We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept THE definitive answer. This week it’s the turn of actor Larry Lamb

The prized possession you value above all others… A little wooden jetty, leading to a small lake, that I made at my house in Normandy. It’s precious because I used to see one just like it on my way to school and think, ‘One day I’ll have one.’

The biggest regret you wish you could amend… Not seizing the chance to see Pavarotti perform in Verona in 1987. I was there for a TV show and got an invitation to watch from the wings. Instead I went to a party and got drunk. What a cretin!

The priority activity if you were the Invisible Man for a day… I’d gather up all the religious leaders of the world to get them to stop all the suffering that takes place in the name of God.

The pet hate that makes your hackles rise… Rude, thoughtless people.

The unlikely interest that engenders your curiosity… I enjoy working with timber. I particularly love the smell and feel of oak.

The figure from history for whom you’d most like to buy a pint and a plinth… Napoleon. I’d like to understand what made him tick.

The way you would spend your fantasy 24 hours, with no travel restrictions… As a generous and decent bloke. The Plug… Larry Lamb is a guest curator of the NGC Discerning Eye Exhibition, Mall Galleries, London, until 22 November. Visit discerningeye.org.

As told to Rob McGibbon

The temptation you wish you could resist… Christmas cake. I can eat a whole one by myself.

The book that holds an everlasting resonance… The Long Walk by Slavomir Rawicz, about his escape with six other prisoners from a gulag in Siberia and their walk across the Gobi desert and the Himalayas to freedom in India. It’s an incredible testament to the resilience of the human spirit.

The enduring quest that drives you on… The search for knowledge. I’m always reading and trying to expand my mind.

The person who has influenced you most… My primary school French teacher, Miss Smith. I was rubbish at most subjects, but she inspired me to be good at French. I now speak it fluently.

The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child… Make sure you’re nice to people on the way up – because you might meet them again on the way back down!

The treasured item you lost and wish you could have again… An ancient axe head I found while digging the foundations of my Norman house about 25 years ago. It disappeared ages ago and I have no idea what happened to it.

The film you can watch time and time again… Argo, about the CIA plot to infiltrate Iran in 1980 and free hostages by pretending to make a movie – the tension is nail-biting.

The poem that touches your soul… Kipling’s ‘The Young British Soldier’ about the Afghan war of 1878-80 is so moving. It sums up the utter futility of that war with the lines, ‘When you’re wounded and left on Afghanistan’s plains, And the women come out to cut up what remains, Jest roll to your rifle and blow out your brains, An’ go to your Gawd like a soldier’.

The misapprehension about yourself you wish you could erase… People often assume I’m a hardcase because I’m 6ft 3in and polythene wrapping are 100% recyclable.

The event that altered the course of your life and character… The day I joined my running a construction business to be an actor. I was 27, living in Canada and very successful. I’m glad I had the guts to do it – my life’s been far more interesting thanks to acting.

The philosophy that underpins your life… Everything will be OK in the end.

The event that you wish you could have avoided… Not seizing the chance to see Pavarotti perform in Verona in 1987.

The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it… I had the guts to do it – my life’s been very successful.

The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you… Not seizing the chance to see Pavarotti perform in Verona in 1987.

The song that means most to you… Life Is Just A Bowl Of Cherries by Billy Eckstine. The lyrics say it all – this life is for living and for laughing.

The event you wish you could have attended… I found while digging the yard near my place in Normandy. As a generous and decent bloke.

The way you want to be remembered… As told to Rob McGibbon.

The way you would spend your fantasy 24 hours, with no travel restrictions… After breakfast on my own in Paris I’d get my extended family together [Larry has been married three times and has four children] and we’d take a cruise down the Thames to the sea, where we’d have cocktails and wrinkles. Then we’d walk in the foothills of the Himalayas in Nepal and settle down in a lodge.

The event that altered the course of your life and character… The day I joined my running a construction business to be an actor. I was 27, living in Canada and very successful. I’m glad I had the guts to do it – my life’s been far more interesting thanks to acting.

The philosophy that underpins your life… Everything will be OK in the end.

The event that you wish you could have avoided… Not seizing the chance to see Pavarotti perform in Verona in 1987.

The crime you would commit knowing you could get away with it… I had the guts to do it – my life’s been very successful.

The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you… Not seizing the chance to see Pavarotti perform in Verona in 1987.

The song that means most to you… Life Is Just A Bowl Of Cherries by Billy Eckstine. The lyrics say it all – this life is for living and for laughing.

The event you wish you could have attended… I found while digging the yard near my place in Normandy. As a generous and decent bloke.

The way you want to be remembered… As told to Rob McGibbon.

The way you would spend your fantasy 24 hours, with no travel restrictions… After breakfast on my own in Paris I’d get my extended family together [Larry has been married three times and has four children] and we’d take a cruise down the Thames to the sea, where we’d have cocktails and wrinkles. Then we’d walk in the foothills of the Himalayas in Nepal and settle down in a lodge.