The DEFINITE ARTICLE

We ask a celebrity a set of probing questions – and only accept THE definitive answer. This week: Blur bassist turned cheesemaker Alex James

The prized possession you value above all others... A Neolithic tool called a celts, which was given to me by my best friend. His mum found it in the woods in Oregon when she was little. It’s a piece of smooth granite that probably doubled as a weapon. It’s great for pounding spices.

The biggest regret you wish you could amend... I’ve made every mistake in the book, but you always learn something.

The temptation you wish you could resist... Cheese on toast in bed.

The book that holds an everlasting resonance... I love Elizabeth David’s cookery books. Some recipes are just a few lines, but they tell you everything you need to know.

The priority activity if you were the Invisible Man for a day... I’d love to poke around Coca-Cola’s HQ. Nobody knows what they put in it.

The pet hate that makes your hackles rise... Spurious exclamation marks. I never reply to emails that have more than one.

The film you can watch time and time again... Kind Hearts And Coronets, with Alec Guinness. It’s funny, but deals with the morals of greed over love.

The person who has influenced you most... My grandad, John Emrys James, was a chef and had a hotel in Bournemouth. He had me flipping rashers and whisking eggs from a very young age.

The figure from history for whom you’d most like to buy a pie and a pint... I’d love to meet Isaac Newton. He was a tricky customer but he’d be fascinating company.

The piece of wisdom you would pass on to a child... With five kids, my mantra seems to be, ‘Clean your teeth!’

The unlikely interest that engages you... I love number theory – I even watch YouTube videos about higher mathematics to fall asleep.

The crime you’d commit knowing you could get away with it... I’d export unpasteurised cheese to America, where it’s illegal.

The song that means most to you... I love our kids singing Uptown Funk by Bruno Mars and Mark Ronson in the car on the way to granny’s. And hearing 100,000 people sing Parklife in Mexico was great. I didn’t even know Blur were big there.

The way you would spend your fantasy 24 hours, with no travel restrictions... I lived out of a suitcase travelling the world for years, so the thought of flitting around different countries does not appeal to me. I’m very lucky because I get to create my own fantasy world for a long weekend every summer with The Big Feastival – a festival of food and music open to the public on our farm. My wife Claire and I bought the farm in 2003 when it was in ruins. Seeing it filled with great bands, incredible chefs, and people of all ages having a good time is the realisation of a dream. I also get to hang out with Claire and our children Geronimo, 13, twins Artemas and Galileo, Sable, eight, and Beatrix, seven, and all my best mates.

The happiest moment you will cherish forever... When Geronimo took over DJing from me at Festival last year. He was brilliant and seeing him enjoy himself was tremendous.

The saddest time that shook your world... I try never to dwell on sadness, although I get a bit upset at the sight of over-cooked steak.

The unfulfilled ambition that haunts you... I’d love to go to Antarctica.

The philosophy that underpins your life... As Churchill said, keep trying. And treat people as you would wish to be treated.

The order of service at your funeral... It would have to be a full state funeral at St Paul’s Cathedral with Carlos Kleiber conducting the Berlin Philharmonic and Chorus in the Dies Irae from Verdi’s Requiem. The eulogy will be read by my great-great-grandchild and I’ll be buried on the farm.

The way you want to be remembered... You don’t get to choose. Hogarth spent his life painting, but is now thought of as a clogged-up roundabout in west London.

The Plug... The Big Feastival runs at the Churchill Heath Farm, Kingham, Oxfordshire from 25-27 August. For tickets visit uk/thebigfeastival.com.

As told to Rob McGibbon

Right: Bruno Mars. Above right: children’s toothbrushes and toothpaste. Far right: Antarctica

PS...

Idris Elba is a gunslinger in The Dark Tower, in cinemas Friday. Broadway hit 13 The Musical opens at London’s Ambassador Theatre on Wednesday. And Van Morrison launches his world tour in Newcastle, Co Down, on Sunday.