

= The Beatles in India =

In February 1968 , the Beatles travelled to Rishikesh , in northern India , to attend an advanced Transcendental Meditation (TM) training session at the ashram of Maharishi Mahesh Yogi . Amid widespread media attention , their visit was one of the band 's most productive periods . Led by George Harrison 's commitment , the Beatles ' interest in the Maharishi changed Western attitudes about Indian spirituality and encouraged the study of Transcendental Meditation .

The Beatles first met the Maharishi in London in August 1967 and then attended a seminar in Bangor , Wales . They had planned to attend the entire ten @-@ day session , but their stay was cut short by the death of their manager , Brian Epstein . Wanting to learn more , they kept in contact with the Maharishi and made arrangements to spend time with him at his teaching centre located near Rishikesh , in " the Valley of the Saints " at the foothills of the Himalayas .

Along with their wives , girlfriends , assistants and numerous reporters , the Beatles arrived in India in February 1968 and joined the group of 60 people who were training to be TM teachers , including musicians Donovan , Mike Love of the Beach Boys , and flautist Paul Horn . While there , John Lennon , Paul McCartney and Harrison wrote many songs and Ringo Starr finished writing his first . Eighteen of those songs were recorded for The Beatles (" the White Album ") , two songs appeared on the Abbey Road album , and others were used for various solo projects .

Starr and his wife left on 1 March , after a ten @-@ day stay ; McCartney left after one month due to other commitments ; while Lennon and Harrison stayed about six weeks , then left abruptly following financial disagreements and rumours of inappropriate behaviour by the Maharishi . Harrison later apologised for the way he and Lennon had treated the Maharishi , and in 1992 gave a benefit concert for the Maharishi @-@ associated Natural Law Party . In 2009 , McCartney and Starr performed at a benefit concert for the David Lynch Foundation , which raises funds for the teaching of Transcendental Meditation to at @-@ risk students .

= = Background = =

In the mid @-@ 1960s , the Beatles became interested in Indian culture , after using drugs in an effort to expand their consciousness and in 1966 Harrison visited India for six weeks and took sitar lessons from Ravi Shankar . Alexis " Magic Alex " Mardas , a friend of the Beatles and head of Apple Electronics , had heard a lecture by the Maharishi in Athens , Greece and Harrison 's wife , Pattie Boyd , attended a lecture by the Maharishi in London and they encouraged the Beatles to hear the Maharishi speak .

At Boyd 's suggestion , the Beatles attended the Maharishi 's lecture at the London Hilton on Park Lane on 24 August 1967 . The Maharishi had announced his intention to retire , so this was expected to be his last public lecture in the West . Some band members had seen him on a Granada TV program years earlier . The Beatles were given front row seats and were invited to meet the Maharishi in his hotel suite after the lecture . During the ninety @-@ minute meeting , he invited them to be his guests at a training retreat in Wales .

Two days later , on 26 August , the Beatles travelled by train to the college campus in Bangor , Wales . It was perhaps the first time the band had travelled without their tour managers and they had not even thought to bring money . The station was mobbed because of a bank holiday and Cynthia Lennon , mistaken for a fan , was held back . She ran after the train but missed it and arrived later by car . The group , along with Mick Jagger , Marianne Faithfull , Cilla Black , Harrison 's sister @-@ in @-@ law Jenny Boyd , and around 300 others , learned the basics of Transcendental Meditation , and were given their mantras . The group " hesitated only slightly " when asked to donate the customary week 's wages , a large sum for a Beatle , to learn . While there , they announced at a press conference that they were giving up drugs (apparently referring to psychedelics , but not marijuana) . This was a choice " in keeping with the Maharishi 's teachings " but one made prior to meeting the Maharishi . The Maharishi did advise them privately to avoid involvement with the " Ban the Bomb " movement and to support the elected government of the day . Their intention was to attend the entire ten @-@ day seminar but their stay was cut short by the

death of their manager , Epstein , in London on 27 August . The Maharishi consoled them by saying that Epstein 's spirit was still with them and their good thoughts would help him " to have an easy passage " and journey to his " next evolution " . According to McCartney , the Maharishi " was great to us when Brian died " and Cynthia Lennon wrote " it was as though , with Brian gone , the four needed someone new to give them direction and the Maharishi was in the right place at the right time . "

Curious to learn more , the Beatles made plans to spend time at the " Maharishi 's training center " in India in late October . However , the trip was postponed due to commitments related to the Magical Mystery Tour film and the soundtrack album . Harrison and Lennon appeared twice on David Frost 's programme in autumn 1967 to talk about their involvement with TM when , according to Lennon 's wife , John was " evangelical in his enthusiasm for Maharishi " . Now publicised as " The Beatles ' Guru " , the Maharishi went on his eighth world tour , giving lectures in Britain , Scandinavia , Germany , Italy , Canada , and California . At that time , Lennon said that , thanks to his meditation , " I 'm a better person and I wasn 't bad before . " When the Maharishi spoke to 3 @, @ 600 people at Madison Square Garden in New York City , in January 1968 , the Beatles sent a large flower arrangement to his suite at the Plaza Hotel .

Harrison flew to Bombay in January 1968 to work on the Wonderwall Music soundtrack , expecting the rest of the group to follow shortly . When they were delayed he flew back to London , where the group spent a week in the studio . Before leaving for India , the band recorded the instrumental tracks for " Across the Universe " , whose refrain , " Jai Guru Deva " , was a standard greeting within the Maharishi 's Spiritual Regeneration Movement . Also in January , the Maharishi , Mia Farrow , Prudence Farrow and their brother , flew from the US to London and on to India .

= = Arrival = =

Lennon , his wife Cynthia , the Harrisons and Jenny Boyd arrived in Delhi on 15 February , where they were met by Mal Evans , their advance man , who had arranged the 150 @-@ mile (240 km) , six @-@ hour taxi drive to Rishikesh . McCartney , his girlfriend Jane Asher , Starr and his wife Maureen arrived four days later . The group arrived three weeks after the session , due to end 25 April , had already begun . They were accompanied by a small retinue of reporters and photographers who were mostly kept out of the fenced and gated compound . Entourage members Evans , Brown and Neil Aspinall were there for all or part of the time and Mardas arrived four weeks later .

As soon as Starr arrived in Delhi he asked Evans to take him to a doctor because of a reaction to an inoculation : " When we arrived at the local hospital , I tried to get immediate treatment for him [Starr] , to be told curtly by the Indian doctor , ' He is not a special case and will have to wait his turn . ' So off we go to pay a private doctor ten rupees for the privilege of hearing him say it will be all right " . Also there at the same time were Mia Farrow , her sister Prudence and brother John , Donovan , Gyp " Gypsy Dave " Mills , Mike Love , jazz flautist Paul Horn , journalist Lewis H. Lapham , film @-@ maker Paul Saltzman , socialite Nancy Cooke de Herrera , actors Tom Simcox and Jerry Stovin , and dozens of others , all Europeans or Americans . Despite speculation , Shirley MacLaine did not attend and Lennon , who had thought of bringing Yoko Ono , decided against it .

= = = Facility = = =

Located in the holy " Valley of the Saints " , the International Academy of Meditation , also called the Chaurasi Kutia ashram , was a 14 @-@ acre (57 @, @ 000 m2) compound . It stood across the River Ganges from Rishikesh , the " yoga capital of the world " and home to many ashrams in the foothills of the Himalayas , 150 feet (46 m) above the river and surrounded by jungle . The Maharishi 's facility was built in 1963 with a \$ 100 @, @ 000 gift from American heiress Doris Duke , on land leased from the Uttar Pradesh Forest Department . The training centre was designed to suit Western habits and was described variously as " luxurious " and " seedy " . Starr later compared the ashram to " a kind of spiritual Butlins " (a low @-@ cost British holiday camp) . It was built to

accommodate several dozen people and each of its stone bungalows contained five rooms . Each was equipped with electric heaters , running water , toilets , and English @-@ style furniture . According to DeHerrera , the Maharishi obtained many " special items " from a nearby village so that the Beatles rooms would have mirrors , wall @-@ to @-@ wall carpeting , wall coverings , " foam mattresses " and bedspreads . She wrote that " by the standard of the other " bungalows , the Beatles ' cottages " looked like a palace " .

While the Beatles were there , the Maharishi was negotiating with the Indian government to use some nearby parkland for an airstrip for a plane which he had been given ; a deal which several thousand landless peasants objected to as they had been denied the use of the land for farming . The ashram was surrounded by barbed wire and the gates were kept locked and guarded . While the Maharishi kept the media away from his famous students , he himself gave interviews to the press .

= = Experience = =

The Maharishi had arranged a simple lifestyle for his guests , which included stone cottages and vegetarian meals taken outdoors in a communal setting . The days were devoted to meditating and attending lectures by the Maharishi , who spoke from a flower @-@ bedecked platform in an auditorium . The Maharishi also gave private lessons to the individual Beatles , nominally due to their late arrival . The tranquil environment provided by the Maharishi ? complete with meditation , relaxation , and away from the media throng ? helped the band to relax . Harrison told Saltzman , " Like , we 're The Beatles after all , aren 't we ? We have all the money you could ever dream of . We have all the fame you could ever wish for . But , it isn 't love . It isn 't health . It isn 't peace inside , is it ? " Lennon was respectful of the Maharishi but not in awe of him . At their first meeting Donovan remembers that the Maharishi was " amiable but non @-@ talkative " , and during an awkward silence Lennon walked across the room and patted the Maharishi on the head , saying , " There 's a good little guru " while the room erupted in laughter . Maharishi cancelled the formal lectures for a time and told students to meditate for as long as possible . One student meditated for 42 straight hours , and Pattie Boyd once meditated for seven hours . Boyd 's sister Jenny meditated for long periods as well , but also suffered from dysentery (misdiagnosed as tonsilitis) ; she said Lennon also felt unwell , suffering from jet lag and insomnia . The lengthy meditation sessions left many students moody and oversensitive . Like the 60 other students at the ashram , the Beatles adopted native dress and the ashram had a tailor on the premises to make clothes for the students . The Beatles shopped in Rishikesh and the women bought saris for themselves and to be made into shirts and jackets for the men , which affected Western fashion when the Beatles wore them after going home .

Vegetarian meals were eaten in a " communal " dining area , where food was vulnerable to aggressive monkeys and crows . Accounts of the food vary , some calling it spicy while others said it was bland . Lennon described the food as " lousy " , while Pattie Boyd says it was delicious . Menu items included chickpeas mixed with cumin seeds , whole wheat dough baked over a fire , spiced eggplant , potatoes that had been picked locally , and , for breakfast , cornflakes , toast and coffee . Starr had problems with the diet because of his past illnesses : " The food was impossible for me , because I 'm allergic to so many different things , so I took two suitcases with me : one of clothes and one of Heinz beans " and eggs . After dinner , the musicians gathered on the roof of Harrison 's bungalow to talk and listen to the Ganges river . Sometimes they listened to records and played guitar or sitar while their wives gathered in one of their rooms and discussed life as the partner of a Beatle .

Donovan taught Lennon a guitar finger @-@ picking technique that he passed on to Harrison . The technique was subsequently implemented by Lennon on the Beatles songs " Julia " and " Dear Prudence " . The latter was composed by Lennon to lure Prudence Farrow out of her intense meditation . Lennon later said : " She 'd been locked in for three weeks and was trying to reach God quicker than anyone else " . Another inspiration was hearing for the first time Bob Dylan 's newly released album , John Wesley Harding . The stay at the ashram turned out to be one of the group 's

most creative periods . According to Lennon he wrote some of the " most miserable " and some of his " best songs " while he was in Rishikesh . Both Lennon and McCartney often spent time composing rather than meditating , and even Starr wrote a song , " Don 't Pass Me By " , which was his first solo composition . Plans were made for a concert in Delhi to feature the Beatles , the Beach Boys , Donovan , and Paul Horn . Harrison complained that more time should be spent on meditating , saying , " We 're not here to talk about music . We 're here to meditate . " Lennon commented on Harrison 's commitment to meditation by saying : " The way George [Harrison] is going , he 'll be flying a magic carpet by the time he 's forty . "

While Lennon was " evangelical in his enthusiasm for the Maharishi " , according to his wife , Cynthia , she herself was " a little more sceptical " . Cynthia later wrote that she " loved being in India " and had hoped she and Lennon would " rediscover our lost closeness " ; to her disappointment , however , Lennon became " increasingly cold and aloof " . The Lennons ' room contained a " four @-@ poster bed , a dressing table , a couple of chairs and an electric fire " . Lennon played guitar , while his wife drew pictures and wrote poetry between their long meditation sessions . After two weeks Lennon asked to sleep in a separate room , saying he could only meditate when he was alone . Meanwhile , he walked to the local post office every morning to check for Ono 's almost daily telegrams . One of these telegrams read : " Look up at the sky and when you see a cloud think of me " .

= = = Special events = = =

The " world press " arrived at the ashram gate and the Maharishi asked them to come back after the Beatles had had " a little time with the course " . According to author and course participant , Cooke de Herrera , the Beatles were " very happy at the way it was done " . De Herrera wrote in her memoir that the Maharishi gave " special attention " to all the celebrities despite her warnings not to feed their egos . Mia Farrow wrote that she felt overwhelmed by the Maharishi 's attention to her , including private sessions , gifts of mangoes , and a birthday party where he gave her a paper crown . Early the following morning the Maharishi arranged for a group photo and told everyone where to sit . Since it was her birthday the day before , Mia was asked to sit in the centre and each student was adorned with a marigold garland . All sat on a podium and the Maharishi had a large picture of his guru , Brahmananda Saraswati , behind him . The photo took half an hour and has been described as " one of the most iconic photographs in the history of rock ' n ' roll " . Photographers included Paul Saltzman , a Canadian filmmaker who was visiting the ashram after completing film work elsewhere in India . Saltzman 's snapshots from this time were later assembled into a book , *The Beatles in India* (2000) .

The Maharishi celebrated Harrison 's 25th birthday and Harrison played sitar . He gave Harrison an upside @-@ down plastic globe of the world and said : " George , the globe I am giving you symbolizes the world today . I hope you will help us all in the task of putting it right . " Harrison immediately turned the globe to its correct position , shouting , " I 've done it ! " (Harrison " affectionately " referred to the Maharishi as the " Big M ") . On 8 April , the Maharishi gave an Indian prince 's outfit to the Lennons for their son in England on his birthday . McCartney was uncomfortable with the Maharishi 's flattery , including calling the band " the blessed leaders of the world 's youth " .

An aviation company owner and patron of the Maharishi 's , Kershi Cambata (K. S. Khambatta) , flew two helicopters to Rishikesh to take the Maharishi and his guests for rides , for the publicity value , even though the flights required the transportation of fuel by truck to Rishikesh . McCartney asked Lennon why he was so eager to be the one to go with the Maharishi on his helicopter ride , to which Lennon replied , " I thought he 'd slip me the answer . " On another occasion , an Italian newsreel company filmed the Maharishi and many students , including the Beatles and other musicians , going down to the river while the musicians sang standards such as " When the Saints Go Marching In " and " You Are My Sunshine " . One evening , when the moon was full , the Maharishi arranged for everyone to cruise on the Ganges in two barges . The trip started with the chanting of Vedas by two pandits , but soon the musicians brought out their instruments . The

Beatles sang Donovan 's songs , while Love and Donovan sang Beatles songs , and Horn played flute .

= = Early departures = =

Starr 's wife had a strong aversion to insects and McCartney recalled she was once " trapped in her room because there was a fly over the door . " Spiders , mosquitoes and flies were present at the ashram and when Starr complained to the Maharishi he was told : " For people travelling in the realm of pure consciousness , flies no longer matter very much . " Starr found the food " impossible " because he was " allergic to so many different things " and he and his wife left India on 1 March saying " I wouldn 't want anyone to think we didn 't like it there ; " they returned home " because we missed the children . " Their departure was per schedule by one account , but premature by others . McCartney and Asher departed in mid to late March as he needed to get back to London to supervise Apple Corps and she had a theatrical commitment . When he left he told another student , " I 'm a new man " . Alex Mardas arrived after McCartney left , either at Lennon 's invitation or on his own initiative .

Mia Farrow , who had come and gone from the ashram before , left again and drifted around India before returning to the United States . Geoffrey Giuliano in *Revolver : The Secret History of the Beatles* says that , before leaving , she told the Beatles that the Maharishi had made a pass at her . Ned Wynn , one of Farrow 's childhood friends , wrote in his 1990 memoir that she had told him in the early 1970s that the Maharishi had definitely made sexual passes at her . In her 1993 autobiography , *Cooke de Herrera* wrote that Farrow had confided to her , before the arrival of the Beatles , that the Maharishi had made a pass during a private puja ceremony by stroking her hair . *Cooke de Herrera* wrote that she told Farrow that she had misinterpreted the Maharishi 's actions . Farrow 's 1997 memoirs are ambiguous , describing an encounter with the Maharishi in his private meditation " cave " when he tried to put his arms around her . She reports that her sister Prudence told her that it was " an honour " and " a tradition " for a " holy man " to touch someone after meditation .

= = = Tensions = = =

Business negotiations , allegations of sexual impropriety , alcohol and non @-@ prescription drug use were sources of tension between the Maharishi and the Beatles . Aspinall was surprised when he realised the Maharishi was a sophisticated negotiator , knowing more than the average person about financial percentages . Evans told Saltzman that the Maharishi wanted the band to deposit up to 25 % of their next album 's profits in his Swiss bank account as a tithe , to which Lennon replied , " Over my dead body " . Mardas pointed to the luxury of the facility and the business acumen of the Maharishi and asked Lennon why the Maharishi always had an accountant by his side . Mardas said the Maharishi offered him money to build a high @-@ powered radio station . Lennon later told his wife that he felt that the Maharishi had , in her words , " too much interest in public recognition , celebrities and money " for a spiritual man . According to her sister , Pattie Boyd had dreamt that " the Maharishi wasn 't what he seemed " . Cynthia Lennon , *Cooke de Herrera* and authors such as Barry Miles have blamed Mardas for turning Lennon against the Maharishi but Mardas denies this . Meanwhile , the weather , which had been quite cool in February , was growing hot and the Maharishi was planning to move the whole group to Kashmir , at a higher and cooler altitude in a week .

Some business negotiations concerned arrangements for a film . According to *Cooke de Herrera* the Maharishi had given the Beatles and their Apple Corporation the rights for a movie about the Maharishi , his movement and his teacher , Guru Dev . While their " people and equipment were on the way " , Charles Lutes , the head of the Maharishi 's Spiritual Regeneration Movement in the US arrived and signed a contract with Four Star Films . The contract was negotiated by Horn and John Farrow was scheduled to direct the film . Horn expected that Donovan , the Beatles , the Beach Boys and Mia Farrow would appear in it . When some of the film crew from Four Star Films arrived

around 11 April , Harrison and Lennon stayed out of sight . Cooke de Herrera felt the contract with Four Star Films and presence of the film crew was the reason for the sudden departure of Harrison and Lennon and Horn said it was the catalyst for their discontent .

Lennon became convinced that the Maharishi , who said he was celibate , had made a pass at Farrow or was having relations with other young female students and later called the Maharishi a " lecherous womaniser " . According to Mardas an American teacher named Rosalyn Bonas had told both him and Lennon that the Maharishi had made " sexual advances " towards her . However , Cynthia Lennon said she thought Mardas had put the " young and impressionable " girl up to it . Brown recalls that Mardas told him that a young blonde nurse from California had said she 'd had a sexual relationship with the Maharishi . In addition , Mardas arranged to spy on the Maharishi when Bonas was with him , and said that he saw the two of them in a compromising position . At the same time , many of the people who were there , including Harrison , Horn , Cooke de Herrera , Cynthia Lennon and Jennie Boyd did not believe that the Maharishi had made a pass at any woman . According to Cynthia Lennon , Mardas ' allegations about the Maharishi 's indiscretions with a lady gained momentum " without a single shred of evidence or justification . " Likewise McCartney said " It was Magic Alex who made the original accusation and I think that it was completely untrue " .

Deepak Chopra , who was not present but later became a disciple of the Maharishi and a friend of Harrison 's , said in 2008 that the Beatles and their entourage " were doing drugs , taking LSD , at Maharishi 's ashram " . An article in the Washington Post reported that " others said the Beatles resumed drug use at the ashram " . The Beatles ' group also violated the Maharishi 's " no alcohol rule " when they consumed " hooch " which Mardas , who Cynthia thought was not an active meditator , " smuggled in " from a nearby village .

= = Later departures = =

On the night of 11 April , Lennon , Harrison and Mardas sat up late discussing their views of the Maharishi and decided to leave the next morning . They packed hurriedly , while Mardas went to Dehradun to find taxis . Lennon was chosen to speak to the Maharishi . When asked why they were leaving , Lennon replied " If you 're so cosmic , you 'll know why " . Paul Mason , a biographer of the Maharishi , later interpreted Lennon 's statement as a challenge to the Maharishi 's claim of cosmic consciousness . Lennon said that his mind was made up when the Maharishi gave him a murderous look in response . According to Mardas : " John Lennon and I went to the Maharishi about what had happened ... he asked the Maharishi to explain himself " ; and the Maharishi answered Lennon 's accusation by saying , " I am only human " . But Lennon said he was " a bit rough to him " and the Maharishi responded by saying " I don 't know why , you must tell me . " While waiting for Mardas to return , Lennon wrote the song " Maharishi " , which was later renamed " Sexy Sadie " because Harrison advised Lennon that was potentially libellous . According to Harrison , Lennon " had wanted to leave anyway " and this gave him a " good reason to get out . "

According to Cynthia Lennon , when the group walked past the Maharishi on the way to their taxis he looked " very biblical and isolated in his faith " . The Maharishi reportedly said , " Wait , talk to me " . After leaving the ashram , the taxis kept breaking down , leading the Beatles to wonder if the Maharishi had placed a curse on them . The car that the Lennons were in suffered a flat tyre and the driver left them , apparently to find a replacement tyre , but did not return for hours . After it grew dark the Lennons hitchhiked a ride to Delhi and took the first available flight back to London , during which John drunkenly recounted a litany of his numerous infidelities to Cynthia . The Harrisons were not ready to go home , so they travelled to other Indian cities and spent time with Ravi Shankar . Harrison said when he got dysentery he thought it might have been due to a spell cast by the Maharishi , but he recovered after Shankar gave him some amulets . Harrison later said he had never intended to stay for the second half of the course in Kashmir and that he thought Lennon wanted to get back to his relationship with Ono .

The departure and split with the Maharishi was well @-@ publicised . In Delhi , Lennon and Harrison told the reporters that they had urgent business in London and they did not want to appear in the Maharishi 's film . Back in the UK the band members said that they were disillusioned by the

Maharishi 's desire for financial gain . McCartney said that " Rishikesh was a good experience . I enjoyed it " . Lennon said on The Tonight Show Starring Johnny Carson , " We believe in meditation , but not the Maharishi and his scene " , and , " We made a mistake . He 's human like the rest of us " . Lennon went on to say : " I don 't know what level he 's on but we had a nice holiday in India and came back rested . "

According to a 2006 statement by Chopra , the Beatles and their entourage " were doing drugs , taking LSD , at Maharishi 's ashram , and he lost his temper with them . He asked them to leave , and they did in a huff " . A 2008 article in The Washington Post reported that " others said the Beatles resumed drug use at the ashram . " Prudence Farrow stayed with the three @-@ month programme and became a TM teacher , along with 40 other students . Mike Love also became a TM teacher and travelled with the Maharishi to Kashmir later in the year . The trip to India was the last time all four Beatles travelled abroad together .

= = Legacy = =

Philip Goldberg , in his book American Veda : From Emerson and the Beatles to Yoga and Meditation , How Indian Spirituality Changed the West , wrote that the Beatles ' trip to Rishikesh , " may have been the most momentous spiritual retreat since Jesus spent those forty days in the wilderness " . Despite their temporary rejection of the Maharishi , they generated wider interest in Transcendental Meditation , which encouraged the study of Eastern spirituality in Western popular culture . Chopra credits Harrison with spreading TM and other Eastern spiritual practices to America almost single @-@ handedly .

After 1968 the Maharishi fell out of the public spotlight for a period and TM was described as a passing fad . Mike Love arranged for the Beach Boys to tour with the Maharishi in the US during the summer of 1968 . However , the tour was cancelled after several appearances and was called " one of the more bizarre entertainments of the era " . Interest grew again in the mid @-@ 1970s when scientific studies began showing concrete results . The Maharishi moved to Europe in the early years of that decade and appeared twice on American television 's The Merv Griffin Show in the mid 1970s , leading to a surge of popularity called the " Merv wave " . That was followed by the introduction of " Yogic Flying " , a technique which offered the promise of levitation . In a 1975 interview , Harrison said of the Beatles ' association with Transcendental Meditation : " In retrospect , that was probably one of the greatest experiences I 've ever had ? Maharishi was always put down for propagating what was basically a spiritual thing but there 's so much being propagated that 's damaging to life that I ? m glad there are good people around like him . " In 1978 Lennon wrote that he considered his meditation a " source of creative inspiration " .

In her 2005 book Gurus in America , author Cynthia Ann Humes comments that although the " public falling out " between the Beatles and Maharishi was widely reported , there has been " little mention " of " the continued positive relationship Maharishi maintained " with Harrison and McCartney . During the 1990s both Harrison and McCartney were so convinced of the Maharishi 's innocence that they offered their apologies . Harrison gave a benefit concert for the Maharishi @-@ associated Natural Law Party in 1992 , and later apologised for the way the Maharishi had been treated by saying , " We were very young " and " It 's probably in the history books that Maharishi ' tried to attack Mia Farrow ' ? but it 's bullshit , total bullshit . " Cynthia Lennon wrote in 2006 that she " hated leaving on a note of discord and mistrust , when we had enjoyed so much kindness from the Maharishi " . Asked if he forgave the Beatles , the Maharishi replied , " I could never be upset with angels . " McCartney took his daughter , Stella , to visit the Maharishi in the Netherlands in 2007 , which renewed their friendship .

By the time of the Maharishi 's death in 2008 , more than 5 million people had learned Transcendental Meditation , and his world @-@ wide movement was valued in the billions of dollars . The ashram , built on land belonging to the Rajaji National Park , was reclaimed by the government in the mid @-@ 1990s after the lease expired in 1981 , and fell into disrepair . After the Maharishi died , McCartney said : " my memories of him will only be joyful ones . He was a great man who worked tirelessly for the people of the world and the cause of unity " . Starr said in 2008 , " I feel so

blessed I met the Maharishi ? he gave me a mantra that no one can take away , and I still use it " . In 2009 , McCartney , Starr , Donovan , and Horn reunited at a concert held at New York 's Radio City Music Hall to benefit the David Lynch Foundation , which funds the teaching of Transcendental Meditation in schools . A 2008 article in Rolling Stone magazine reported Yoko Ono as saying : " John would have been the first one now , if he had been here , to recognize and acknowledge what Maharishi has done for the world and appreciate it " . Author Gary Tillery wrote in 2010 that Lennon " benefited from the experience " and " for the rest of his life he often turned to meditation to restore himself and improve his creativity . "

In 2011 , a 1967 letter surfaced in which Lennon wrote to a fan saying the Beatles " were lucky to have met " the Maharishi . A 2011 article in The Telegraph reported Harrison as saying : " Maharishi only ever did good for us , and although I have not been with him physically , I never left him " . In 2007 , a Canadian actress , Maggie Blue O 'Hara , announced plans to renovate and convert the property into a home for the street children of New Delhi . In 2011 , a plan was announced by the state government to build an Ayush Gram on the site . In 2003 , Jerry Hall produced a series for the BBC titled Gurus , which included interviews with TM initiates , Jagger , and Cooke de Herrera , and a visit to the ashram in Rishikesh . Saltzman 's photographs at the ashram have subsequently been displayed in galleries worldwide , published in two books and in a permanent exhibition above the retail units in the departure lounge of Liverpool John Lennon Airport . Mira Nair began work on a documentary film about the Beatles ' visit to India ; although no date for the film release has been announced .

= = = Songs = = =

The Beatles wrote many songs during their visit to Rishikesh : 30 by one count , and " 48 songs in seven weeks " by others . Lennon said : " We wrote about thirty new songs between us . Paul must have done about a dozen . George says he 's got six , and I wrote fifteen " . Many of the songs became part of the album The Beatles (aka " the White Album ") , while others appeared on Abbey Road , and solo records . Several of the songs contained Eastern musical influences .

Recorded for The Beatles :

" Back in the U.S.S.R. "

" Blackbird "

" Cry Baby Cry "

" Dear Prudence " (named after Prudence Farrow , who would not " come out and play ")

" Don 't Pass Me By " (written by Starr)

" Everybody 's Got Something to Hide Except Me and My Monkey "

" I Will "

" I 'm So Tired "

" Julia "

" Long , Long , Long "

" Mother Nature 's Son " (inspired by a lecture given by the Maharishi)

" Ob @-@ La @-@ Di , Ob @-@ La @-@ Da "

" Revolution "

" Rocky Raccoon " (co @-@ written with Donovan and inspired by Bob Dylan 's new album John Wesley Harding , which they heard for the first time at Rishikesh)

" Sexy Sadie " (originally named " Maharishi " but changed to avoid libel)

" The Continuing Story of Bungalow Bill " (inspired by the son of an American student who went tiger hunting)

" Why Don 't We Do It in the Road ? " (inspired by monkeys mating in the road)

" Wild Honey Pie "

" Yer Blues "

Recorded for Abbey Road :

" Mean Mr. Mustard "

" Polythene Pam "

Recorded for solo records and others :

- " Child of Nature " (reworked as " Jealous Guy " for Lennon 's Imagine)
- " Circles " (on Gone Troppo in 1982)
- " Cosmically Conscious " (on Off the Ground in 1993)
- " Dehradun " (Harrison 's song , but never released)
- " Junk " (on McCartney in 1970)
- " Look at Me " (on John Lennon / Plastic Ono Band in 1970)
- " Not Guilty " (on George Harrison in 1979)
- " The Rishikesh Song " (also called " The Happy Rishikesh Song " , but never released)
- " Sour Milk Sea " (performed by Jackie Lomax and released on a single)
- " Spiritual Regeneration / Happy Birthday Mike Love " (recorded on tape at Rishikesh)
- " Teddy Boy " (on McCartney in 1970)
- " What 's the New Mary Jane " (officially released on the 1996 compilation Anthology 3)

Donovan :

- " Happiness Runs "
- " Hurdy Gurdy Man " (Harrison wrote a chorus which was not recorded)
- " Lord of the Reedy River " (later recorded by Kate Bush)

= = = Filming = = =

Although there was talk of making a film about the Maharishi in co @-@ operation with Apple Films , it was discovered that the Maharishi was independently negotiating with ABC Television in the US , to create a TV special featuring the band . Two visits by business manager Peter Brown to the Maharishi ? who was lecturing in Malmö , Sweden ? and one by Harrison and McCartney , failed to stop him proclaiming that he could deliver the band for a TV show .

A film crew led by producer Gene Corman ? linked to ABC Television ? did eventually arrive to film proceedings , but within a day of their arrival the remaining Beatles had left ; Upon returning to England , Lennon dismissed the idea that the presence of the film crew had contributed to the timing of their exit .

Video footage of the Beatles ' stay does exist , sourced from a 16mm silent handheld camera that was used by many of the guests during their stay there . Segments of this can be seen in the documentary The Beatles Anthology .