

MAHARISHI MAHESH YOGI:

Reflections on a Cult Leader

Transmuting inconsistency into shibboleth
this man trademarked "enlightenment"
and sold mantras like hamburgers
in market-efficient ways

Seated on a deer-skin throne
surrounded by white silken sheets
he learned how wonderful
it was to market "reality"

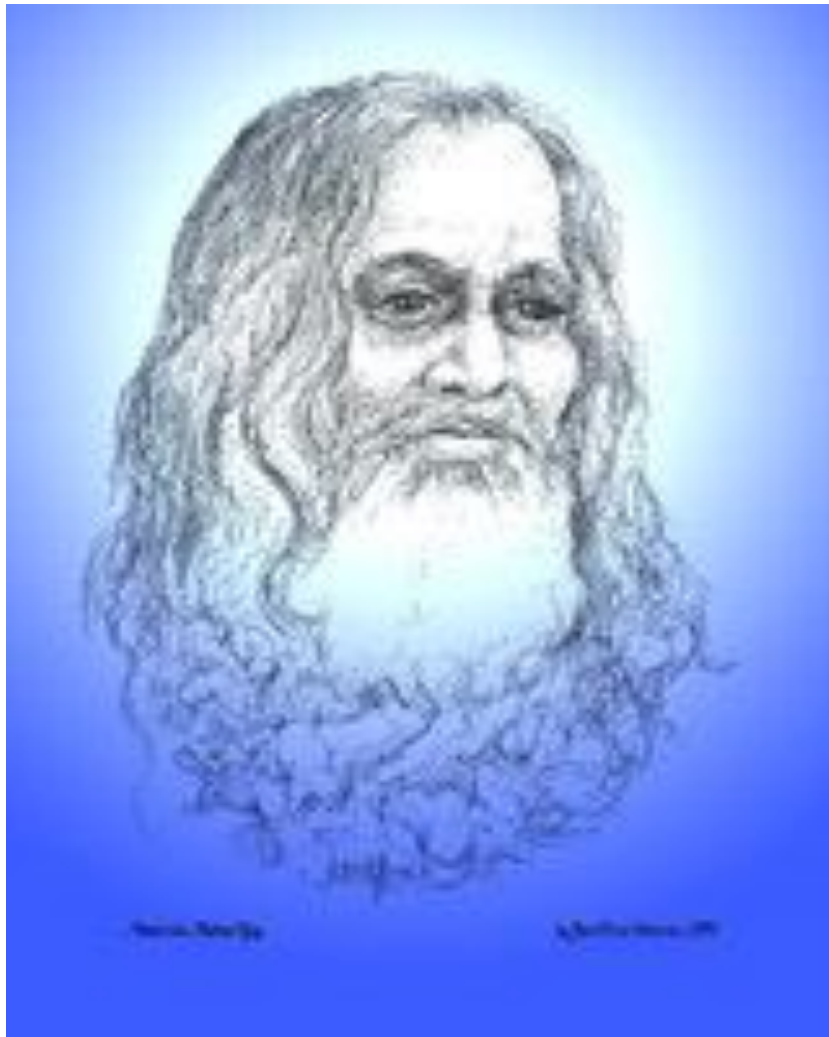
Twisting Shiva's dance
into pseudo-science
he saw spiritual aspirants
as business clients

While videos rolled
and cameras clicked
this guru mesmerized audiences
into paying big bucks for bliss

- T Newfields

Begun: 1980 in Port Angeles, WA ≡ Finished: 2018 in Yokohama





An-Yi: Was Maharishi an awakened sage or skilled charlatan?

Chariya: I'm not in a position to evaluate who is enlightened or ignorant. In fact, I'm not sure any human is.

Bhāraté: Must this be an "either-or" scenario? Isn't it possible to be enlightened in some ways, yet foolish in others?

Daiki: Actually, the issue is not enlightenment, but marketing. If you want money or fame, it is necessary to market some sort of fiction. That's what politicians and gurus and preachers do: sell fictions.

An-Yi: Agreed. Naked truth is seldom a good-selling product. There are too many unpleasant things about existence most people would prefer to ignore.

Chariya: Yep! And perhaps we need fictions to live because truth itself is incomprehensible. Often it seems as if human brain is designed to handle small fictions, not cosmic truths. Those claiming 'cosmic truths' are too often arrogant and deluded.