
Sunday Star-Ledger

ATLANTIC CITY

McBride Magic - The Secret Art

Where: Palace Theater, Claridge Casino Hotel, Brighton Park and Park Place

When: 8 p.m. Mondays- Thursdays, 8 and 11 p.m. Saturdays and 7 p.m. Sundays. 3:30 p.m. matinees Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. No performances Nov. 8c11.

How much: \$20. Call (609) 340-3700 or Ticket-master (800) 736-1420.

BY CHARLES EINSTEIN

STAR-LEDGER STAFF

"Inspiration," says the award-winning master magician Jeff McBride from the stage of the Palace Theater at the Claridge, where he's the attraction through Dec. 9. "Then passion. Then mystery."

Such, he proclaims, are the basic ingredients of the magician's art. Atlantic City audiences may remember this from a decade ago when, as the opening act in a revue at the Showboat, he was gingerly breaking in a 12-minute Kabuki mask-changing act.

By now, those 12 minutes have become a 75-minute "McBride Magic" spectacular, but the masks remain essential.

Today's McBride production has a cast of five, including his recent bride Abbi Spinner, who can beat Houdini's time out of a strait-jacket, and their mentor, two-time Close-up Magician of the Year Eugene Burger, who more than likely has four



Jeff McBride is performing his magic at the Claridge's Palace Theatre

decks of cards stashed in his Kris Kringle beard.

Sleight of hand generally is another benchmark of any McBride performance. And thanks to the hands-on inventiveness of his manager, Tobias Beckwith, McBride's is one of the most arrestingly lit magic shows to be found anywhere. The interplay of lights burning red and orange and an aggressive musical track against the dark not only invigorates the rapid-fire pacing but creates just the right distractions.

Does it keep audiences from guessing how a trick is done? McBride shakes his head. "The real secret," he says, "is that audiences don't really want to know how a trick is done." He smiles. "They want to know why, not how."
