

Elaine interviewing LYDIA

Lydia: So I moved to England 91, just this week, actually, went to Reading festival, I saw Nirvana, and I thought, OK, I'm staying here to learn English for one year. I was supposed to go to Spain. I just stayed 30 years and just escaped.

Elaine: So originally, you're not from Brittany ...

Lydia: I'm Lorraine, I'm from near Luxembourg. My parents are now from Luxembourg and Saarbrücken in Germany.

Elaine: So, why Brittany?

Lydia: Because I came here and most people have small amounts of teeth in their mouth, terrible cars, and they were just lovely. Within three days, three people offered me accommodation and I didn't hardly know them. Yesterday I had the keys of two people in my bag for me to go do laundry and shower, because I still don't have hot water. So, I love it. People ... I feel like I'm younger, I feel like I'm in the '80s. The fact that you see the stars, I love it. The fact that there is a British community, ex-pat community, I love it, because I feel less far from home, really, because I don't know how to be French and you know, 30 years somewhere ... I came back here and I didn't even know who to call to open the water supply, or seriously, I don't know how to take train tickets. I still think in English. I dream in English. It's just really odd.

I started bugle, it's called, I was four, my dad was at the head of marching bands, you know, military marching bands. My papa, I'm actually "la fille du Fisher," the daughter of Mr. Fisher. I'm not "Lydia" where I come from. So, I started with the bugle, then when I was nine, I did music theory, or eight. Then I was given a transverse flute. My dad was an antique dealer, as well as a musician, and whenever he'd come back from the flea market, I would get a new instrument, which I'd pick up and play. So, that was fun and I entered the conservatoire when I was eleven, I was very lucky, then I took saxophone in Luxembourg later. Piano came later, because in those days, piano was very expensive to buy, and I picked up the trombone, and the horn, which I was playing at the fair the last time. It's like a small tuba. It's a German tin horn that I was playing with palettes, we used in Gypsy music in Eastern Europe. So, I started by teaching flute, because that was my job, and music theory in schools in France, then escaped to the UK. Obviously, I was playing clarinet and saxophone, so I didn't have a television, ever. And instead of watching Netflix series, which didn't exist then, I was just playing all the time. You know, I play every day.

Elaine: So, what is your favorite instrument if you have to ...?



Lydia: The flute. My flute is in this bag. It's always with me; I always have a flute or two or three with me. And always a fife, and always a recorder, and a tin whistle under the car seat. I'm a maniac.

This band I am putting together is going to be a non-political, bilingual band. I think I've found a drummer. I need a few drummers, single element playing, not a drum kit, but a snare, and a bass drum. I want a band, I want people to join, I want it to be fun, the sort of a band where you can crack jokes, you don't need to sit there and being told off by the conductor, it's not a brass band like it used to be. So, I need trombones, tuba, small tuba, euphonium, trumpet, flugel. So, brass band, we will be playing Madness, Clash, the Ramones, some '80s school tunes from France, and the parts are already written, because I'm using all the music we've written on the computer program. I can print it, I can send some out. We start with three songs, followed by the Clash, the Specials, Gangsters, and the third one, I'll have to think. Maybe Bella Ciao, because it's easy, not because it's political, because everybody knows his song, everybody sings along.

Elaine: So where will you meet here, when you get your band together? Where will you be able to meet?

Lydia: So, at the beginning, at mine, I live in Plouguerneval, next to the château d'eau. I can audition people, I can speak to them one-to-one on the phone, on videophone. Some people won't have instruments. I've got a few instruments—I've got a glockenspiel! So, I need a pianist who can play be ear and play what he wants or what she wants. But, I'm a music teacher as well, so what I do, I've been teaching since I was 13, I am now 55, I look about 25 inside, and I act about like I'm about 14, really, apart from now I'm not embarrassed to play for the people. I was very embarrassed when I was a kid. So, I'm a flute teacher, clarinet, saxophone, trumpet, trombone, and anything looking like a tuba. I teach piano also to break free.

Elaine: So, are you going to play something for us?

Lydia: Oh, yeah! I can play something. Ah, should I do a quiz? Ok, I'm going to play something, so that's a quiz. So here, that's the first quiz. Can you guess what that is or are we just going to do it?

[Music playing]

Elaine: Kermit, the thing with Kermit, Miss Piggy.

Lydia: Yah, The Muppet Show. OK, I'm going to do a French one.

[Music playing]

Elaine: It sounds familiar, but ...



Lydia: So, you have to be from in the 80s and 90s, it's "Candy, Candy." So, you have to be French to know this one. And, should I do another one? I'm going to do a French one.

[Music playing]

Lydia: You know this -- Aux Champs-Élysées? You know that? It's a 70s classic, really. So, that's what the band is going to be, a mix of French stuff, Japanese cartoons, because they have to be pieces which will be recognised by people. If I play some obscure song by the Damned, it would not work. OK, with Brunk, we do this. OK, can you recognise this?

[Music playing]

Lydia: Do you know what that is? That's Motorhead, Ace of Spades.

Elaine: Lydia, we wish you the very best of luck and I hope to hear you again soon.

Lydia: Thank you! I can't believe I did this—I was so brave!