

INTERVIEW, MUSIC, REVIEW

# INTERVIEW WITH MIEL DE BOTTON

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Having opened for John Barrowman on his UK tour in May, Miel de Botton is heading back on the road this autumn to support Welsh baritone Rhydian Roberts, including a Weston-Super-Mare date on the 8th October 2015. The audience can enjoy the romantic sounds of Paris in spring as Miel performs songs in both French and English from her debut album 'Magnetic'.

Born in Switzerland, Miel and her younger brother – philosopher Alain de Botton – had an idyllic childhood growing up by a lake in Zurich. Singing French chansons with her father instilled in her a love of music “The songs transported me to an era of wild romance. I could feel the intensity of love, but also its tragic inconstancy, and I wanted to abandon myself to that music.” recalls Miel.

After qualifying as a clinical psychologist and family therapist, English school-educated Miel practised in therapy centres in and around Paris. This career would, perhaps surprisingly, come to influence her relationship with music.

Now on her debut album, and on stage, Miel breathes new life into those beloved chansons as well as original songs in English that she wrote. 'Magnetic' is the sensuous, exultant sound of a woman who is finally following her path; a woman who has dared to dream.

Miel will be joined on stage by her talented band members Sam Swallow (piano), Daniel Western (drums), Mark Jaimes (guitar) and Gareth Davies (bass).

I interviewed Miel, ahead of her upcoming tour:

**Becky:** Congratulations on the release of your debut album, 'Magnetic', earlier this year.

**Miel:** Thank you very much.

**Becky:** Are you excited about performing at the Playhouse, Weston-super-Mare in October? And what can we expect from a Miel de Botton concert?

**Miel:** I'm very excited. I've been looking you up; I've never been to Weston-super-Mare so it's exciting and the Playhouse looks like a really nice place to perform. The main act is Rhydian (Roberts) and so I will try to entertain as best I can before he comes on. I like to sing my most poignant and joyful songs to get the audience going as I did on my last tour when I supported John Barrowman. This is a new audience, a different demographic who are more used to Classical and I hope my music will appeal. And it has got similarities with Classical music.

**Becky:** It's exciting and different. And you've completely taken a change of career (from your psychologist and family therapist days). I wondered how that transition has been for you?

**Miel:** Well, I lived my psychology career to the full; I practised for many years in Paris and some time here and when it came to an end I thought that was right too but it definitely infuses with the music to a certain degree. And it's helped it all flow in a way.

**Becky:** So, Miel, what would you say to anyone considering a change of direction in their life. Have you got any advice you could offer them?

**Miel:** Yes. I think follow your dreams as much as possible.

**Becky:** Good advice, thank you. And I wondered also ... you practise yoga. How has yoga helped you in your life path?

**Miel:** I have a healer who I do yoga with so, in a way, I think the healing is coming through the yoga as well. I do what I can and I think it's really important to keep limbered up and that keeps you centred and anchored as well as all the rest of all the things you might do in your life.

**Becky:** Absolutely, it's a good starter all round really, isn't it?

**Miel:** It is!

**Becky:** Back to your music, Miel, you wrote a song called 'Bad Men', which is about some of the more negative experiences in your dating life. But, my thought is that there are a lot of good men out there too. Do they get a mention in your lyrics?

**Miel:** Well, I hope that I find a good man to take me forward and that song was about a particular moment, where I was seeing things very negatively and when one looks back in one's happier moments, it doesn't look so negative and you see the positive side as well. But I think it's poignant and that people connect with those moments of real anger and disappointment, you know, where we say, "Right ... what's going on here? We want something better than that."

**Becky:** And I guess, like your yoga, actually being able to write about those moments helps in your own, personal therapy?

**Miel:** Yeah, absolutely! And I think my writing is a part of healing me and I hope it will heal others because it comes profoundly from the heart and I think these kind of things reach people and they hopefully help.

**Becky:** You're also an art collector. Is there any particular artwork that you'd love to be able to look at every day?

**Miel:** I like contemplative pieces very much, ones that I can get lost in. There's an artist called Jaume Plensa from Barcelona – he does these beautiful marble heads, which look like the Buddha and they're very contemplative. And then I like Anish Kapoor very much – he has these very contemplative pieces and you can kind of get lost in ones that look like spaceships but they have a void. Yet that void is full is what I feel when I look at these things – it's interesting.

**Becky:** Finally, Miel, do you dance? If so, what to you dance to? And who with?

**Miel:** I dance to just about everything! I like Club, Disco, Jazz. And, with my boyfriend, I do Waltz lessons. So, yeah, I like to dance.

**Becky:** Do you ever dance to your own songs?

**Miel:** Well, yeah. The Club ones. I've had quite a few done in Club and Reggae versions so I quite like dance to those too.

**Becky:** Can you recommend any Club versions of your songs that we could listen to?

**Miel:** There's a Reggae version of 'Bad Men' on iTunes and a Club version of 'Magnetic' that just came out on iTunes called Chill Out Mix.

**Becky:** We'll look out for those. And we'll see you in October at the Playhouse! Thanks for taking the time to chat to Weston-super-Mum.

**Miel:** Great! Thanks a lot.

Miel de Botton is supporting Rhydian Roberts at The Playhouse, Weston on 8th October. You can buy tickets [here](#)

There are lots of links and new about Miel on [her website](#)

Thanks to Erin Jones at [Republic Media](#) for arranging the interview

