

# “Dusty & MiKey Start a New Life”

## PORTRAIT

**As Saskia Stäuble with not even 30 years suffers a stroke, she knows: It's time to make a change in her life. She fulfills her dream and becomes a singer. Through music, she meets Michael Odermatt. As Dusty and MiKey they want to win the hearts of the listeners.**

For many years, Saskia Stäuble (31), born of Basel, had a vision: She wanted to touch the hearts of people with her voice. Singing has always been her passion; already the age of six she performed in choirs and theaters, at age 14 she was in a girl group. But her life took many turns before she got to her big goal.

In a four-star hotel in Rheinfelden, she completed an apprenticeship as a chef, then worked in Zurich and “slipped” into two long relationships. In the second relationship, there was violence, and the young woman stopped singing. Only after the separation, she turned back to the music. “I spent three years alone and had to process the pain. But my voice always gave me strength again”, says Saskia Stäuble - honestly, warmly hearted, sensitively and vulnerably at the same time. Her artist name “Dusty” has derived from her last name.

She then worked as a waitress and started a new relationship. She lived in a nice apartment in Lucerne and had enough money. And yet an inner voice told her that something was not good. Her feeling was getting stronger, that she did not do what she really wanted.

“Eighteen months ago, I went into the kitchen to feed my cats. Suddenly I broke down, the left half of my body was paralyzed, and I could not move my tongue anymore. I laid on the ground and only cried”, says Dusty. The doctors diagnosed a stroke; the neurologist could make no sense of it. She, however, knew: She knew that she was not living her real life. Then the body had reacted.

Dusty acted, ended her relationship and told her boss: “I have to become a singer.” She was looking for bands to collaborate; she took part at the TV Show “Die grössten Schweizer Talente” (in English: “The Greatest Swiss Talents”) on Swiss Television where juror DJ BoBo considered that her talent was not good enough for Swiss stages. “I knew I had to work tremendously on me.”

## When they met, a rainbow loomed on the horizon

In the summer of 2012, she traveled to New York for the first time. When she landed at JFK airport, she burst into tears and said to herself: “At last I arrived at home.” She educated herself further with a voice coach and worked in a cloakroom in order to stay afloat. Back in Switzerland, Michael Odermatt (23) came in her life. The singer heard from someone who also loves New York and is pianist. “We met on the 15<sup>th</sup> of July 2012 at the train station in Lucerne. When he took off the sunglasses, I saw the fire in his eyes”, Dusty recalls. She told him she wants to travel back to New York. And just at the moment when Michael asked her to sing a song, a rainbow loomed on the horizon. He said: “When I heard her song, I knew immediately: That's it. I was nervous.”

Michael became to MiKey, or, “My Key”. Singer Dusty and piano player MiKey met again, realized that they frequented in Lucerne in the same restaurants and cafes, without having ever encountered. She could hardly trust her ears: “I have carried melodies inside of me for 25 years, and when MiKey was playing his compositions on the piano, I heard my own songs transcribed on an instrument!” Both flew in 2012 for a month to New York and gave their first common concert in the piano bar “Don’t Tell Mama”.

MiKey, who had worked after his commercial apprenticeship in the municipality of Emmen in Lucerne in a film distribution company in the accounting department, decided to travel again this March together with Dusty for three months to New York. They sold their “Goldvreneli” (in English: ‘Helvetia Head’) and all of their household, they could convert into money, only to be able to afford Manhattan for a few extra days. “My family and my closest friends had the least faith in me”, Mikey says. “But thanks to the music we trusted each other.” The two arrived to their own world where they have always wanted to live, in the world of music. “I deliberately wanted to break out of the comfort zone Switzerland and broaden my horizons. Finally I have found someone who thinks the same just like me”, he says. Today MiKey and Dusty are not only a couple on the stage.

In New York, they wrote a musical about her life story, rented studios where they composed 20 songs. They had to change their accommodation 43 times because they could not afford hotels. They often stayed with locals, from whom they were spontaneously invited. And they gave several concerts. Dusty says: “We realized that our music touches people and their souls.” She was once an outsider because she was told that her voice was too strong, the vocal color would not fit into a schema. “Today, I am proud of it.” And MiKey knows that he can open the hearts of the audience with his piano music. Already as a young boy he played the piano.

### **The fans are increasing, however the money is running out**

Meanwhile, the duo has over 64,000 fans on Facebook, many between 14 to 25 years old. Around a quarter of the fans lives in Tunisia, “because the locals there live even more with the heart”. For the two heart people it is therefore only logical to travel to the North African country. “We will fly to Tunis in September and give several concerts in a hotel or in a small theater,” says Dusty. They are about to organize the trip – knowing well that it is not possible without sponsors. The duo is currently still living of the money from the sale of their possessions. But slowly it comes to an end. “We are brave and believe that somewhere a door will open for us and our music,” says MiKey.

*The next concert in Switzerland: September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2013 from 14 o’clock in Gelfingen / Hitzkirch LU in the ballroom of the castle Heidegg*

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