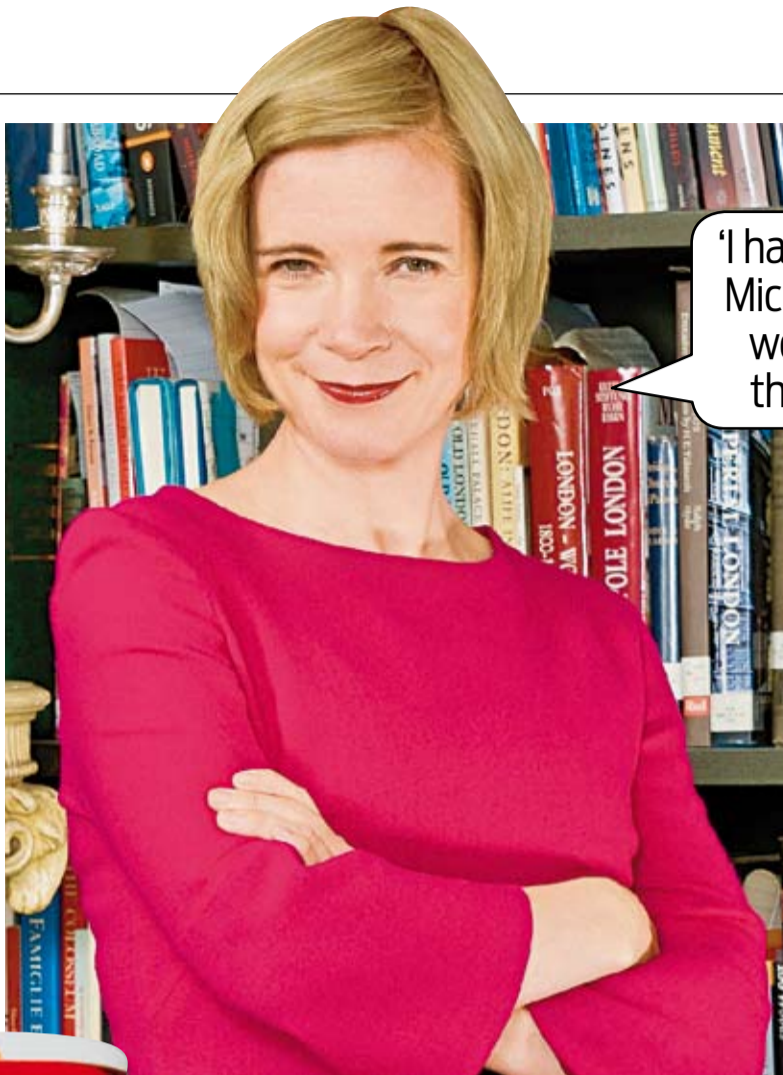


The DEFINITE ARTICLE

We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept THE definitive answer. This week it's TV historian Dr Lucy Worsley



'I have a serious passion for Michael Bublé. His music is wonderful but it's more than that – it's a crush!'

The prized possession you value above all others... My shoebox full of old photos. I have several hundred, dating from a school trip when I was 11. They're a capsule of wonderful times, but sadly they stop in 2000, when I went digital.

The biggest regret you wish you could amend... I wish I'd been less shy when I was young. I didn't speak up for myself, which means you miss out on things. I'm still shy, but I've learnt to overcome it.

The temptation you wish you could resist... Chocolate. I like dark best, but if I'm desperate I'll eat Dairy Milk.

The book that holds an everlasting resonance... Swallows And Amazons by Arthur Ransome. I read it aged eight, the

first time I actually sat down and read a book all by myself. It's about the importance of making decisions for yourself and it swept me away.

The priority activity if you were the Invisible Woman for a day... I'd watch what went on in Henry VIII's bedroom at Hampton Court Palace. Now that *would* be an eye-opener!

The pet hate that makes your hackles rise... Things that go on too long – films, books, meetings, people waffling on. I'm quite impatient.

The film you can watch time and time again... David Lean's Brief Encounter. It's a fantastic story and one you can enjoy on many different levels. I've lost count of how many times I've seen it.

The person who has influenced you most... My mum Ned. She's a kind person and has always been a hard worker. She taught me to be independent.

The figure from history for whom you'd most like to buy a pie and a pint... Jane Austen. I'm writing a book about her and there's so much I'd love to ask. She never married but had some important loves. I'd like to know how 'far' she went with them, if she ever lost control.

The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child... I was a lonely, geeky book-worm of a child and it wasn't easy.



If you're like that don't worry, life *will* get better.

The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity... I have a serious passion for Michael Bublé! His voice and music are wonderful, but it's more than that – it's a crush!

The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again... A paste diamond hairclip made from a Victorian necklace. I lost it in a house move in 1996.

The unending quest that drives you on... Enticing people into loving history. If they watch one of my TV shows and it sparks an interest, I'm happy.

The poem that touches your soul... Any by the 17th-century 1st Duke of Newcastle. I spent four years studying him for my PhD and they gave a peephole into his world. They're often quite rude!

The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase... That because I don't want to have children I hate them. I've just wanted to do other things.

The event that altered the course of your life and character... Becoming Chief Curator of the Historic Royal Palaces in 2003. It's my dream job.

The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it... I'd steal Victoria's Small Diamond Crown from the Crown Jewels and wear it to a party.

The song that means most to you... It Had To Be You by Michael Bublé. It always makes me want to get up and dance in a swaying jazz style.

The way you would spend your fantasy 24 hours, with no travel restrictions... I'd wake up in 1802 in a Georgian mansion in Bath. My cook would bring me breakfast in bed – scrambled eggs with mushrooms and builder's tea. I'd go for a morning swim in the Bath thermal springs before flying back to the present day to meet my husband Mark for a walk in the Austrian Alps. We'd go to Barbados in the afternoon and have fish

for lunch on Crane Beach with a glass of sauvignon blanc, before a snooze in a hammock under a palm tree, listening to the waves. In the evening, we'd have Manhattan cocktails at the Algonquin Hotel in New York, then listen to jazz in the Oak Room. Dinner would be in the great kitchen at Hampton

Court Palace where I work. I'd get our Tudor cook to roast a joint of beef and serve a feast for my friends and family with plenty of red wine. I'd end the day in the magnificent velvet four-poster bed at Houghton Hall in Norfolk.

The happiest moment you will cherish forever... Happiness is being engaged in something interesting that absorbs your brain. I try to experience that every day.

The saddest time that shook your world... I've been lucky not to have lost anyone close to me, but I had a tough six months working in Glasgow in 2002. I missed my family so much I travelled home every weekend.

The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you... To go on Strictly Come Dancing. I've been asked, but I signed a prenuptial agreement in 2011 saying I'd never do it. Mark said all that showing off would be very bad for me. I might even run off with my dance partner!

The philosophy that underpins your life... Work is not work, it's intelligent play, so enjoy it.

The order of service at your funeral... I'd have a humanist service, then have my ashes scattered in Chapel Court, a garden at Hampton Court Palace.

The way you want to be remembered... She made history enjoyable.

The Plug... Lucy's series Empire Of The Tsars: Romanov Russia finishes on Wednesday at 9pm on BBC4 and is on iPlayer. lucyworsley.com. ■

As told to Rob McGibbon



PHOTOGRAPHS: MIKE LAMN, GETTY, REX



Left: Jane Austen. Above right: a Manhattan cocktail. Far right: the Austrian Alps

PS...

Brad Pitt and Christian Bale star in financial crisis drama The Big Short – in cinemas from Friday. Eddie Izzard begins a four-week residency at London's Palace Theatre on Monday. And The Corrs' UK tour kicks off at Birmingham's Genting Arena on Tuesday



NEXT WEEK

- Emilia Fox on the new series of Silent Witness
- James Martin's comfort food dishes
- Monty Don on a dazzling exhibition of garden paintings from Monet to Matisse
- Britain's best TV listings