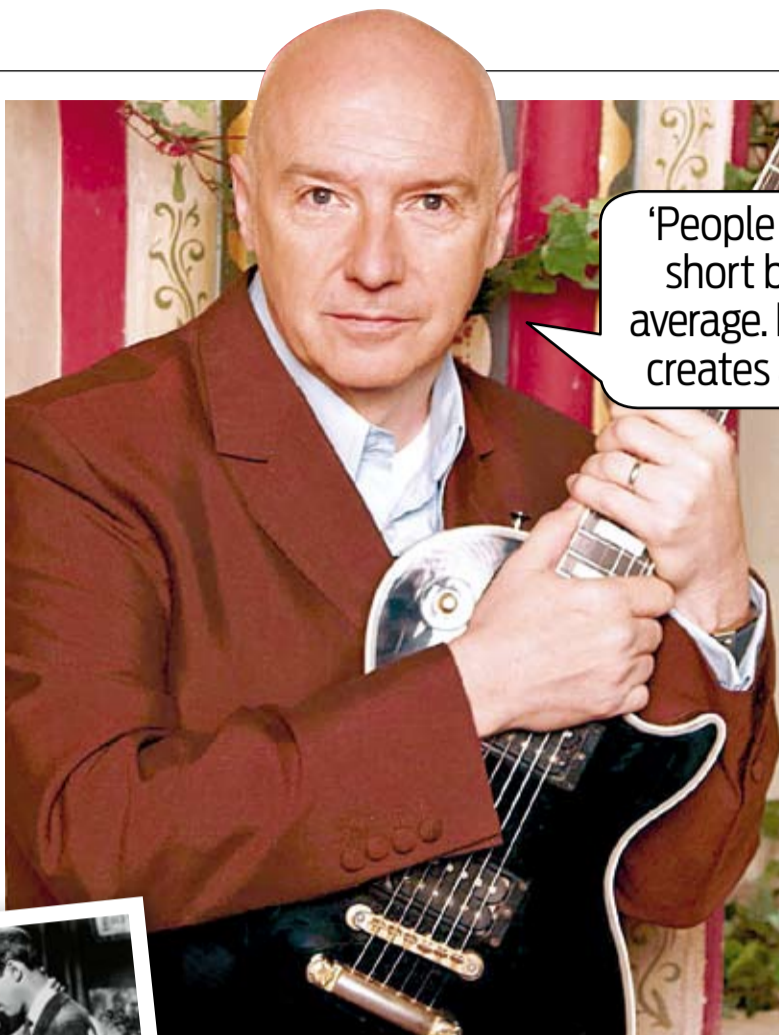


The DEFINITE ARTICLE

We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept **THE** definitive answer. This week it's musician Midge Ure's turn



'People always think I'm really short but I'm 5ft 8in, which is average. Maybe the name Midge creates an image that I'm tiny'

The prized possession you value above all others... Two chairs made by the Glasgow designer George Logan around 1900. They cost £5,000 in 1981. They're beautiful and they have a connection to Glasgow, which was my hometown.

The biggest regret you wish you could amend... Not asking Phil Lynott to reform Thin Lizzy for Live Aid in 1985. It was a massive omission. I was in Thin Lizzy in 1979-80 and Phil was a great mate. [Lynott died aged 36 in 1986 from heart failure.]

The book that holds an everlasting resonance... The novel *Perfume* by Patrick Süskind. The writing is so amazing you can smell the filth of 18th-century Paris.

The priority activity if you were the Invisible Man for a day... I'd lock myself in a vintage guitar shop near my home in Bath and strum to my heart's content.

The pet hate that makes your hackles rise... Mindless idiots desecrating cities with graffiti.

The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child... Speak nicely because people will judge you by that. My mum instilled that in me.

Right: Phil Lynott of Thin Lizzy. Above right: It's A Wonderful Life. Far right: The Isle of Mull

The film you can watch time and time again... It's *A Wonderful Life* with James Stewart. It's a lesson in the importance of life and it's beautifully acted.

The temptation you wish you could resist... Sweets. The urge never existed before I gave up drinking ten years ago, but now I'll tuck into a

family packet of Liquorice Allsorts. But it's better than pouring flagons of Jack Daniel's down me!

The person who has influenced you most... A teacher called Miss Gebbie. I was nine when she taught me how to draw a face and it inspired me. She was my first love!

The figure from history for whom you'd most like to buy a pie and a pint... The 19th-century Scottish architect Charles Rennie Mackintosh. He was a modernist and visionary – I'd like to know how he managed to stick to his guns and thrive.

The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity... Cooking. It's my way of switching off from music. I'm fascinated by making flavours. It was hit and miss for a while, but now I know what goes with what.



The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again... Naivety. I couldn't write *Vienna* [his 1981 hit with Ultra-

vox] today because I'd over-analyse it and worry what people would think.

The unending quest that drives you on... To create something better than I've created before.

The poem that touches your soul... A Red, Red Rose by Burns. I was ten when I sang it in front of the class and won a certificate. It was my first recognition for *anything*, let alone singing.

The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase... That I'm really short! I'm 5ft 8in, which I think is fairly average. Maybe the name Midge creates an image that I'm tiny.

The event that altered the course of your life and character... When my daughter Kitty saw me getting a bottle of vodka out of the car while we were at a beach in Cornwall. It was ten years ago and I'd been in rehab, but I was still drinking. She was 11 and the look of disappointment on her face was hideous. I've not had a drink since that day.

The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it... I'd rifle through secret bank vaults in Switzerland and give the money to the poor.

The song that means most to you... My Mind's Eye by Small Faces. They were my favourite band when I was 14 and I was besotted with that song. They were the ultimate pop band.

The way you would spend your fantasy 24 hours, with no travel restrictions... I travel so much that a special day for me is hanging out with my wife Sheridan and my girls [Molly 28, from his first marriage, Kitty, 21, Ruby, 18, and Flossie, 16], so I'd wake up at home in Bath. I'd have muesli with yoghurt for breakfast, plus white toast with banana, then I'd head to Rock beach in Cornwall for some boogie boarding with the family. We'd have fish and chips for lunch at Rick Stein's restaurant in Padstow, then I'd wander around Nelson in New Zealand. I love it there because it's so quaint and old-fashioned. I'd go into space and write a song

while orbiting the Earth. After that, I'd head to the Isle of Mull and stay at Calgary Castle where Sheridan and I got married in 2003. All the family would hang out on the beach watching the sunset, then I'd have steak for dinner back at the castle – washed down with a Pepsi Max!

The happiest moment you will cherish forever... My tenth birthday when Mum and Dad gave me my first guitar. Dad only earned £6 a week, but the guitar cost £3. I was ecstatic, and I still have it.

The saddest time that shook your world... The day my father Jim died in 2001 when he was 82. It gave me the excuse to feel sorry for myself and my drinking escalated. I was on a bottle of Jack Daniel's a day and the next four years were the saddest of my life.

The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you... To have a full head of hair again!

The philosophy that underpins your life... Strive for quality.

The order of service at your funeral... I want weeping and wailing in the church, but then *Crossroads* by Cream will play to liven everyone up. My girls can scatter my ashes on the Clyde.

The way you want to be remembered... Despite the pressures, he never gave in.

The Plug... Midge is currently on his *Breathe Again* Tour and is joining the 80s *Invasion* tour in March 2016. Visit midgeure.co.uk or tdpromo.com. ■

As told to Rob McGibbon



PHOTOGRAPHS: REX, GETTY, ALISTAR, ALAMY

PS...

David Suchet is *Lady Bracknell* in *The Importance Of Being Earnest* at London's Vaudeville Theatre from Wednesday. Jennifer Aniston's new romcom *She's Funny That Way* opens in cinemas on Friday. And Taylor Swift is at The SSE Hydro in Glasgow on Tuesday



NEXT WEEK

- Tom Kerridge's ultimate barbecue guide – and four pages of his sizzling recipes
- Monty Don's tips for a terrific display of clematis
- PLUS Britain's most detailed TV listings