

Kevin Spacey comes out of hiding for 'Casino Jack' - USA Today

Written by Administrator

Sunday, 26 December 2010 18:44 -

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The two-time Oscar winner spends most of his time in London, where he's artistic director of the [Old Vic](#) theater. And he emerges only to hype a new release, like the political dramedy *Casino Jack*, in theaters now. Spacey just earned a best-comedy-actor Golden Globe nomination for playing disgraced lobbyist [Jack Abramoff](#).

"For me, it's fantastic. It's a wonderful surprise. I'm very honored by this because it's really the first central role I've done in about seven years," Spacey, 51, says of the recognition.

For him, wheeling and dealing in one of Abramoff's signature hats was a no-brainer: "It was an amazing part, very larger than life."

And basically the opposite of the reserved Spacey, who is known for his work and little else. Living as a private citizen, whose personal life is off-limits to the press, "really doesn't take that much effort. (People) go to the restaurants where the paparazzi are. I don't go to those restaurants. I do something I feel passionate about or something I'm supporting, so I don't show up at every opening," says Spacey.

"I'm an actor and occasionally a director. But first, I'm a human being. If you're consistent, eventually you get boring."

As anyone who has seen one of Spacey's infamous dead-on impressions of [Johnny Carson](#) or [C](#)

[hristopher Walken](#)

knows, the actor is anything but dry in person. "He kept the set very light," says his

Casino

co-star

[Jon Lovitz](#)

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. "He doesn't have a fat head. He knows how to make a scene work, and he makes you better. It's like playing tennis with someone who's better than you."

And he's quick on his feet. When asked why he kept checking his BlackBerry during a breakfast interview, Spacey makes a mock sad face. "I'm seeing if Woody (Allen) has called. (Martin) Scorsese never calls," he retorts, referring to two storied directors he wants to work with.

Spacey is a big believer in the right to privacy — with a caveat. "I don't believe there's anything about a person's personal life that's in the public interest, unless they are, you know, abusing funds, doing something that's so remarkably hypocritical that it is in the public interest that it be exposed," he says.

Certainly, that applies to the connected Abramoff and the politicians with whom he hobnobbed. The Washington power broker was involved in a corruption scandal and pleaded guilty to fraud, conspiracy and tax evasion in 2006; he's now out of prison after serving a shortened six-year sentence.

The role was irresistible to Spacey, who plays Abramoff with a mix of pathos, intensity and *joie de vivre*

. Plus, it was a way for the actor to get back in the moviemaking game after focusing on theater work.

"I spent 12 years being driven, having my own personal ambition about making it in the movies. It went better than I could have hoped. And then I went, 'OK, now what?' " says Spacey, who also has the comedy *Horrible Bosses* out next year. "I want to do something else, so I made a left turn. Over the next five years, I'll be doing more film. Now I want to begin to build the kind of work I like to do. When I leave the Old Vic, I don't want to start building then."

Spacey says he's decisive and methodical about planning his career, always looking at the bigger picture. "I don't put things in isolation. I put things in a trajectory of what am I going to be doing over the next five years," he says. "There isn't a single thing I turned down that I lost any sleep over. It hasn't been a struggle. I made a decision, and when I make a decision, that's it. The decision was everything else follows the Old Vic."

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One thing not in his five-year plan? A career in politics.

"The system is broken, so why would I knowingly walk into a system that I know doesn't work? I have no interest in it, personally, and if I want to be effective and do anything, I think I can be effective behind the scenes, as I have been and will continue to be without making myself a target. It doesn't interest me," says Spacey. "I believe in public service and I believe in education. But the idea of running for office? That holds no interest for me."

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