



Divine Duet

Deva Premal and Miten send the world good vibes with their sacred mantras and jokes.

18-year-old Deva Premal (whose name means “divine loving”). That was 17 years ago. The two travel the world performing mantras and joking onstage. After a song, the duo prefers that people forgo clapping and sit in silence to absorb a tune’s vibrations.

What do you remember about first meeting? DEVA: I was 18 and in love with a mime artist leaving on a world tour with our ashram’s band. I wanted to be with him, so I thought, very innocently, maybe I could

BRITISH-BORN MITEN lived a rock ‘n’ roll life, touring with Fleetwood Mac and Lou Reed, before he found his guru, Osho (who gave him the name Prabhu Miten, “friend of God”). At Osho’s ashram in Pune, India, Miten, then 41, also found his life’s love:

join the band as a singer. Miten was the leader of the band. He was friendly but said they already had singers. I was just another wannabe!

MITEN: I don’t recall that at all. Our band—Ah This!—was being photographed. The photographer wanted a blonde in the picture. I was sent to find a blonde, any blonde; I happened to find this very sweet young German girl.

How has your music changed over time? D: I had had music lessons and an ear for music, but not ambition or discipline. Miten taught me to open my heart and improvise. After seven years I reconnected with the Gayatri mantra, which my parents had me sing as my goodnight lullaby throughout childhood. From then on, my shyness disappeared.

And yoga? D: I was introduced to yoga when I was 11. I can’t always roll out a mat every day. But I love Wheel and Headstand. M: My asanas are the yoga of sound. But I watch Deva practice in hotel rooms. I see the beauty and immense benefits; you’d have to be blind or a fool not to.

How do mantras affect us? D: Singing has a strong healing power; deep breathing charges our cells with the vibration of the sound. With Sanskrit words, mantra singing becomes a powerful spiritual tool, an effortless way to enter meditation.

M: When we released *The Essence* [in 1998] we were unaware of America’s yoga movement. We hoped a few *sannyasin* friends would use the album during massages. White Swan records picked it up, and U.S. orders flooded in. That was 180,000 CDs ago. I’m happy people from all walks of life appreciate the music. Our music is a celebration of life. I want people’s hearts to explode and their eyes to fill with tears of joy. I want them to run out in the street and hug the first person they see. I want the music to support them in their sacred moments—meditating, making love, sitting in traffic jams.

What’s the best thing about your nomadic lifestyle?

M: I have so little in the way of possessions to hold me down. You can’t hoard stuff as a traveler. I like being in a flow. D: When you travel this much, the whole planet is your home. ■