

## Film Review: Great Michael Shannon Performance Can't Thaw 'The Iceman'

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on May 16, 2013 - 11:15am

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Rating: **2.5/5.0**

CHICAGO – Another great Michael Shannon performance should come as no surprise as everything he touches lately seems to be interesting, from “Take Shelter” to “Boardwalk Empire” to letters written by batshit crazy sorority girls. However, his increasingly impressive ability can't save “The Iceman,” a misguided, clichéd hitman flick that careens tonally and doesn't really justify its existence. It doesn't work as thriller or as drama, serving as little more than a performance piece for its talented star.

“The Iceman” was the alias for the notorious Richard Kuklinski, a seemingly average guy who happened to be a total psychopath. The most successful people find a way to turn their skills into financial assets and Kuklinski became one of the most notorious mob hitmen of the twentieth century after crossing paths with the legendary Roy DeMeo (Ray Liotta). Kuklinski worked at one of DeMeo's porn production houses and was there when an order was messed up and DeMeo's guys got rough. Kuklinski didn't even blink. In the film, DeMeo even says, “*Guy's cold as ice*” in case you didn't get it.



[Read Brian Tallerico's full review of “The Iceman” in our reviews section.](#) [13]

However, “The Iceman” is not a story of an average guy being sucked into the glamour and financial allure of the mob. From the beginning, Kuklinski is more than a bit off. Director Ariel Vromen may start his film with a lovely first date between his protagonist and future wife Deborah (Winona Ryder) but the story quickly shifts to a billiards hall scene in which some poor schmuck decides to insult Richard. He slits his throat in the alley. And not for money. He's a maniac, plain and simple, and one of the problems with Vromen's film is that he doesn't seem to fully grasp that insanity at the core of a man who killed over 100 people. Richard wants to give his wife a better home. His father was abusive. These may be true but the modern movie justifications only muddy the waters and “The Iceman” is real dirty. Should we loathe Kuklinski? Then why turn his kills into slo-mo montages? There's not enough grit here. Not enough honest darkness – just a movie version of a maniac.



[Continue reading for Brian Tallerico's full “The Iceman” review.](#) [13]

*“The Iceman” stars Michael Shannon, Winona Ryder, Chris Evans, Ray Liotta, James Franco, David Schwimmer, Stephen Dorff, and Robert Davi. It was directed by Ariel Vromen. It is now playing in some markets and will be released in Chicago on May 17, 2013.*



The Iceman

*Photo credit: Millennium Pictures*

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