

Charlie Rose Program – Jeff Bridges

CHARLIE ROSE: There was a piece in the "Wall Street Journal" the other day about method acting famously because of Marlon Brando specifically saying that on the one hand there are actors who are more like archaeologists who sort of dig down, and then there are other actors who are like architects and they construct. And more American actors are of that type than are those method actors.

CHARLIE ROSE: I'm going to probe this for a little while. What is it, though? Is it -- what is it that gives you the gift?

JEFF BRIDGES: A lot of it is -- I look at this with what I do and exactly what actors do, the way we're talking about it as sort of like advanced pretend. Remember when you were a kid how much fun it was to pretend. And this kind of like...

CHARLIE ROSE: A higher level of pretending?

JEFF BRIDGES: It is a little higher level of that. And I remember playing as a kid the more you got into it and the more the kid that you were playing with it got it into it, you said "No, this is real," the more fun it was. And that's kind of the approach. I don't know if that has anything to do with it, but it might.

CHARLIE ROSE: It's a joy for you?

JEFF BRIDGES: It is.

CHARLIE ROSE: You seem to be halfway in between them based on what you said to me.

JEFF BRIDGES: My father was my teacher, my mother as well. And not too long ago I saw a documentary on Michael Chekhov. (Ed. *From Russia to Hollywood*, co-produced and interviews by Lisa Dalton) And all of a sudden I see my dad being interviewed in there and my mom.

CHARLIE ROSE: Chekhov, yes.

JEFF BRIDGES: And I'm realizing "Oh, that's where my stuff came from." And I remember my mom teaching me about acting, and she talked about three different ways to approach a part or a scene that you're working on.

One, do it as if you were the character and explore just how you would be in this scene. And then the other way would be do the scene that is different than yourself. What is different about the character? Is it a limp, an accent, a look with your face? You work on that.

And the second way, you mention this word "architecture." and this is probably the most important, but how that scene functions in building this -- building of the movie and what the function of that scene is, and think about that.

So there's many different ways to kind of go at it, and one of the great things about making movies is that it's a communal art form. So you get to work with all of these artists, and you get to tap into their minds, and they help you transcend your own imagination of who this person is.

So you really -- I certainly look to the director and the costumer and the makeup person. All these people add to it.