

## Film Review: Intriguing ‘Deceptive Practice: The Mysteries and Mentors of Ricky Jay’

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on June 4, 2013 - 12:50pm

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Rating: **3.5/5.0**

CHICAGO – Ricky Jay is a fascinating character. He went from a staple of late night TV on shows like “Dinah Shore” and “The Tonight Show” to a notable collaborator with David Mamet, co-starring in most of his films, to an author and performer on Broadway. The man is one of the true living masters of his chosen art form – magic. As one might imagine, getting behind the curtain of this particular wizard proves difficult for “Deceptive Practice: The Mysteries and Mentors of Ricky Jay” but the film about him remains an entertaining bio-doc regardless of the fact that the bio portion really only stays within its subject’s profession.

We get to know Ricky Jay in “Deceptive Practice” but learn almost nothing about “Ricky Potash,” the man who would change his name and become as influential a magician as nearly any of the 20th century. Ricky Jay has always and will always just exude cool confidence in what he does. So many magicians and magic acts come with an obvious desire to please. “Look at me! Look at my trick!” Jay never conveys that desperation. He’s more of the school of the old-fashioned bon vivant who would travel the world and bring sleight of hand learned along the way back to the royalty he served. There’s something infinitely relatable in that he seems like the kind of guy you could meet in a bar and something very performer-like about Jay at the same time.



[Read Brian Tallerico’s full review of “Deceptive Practice” in our reviews section.](#) [9]

How did Ricky Potash become Ricky Jay? He loved the form of magic from a very young age and has a natural confidence on stage. The documentary spends a lot of time detailing the relationships with other magicians that inspired Jay, after the subject points out that it’s always the one-on-one teaching dynamics that will do more for a budding performer than anything they could read in a book. With an impressive amount of archival footage, we see the classic magicians who inspired and sometimes even taught Jay how to be a performer – “The Mentors of Ricky Jay.” And the film wraps around nicely to show us a decades-long relationship that Jay has with a younger magician, passing not the specific tricks of the trade per se but the disciplines needed to become a master.



[Continue reading for Brian Tallerico’s full “Deceptive Practice” review.](#) [9]

*“Deceptive Practice: The Mysteries and Mentors of Ricky Jay” opens at the Music Box in Chicago on June 7, 2013.*



Deceptive Practice

*Photo credit: Kino Lorber*

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