

# When I was 14, I would face-paint for friends

**FIRST MEMORY:** Going with my dad to buy my little (not so little now) brother a present from our local shop when he was born. I must have only been three.

Other early memories mainly involve my brother being cheeky. He hasn't changed much.

**FIRST SCHOOL:** Riverside Primary School, in Birstall. Mr Morrish told me I should be an artist one day.

**FIRST HOLIDAY ABROAD:** I was two and we travelled to Spain. My parents told me we were one of the last flights to leave the UK in the great storm of 1987. No wonder I hate flying now.

**FIRST ALBUM:** The Spice Girls – of course.

**FIRST GIG:** Melanie C at De Montfort Hall. Rock on.

**FIRST LOVE:** I loved anything creative from a young age. I remember sitting and drawing for hours with my grandad and learning to knit with my nana.

Then came my love for swimming and passion for animals and of course, the best cat in the world, Milo.

**FIRST CAR:** The "purple people eater" – a Vauxhall Corsa Merit. That got me to all my first freelance jobs in one piece. I loved that car but I now fully appreciate power steering and air con more than you can imagine.

**FIRST JOB:** When I was 14, I would face-paint for friends and family parties, although my first "proper" job was at the Disney Store when I was 16.

We had a really nice manager called Nicky who allowed me to work around make-up and special effects studies at Leicester College.

**FIRST PLACE OF MY OWN:** I moved to London when I was 18 to study at The London College of Fashion (LCF). Halls of

residence in Tooting became the first place I lived alone.

After experiencing three-and-a-half years in the "Big Smoke", I now love that I'm only 10 minutes from the beautiful Bradgate Park and amazing countryside of Leicestershire.

**FIRST JOB AS A MAKE-UP ARTIST:** As a make-up artist you have to volunteer for such a lot of unpaid work initially to build up your portfolio that I am almost unsure of my first paid job.

I worked as a make-up artist for the Tommy Hilfiger stand at the Clothes Show Live in 2002 and alongside my studies, worked for a local agency doing make-up and hair for model portfolios.

**FIRST BIG EVENT I WORKED AT:** London Fashion Week in 2004, working for LCF with the Lancome team.

It was very busy, but a real buzz to be backstage working with professional models and stylists.

**FIRST CELEBRITY I WORKED WITH:** Brix Smith Start for Gok's Fashion Fix in 2012. She was the designer/presenter for the catwalk challenge with Gok Wan.

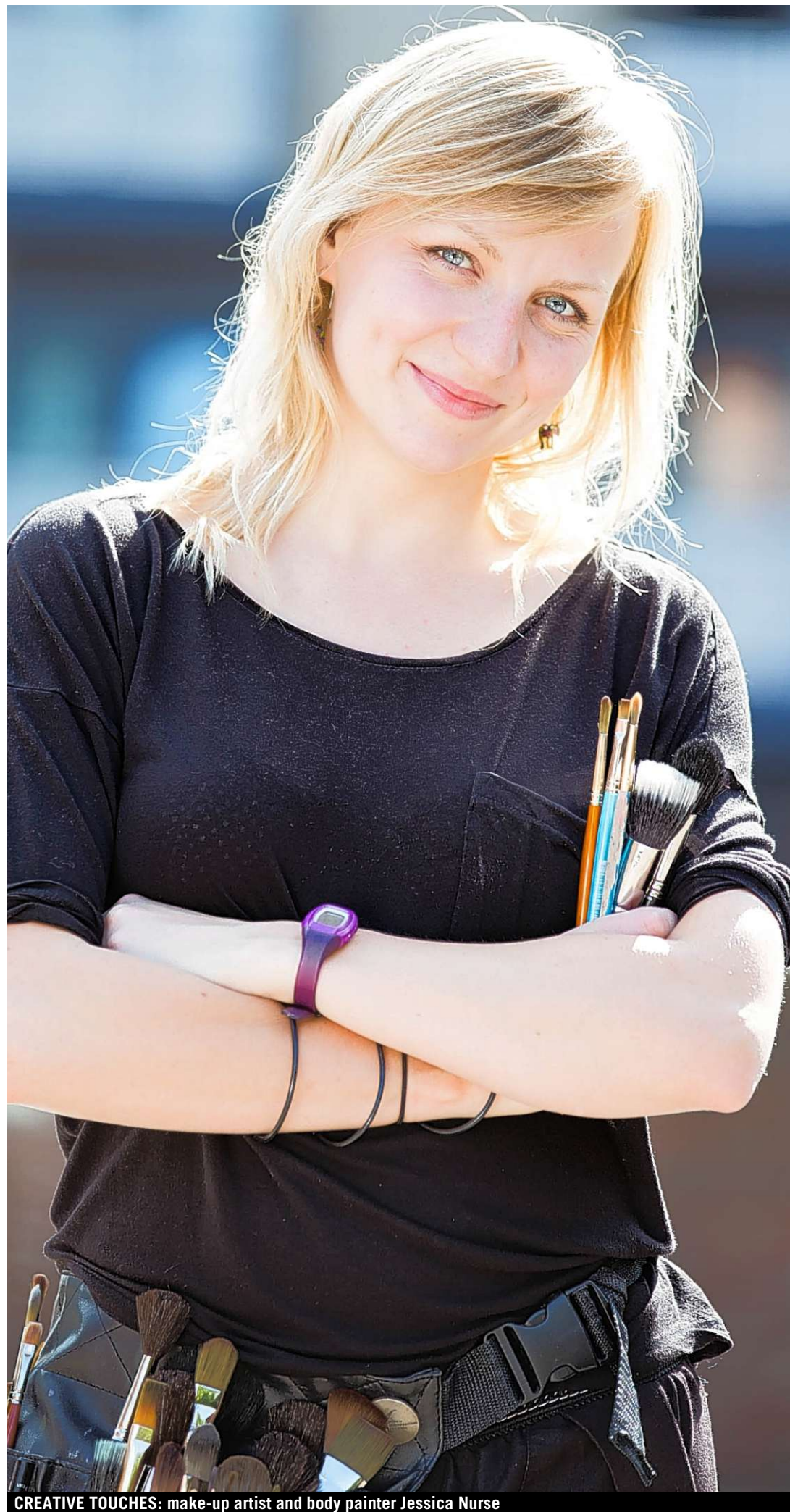
Brix is loud and charismatic and she was great to work with as she let me experiment with elaborate make-up and hair looks for the shows. I soon became her pug looker-afterer while she was on stage.

**FIRST WORLD BODYPAINTING CHAMPIONSHIP I ENTERED:** In 2006, I assisted Karen Yui, a university friend and make-up artist now based in Hong Kong. We came 12th in the full body brush and sponge category.

It was an amazing experience which inspired me to create many bodypaints and creative designs back in the UK.

■ Jessica Nurse is a freelance make-up and hair artist and body painter, who has competed at the World Bodypainting Championships.

[www.jessicanurse.co.uk](http://www.jessicanurse.co.uk)



CREATIVE TOUCHES: make-up artist and body painter Jessica Nurse