

# The DEFINITE ARTICLE

*We ask a celebrity a set of devilishly probing questions – and only accept THE definitive answer. This week it's the turn of actress Susan George*

**The prized possession you value above all others...**

My diamond engagement ring, which I designed with Simon [her late husband Simon MacCorkindale, who died from cancer in 2010]. It was also my wedding ring and I know what our marriage meant to us both. I also treasure my beloved Arabian mare SG Amber Djewel – she was the first thing I hugged after Simon died.

**The biggest regret you wish you could amend...**

The times I spent apart from Simon. We were hardly ever apart, but if I had my life over again I wouldn't have spent a second away from him.

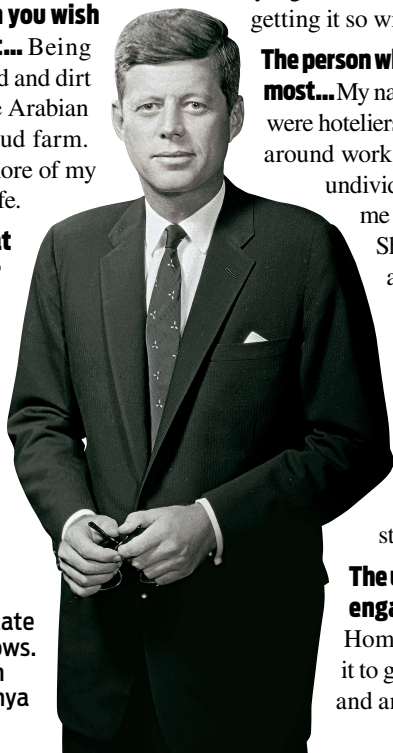
**The temptation you wish you could resist...**

Being drawn to the mud and dirt looking after the Arabian horses on my stud farm. It's time I had more of my old glamorous life.

**The pet hate that makes your hackles rise...**

How our beautiful language is being lost to modern slang and the short-form text.

Right: John F Kennedy. Above right: hot chocolate and marshmallows. Far right: African elephants in Kenya



**The book that holds an everlasting resonance...**

A collection of touching poems about love and relationships called *Will You Be My Friend?* by James Kavanaugh.

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

I would walk among wild animals in Africa, like elephants, big cats and chimps.

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

*Carousel*. It's a moving story about someone trying so hard, but getting it so wrong.

**The person who has influenced you most...**

My nanny Doris. My parents were hoteliers whose lives revolved around work, but she gave me her undivided attention. She told me anything was possible. She died about 20 years ago – the day I realised what heartbreak is.

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

John F Kennedy. I admired his strength and drive.

**The unlikely interest that engages your curiosity...**

Homeopathy. I have used it to great effect on humans and animals for 35 years.



'I love the quote, "Life isn't about surviving the storm, but about learning to dance in the rain". It's what I am, dancing in the rain'



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

Embrace every moment. Live for the here and now.

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

My ability to play the piano. I learnt during a crash course in 1988, but then I had to go away to make a film and I never picked it up again.

**The unending quest that drives you on...**

To never lose my positive attitude. My mother, Billie, called me the eternal optimist – and it seems to have worked for me.

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

That I'm serious. It's probably because of some of the roles I've played. People might not think it, but I laugh a lot and I'd love to do a comedy again soon.

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

I'd borrow someone's private jet and fly around the world with some special friends.

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

Making *Straw Dogs* [in 1971 with Dustin Hoffman] when I was 21. For all its trials and tribulations I'd do it again in a heartbeat.

**The poem that touches your soul...**

I love the quote, 'Life isn't about surviving the storm, but about learning to dance in the rain.' I wrote it out and it has been on my office wall since I lost Simon. It's what I am, dancing in the rain.

**The song that means most to you...**

What Are You Doing The Rest Of Your Life? which has been recorded by many people including Barbra Streisand. It's about spending your whole life with one person.

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

I'd swim in the South Pacific and have breakfast by the beach. Then I'd have lunch at Belmond La Samanana Hotel in St Martin and shop on Fifth Avenue in New York, stopping for a Bull Shot – vodka with spicy consommé – at The Russian Tea Room. I'd take a speedboat ride in the South of France before having hot chocolate and marshmallows in the mountains of Lech, Austria.

I'd sip Cristal Champagne as I ride in a pony and trap through the snow before a fondue supper. In the evening, I'd see Neil Diamond in concert before dancing until dawn in Brazil with my best friend Olivia, and then go to sleep at home in Exmoor.

**The happiest moment you will cherish forever...** Walking down the aisle in Fiji in 1984 to marry the love of my life.

**The saddest time that shook your world...** Losing Simon. I think of him all the time. He is with me in everything I do, but I turned a huge corner at the beginning of last year when I felt my spirit returning.

**The unfulfilled ambition that continues to haunt you...** To complete my autobiography, which I started 11 years ago. I am three-quarters through.

**The philosophy that underpins your life...** Be true to yourself.

**The order of service at your funeral...**

I want the music from our marriage blessing and Tony Bennett's *The Good Life*, then my ashes scattered with Simon's in a country churchyard.

**The way you want to be remembered...**

For being kind and caring, for my love of animals, and for always seeing the sunny side of life.

**The Plug...** Susan is dedicated to the charity Lasting Life – The Simon MacCorkindale Legacy, which raises money for people suffering life-threatening disease. Visit [lastinglife.org.uk](http://lastinglife.org.uk) and her websites [georgiaarabians.com](http://georgiaarabians.com) and [susangeorge.co.uk](http://susangeorge.co.uk). ■

As told to Rob McGibbon



## PS...

*Scarlett Johansson voices Nutmeg the dog in animated film Isle Of Dogs, in cinemas Friday. Kate Nash's new album Yesterday Was Forever is out the same day. And Vanessa Redgrave opens in The Inheritance at London's Young Vic on Wednesday*



## NEXT WEEK

- James Martin serves up succulent roast lamb and a decadent raspberry trifle in his Easter feast
- How to sow seeds now for summer colour
- PLUS Britain's best TV guide