

# The DEFINITE ARTICLE

We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept **THE** definitive answer. This week: *The Pretenders' Chrissie Hynde*

**The prized possession you value above all others...** My white Telecaster guitar, which I bought at the beginning of The Pretenders in 1978. It's in a lock-up somewhere, but I think I should get it out.

**The biggest regret you wish you could amend...** Not spending more time with my parents. I left home in Akron, Ohio, when I was 22 and never really went back. My father died in 2010 and my mother died three years later.

**The temptation you wish you could resist...** I gave up smoking and I generally stay away from alcohol, but I probably watch too much television.

**The book that holds an everlasting resonance...** Black Beauty by Anna Sewell. I read it at 11 and it started my love of novels and horses.

**The priority activity if you were the Invisible Woman for a day...** I'd watch the dancer Michael Clark rehearsing. He's a fascinating talent and I've always had a crush on him.

Right: the dancer Michael Clark. Above right: boxing. Far right: the Sri Krishna-Balaram Temple in Vrindavan, India

**The pethat that makes your hackles rise...**

Barbecues! I sit in my garden in London in summer and the air's filled with lovely smells like jasmine and then some a\*\*\*\*\* starts grilling burgers.

**The film you can watch time and time again...** The Twilight Samurai from 2002. It's about a man in search of honour and love. It's very moving.

**The person who has influenced you most...** Lemmy from Motorhead. I met him in the 70s when things weren't happening for me. I tried to cry on his

shoulder, but he gave me a kick up the ass and got me going.

**The figure from history for whom you'd most like to buy a pie and a pint...**

Vincent van Gogh. I'd sit with him before he started painting so he could tell me what he sees.

**The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child...** Don't worry so much about what people think of you, consider how you feel about them.

**The unending quest that drives you on...** To write a great song or do something great musically. I think I've had a lot more credit than I'm due.



**The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity...** I love the purity and courage of boxing. There's something noble about it.

I used to follow Nigel Benn around the country in the 90s.

**The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again...** The guys from The Pretenders that I lost to drug overdoses [Jimmy Honeyman-Scott, in 1982, and Pete Farndon, in 1983]. I wish they were still here.

**The poem that touches your soul...** To JS by Tennyson. It's about the loss of someone and I love how it deals with the eternal nature of death.

**The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase...** I've not read anything about myself for decades, so I'm spared knowing what people think!

**The event that altered the course of your life and character...** Going to see a gig by Mitch Ryder & The Detroit Wheels in Akron when I was 14. It was like a divine intervention in my life.

**The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it...** I'd burn

every factory farm, slaughterhouse and McDonald's to the ground. I wouldn't care if I got caught. I'd hang for it!

**The song that means most to you...** I Want To Hold Your Hand by The Beatles. I heard it on the radio when I was 12 and their sound woke me up.

**The way you would spend your fantasy 24 hours, with no travel restrictions...**

I'd wake up in a rundown hotel on Copacabana beach in Rio. I'd have a piece of bread and a tankard of strong coffee before walking the length of the beach, passing an apartment I once shared with the architect Oscar Niemeyer and nod to his memory. I'd have a frozen acai berry juice and then hang out with musicians I know there, and then meditate on the rocks by Ipanema beach. Around lunchtime, I'd go to producer Björn Yttling's studio in Stockholm and bash out some songs. In the afternoon, I'd walk around Queen Mary's Garden in Regent's Park, then go for key lime pie at Chiltern Firehouse. I'd spend the evening in

'I love the purity and courage of boxing. There's something noble about it. I used to follow Nigel Benn round the country'



the temples of Vrindavan in India, then have a vegetable curry. Later, I'd see the bands Tame Impala and The Black Keys before sleeping in a hotel by the sea at Sète in the South of France.

**The happiest moment you will cherish forever...** I believe that you can choose to feel good or bad, so I try to find moments of happiness in every day.

**The saddest time that shook your world...** The earthquake and tsunami in Japan in 2011. I was profoundly affected even though I don't have a great personal connection with Japan. I felt like it was slipping into the ocean.

**The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you...** I wish I'd learnt to paint. But Van Gogh did all his work in his last ten years, so maybe there's time!

**The philosophy that underpins your life...** Stick to the plan. It's not rock'n'roll, but you get more done.

**The order of service at your funeral...** I'm fine with a church funeral with a horse-drawn carriage, but let's make them dapple grey, so it's not too sombre! They can take me out to Willie Nelson's Angel Flying Too Close To The Ground. I want to be buried in a cemetery in London – I love cemeteries!

**The way you want to be remembered...** Memories hold you back. I'm happy to fade away as people get on with living.

**The Plug...** Chrissie Hynde's autobiography Reckless is out now, published by Ebury Press, £20. ■

As told to Rob McGibbon



## PS...

Keira Knightley stars in adventure thriller Everest – in cinemas on Friday. Mark Rylance plays the King of Spain in Farinelli And The King at the Duke of York's Theatre from Monday. And David Gilmour's solo album Rattle That Lock is out Friday



## NEXT WEEK

- As Strictly returns, we meet the contenders hoping to sizzle
- Bruce Forsyth tells of the loss of his brother in a moving extract from his memoir
- Monty Don shows you how to grow figs
- PLUS Britain's best TV guide