

just stay forever in his lover's company.

The title "Sat Singing" plays on the Sanskrit term *sadhu-sanga* used in Hindu, Buddhist, Jain and Sikh traditions to mean the company of holy people. George had been keeping company with holy people for the past fourteen years, starting with his first trip to India in 1966 to study sitar with Ravi Shankar. Then in 1968, he brought John, Paul, and Ringo with him on a retreat to Maharishi Mahesh Yogi's ashram in Rishikesh. On return to London, he met disciples of Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, a revered instructor of *bhakti* or devotional yoga. In their company, George began chanting mantras, particularly Hare Krishna, and incorporating meditative practice into his daily routine.

For a superstar who had been part of history's most successful rock group, such dedication and discipline were rare. As a fellow student of Bhaktivedanta Swami, I remember joining fellow Krishna devotees on visits to George's home in Friar Park west of London and marveling at the oil paintings of four-armed Vishnu and brightly colored posters of Hindu demigods that decorated his huge Victorian manor. He kept a small marble altar to Krishna over the fireplace. Chanting sessions could go on for hours without a break. We would arrive around 9am and assemble in his living room, he would sit down at his harmonium — a keyboard instrument played with the right hand while the left pumped air through a bellows fixed at the back — and we would begin chanting one mantra or another: *sri rama jaya rama jaya jaya rama* or *hare krishna hare krishna krishna krishna hare hare*. The chanting and playing would go on until lunchtime.

George wrote "Sat Singing" shortly after John Lennon was murdered outside his New York apartment building. It was George's sister Louise who heard about it on the radio from her home in Illinois and called her brother. Several days later, after the shock had worn down, George gave an interview.

"We saw beyond each other's physical bodies," he told a reporter, seeking to reassure fans that John's soul lived on. "If you can't feel the spirit of some friend who's been that close, then what chance have you got to feel the spirit of Christ or Buddha or whatever else you may be interested in?"

On the popular British talk show *Aspel & Company* he added, "I believe what it says in the Bhagavad-gita: 'Never was there a time when you