

# Odyssey

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## Deva's Embrace

Graced by ancient mantras, rich harmonies, and sensual rhythms, Deva Premal and Miten's music explores the essence of love, devotion, and consciousness. The couple, who have been living and playing together for more than 11 years, have toured the world and released a string of acclaimed albums that soothe the soul.

*I*n contrast to the rock 'n roll lifestyle of her partner Miten, Deva Premal was raised in an atmosphere of mantra and spiritual discipline.

Born in Germany in 1970 to a mystic/artist father and a musically talented mother, Deva was taught violin, piano and received voice training. By the time she was five years old, she was already chanting the Gayatri Mantra daily, and since then she has continued to integrate meditation into her life. She has studied shiatsu, reflexology, craniosacral therapy and massage, but music remains her ultimate love.

'My father has been on the spiritual path since the 50s, studying yoga, spiritual scriptures and whatever books were available back then, making it his daily discipline to meditate every morning between 3 and 5am,' she says. 'When I was growing up he devised exercises for my sister and I to help us become more aware of the moment.'

As a child she studied the violin and piano, but it wasn't until she met Miten, at the Osho Community in India, that she began exploring her voice.

'When Miten began encouraging me to sing harmony with him, I didn't need a big push. I had grown up with music so the ground work was already done. And we sounded pretty

good together.

'At first I played a supporting role, singing second voice, playing keyboards, and co-leading our workshops, which used mantras and chants from different cultures. I was very shy to sing alone, but, encouraged by Miten, I became more confident and eventually discovered my voice.'

The influence of Indian classical music is evident in her singing, although she has never attempted to copy or steal from the tradition. 'It just comes naturally,' she says. 'As if I'd heard it all before, in another life.'

Among the numerous letters of appreciation she has received throughout her professional career, many fans describe how her music has been used to accompany and enhance the sacred passages of birth and death. In fact, Elisabeth Kübler-Ross herself, the world famous author of *On Death and Dying*, requested that Miten and Deva Premal use their music to accompany her passing.

'We have played for many people,' says Premal, 'but to play personally for Elizabeth was something I will never forget, and to grant her wish was an honour and a privilege.' ◯

Image courtesy of *Prabhu Music*.