

The Actor Inside You

Baby boomers love the theater. And with good reason. The theater has always been an art form that teaches the love of culture and values that were important to baby boomers when they were enjoying those explosive years of youth during the 50s and 60s. You can see the influence of the stage even in the clothing and ways of expressing themselves that the "hippies" demonstrated when they were at their zenith.

The love of the stage and culture that has become wide spread in the baby boomer culture also reflects that this has always been a very well educated generation. The fact that such a big percentage of baby boomers either had some exposure to the arts in college themselves or from their parents has been a healthy thing for preserving this important part of society throughout the time this generation has been in charge.

For many a baby boomer the stage has held a fascination that is more than just watching a good play and being a good patron of the arts. Many feel that there is a performer inside them that wants to become part of theater history by getting up there and acting in a play with all the joys and terrors that such a big step would mean. But that shyness and unwillingness to take a chance has kept many of us from getting out there and giving it a try, knowing it could lead to disaster. While risk taking of this nature might have been easy when we were youth, it might not be so easy as adults when we, allegedly, need to preserve our pride and try not to look stupid on stage if we forget a line.

But as more and more baby boomers move toward retirement age and have the time to explore the creative side of themselves, this time of life is a perfect opportunity to get out there and take that plunge and see if you can release the actor inside to captivate a crowd with your dramatic or comedic talents.

There are plenty of opportunities around that you can give yourself a chance to step out on stage and experience that thrill of performing a theatrical piece for a live audience. Virtually every community in the country has one or many local theater groups who offer the chance for an amateur actor to try his or her wings in a small role of that next local production. In addition, many churches, colleges, art museums, improv groups and culture centers use drama as part of their programs. These are good places to try out your acting skills in short 3-5 minute skits that would take less commitment to learn and limit your time on stage so you can get your legs and learn the craft.

If you want to get involved with groups like this, it's easy to volunteer and perhaps enjoy being part of theater without getting out on stage at first. You

can help with sets, costumes and other tasks and still have the fun of rehearsals and all that back stage drama before you actually have to step out there and face an audience.

If ever there was a part of life that cried out those words that should become our mantra as baby boomers who are sprouting new wings in our later years, the theater is that place. And that mantra is WHY NOT? Why not take a chance with a part of life you have always dreamed of trying out? Retirement is a time when you say, "Hey! No more excuses. I am going to give it a try."

You have let your fears and timidity keep you from letting that actor inside you try out an actual role in an actual play for long enough. By letting that actor inside out, you may have the most fun you could ever imagine by getting out on stage and becoming someone else for a little while. And when you hear that sound of applause and you know that applause was for you, then that actor inside you will not only thank you for letting him loose, he will begin nagging you to get out there again and try an even bigger role next time. And you will be hooked for life.

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