

July 11, 1983

Concerning: Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh

Having been assistant to the Director of the Museum of Modern Art. at The Hague, Holland, for two years, I decided to go into art myself in 1968. I finished the Arnhem School for Fine Arts & Crafts in 1973, after which I first took to the applied arts, designing stage decorations, costumes and posters for various national theatre and opera companies. In 1975 I received a scholarship for Poland, enabling me to extend my knowledge and experience in the field of scenography, poster design, painting and graphic art. My free work started in 1976, covering painting and drawing, graphics and performances (hyperrealism).

Though the Dutch government approved of the quality of my work and regularly bought it, I still felt a certain imbalance, a lack of depth in my paintings, as if I could not get in touch with the essence of my being, with that part of myself that really wanted to be expressed.

In 1979 I first read about Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh and his School for Inner Growth, then still residential in Poona, India. The report I read had been written by the famous psychiatrist Jean Foudraine, now known as Swami Deva Amrito.

I felt a strong urge to go and see Bhagwan after I had read some of his lectures which at the time started to appear in book form. A visit in July and August 1979 and the participation in a few of his therapy groups and the meditations specially conceived by him, brought about a tremendous change in my concept of life and confirmed me in my feeling that here a Spiritual Master of universal proportions was at work. Before I went back to Holland I became his disciple. (During that period he already announced that the phase of his speaking in public would soon be over and the..!"silent communion" would start) The change was enormous. A lot of blocked energy in my system had been released and creativity started flowing as it had never before. All those around me could see the difference...both in my person and my work. Last year in Bruxelles I was selected for participating in the exhibition "Les Arts en Europe" and won the first prize for painting with the oeuvre that had been created between 1979 and 1982.

EXHIBIT "A-708"

In 1981 I took to organising creativity courses and workshops, including sculpture, photography, drama and writing beside painting and drawing (next to my own free work). Following Bhagwan's concept of giving people an opportunity to unburden themselves in order to get in touch with their true being and make their blocked or hidden creativity flow more freely and more fearlessly. The result is that I see confused and stressed people of all ages and of different nature and social background relax, open up and enjoying life like they have never done before.

Els J. van der Kooi

Els J. van der Kooi
(Ma Prem Els)

Fine Qualified Artist

Oostpeterstraat 25
G822 AD Arnhem
Holland

Tel 85-512967 (studio)
or 85-426400 (private)