

The Beauty of Aging, Women of a Certain Age

Submitted by [Marcia Barhydt](#) on September 13, 2011

THE BEAUTY OF AGING by Marcia Barhydt

I'm always on the lookout for information [about](#) aging, especially aging with grace and style. The more I research, the more I find about [women](#) who are aging with grace, but even more women who are aging with pizzazz, verve, chutzpah.

Here is an amazing example of women doing just that. Have a look at the movie trailer here: <http://www.beautyofaging.com/the-trailer.html>. These women are an incredible example of how wonderful aging can be if we have the right mind-set.

The Beauty of Aging is the brainchild of Laurie Schur, Director/Producer of the film (Schur Shot Productions, isn't that clever?). Laurie transitioned into documentary film in the last few years after a 25-year career as a psychotherapist. She created the idea for "The Beauty of Aging" out of a desire to find inspiring models of aging for herself and other women. Laurie works with Lisa Thompson, Director of Photography/Producer. Lisa is a producer, director, cinematographer and editor for documentaries.

This one-hour documentary explodes myths about aging with stories of active, extraordinary American women over 80. And they are a wonderful, inspirational, positive-minded group of women.

There's a mythical age past which women are supposedly headed downhill. But the extraordinary women in this film are so engaged in their activities, curiosity, creativity, and wisdom; they're redefining old age. As part of the fastest growing population in America, pre-boomers, these women forge a new trail for others. The women in The Beauty of Aging show us through their creativity, sense of purpose and fearlessness, how to stay engaged in living.

The Beauty of Aging is a film that honours the older, older women, seeing them as the wise elders that they are. Women of all ages can learn and be inspired by their stories. What if the fountain of youth springs from your head? The women who believe it's not age but attitude are aged between 87 and 102. They are all fantastic models for the attitude we all need to cultivate at whatever age we are right now.

I was able to connect with producer Laurie Schur (Schur Shot Productions, isn't that clever?) and learn more about this wonderful exploration of hers.

"After about two years of documentary education, I decided to make my own film. I was approaching my 60's and was drawn, not surprisingly, to the topic of aging. My mother died suddenly and unhappily just before her 64th birthday. I had a lot of questions and fears about my own aging. Would I follow my Mom's path? What did it take to live well into old age? Were there women who could show me the way?"

"I wanted to know their aging secrets and what qualities would help me bring meaning and substance to my own journey into old age. I was confident that this topic would be helpful to other women as well. While I wasn't yet sure what the film would be, I knew I wanted it to inspire and educate."

I asked Laurie if life was different after 80 from what is after 60. "I did find that these women – born of a different generation – seemed different than the baby boomer generation. They seem to be able to let go of things more easily and perhaps as they get older, focus on what's truly meaningful.

“I was interested in a diverse group of women over 80 who were doing well in life. I’m very close to the women – not really as mother figures – but as strong wise women whom I look at as role models and friends.”

“I asked all of them about death. Probably because of my psychotherapy background, I asked a wide range of in-depth questions about: attitude, relationships, creativity, work, money, spirituality, sex, death – to name a few.”

“Filming the women for the documentary has been an incredible gift in my life. Hedda Bolgar ,the oldest women in the film will be 102 in mid-August. She inspires me in so many ways. At age 98 she felt she was frail and hired a personal trainer. Not to mention, by the way, that she’s a psychoanalyst and still works with patients four days a week!”

“Another dynamic woman in the film is Lavada Campbell. Lavada exudes spirit, energy and self-confidence. At age 86 she is embarking on a new career into publishing. She was a hairdresser for many years and is also a Minister who does spiritual counseling. Lavada practices what she preaches. She has just finished chemotherapy for lung cancer and says that she chooses not to focus on sickness but rather sees this as another “growth spurt” in her life. She believes and lives that it is important to stay active in life and not to give up.”

“These optimistic attitudes are prevalent with many of the women in the documentary. Remembering their words of wisdom helps me at times when I am feeling less than optimistic about getting the funds to finish the film. I am also gratified by the knowledge that watching footage of the women has uplifted other people. I am happy that the film is serving my main intentions, to inspire and to educate. My passion and my commitment to the message of the film and my own transformation into a woman with more faith about the possibilities of my own longer, happier life keep me going.”

When I first heard of The Beauty of Aging and went to its website, I knew I had to write about this extraordinary woman, Laurie, and her extraordinary women in the documentary. They are all incredible examples of what may lie in store for us as we progress to ‘old old’. And there’s also a reassurance that, as always, age is so much more than just a number.

Perhaps not all of us can have the health to match these women, but we will all be able to adopt their optimism and positive attitude.

I’m a woman of a certain age and I’m certain now that aging can continue to be a positive experience.

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