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TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

Educated as an actress, graduated from the Danish Academy of Theatre in 1970, I was full time occupied in my field, on stage, television, radio and film. After successfully having performed several leading roles I received a grant from The Danish National Bank's Fund, encouraging my work and giving me an opportunity to do research abroad.

Already before this, during my work in Denmark, I had connected with sannyasins and I had become acquainted with Bhagwan's work, his meditations, his discourses and videos, and I felt a strong attraction. My original choice of becoming an actress came from a strong urge of getting in touch with myself - in a deeper way, beyond the surface. For me, acting was a way to do that - to explore myself and others, all angles of the human being and our way to relate to each other and ourselves.

When I was accepted at the Theatre Academy (9 people out of 500 were accepted that year), it was just undergoing a big change, from being closely connected to the Royal Theatre, to being a totally separate Academy with space to explore without having to perform right away. This gave the students an incredible opportunity. The way we were taught was very progressive and experimental. We were encouraged to be as true as we possibly could, to start becoming aware of what was underneath our surfaces, aware of what motivated us to say and do things the way we did, and to keep taking the courage to discard anything that would cover us up, make us safe - to be as REAL as we were able to. To feel and see ourselves and others. In order to be able to describe and express a person on stage, you have to gather the material from yourself - and the more you know and feel of yourself, the more and the stronger you can transfer and communicate. The performance moves from superficial amusement to a strong deep communication. I had felt this transfer in theaters a few times when I was younger - it was like some strings of my being, that I didn't remember ever having played, were suddenly being touched and it was almost scary because it was unknown what was happening - but I was touched and moved and fascinated.

Bhagwan talks about art being like meditation or communion when something gets transferred beyond the words - just by the presence of the artist and the audience; and the deeper the artist's involvement and expression, the stronger and deeper the meeting can be with the audience. Just feel the silence after a beautiful concert, a beautiful ballet, an intense theatre play something has happened, something has been touched and moved.

When I attended a discourse with Bhagwan for the first time, I felt that quality of meeting; somebody who was there to meet, somebody who was real and understood all these things I had been working with, and who had a vision of a real life. He is real - and just sitting with him touches the strings in you, the strings of your real being.

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Teachers at the Academy could only go so far, that was obvious. They had their own limitations, things they didn't accept in themselves, things they didn't see and didn't understand and we could never really get any further than the teacher could take us - because it takes trust and acceptance; when there is fear and judgement, no opening happens, no expansion or evolution.

On my trip abroad I spent some months in the USA, studying the new waves of theater there, and I experienced a much more open explorative and daring attitude than in Denmark where I came from. People here were ready to jump into the unknown, into something new; there was an enthusiasm and openness that was very inspiring - and being spiritual or religious here was not anything mystical or strange. People were meditating and talking about love and God and suddenly I understood something - love and God is not something unreachable and unreal, it's just words trying to describe a quality of life, when joy starts happening, when you feel grateful and happy that you are alive, when every moment starts being a new wonder. And many people here felt alive - and they knew about Bhagwan. I came to know more and everything I read or heard or saw, just made me feel stronger and stronger that this man has something tremendously valuable to offer all of us - life, love and laughter; to live life totally, to become the real man.

It is a gift to the USA to have him here, and even if part of his work cannot be described in words, and is not done with words but communicated with silence, so much is still obvious to whoever wants to see it or deny it. Daily, a larger number of people is joining the dance, becoming sannyasins, living with more joy and awareness - all being creative in the world, contributing economically in businesses, making things live and grow and flower where they come.

Rajneeshpuram in Oregon is a beautiful example of what Bhagwan's presence inspires. A city in the midst of farmland - grown in two years from totally barren desert into a green, productive functioning oasis, where people live together in peace and joy, and with energy and enthusiasm; and with a quality of love you will not find anywhere else on this planet.

Yours sincerely,

Elizabeth Rice
Ma Prem Nidhi

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Elizabeth Rice". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned to the right of the typed name.