

MEDIUMSHIP, MUSIC *and* ME

Singer-songwriter **Brix Smith Start** talks exclusively to Kate Delamere about living with Nigel Kennedy, out of body experiences, and her new life as a psychic medium

Musician Brix Smith Start, 53, is best known as the guitarist in influential British post-punk band The Fall, and is heralded as a successful female guitarist and songwriter. But few know that behind her rock and roll story is a deeply spiritual woman. Mentored by a Native American spirit guide since she was a child, she sees and hears spirit. She grew up in the Hollywood Hills where she moved between the homes of her divorced parents – fashion model mum and Beverly Hills psychiatrist dad. Her life took her from a haunted mansion owned by her mum, where neighbours included Jack Nicholson and Cher, to Manchester in the 1980s after marrying The Fall's lead singer Mark E Smith. After the end of her six-year marriage, Brix went on to have a three-year relationship with classical violinist Nigel Kennedy. She still performs with her bands Adult Net and Brix and the Extricated. She married fashion entrepreneur Philip Start, 70, in 2002, and they live in East London with their two pugs Gladys and Pixie.

You've been aware of a spiritual world since you were a child?

Yes. As far back as I can remember I had a 'friend' I talked to all the time. His name was Sandwa and I christened him 'The Indian' because he looked like Indians in my books. He appeared in my bedroom at night and his gentle voice had a calming effect on me. I never thought to question his existence, or tell my parents. One Halloween when I was about three years old, Mum asked me: 'what do you want to get dressed up as?' I said, 'as an Indian of course.' She was like what a weird thing to want to be. 'What about a ghost or a witch?' But I was adamant I wanted to be an Indian because of my Indian friend.



Rocking it at the Rebellion Festival



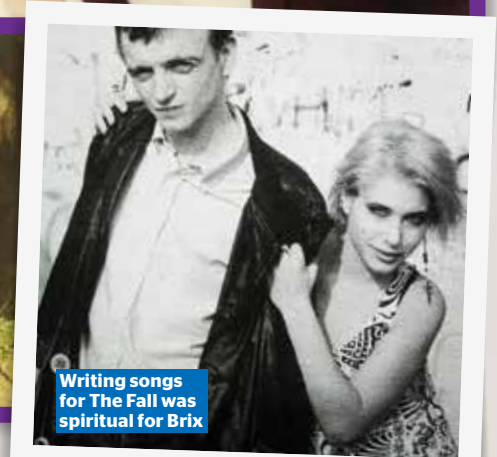
Brix had an intense connection with Mark E Smith



With husband Philip Start



Brix's childhood 'friend' Sandwa, taught her to communicate with her pets



Writing songs for The Fall was spiritual for Brix

Not only can you talk to animals but you see spirits?

Yes. After my mum Lucy and dad Steve divorced when I was two, mum moved to a mansion in Chicago with my stepdad Marvin. It was built in 1893 and the decor inside was untouched by the modern age. As soon as I stepped inside I felt a heaviness of atmosphere. It just felt creepy and I got such a bad feeling when I went in the bathroom that I backed out feeling repelled.

Every night from the age of eight, for I can't remember how many years, I'd be woken up by the cloudy shape of a young girl who'd bang on the wall by my headboard. Tuning into her energy I intuitively felt she'd died of pneumonia in our house.

When I told Mum, she thought I was mentally disrupted from the divorce and took me to see a psychiatrist. I begged her to paint my room yellow without knowing why. Only 35 years later did I learn yellow is the colour of the solar plexus, the chakra that's all about strength and power. I'd intuitively locked into the colours of the chakras to protect myself. From the time my room was painted the girl never bothered me again.

I later learned he was Native American. As I was growing up, if my father was angry at me, Sandwa would tell me how to sort it out. He also taught me to communicate with animals by giving me blocks of their thoughts in my head. Our family pets – a pony, tortoise, and several dogs and cats – would tell me how to handle them and what they were thinking. I still talk to my animals. Gladys, my pug, tells me things about people we pass when we're out for a walk, such as, 'she's angry'. Recently she told me my dog walker's husband was 'half way to heaven' and showed me a picture in my head of his body filled with fluid and the sickly yellow colour of his skin. I phoned my dog walker and said: 'hope you don't mind, but Gladys told me there's something wrong with your husband...' And she told me he'd just been rushed to hospital with a kidney problem.

You met Mark E Smith after going to a Fall gig in Chicago when you were 20, and married six months later. Did your intuition play a part in your decision to marry so quickly?

We actually first mentioned marriage a week after we met. Our connection was so intense. Up until this point in my life I'd managed to seduce a few older rock stars – it made me feel desirable and connected to the rock world.

This time it felt different. So much about Mark was alien to me but his energy felt familiar. We didn't want to leave each other. That first night we went back to his motel room, lay down on one of the twin beds fully clothed and fell asleep in each other's arms. Next morning as the sun shone through the blinds, our eyes locked. Wordlessly we removed each other's clothes and made love.

I'd found my soul mate. I didn't think twice about moving to Manchester and we married in the registry office in Bury, Lancashire. ➤



Marrying Philip
Start in 2002



Brix with her
parents and
husband

You joined the band as bass player and went on to write songs for them too. You've said that was an otherworldly experience...

In the early days, when I wrote songs for the band I didn't realise I was channelling what I now believe is a divine energy. I didn't know where these songs were coming from. They would come through me in chunks, written without thinking, and I would tingle when I wrote them. I remember playing them on stage and being transported. As a band we were so intuitively locked in, it was almost spiritual.

Sadly your marriage to Mark ended after he had an affair – you must have been devastated?

I don't want to live my life being angry at Mark – I learned a lot from him. At the end I felt him energetically pulling away from me and my marriage disintegrating. I used to imagine him cheating or leaving me. I don't know whether I manifested that and called it into my life or picked up on it as it was happening. But after he left, a friend told me he'd been having an affair. The main thing I learnt from Mark was when something doesn't feel right, it isn't. It was a hard lesson but now I always trust my gut instinct.

You later got together with violinist Nigel Kennedy, what was that like?

I'm sure he's reincarnated from some unbelievable musician – maybe Mozart! He plays every instrument and the piano to concert level. He was such fun too. We lived in Malvern, Worcestershire (1989-91) when I was in my late 20s and that's when I started opening up spiritually. It's a mecca

Nigel Kennedy and his music were part of the journey



for spiritual people, because it's believed to have a ley line running through it. I started getting into the energy of crystals, and bought a few to have around my home and did a flotation tank.

When did you fully embrace your spiritual calling?

I only properly embraced it eight years ago, after a friend asked me to go on an angel course in Wincanton, Somerset. We did an angel ceremony and I heard celestial music like an orchestra. It was as if the angels were waking me up. As I tuned in I heard the voice of my Native American friend – just a faint murmur, I couldn't make out the words. I'd rarely heard that for many years because my head was so full of chatter from my life. But I realised he'd never really left my side.

'We closed our eyes and I felt myself lift up out of my body, it was amazing'

Since then I've done a couple of spiritual courses a year, including psychic development and astral travelling. On one astral travel course a group of us pooled our collective energies so we could fly to Japan after the 2011 earthquake and tsunami, to help heal the poisoned sea off the Pacific coast. We closed our eyes and I felt myself lift out of my body. Then I flew above the building, over a wood and up through the cosmos, then over Japan and down. I said loving words to the water and flew back up into space and across to England then down into my body. It was an amazing experience.

What did you learn on your psychic development course?

That by the end of the week I'd be a psychic medium! I laughed so hard in disbelief when the woman teaching the course said it – but she was right! I learnt how to ground myself, cut cords of negativity, connect to spirits and do readings for people. I'd seen and heard spirits since I was a young girl but she taught me to handle my gift.

I started doing readings for family and friends and word got round, now I get people coming to me for professional readings. Sometimes a spirit guide, an angel or a relative, gives me information for the person. Recently I was giving a reading and I couldn't breathe. As I struggled for breath, I could see in my mind's eye an elderly woman who smoked and couldn't breathe. I later learned their grandmother died of lung cancer.

You mentioned about Nigel Kennedy being Mozart reincarnated. Do you believe we have several lives?

I believe in reincarnation, and have had loads of past life regressions but I'm not interested in who they said I was, more about the lessons I needed to remember but they're personal, I don't want to go into them here. I was destined to meet Mark and Nigel in this life and music was part of our journey. I strongly believe this is my last life on earth before moving on to be a guide. I also pick up on other people's past lives. I work in fashion with my husband Philip [he owns Start Boutique in London]. Recently one woman was trying on a polo neck and said 'I don't like the feel around my neck' – it was obvious to me she'd been guillotined in a past life and had some deep trauma in her cellular memory that needed to be healed.

Why have you decided the time is right for you to come out of the spiritual closet?

I was frightened to talk about this stuff in case I ended up as a headline in the Daily Mail – 'Brix is crazy!' Now I don't care – I'm a hundred per cent certain I was a spiritual teacher in a former life and I'm here to help others. I've never spoken so honestly about what I believe to anyone – people can say what they like – but I'm proud to say I'm a psychic medium and a super lightworker in service to wake people up. ■

WANT TO FIND OUT MORE?

Brix's autobiography *The Rise The Fall and The Rise* is published by Faber, £14.99.