

# A QUEST FOR HUMAN IDENTITY

A One Man Show  
A Comedy

By  
Christopher Vened

cvened@gmail.com  
(323) 350-1080

CHARACTER NAME

BRIEF DESCRIPTION

AGE

GENDER

ACT I

ACTOR

Ladies and Gentlemen, welcome to my show. My name is Christopher Vened and I used to be a mime.

(The ACTOR shows what it means to be a mime by creating the illusion of a wall. He attaches his hands to an imaginary surface, one after another. He keeps his hands flat and extended by pressing the palms against the surface and spreading the fingers apart.)

But I am not a mime anymore because I've gotten old.

(Now the ACTOR becomes old. He shows it through a movement metaphor, by shrinking, crumpling, and collapsing his body part by part.)

My body has stiffened and lost plasticity that the art of mime requires.

(The ACTOR freezes in a stiffened posture. Then he relaxes and stands up comfortably in a straight posture.)

So now I talk instead of showing. But I am not entirely disabled yet. I still have some skills left. You see?

(The ACTOR again attaches his hands to the imaginary surface, both at the same time, but only for a moment, and then he makes different movements to demonstrate dexterity and skill of his hands, for example, undulating them in a wavy motion, on the horizontal plane.)

So, whenever I can, I will show you something, but when I cannot, I will talk.

(MORE)

ACTOR (cont'd)  
(The ACTOR relaxes again and stands as a talking person would.)

The subject of my show is human identity. I want to figure it out.

(The ACTOR is animated throughout the following monologue, physicalizing the text through gestures and expressions. The idea is to talk and mime at the same time.)

I have lived [the actor's age] years in this mortal world, and I still don't know who I am. Not really, not entirely. And you don't know who you are either. Not really, not entirely. No one knows it totally but the creator who made us.

(The ACTOR points up at the imaginary God in Heaven, then finds different gestural expressions for different versions of God.)

But he... or she... or it, whoever the creator is, does not let us know the secret of creation. It is unfair!

(The ACTOR addresses the imaginary creator in heaven, and then talks to the audience, in turn.)

If I knew how I was made, I would know who I am. Why does the creator keep us in darkness? Maybe the creator is dead. It is a popular notion. Whether the creator is dead or not, he behaves as such. Therefore, we have no other choice but to figure out the secret of creation on our own. So I will! I will quest and probe until I find out who I am. I know that the chances to succeed in this quest are pretty slim; all those who went before me have failed. What if I fail too? Well, so I fail. But at least I will find out something, even if not everything, about human nature. But if I succeed? If I succeed I will be like a god who knows everything.

(The ACTOR assumes a lofty pose of an all knowing god.

(MORE)

ACTOR (cont'd)

Then he becomes startled by an imaginary voice coming from above, as if from heaven, and curls up cowardly, listening to the voice.)

Did you hear that?... I hear a voice telling me that those few who claimed to resolve the secret of creation lost their minds. As Friedrich Nietzsche, for example.

(The ACTOR shouts to the imaginary creator in heaven.)

Am I suppose to be afraid because of it?

(Talking to the audience.)

I am losing my mind with old age anyway. So what's the scare? Nothing will deter me from my quest!

In my quest for human identity, I am going to use myself as a guinea pig on which I experiment. I tried to use a real guinea pig but it didn't work out. I found out that it is much easier for a human being to pretend to be a guinea pig than for a guinea pig to pretend to be a human.

(The ACTOR stands in the posture of Vitruvian Man, as drawn by Leonardo da Vinci.)

"Who am I?" I begin my quest by looking in the mirror.

(The ACTOR outlines the frame of an imaginary mirror in front of him, then steps back and looks in the mirror.)

That's me! I recognize myself in this image. Humans, supposedly, look in the mirror because they don't know who they are, so they need to see their own reflection to identify with it.

(The ACTOR poses in front of the imaginary mirror.)

Really? It is so trivial to merely identify with one's own appearance. But it is hard not to: it is the way the others see me. The first impression counts. Merely by the way I look I can either impress or depress others.

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