

JREF Appoints Jamy Ian Swiss as Senior Fellow

Written by JREF Staff

Tuesday, 05 February 2013 16:44



LOS ANGELES—The James Randi Educational Foundation (JREF) has appointed renowned magician and skeptic Jamy Ian Swiss as Senior Fellow.

Swiss is a professional magician, author, corporate speaker, and longtime skeptic activist. He has performed magic throughout the United States for organizations ranging from Fortune 500 companies to the Smithsonian Institution and made numerous television appearances in the United States, Europe and Japan, including U.S. appearances on CBS *48 Hours*, PBS *Nova* and the PBS documentary *The Art of Magic*, and repeat appearances on both *The Today Show* and *The Late Late Show with Craig Ferguson*. His work with the JREF will include helping educate the public about the intersection of skepticism and magic, and writing articles and producing educational videos on critical thinking.

"Jamy is a leading voice for scientific skepticism," JREF President D. J. Grothe said. "Not only does he have decades of experience in organized skepticism, through helping found New York City Skeptics and National Capital Area Skeptics, but he is a longtime friend and colleague of Randi's and the JREF. We are fortunate to be able to feature his important work advancing skepticism about pseudoscience and the paranormal. His *Honest Liar* features on *For Good*

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Reason have been a valuable addition to our educational efforts, and I'm excited to see that role expanded. "

JREF Founder James Randi added, "Jamy is a long-time friend of mine and of the JREF. His services at our Amazing Meetings in Las Vegas have always been well-received and appreciated by us all, and by involving him more in our work in this way, our Foundation will be even more effective in advancing scientific skepticism for the interested public. There are very few such experts on the relationship of magic and skepticism, and we're excited about this new association."

About the new role Jamy said, "I am truly honored by the opportunity to expand my longtime association with my friend and mentor, James Randi, and with the JREF. Deception is the weapon of choice for con artists and hustlers – from psychics and TV mediums to alternative medicine pitchmen – and I hope to help disarm that weapon in the constant and necessary battle against irrationality and anti-science propagandists."

Swiss began his new role at the JREF on February 1, 2013.

About Jamy Ian Swiss

According to the post-modern magic duo, Penn & Teller, Jamy Ian Swiss is "James Bond with a deck of cards for a pistol!" Swiss has appeared internationally for presenters ranging from Fortune 500 companies to the Smithsonian Institution. His U.S. television appearances include CBS *48 Hours*, PBS *Nova*, *The Today Show*, and repeat appearances on *The Late, Late Show with Craig Ferguson*.

In a lengthy profile,
The New Yorker

magazine declared, "Swiss is widely thought to have one of the most masterly sleight-of-hand techniques in the world today."

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A gifted sleight-of-hand artist who possesses, as the *Washington Post* once wrote, “a finely tuned sense of the absurd,” Swiss was born in Brooklyn, New York and after residing for many years in Manhattan, today makes his home in San Diego, having appeared along the way in performances from Hollywood's Magic Castle to Caesar's Palace on the Las Vegas Strip to the Ginza District of downtown Tokyo. His wildly eclectic resume includes stints as a marketing consultant, telecommunications firm owner, and wild animal handler. His greatest passion, though, is sleight-of-hand magic, and there are few practitioners who can match his skill and enthusiasm. With a bravado that reflects his early days performing in biker bars, Swiss blends contemporary comedy with bravura technical mastery to create a truly unique show that appeals to almost any audience. He has been called magician, comedian, artist; Swiss himself prefers the phrase “Honest Liar.”

Internationally renowned for his skills as a sleight-of-hand artist and close-up magician, Swiss has lectured to magicians in 13 countries. On stage he has performed his show of mind-reading and mentalism, *Heavy Mental*, for audiences of thousands across the United States. As a public and corporate speaker, Swiss has addressed subjects including creativity, user experience, risk management, interface and formation design, and other aspects of corporate and creative concern to firms as diverse as Evernote, Publicis, Schlumberger, Adobe, Intuit, Electronic Arts, and Shufflemaster; and also serves as on-stage host for a diverse range of business conferences.

Swiss is the author of several books including *The Art of Magic* (the companion to the PBS documentary); two collections of essays,

Devious Standards

and

Shattering Illusions

; and he collaborated with Edward Tufte on a chapter in the book

Visual Explanations

. He has produced and written for television including Penn & Teller's

Sin City Spectacular

series; and he is a co-producer of New York's longest-running Off-Broadway magic show,

Monday Night Magic

, now in its 16th consecutive season.

A renowned “skeptic” and pro-science advocate and activist, Swiss is a founder of the National Capital Area Skeptics [www.ncas.org]; a founder of the New York City Skeptics [www.nycs.org]; has spoken and performed across the U.S. on behalf of the Center for Inquiry; has been a contributor to *Skeptic* magazine; hosts the annual New England Conference on Science and Skepticism [NECSScon.org] in New York City; serves as a Senior Fellow of the James Randi Educational Foundation [randi.org], including helping to administer the foundation's Million

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Dollar Challenge, and is a regular presenter at the foundation's annual TAM (The Amazing Meeting) conference; and is featured in the foundation's podcast and webcast commentaries, *The Honest Liar*

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For more information about Jamy Ian Swiss, please visit www.honestliar.com .

About the James Randi Educational Foundation (JREF)

The James Randi Educational Foundation exposes charlatans and helps people defend themselves from paranormal and pseudoscientific claims.

The JREF's annual critical thinking conference, The Amazing Meeting, is the largest meeting of its kind in the world. Through scholarships, workshops, and innovative resources for educators, the JREF works to inspire this investigative spirit in a new generation of critical thinkers.

The Foundation was established in 1996 by famed skeptic and conjuror James Randi, who has an international reputation as a magician and escape artist, but today is best known as the world's most tireless investigator and demystifier of paranormal and pseudoscientific claims. The JREF offers a still-unclaimed One Million Dollar reward for anyone who can produce evidence of paranormal abilities under controlled conditions.

For more information about the JREF and its programs, please visit www.randi.org .