music - throughout the United States and, as my interest in the medium of opera developed, I directed opera productions for several American Opera companies such as the International Opera Institute, San Diego, the Houston Opera, Dallas Civic Opera, New Orleans Opera, and for one year served as Assistant Artistic Director of the acclaimed Santa Fe Opera.

Throughout my post-graduate years my basic interest in meditation and the viability of both music as meditation and meditation as a means of making more beautiful music led me to a long and productive involvement as a member of the International Sufi Order in the early seventies. This association prepared me well for my introduction to Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh, who has based so much of His work on just the powerful combination of meditation and music which had so long been of interest to me.

By 1978 - still actively involved as a critic in the U.S.A. and Europe - I had digested numerous volumes of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh's published discourses,

had experimented with his unique meditation techniques, and had experienced such a deepening of awareness of both music and myself that I, as literally hundreds of other young American professional persons similar to myself, took a leave of absence from my work and went to Poona, India, to actually meet this man.

In December of 1978, I became a disciple of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh and remained in his ashram in Poona, India, studying meditation and participating in growth programs under His guidance until June 1979, at which time I returned to New York and resumed my work as critic - journalist. There are neither words nor the space here for words to describe the sweeping changes, benefits and opportunities for continued development as both human being and musician that have resulted from my association with this unique teacher.

I am currently residing in Rajneeshpuram, Oregon, the unprecedented experimental city being built on the religious principles of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh. In the past year I have come to understand more what Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh has meant in saying that "music is man's bridge from chaos to the cosmos". There is such a thing as a cultural and artistic ecology having no less delicate a balance, nor less vital a role in human life than the ecology of the material environment. Both are being nurtured here in the presence of this enlightened master. Both are nurtured by even the mere fact of His presence, without which none of the development of this community and its inhabitants would have been possible.

Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh has repeatedly reminded us that silence and music punctuate each other, cannot exist without each other. The experience and use of silence and music are central to our religious and secular lives in Rajneeshpuram. The music of wisdom and knowledge is passed here without need of words. The concrete music which is created and performed here forms the basis of all our meditations, celebrations and religious ceremonies. Whether classical or popular in style (even rock and country-western are in the repertoire) all of our music reflects the uncommon spaciousness and communicative power directly resulting from the influence of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh. Our musicians (and their audience) continue to flower as they create and perform with the keen concentration and intense energy only possible near so dynamic a teacher.

In practical musical terms, Rajneesh musicians have certain extra capabilities due to the meditative way in which we live and work according to the teachings of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh. We can rehearse longer, more thoroughly, and with greater retention than others; as such we require less preparation time and have a larger repertoire. As Rajneesh meditators, our musicians are more flexible as ensemble players, more adaptable to various musical styles and periods, and are sufficiently dedicated to develop prodigious instrumental technique. More important, we possess the sincere desire to let the gift of music emerge freely - and the rare ability to do so.

I have witnessed these seeds of a new clarity, a new artistry in music being sown

by the devotees of Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh. He is the silent singer - we are His voices. This organic, generous approach to music is His gift to us, to be shared with all men, all countries, all religions. As such, it is my opinion that Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh has made an exceptional contribution to the art of music which will be of continuing value to the cultural life of all society.

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