

The DEFINITE ARTICLE

We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept THE definitive answer. This week it's the turn of Hairy Biker Si King

The prized possession you value above all others... My Sakae Almighty drum kit and cymbals in my front room. I've played for 35 years and try to practise every day.

The biggest regret you wish you could amend... I wish my sons (Alex, 26, James, 23, and Dylan, 15) had travelled with me over the years. What better education is there?

The temptation you wish you could resist... Toasted sourdough bread with butter. I could eat bread and butter 24 hours a day – that's why I no longer buy it.

The book that holds an everlasting resonance... Robert Louis Stevenson's *A Child's Garden Of Verses*. I won a copy for 'academic progress' at eight and it started my love of poetry.

The priority activity if you were the Invisible Man for a day... I'd sit in on a meeting of international monetary policy makers, to confirm they haven't the foggiest idea what they're doing.

Right: The Dude in *The Big Lebowski*. Above right: a Sakae Almighty drum kit. Far right: the Vatican

The pet hate that makes your hackles rise... Parents announcing that their children won't like a particular food, without letting the child make their own decision.

The film you can watch time and time again... *The Big Lebowski* with Jeff Bridges as the slacker The Dude. That's what my boys call me – I think it's because of my general malaise.

The person who has influenced you most... My mother Stella. She was strong and loving and taught me that style isn't just the province of the rich. She died in 2008 aged 86.

The figure from history for whom you'd most like to buy a pie and a pint... Led Zeppelin's late drummer John Bonham. He could teach me to play!

The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child... Treat the world with a gentle hand.

The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity... The Cathars [a medieval Christian sect] and their massacre in the early 1200s. I spent a month last year in the South of France learning about it.



The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again... A sundial compass

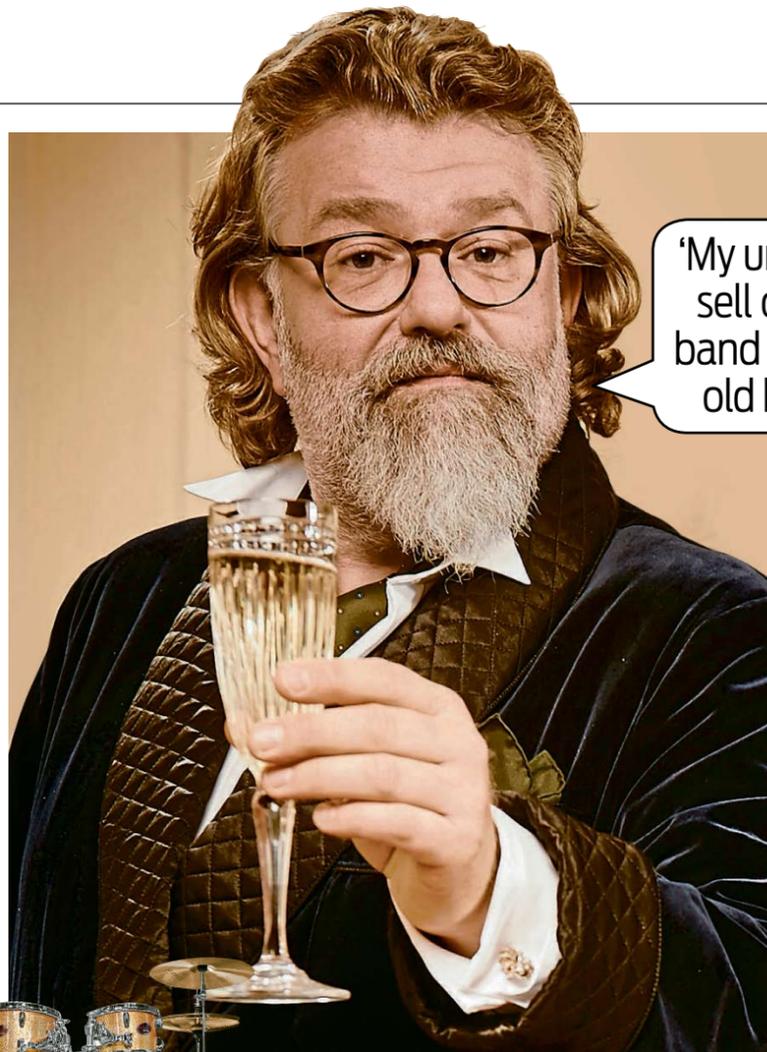
given to me by the great cinematographer Freddie Francis. I worked with him in the 1990s when I was a locations manager. It was stolen from my car.

The unending quest that drives you on... Contentment. As the second-century preacher Ben Zoma said, 'Who is rich? The one who's content with his portion.'

The poem that touches your soul... Seamus Heaney's *The Rescue*. I tend to put others before myself, so I've often been the rescuer. But I'm lucky to have been rescued, too.

The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase... That I'm a brash Northerner. I'm gregarious, but also reflective and I can be quiet.

The event that altered the course of your life and character... My dad Graham's death, in his 60s from kidney failure, when I was eight. I had to look after my grieving mum because my older brother and sister were off building their lives.



'My unfulfilled ambition is to sell out Wembley with my band – which is basically five old blokes having a laugh'

South America. After that, it would be the 1970s and I'd watch Led Zeppelin play in LA. In the evening, my boys and I would take a balloon flight across Namibia and land at the Messum Crater to watch the changing colours of the Brandberg Mountain as nightfall came. We'd then sit around a campfire and cook bobotie – a spicy mince dish – looking at the Milky Way, which is so incredibly clear there.

The happiest moment you will cherish forever... The births of my sons.

The saddest time that shook your world... The end of my 27-year relationship with Jane. We split because we'd lost each other. Jane was focused on the family and I was focused on work. But we remain close – so close we can't be bothered to sort out the divorce!

The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you... To sell out Wembley Stadium with my band, which is basically five old blokes having a laugh while playing a bit of music.

The philosophy that underpins your life... Be gentle, kind, warm – and quiet!

The order of service at your funeral... There'll be no order! I want a big party on a beach with a fire and loud music.

The way you want to be remembered... With a laugh and with kindness.

The Plug... The Hairy Bikers' Diet Club is perfect for anyone who wants to lose weight eating real food, not rabbit food! Visit hairybikersdietclub.com. ■

As told to Rob McGibbon



PHOTOGRAPHS: RAY BURMISTON, REX, ALLSTAR, SHUTTERSTOCK

PS...

*Bill Murray and Kate Hudson star in comedy *Rock The Kasbah*, in cinemas Friday. Iggy Pop's new album, *Post Pop Depression*, is out on the same day. And *The Painkiller*, with Kenneth Branagh and Rob Brydon, opens at The Garrick Theatre on Thursday*



NEXT WEEK

- We're behind the scenes as police drama *Line Of Duty* returns
- Shakespeare's passion for gardening
- Cracking Easter cakes from Fiona Cairns
- PLUS Britain's best TV listings