

TV Review: TNT Spins Wheels with 'Perception,' 'Rizzoli & Isles'

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on June 24, 2013 - 5:31pm

- [Angie Harmon](#) [2]
- [Brian Tallerico](#) [3]
- [Eric McCormack](#) [4]
- [HollywoodChicago.com Content](#) [5]
- [Lorraine Bracco](#) [6]
- [Perception](#) [7]
- [Rachael Leigh Cook](#) [8]
- [Rizzoli & Isles](#) [9]
- [Sasha Alexander](#) [10]
- [Television](#) [11]
- [TNT](#) [12]
- [Theater, TV, DVD & Blu-Ray](#) [13]

CHICAGO – TNT brings "Perception" and "Rizzoli & Isles" back for new seasons tomorrow night, Tuesday, June 25, 2013, and the first episodes are unlikely to hook anyone new while also not annoying previous fans of either program. It's the definition of playing it safe. With networks like AMC, FX, and A&E pushing boundaries, it's beginning to get harder to make excuses for TNT, especially after they canceled their two most interesting dramas, "Monday Mornings" & "Southland."



Television Rating: **2.0/5.0**

Both of these shows have strong performers in their ensembles, I just wish they'd try something new instead of going down such predictable roads. Even the "witty banter" between characters is starting to feel stale. With so many options this season, I wouldn't put these two at the top of the list for your crowded DVR season passes. However, considering how well "Rizzoli" does and how little this premiere deviates from the norm, it's unlikely to slip.



Perception

Photo credit: TNT

"Perception"

"Perception" is the better of the two shows largely because star Eric McCormack has always been something of an underrated actor (his co-stars on "Will & Grace" stole the spotlight by playing broader characters). At the start of season two, Dr. Daniel Pierce (McCormack) is asked by FBI Agent Kate Moretti (Rachael Leigh Cook) to serve as an expert witness in a strange case. A killer may not really be the same

person he was in terms of not just personality but literal brain configuration as when he committed the crime. Should he do time? Scott Wolf stars as the Assistant U.S. Attorney prosecuting the case, who just happens to be Moretti's about-to-be-ex-husband.



Rizzoli and Isles
Photo credit: TNT

For a show with such potential to comment not only on its subject of how perception is subjective but by playing with audience expectations, "Perception" feels surprisingly safe. Yes, Pierce has some serious mental issues, including that imaginary relationship we learned about last season, but even those feel by-the-numbers. I want "Perception" to take risks. Maybe it will as it goes along but even the case this week with its "gotcha" twist feels routine.

"Rizzoli & Isles"

Speaking of routine, the stars of TNT's smash hit (Angie Harmon & Sasha Alexander) have figured out what their fans want to see. They love the banter between the two lovely stars, witty exchanges in which they playfully make fun of each other but secretly adore one another. They talk about their love lives, deal with their families, solve a crime, and do it again the next week.

The premiere of "Rizzoli & Isles" centers on an assassination at a parade that the stars happen to be attending while also dealing with Maura's family drama. Who shot the politician? Most audiences will figure it out almost immediately. I know I shouldn't expect Agatha Christie level mysteries here but the plotting just feels so lazy. It's like someone found an old script from an '80s TV mystery and just tweaked some character names. Like "Perception," the performers are likable but the writing just sags.

"Perception" and "Rizzoli & Isles" return to TNT on Tuesday, June 25, 2013.



[14]

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