



ILLUSTRATION BY DEBORAH STORER

relight that fire

Stoke up the flames in the belly, says DEBORAH STORER. After all, it's your life

Want to get back that burning desire for life? In the 1960s, Tony Lepore had a dream and that was to be an actor or a performer. However his parents told him acting was only for people who are special. So Tony buried his dream away.

As he grew up, he had pent-up feelings he didn't know how to release. Sure enough he tried. He joined the army and survived the Vietnam War, but came back still carrying this burning desire. He needed to get it out, so he took a job as a policeman in Providence, USA. It wasn't his dream, but at least it would involve adventure. He began doing night duty, however in 1981 he moved to day duty to direct traffic. He did it for two years, until one day he became bored.

He remembered a candid camera show on television where an officer in the '50s flamboyantly directed traffic. So he started to add a bit of move and groove to his routine. He added half a spin and some fancy arm movements. Before long, he grabbed the attention of the media and made the front page of the local paper: "Making Traffic Flow with Flair".

In 1984, the 'Dancing Cop' was born. Tony was on fire, absolutely enjoying himself. I guess Tony ended up being a performer after all. We all need to learn from Tony Lepore because we all have that burning desire within us. It's just a matter of letting it out. Why? Because being able to express yourself freely is the greatest need of every human.

Maybe you aren't aware of that burning desire within because you have been suppressing yourself for so long now – suppressing your emotions, your dreams and your needs. Maybe someone told you that it can't be done? Maybe someone said a long time ago that you were not good enough? Thomas Edison said: "We would literally astound ourselves if we all did the things we were capable of doing."

Imagine for one moment that you have come to the end of your life. Will you be filled with regret, wishing if only you could have had more fun and did what you really wanted to do?

Will you die with the music in you? Or will you be proud that you have lived an extraordinary life, where you had the time of your life? The choice is yours.

In the movie *The World's Fastest Indian*, based on a true story, Burt Munroe said: "If you don't have a dream, you might as well be a vegetable."

We all need to have a dream. We all need to have something to fight for.

If you don't, you die within. A dream keeps us alive! Not just existing, but really living! If you want to turn your dream into reality, it will all depend on whether you are willing to do the following:

1. Get uncomfortable. If you want to live a quality life, it will all depend on the amount of uncertainty you are willing to experience. Learn to love the unexpected and take more risks!

Will you die with the music in you? Or will you be proud that you have lived an extraordinary life?

2. Make things happen. Some people wait for things to happen, others make things happen. It's up to you to make your dreams come true.

3. Ask quality questions. Your mind is an extraordinary resource that can provide all the answers, ideas and solutions you need to live your best life.

4. Take time out. Those who rush through life miss what's most important – you! Take time out to de-clutter your mind and gain peace.

5. Believe in yourself. Even if no-one else believes in you, you need to believe in yourself. Remember what Christopher Morley said: "There is only one success – to be able to spend your life in your own way."

What is your dream? More importantly, what are you doing right now to achieve it?

Singer Jon Bon Jovi said on *60 Minutes* a few weeks back: "Some people say, 'I could've, I would've, I should've', yet I say, 'Go for it!'"

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CLOONEY STEPS OUT

As director and lead actor in screwball comedy *Leatherheads*, George Clooney proves he's more than just an 'issues' director, writes PAULA BUSTAMANTE

George Clooney may be one of the elite Hollywood stars to have earned Oscar nominations for acting and filmmaking, but the iconic heart-throb is still getting used to directing himself.

After recently missing out on a second Academy Award for his performance in the legal drama *Michael Clayton*, Clooney is back in Australian cinemas this month with his gridiron comedy *Leatherheads*.

The film is a screwball comedy inspired by the raucous early years of professional American football in the 1920s.

It marks a light-hearted change of tack for Clooney, who has earned acclaim for his performances in a string of recent weighty dramas such as *Michael Clayton*, *Good Night and Good Luck* and *Syriana*.

Clooney, 46, told reporters at a recent press event in Beverly Hills that he had been keen to make and star in *Leatherheads* in order to avoid being pigeon-holed as a politically-driven filmmaker.

"After *Syriana* and *Good Night and Good Luck*, every project that came to me was 'issues' based. Everybody was happy to let me direct but it was always going to be something political," Clooney said.

"I had a great fear of being the 'issues' director because the issues change. And I have a much bigger interest in being a director. So I thought, I want to do something completely different."

Clooney had been made aware of the *Leatherheads* project almost a decade earlier after being shown the script by long-time collaborator and Oscar-winning director Steven Soderbergh.

Bringing the film to the big screen went on the backburner

as Clooney focused on other movies before revisiting the script in late 2006 and reworking the story ahead of filming in 2007 with a cast that includes Oscar-winner Renée Zellweger and Jonathan Pryce.

With Clooney's character required to feature in a number of physically demanding sequences, the star was also keenly aware of the march of time.

"I'm 46. I realised if I don't make this film now, I'm never going to do it," Clooney said. "I was also going to play football. And it hurt. The first day I got hit by a 21-year-old."

Clooney said the experience of directing a film and starring in the lead role had been an eye-opener that he was unlikely to repeat.

"I wouldn't by design direct a film where I would play the lead ever again. It was a dumb move in some ways," he said, citing the awkwardness of having to direct co-stars while starring in the same scene as them.

"It's tricky because there's an enormous amount of narcissism that comes into play," Clooney said. "You're breaking the trust between two actors particularly when you're doing the lead and directing."

"If you and I are doing a scene together I'm not supposed to be judging you as an actor. While a lot of actors will suggest how to do something, in general it is the director who performs that role. So you're breaking that trust."

"As an actor it's easy because I know exactly what I need from a scene."

"But it's embarrassing when you're sitting across from Renée and she's doing a fantastic job, but you know that the camera has come in too close, too soon and you have to say 'cut!'."



Lights, camera, action: Clooney directs and acts in his latest flick, *Leatherheads*.