

The prized possession you value above all others...

A vintage acoustic guitar once owned by 1950s American country artist Red River Dave. It led me to record in Nashville which convinced me to start playing live again.

The unqualified regret you wish you could amend...

Not having an in-depth conversation about life with my father before he died three years ago.

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

I'd wake up at my home in LA with my wife Anoushka and our kids Kaya, 12, and Indya, 10, and my other two boys [Sam, 24, and Django, 21, his sons by Siobhan Fahey]. I'd work out, then breakfast would be an omelette with spinach and an avocado with a triple-shot cappuccino. I'd head to my office, chip in all my ideas, then go to Seaburn beach in Sunderland for a sandwich and an ice cream sundae. I'd spend the afternoon writing songs with Mick Jagger, then pop back to the office where all my ideas will have worked! I always have a vodka martini with three olives between 7.30pm and 8pm. Today I'd have it at The Wolseley in London, before dinner at the Chateau De La Chèvre D'Or hotel in Eze, South of France.

The temptation you wish you could resist...

Taking sleeping pills. I have to take them to combat jet-lag.

The book that holds an everlasting resonance...

Dickens' *Oliver Twist*. When I ran away to London [from his native Sunderland] at 16, I lived on the streets and used to compare the characters I met to those in the book.

The priority activity if you were the Invisible Man for a day...

I'd sit in on a gossip lunch between great women who have lived a life, like Anjelica Huston and Susan Sarandon.

The pet hate that makes your hackles rise...

People who have closed minds.

The film you can watch time and time again...

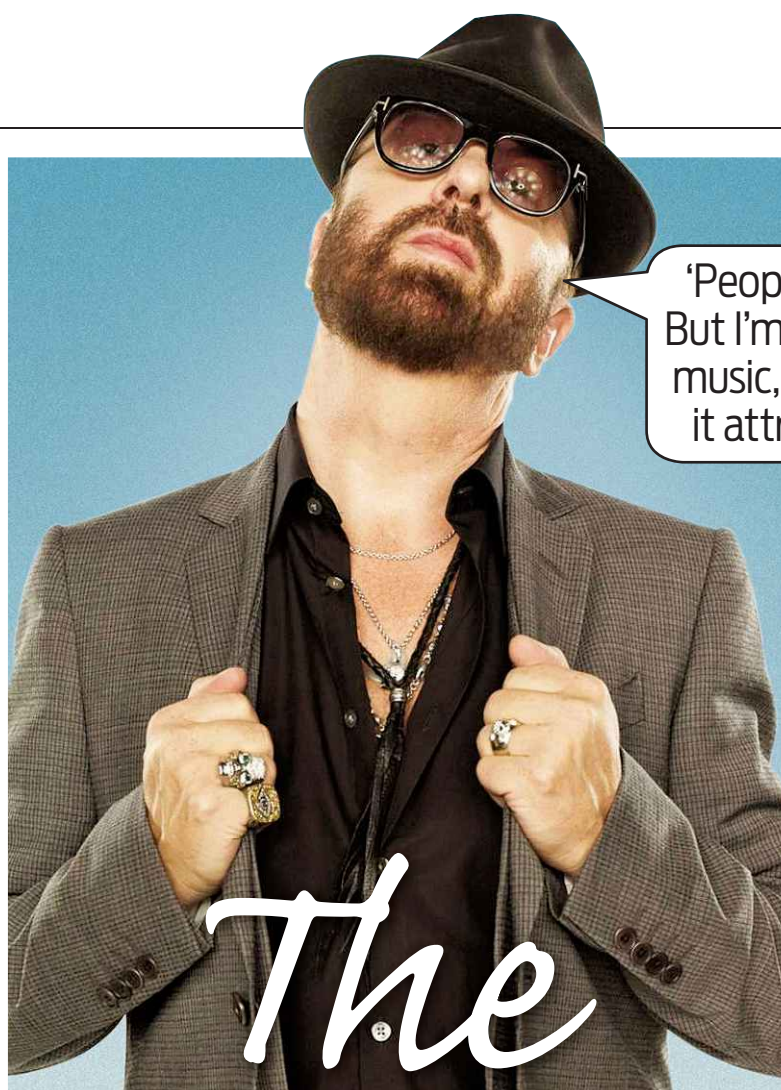
Willy Wonka & The Chocolate Factory from 1971. All my children have been obsessed with it.

The person who has influenced you most...

Nelson Mandela. I worked with him for two years to launch his 46664 Foundation. He can make the most negative thing positive.

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

The 18th-century Scottish poet Robert Burns would be great fun, but I think we'd better have a whisky.



'People think I'm a party boy. But I'm a family man who loves music, it's just that when I play it attracts beautiful women'

The DEFINITE ARTICLE

We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept THE definitive answer. This week: former Eurythmic Dave Stewart

The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child...

I nailed Rudyard Kipling's poem *If* above my boys' beds when they were growing up. It's a mantra for how to live life and its wisdom is hard to beat.

The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity...

People wouldn't expect me to be sporty, but in fact I'm a pretty good skier. I used to stand on my dad's wooden skis in the yard when I was a kid waiting for it to snow!

The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again...

An electric guitar I had made in New York in 1994. I flew back to England with it and it was stolen the next day.

The unending quest that drives you on...

To write the perfect song.

The poem that touches your soul...

I love comedic poetry, like John Cooper Clarke's take on the 17-syllable haiku: 'To convey one's mood in 17 syllables is very diffic!'

The event that altered the course of your life and character...

I was in a car crash in 1975 in Germany. I had to have a huge operation and when I woke up I had a new clarity about what I wanted to do musically.

The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase...

That I'm a gregarious party boy. I'm a family man who loves music. It's just that when I play, it attracts beautiful women.

The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it...

I'd release prisoners locked up for their beliefs.

The song that means most to you...

Ray Charles' *Take These Chains From My Heart*. When I was 12, my mum used to play it endlessly around the time her and my dad split up. I've since rediscovered it and think it's beautiful.

The happiest moment you will cherish forever...

On stage with Annie Lennox in Rome in 1989 singing *When Tomorrow Comes*. She'd been through so much, but that night she was exhilarated. [Daniel, Annie's son by then husband Uri, was stillborn in 1988.]

The saddest time that shook your world...

My father's funeral. He used to play harmonica but we never played together. As his coffin went down a tape of him playing *Danny Boy* came on and I played along on my guitar.

The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you...

To write a memoir exposing the music industry.

The philosophy that underpins your life...

Anything is possible.

The order of service at your funeral...

I'd want a service in Jamaica. Some of my ashes would be scattered on the Caribbean Sea for the pirate in me and the rest at Roker beach in Sunderland, by the Cat And Dog Steps, where my brother and I will soon scatter our dad's ashes.

The way you want to be remembered...

As someone with a sense of humour who wrote a few good tunes.

The Plug...

Dave Stewart's album *The Ringmaster General* is released on 3 September and he is on tour 3-7 September. www.davestewart.com

As told to Rob McGibbon



From top: Roker beach in Sunderland, an ice cream sundae, Nelson Mandela, Red River Dave's guitar, Willy Wonka & The Chocolate Factory, a vodka martini, Mick Jagger, Oliver Twist and Annie Lennox

PS...

Kate Beckinsale and Colin Farrell hit cinemas in the remake of Arnie's Total Recall on Wednesday. Jenny Seagrove's in Noël Coward's Volcano at the Vaudeville Theatre. And Havoc And Bright Lights, Alanis Morissette's new album, is out Monday



NEXT WEEK

- Terry Wogan's most candid interview yet
- Behind the scenes on Rupert Penry-Jones' steamy drama *The Last Weekend*
- Jamie Oliver plumps for plums with some delicious puds
- PLUS Britain's best TV listings