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Les Trent is a New York-based senior correspondent. He joined CBS Television Distribution's **INSIDE EDITION** in the fall of 2000. Trent was one of the first journalists to bring the incredible story of Ted Williams, the homeless man with the Golden Voice, to America's attention. He also reported the disturbing story of Jodi Barrus, the lowa High School teacher wrongfully accused and acquitted of having sex with one of her students. Trent has covered such high-profile stories as the Super Bowl, the 9-11 attacks and the heartbreaking aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. He was one of the first journalists to report from inside St. Rita's Nursing Home, where 34 elderly residents perished after being left behind during the height of the storm. Trent has covered breaking stories around the world for more than a decade. He was on the 2004 and 2008 campaign trails interviewing the presidential candidates. The New York Observer praised Trent for his insightful and persistent questioning of then U.S. Sen. John Edwards and declared that Trent "stole the show" at the presidential hopeful's Manhattan press conference. Trent has provided **INSIDE EDITION's** coverage of the Cannes Film Festival over the years, and he traveled to Rome for a Vatican screening of the CBS miniseries on the life of the late Pope John Paul II, scoring an interview with actor Jon Voight about his starring role as the late pontiff. Prior to joining INSIDE EDITION, Trent spent five years as an on-air correspondent for King World's "American Journal." He also served more than 10 years as a local reporter in San Francisco. He started his career in Buffalo, N.Y., where he has been inducted into the Buffalo Broadcasters Hall of Fame. Trent is a graduate of Seneca College in Toronto, Canada, and resides in Newark, N.J.



Co-Host JOAN BAKER

Joan is the co-creator of That's Voiceover![™] and the Society of Voice Arts and Sciences. She's a voiceover spokesperson for Neumann Microphones and the author of Secrets of Voice-over Success: Top Voice-Over Actors Reveal How They Did It. She donates all royalties from the sale of the book to the Alzheimer's Association. Joan is also featured in the following books: Daughters Of Men by Rachel Vassel (2006), Career Clinic by Maureen Anderson (2007), Put Your Dreams First: Handle Your Entertainment Business by Thembisa Mshaka (2008), Signed, Your Student by Holly Holbert (2010) and Dream Reachers II by Betty Dravis (2011). And Joan's got it goin' on as a voiceover actor: winning five Telly Awards for her narration and on-camera performances. Joan is also among the cast of narrators, playing 45 female roles in the bestselling audiobook, Those Boys Have All The Fun: The Inside World of ESPN. Other projects include promos for ABC's "The View", the Royal Wedding promos on HLN and the TBS campaign for HBO's Sex And The City series and Sex And The City 2, the movie. Other clients include Grand Theft Auto, CNN, ESPN, Showtime, Nickelodeon, Chase Bank, American Express, NICK at NITE, ABC News, CBS Sports, Lifetime, Lexus and SPIKE TV. Joan has been the announcer for numerous live entertainment venues: The Muse Awards for Women in Television & Communication, Promax/BDA, The Vision Awards, The Moving Image Salutes Will Smith and Julianne Moore and The Matrix Awards. In addition to being a working voiceover actor, Joan maintains a private coaching practice in midtown Manhattan, where she teaches advanced voiceover craft and technique, and offers career guidance for long-term business success. She works with both professional voiceover actors and newcomers, teaches part time at New York University, Western Kentucky University and The Actors Institute (NYC). Joan co-writes a monthly column for Backstage Magazine called Voiceover Exchange.

A HEAR Now Festival favorite!! www.hearnowfestival.org

HOSTED BY

DAY-AT-A-GLANCE

9:00 am Registration

Get yourselves checked in, say hello to your amazing exhibitors, say hello to friends, then hit the auditorium and fasten your seat belts for the super sonic experience of VoiceScapes.

10:15 am **Performance Palooza** By VoiceScapes Audio Theater & Hear Now Festival

Brace yourself for the sonic experience of your life! VoiceScapes Audio Theater presents a fast-aces series of LIVE original audio dramas with an award-winning cast of master voice artists. The cast: Sande Sherr. Robin Miles, Barbara Rosenblat, LJ Ganser, Sue Zizza, Butch D'Ambrosio, and Tom Curley.



11:00 am There's Money In Your Radio II Hosted by Joe Cipriano, Author and Voice Actor

This was the sleeper session of 2016, so we amped it up and brought it back for a second round. Legendary voice actor, Joe Cipriano, once again, unleashes the power of radio for voice actors, and tunes in to how to position yourself for career gains and success. Don't touch that dial. The panelist: Craig Schwalb, Pat Garrett, Nate Zeitz, Lynn Hoffman, Eric Romanowski, and David Kaye.



11:50 am What Producers Want Hosted by Rudy Gaskins, CEO & Chairman, SOVAS[™]

As a former TV executive, and Emmy Award –winner, Rudy Gaskins knows a thing or two about what producers want from voice actors. In this session, he draws out the psyche of the key gatekeepers at NBC, BET and the Today Show - revealing what you need to know about delivering performances that get noticed. Say hello to: Brooke Stelzer, Jose Prat, Miranda Patterson, Patrick Trettenero, Roderick Beltran and Val Nicholas



12:40 pm Intermission: 20 minute

1:10 pm

Microphone Mastery For Voice Actors Presented by Christopher Currier

Manager, Trade Marketing Americas | Pro Audio Solutions | Sennheiser Electronic Corporation



Is the voice actor only as good as his or her tools? Those tools include a myriad of analogue and digital devices, computer software, hardware, apps, acoustics, and more. Of course, the absolute ruler is the almighty microphone. And no one is more intimately familiar with its use, than expert Sennheiser equipment specialist and voice actor, the incomparable Christopher Currier. Christopher teaches and tantalizes as he demonstrates the magic of the microphone, and invites brave audience members on stage for some revealing experiments.

2:00 pm

SOVAS[™] Presents

2017 Backstage Vanguard Award for Arts and Humanities **Recipient: Nancy Cartwright**



Best known as the spiky-headed underachiever Bart Simpson, Emmy Award-winning voice actor Nancy Cartwright is also the unique voice behind Simpsons' characters Ralph Wiggum, Nelson Muntz, and Rod Flanders. In addition to her work on "The Simpsons", Nancy has continually expanded her acting arena, taking on the voice of Chuckie in Nickelodeon's "Rugrats" and Rufus the Naked Mole Rat in Disney's new hit show "Kim Possible" - all in keeping with her history of playing popular characters on such animated series as "Richie Rich"; "Animaniacs"; "Pinky and The Brain"; "The Critic"; "God, The Devil and Bob"; "Mike, Lu & Og"; as well as Chuck Jones' final work, "Timberwolf". In selecting recipients for this unique honor, SOVAS™ and Backstage Magazine look first within the community of people who contribute to the world of voice acting. Voice acting alone is not the key. The selection is inspired by exploring the range of ways an individual's work and life define an archetypal standard that inspires others to be their best selves. We honor Nancy's storied career as an actor, voice actor, writer, feature film producer and philanthropist. We celebrate her willingness to stand at the vanguard of what is possible for future generations. We acknowledge an artistic and humanitarian influence appreciated around the world.

Nancy's award will be presented by inaugural Vanguard Award Winner for Education - longtime friend, teacher, and colleague, PAT FRALEY. Plus, from Inside Edition, Emmy-nominated, Sr. Correspondent, LES TRENT, will sit down for a revealing one-on-one interview that may allow a bit of Nancy's magic to rub off on us all.

MIDDAY

3:00 pm – 6:00 pm **Exhibitors Reception (Fully Catered)**

Lunch and beverages will be served. Our sponsors will be out to play. They'll bring you up to date on the latest in audio technology, web design, voiceover training, news and more. Most of all, this is an opportunity to get your networking on, enjoy friends and meet new ones, and to share your knowledge and learn from others. Inspire and be inspired.

continues

DAY-AT-A-GLANCE

3:45 pm **Speed Dating With Your Demo Reel**



Roy "Uncle Roy" Yokelson hosts one of the preeminent events in all of voiceover. This is not to be missed. Ticket holders by interview only.

An exclusive one-on-one networking event where voice actors, meet in 6-minute sessions with some of the most amazing producers, talent agents, and casting directors in the business. This exclusive event admits 25 attendees who have been pre-approved. This is a fast-paced rocket

ride to that gives each actor multiple points of views on their marketing tools, career strategy and networking skills. Actors meet the people who can make an absolute difference in their careers. Anything can happen and it probably will. Sponsored by Sennheiser, Nuemann and Backstage.



3:45 pm Audition Spotlight[™] For New York's Own PIX11- Round 2



Just before what could possibly be the biggest voiceover moment in their lives, 30 finalists will step up to the mic for round two of the Audition Spotlight[™], where they'll compete for a paid voiceover booking. The winner will voice a TV Promo Campaign, be awarded a talent contract with a Vanessa Gilbert of Solid Talent Agency, and take home gifts that include a brand new MK8 Studio Microphone from Sennheiser.

4:00 pm **VO Coaches Corner**



For the first time ever, That's Voiceover!™ Career Expo brings you the Coaches Corner, where top voiceover coaches, from across the country, pay it forward by giving it away. Robin Armstrong moderates. Meet them on the exhibition floor, where you can pick their brains, drain their knowledge banks, and pump them for insight and career guidance. You have a question? They've got answers. Looking for insight to boost your career? This is your lucky day. Joining Robin Armstrong: Anna Garduñd, Dave Fennoy, Chris McGinn, Shelly Shenoy, and Joe Cipriano.



PRIMETIME SHOW

6:10 pm Get Your Brand On

From the hit news magazine, Inside Edition, Emmy nominated LES TRENT, hosts a powerhouse panel of industry pros, to uncovers the successes and failures of building a brand. Branding can be a very vague aspect of marketing, but you'll walk out of this seminar with a crystal clarity. Meet the branders: David Katz, Celia Siegal, Debra Devan, Doug Melville, Pat Fraley, and Rachael Naylor.



7:00 pm Million Dollar Voices

Author, performer and SOVAS[™] co-founder, Joan Baker, brings color, magic and opulence to the inspiring career journeys of some of our most revered voice actors. As in any pursuit, the voice actor's journey is full of both challenges and successes. And no two journeys are alike. The key to longevity would appear to be in how we navigate the challenges and appreciate the successes. Through the sharing of candid anecdotes and insights, from this very special cast, we hope to touch, move and inspire. The Cast: Bob Bergen, Debbe Hirata, Malikah Mallette, Rodd Houston, Scott Parking and Sylvia Villagran.



8:00 pm **Society of Voice Arts and Sciences** J. Michael Collins Academic Scholarship Announcement



See who wins the coveted SOVAS[™] J. Michael Collins Academic Scholarship. The entrants are all ticket holders who will be sitting in the audience awaiting the verdict of the SOVAS[™] Board of Directors. One unsuspecting attendee will hear his or her name called. The winner selected based on having demonstrated a compelling determination to achieve their dream of succeeding in voice acting, even in the face of life's hardships, and sometimes insurmountable odds. On this night, he or she will know that their dream is still alive.

8:15 pm Audition Spotlight[™]



Under the bright lights New York City, before a live audience of industry peers, with agents and producers scrutinizing every nuance of every performance, 6 talented finalists will square off for the Audition Spotlight[™] Grand Prize. But only one of them will bask in the white hot spotlight of victory. The grand prize is a paid promo booking with New York's PIX11, a talent contract with SOLID Talent Agency, a brand new MKH 8 Studio Microphone from Sennheiser, and VIP tickets to the Voice Arts® Awards 2018. What a day! I mean, really? Your questions have been answered, you've learned things you didn't expect, you met some of the best people in the business, cultivated new relationships, made new friends, and now your cup runneth over with new inspiration. Now, it's time to celebrate it all, over decadent desserts and refreshing cocktails. Unwind a little and let networking take its course. We'll see you tomorrow on the red carpet at the Voice Arts® Awards.

9:15 pm **Voice of Gods and Goddesses Reception**

What a day! I mean, really? Your questions have been answered, you've learned things you didn't expect, met some of the best people in the business, cultivated new relationships, made new friends, and now your cup runneth over with new inspiration. You're an insider. Now, it's time to celebrate it all over decadent desserts and refreshing cocktails. Unwind a little and let networking take its course. We'll see ya tomorrow on the red carpet at the Voice Arts® Awards.

10:15 pm Goodnight.





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JEANIE KHANKE Senior Director, Public Relations Muhammad Ali Center



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PATRICK TRETTENERO SVP, Partnership Creative NBC/Uni



SANDE SHERR Voice Actor Founder, VoiceScapes



BARBARA ROSENBLAT Actor/Narrator



L.J. GANSER Narrator



SUE ZIZZA Founder HEAR Now Festival



BUTCH D'AMBROSIO Writer

10



TOM CURLEY Producer/Voice Actor



PAT FRALEY Teacher/Performer Backstage Vanguard Award Winner



CRAIG SCHWALB Program Director WABC Radio







NATE ZEITZ Talent Agent CESD Talent



ERIC ROMANOWSKI Demo Producer Ear Blowing Audio



CELIA SIEGEL Talent Manager/Brand Builder Cielia Siegel Mgmt.



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VAL NICHOLAS VP, NBC News



BROOKE STELZER Producer/Writer NBC News

SPEAKERS 2017



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CHRISTOPHER CURRIER Manager, Trade Marketing Americas Pro Audio Solutions, Sennheiser



DAVID KATZ CEO Elvis Duran Group



Owner Deyan Audio



RACHAEL NAYLOR Voice Actor Founder, VoiceOver Network



BOB BERGEN Voice Actor Voice of Porky Pig



SCOTT PARKIN America's Commercial Actor DBN Talent



SYLVIA VILLAGRAN Voice Actor, English/Spanish 2-time Voice Arts® Nominee



DEBBE HIRATA Voice Actor 5-Time Voice Arts® Winner



ROY YOKELSON Demo Producer/Engineer ANTLAND PRODUCTION

JOAN BAKER Host That's Voiceover!™



ROD HOUSTON Voice Actor Voice Arts® Nominee



ROBIN MILES Voice Actor/Narrator



Sr. Correspondent Inside Edition



MALIKAH MILLETTE Voice Actor Arcieri & Associates



JEFF WILBURN Live Announcer That's Voiceover![™] Primetime



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PATRICK FRALEY'S

VANGUARD AWARD-WINNING VO TRICKS

THE TIMID PERFORMER'S MANTRA

When preparing to do an audition, we performers occasionally become concerned whether a choice we are considering making is, "too much," or "risky," even though we know of the importance of getting attention in auditions. When that occurs for you, consider this mantra -"Why not? They're already not hiring me."

VIBRATO THROAT WIGGLE

This is nothing but handy. Take hold of a little skin on the throat area around your vocal folds and gently wiggle the flesh up and down as you talk or sing. You can control the tempo of the vibrato by wiggling faster or slower. This is great for doing higher voices that would have a faster vibrato when singing.

THE STEVE MACKALL QUOTE

A constant reminder to my students and me from a wonderful voice over performer, Steve Mackall: "Doing the job is easy. Getting the job takes the skills."

WRITE LIKE A TELEGRAPH MESSAGE

Email messages did not take the place of correspondence, they took the place of "telegraph messages." Stop. Keep all your communications in email short and to the point. Stop.

START WITH THE ALMIGHTY LOG LINE

A Log Line is a brief statement that yields the basic story of a script, a piece of copy, an excerpt, even a book or a movie. It is essential that every time you get a script or any other piece of copy, you come up with the Log Line. Why? You can't realize a story unless you know it, and that's our job. A tip: Start considering the Log Line with the conflict or problem in the project. The center to all stories is conflict.

SIX WAYS TO SLEAZE TECHNIQUES

Here are six ways to sleaze up a character. Try them out using this line:

"Hey there. I haven't seen you before around these parts."

- Suck your teeth. I imagine you don't believe in flossing. Suck some air in between two teeth.
- Snort. Give a "loose snort" on your inhale. Adds that "lack of control" factor.
- Constrict. Choose a couple of words in your phrase where you constrict your throat for no particular reason.
- Drippy Nose. Do this by moving some saliva to the tip of your tongue. Press your tongue against your hard palate. Draw in air. You'll get a "frying sound." You do this at the end of a line, or after a sneeze.
- Sigh. Sigh through the whole line. It reads great for low-ball characters. Prepare for this by taking in more air than you need prior to your line.
- Repressed Burp. All it takes is to close your mouth, fill it with air rapidly while you put a bit a tone in it, then release the air out of your mouth quietly. So sleazy.

A COOL HEAD AND A WARM HEART

Fine acting comes from the heart not the head. The great 19th century American actor, Joseph Jefferson, once said, "as for me, my acting is better when I keep a cool head and a warm heart." What I gleaned from the quote is that good acting is from the heart, yes, but always with solid text analysis, which comes from the head.

NEVER PLAY THE BANG

8

12

If a sentence ends with an exclamation mark (a "bang" in the printing business), challenge yourself by coming up with a different way of giving it meaning besides just getting loud. Let all the other actors do that. I like getting very intense and guiet.

THE ALMIGHTY UNDERLINED WORD 9

Nine times out of ten, the "good dog" actor in me sees a word that's underlined in a script or in copy and "Rover" wants to say it louder than the other words. There are seven other ways of emphasizing a word: Get quieter, higher, lower, pause before, after, elongate the word, or truncate the time saying the word.

10 BILL SADLER'S "ONE THING AT A TIME" TECHNIQUE & EXERCISE

Bill, a wonderful character actor, has a reputation for playing "multidimensional" characters. He once said to me, "Pat, I can only do one thing at a time." He shared his technique.

- **1.** He figures out how many dimensions there are to a character.
- characters "multidimensional."

RAISING STAKES

We you get down to it, all mediums of performance require, "raised stakes." That's a term from gambling that infers that when there is more money on the table, the gamblers are more attentive, or "passionate". Ask yourself this question when you confront a script or copy: How high to I do raise the stakes? With an audiobook project, you raise the stake just a bit. With animation, usually a great deal. Your objective is to make your performance more passionate than the average bear.

GIVE THEM MORE THAN THEY ASK FOR

This is particularly true when you audition. Always remember that producers are thirsty men in the desert. They'll only drink a glass of water, but they want to get it out of a lake. Be a lake. After you get the job, they usually only want the glass of water from you.

(4)

5

6



2. He then "assigns" a different "read" or performance to each aspect in the text and that way he avoids generalization and does "One Thing at a Time." He lets the audience make his

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Do You Need Actor Training to Do Voiceover?

To act or not to act? That is the question.

Whether acting is "needed" to pursue a successful voiceover career is a common concern—especially among emerging VO talent—stemming from two main sources: First, acting training means time and money. Second, there are many successful voice actors who don't have acting training. Both are worth considering, but they can also be misleading, stemming from a place of scarcity.

Many non-actors are surprised and dismayed to discover that acting training is invaluable to a successful voiceover career because, aside from the extra money, it also means a longer timeline for getting to their dream job. For others, the idea of performing scenes in front of a class can be overwhelming. One of the reasons they chose voice acting was because it was off camera, so to speak.

However, the question of whether acting training is needed is an honest one. Let's look at it from a different angle: Do you need to pass the bar exam to talk about the law? Do you need a medical license to offer remedies to the sick? No. You can do both as long as they don't conflict with the law. This makes the answer to our question more conspicuous, but it warrants a more thoughtful explanation.

Just as stage acting, TV acting, and movie acting are all forms of acting, so too is voice acting. The art of voice acting starts with a script with the voice actor's



Photo Source: @mrs.kristina via Twenty20

job is to faithfully interpret the script and render a vocal performance, usually under the visionary guidance of a director.

Traditional actors have been doing voice acting since the start of talking pictures, before anyone called it "voice acting." It was a technique used to reveal what a character was thinking and as narration to enhance storytelling.

As for the many successful voice actors who do not have traditional acting training, some have developed clever tricks and gimmicks that resemble acting and work brilliantly within a narrow spectrum of performance. Others have a natural proclivity for acting and are therefore able to learn solid acting techniques on the job, becoming proficient over time.

performances. The "conversational read" is just "So why can't I just learn on the job," you ask. The answer? Competition and a revised industry trend shorthand for good acting. that demands acting skill to convey authenticity over salesmanship. Yesterday's voice actors didn't have The good news for anyone hoping to bypass acting in their pursuit of a VO career, is that taking an acting the same level of competition against trained actors. Nor were they required to recreate the level of nuance class is an incredibly eye-opening, life empowering, and subtly common in acting. Now, it's demanded by thrilling, therapeutic journey most people love more than they ever imagined. You'll learn a solid rehearsal today's market place. process, develop practical techniques, cultivate Good acting has always been required in animated improvisational skills, build your confidence, and cartoons and is one of the reasons trained actors are expand what you have to offer as a performer.

Good acting has always been required in animated cartoons and is one of the reasons trained actors are hired to do them. It's not enough to be able to create a unique character voice—the actor has to be able to stream that voice through the range of human emotions, on cue. That takes training.

Good acting suggests the performance is organic, authentic, and empathetic. The requirement for good acting has become true for commercials, promos, and video games. Consumers vehemently distrust sales people (announcers) and they don't want to be pitched by them. Consumers want to hear from "everyday" people who share their concerns.

by them. Consumers want to hear from "everyday" people who share their concerns. At the same time, video game enthusiasts don't want b-list performances from their favorite characters. They are fully invested in the gaming experience and demand the same investment from the acting. Authenticity is essential to establishing trust in your relationship with an audience; acting training allows you to develop the skills that lead to authentic



So do you need acting training to do voice acting?
To work at the highest level, yes. Will acting training enhance your expertise, and by extension, your opportunities as a voice actor? Absolutely. Is there any good reason not to get acting training? No. Do agents and casting directors give added consideration to voice actors with traditional acting training? They do, absolutely.

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VOICEOVER E CHANGE with Joan and Rudy

Is Voiceover Acting Undervalued?

When it comes to voiceover and its value, you don't have to look far for an answer. Voiceover fulfills the requirements of a global communication network the world depends on. The value of voiceover (prerecorded speech) is unequivocal. This is true on the most basic level of communicating information, not just for marketing, entertainment, and recreational use, but in emergency related industries where life and death are at stake. We're not just talking about robotic voices like SIRI.

When you incorporate "acting," as in voiceover acting, you integrating a level of skill and technique that enhances the communication, makes it clearer, more meaningful, more effective in achieving its goal. No one would argue with the importance of effective communication or the pursuit thereof. Effectiveness is the value voice actors bring to the table.

Voiceover as a communication tool, and voice acting as a means for realizing the most effective use of this tool, can be viewed together as a single, powerful aspect of human communication. Indeed, one's mind cannot hold the ubiquitous need for recorded language across the vastness of the media universe.

If you were to take voiceover out of the equation, the world would practically come to a stop. Cars would literally come to a stop because drivers are more dependent than ever on GPS to get to their destinations. Children would be dumbfounded by voiceless animated cartoons and video games. Parents and educators would lament the loss of a multi-billion dollar industry in educational toys that talk. Advertisers would depend on consumers to read their TV commercials and radio could say goodbye. Even academia would suffer as the loss of e-learning curricula would hurl it back in time.

We could go on. In fact, we encourage you to consider other ways that your life and the world is impacted by the use of recorded speech as a singularly defining feature of the 21st century. Voiceover permeates our lives like the air we breathe. And, like air, we don't think about it until it's in short supply.

Clearly, voiceover and voiceover acting is of inestimable value.

As much as we depend on the inestimable value of voiceover for global communications, the flood of people joining the ranks of professional voice acting is diluting the monetary gains across the board. It's a simple matter of supply and demand. The more people you have competing for the same job, the less monetary value the work carries. It's a sobering reality in an already highly competitive field.

Producers of multi-million dollar products will toss out crumbs for the voice actor, even though the final product cannot be completed without it. And like pigeons in the park, when the crumbs hit the ground, a flock of hungry voice actors is waiting to descend upon the pittance. You can find voice actors advertising to perform a 30-second script for five bucks! Unfortunately, this is not an aberration. The pay-to-play job sites regularly post jobs as low as \$25. Book authors strike deals with narrators to record entire books on the promise that they'll get paid if the book sells.

Far be it from us to tell anyone how to make a living, but we believe all voice actors will benefit by educating themselves about how the voiceover industry works and how they can have a role in making it work better. The problem comes into play when you have unenlightened voice actors who rationalize the



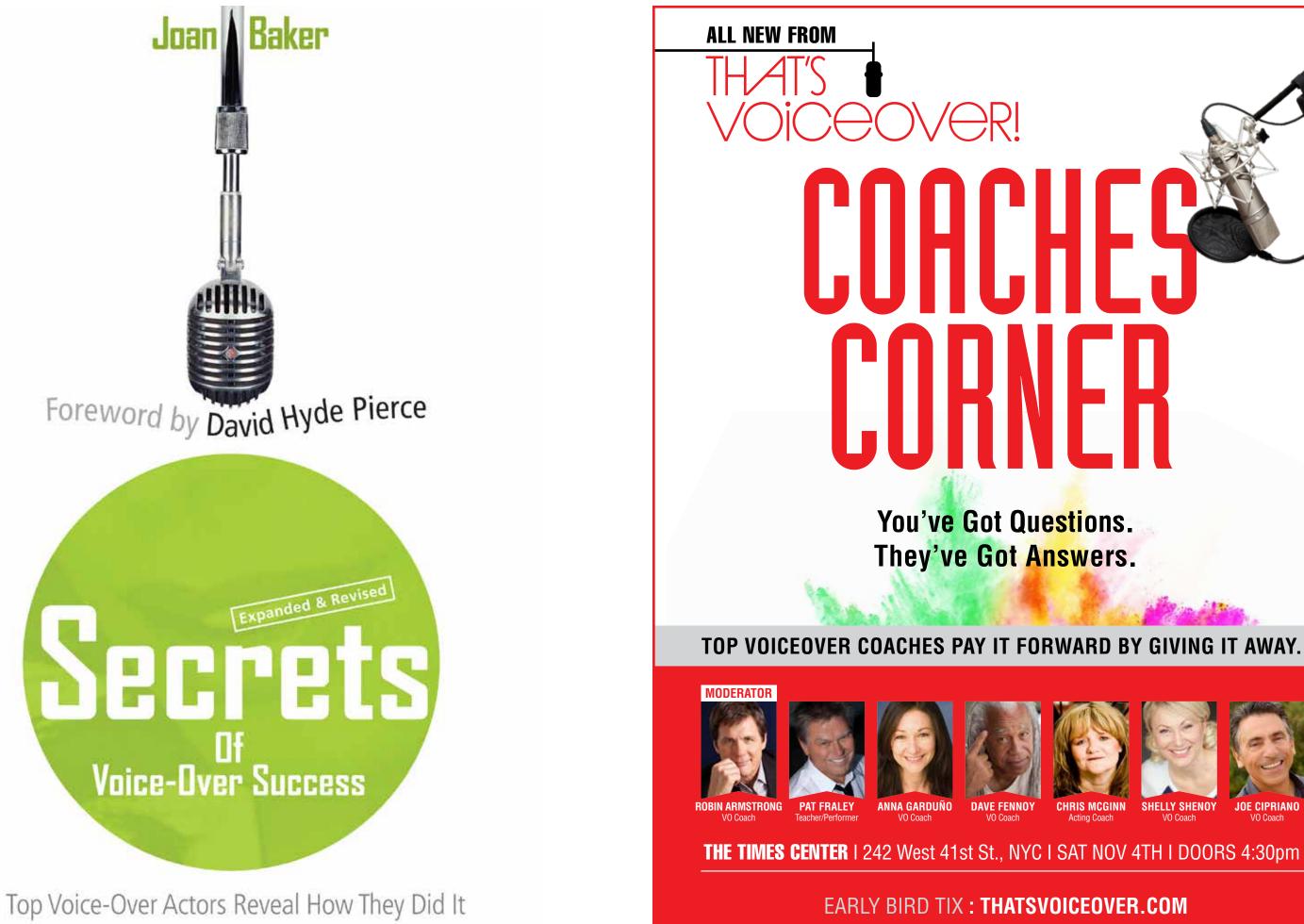
acceptance of unfair, humiliating salaries. They say, train the newcomers. As a result, there is a substantial "Someone else will do it if I don't." They say, "I'm influx of highly trained, nonunion voice actors into still training and this is good practice." They say, the hiring pool and this blunts the union's advantage, "This is more of a hobby for me. I don't care about causing the supply to outstrip the demand, leaving the money." Can you imagine if guacks infiltrated the more actors scrambling for less pay. larger medical industry, convincing the public that We don't believe there's a soap box speech that will

have everyone march to a single drum on the value of the work. Paying one's rent and feeding one's children has always won out over platitudes of worker solidarity. What we do believe is that cultivating a loving, well-meaning, and intelligent conversation about how each of us can begin to push back, will lead to positive evolutionary changes that will eventually bring about a positive result. We can teach value, integrity, and ethics as part of our industry's culture. You don't have to castigate your colleagues for not going your way but you can continue to share the vision of something with greater possibility. Gainful employment, in a fulfilling job, is a promising and a realistic goal for voice actors.

they can save on medical care? Those who lowball pricing have to be shown that they're pointing a gun at their own foot? The devaluation of the work starts with the individual voice actor. If the actors are willing to take less, they'll get less. SAG-AFTRA has fought and continues to fight for fair labor practices, including standards for salaries. SAG-AFTRA's fight reverberates so powerfully that even nonunion actors benefit from their long, hardfought battles. Even a novice can hear the difference between highly trained and untrained. Union talent continues to be the best trained and most consistently stellar talent you can find. But in today's industry, the high-guality union talent are now the teachers and coaches who



Photo Source: Terri Nicole





CHRIS MCGINN Acting Coach



SHELLY SHENOY VO Coach



VOICEOVER E CHANGE with Joan and Rudy

Why Voice Actors Should Learn to Think Like **Producers & Directors**



There are two employment hot spots in the world of voiceover acting. One is the buyer-often identified as the producer, director, or account manager—who provides the job, chooses the winning audition, and pays the bills. The other is comprised of talent agents, casting directors, talent managers, and websites that facilitate relationships between buyers and voice actors. Let's call this group the facilitators.

These two groups (buyers and facilitators) can be combined under one umbrella that covers the voice actor's employment opportunities. Though the buyer is at the top of the food chain, it's important to include the facilitators for two critical reasons. First, many buyers insist that the voice actor come through a

known, credentialed facilitator, like a talent agent. Second, even if the voice actor gets the job through direct networking, he or she benefits from engaging a facilitator to manage the administration, leaving the voice actor free to focus on the creative. Of course, there are scenarios where anything goes, but we're focusing mainly on high quality jobs with respectable

The buyer operates on behalf of advertisers, like Pixar, McDonald's, Mercedes, American Express, Random House, Starbucks, etc. These advertisers are the ultimate source of the work and their influence governs the strategy employed by the front line buyers who interact with the voice talent. What's important

salaries, long-term prospects, residuals, etc.

for the voice actor to recognize is that the buyers for buyer. The difference between how you approach a whom they audition and with whom they work, are seasoned advertising executive versus the owner of thinking about how to best accommodate the needs of a local used car dealership is in understanding what the advertiser; they're not acting in a vacuum. In this motivates each. Major brands take a macro approach to reaching large, multifaceted audiences from regard, they serve several masters, some of whom national to international. The used car dealer takes a are in the room during the recording, others who are standing by to hear the result. micro approach to reach a specific local audience.

The voice actor needn't be thinking about all these If the voice actor develops a personal brand strategy moving parts when recording a project, but a general designed to impress the major league buyers, it will awareness of the buyer's process breeds respect for the also impress the minor leagues. However, when team of which the voice actor is now a part. The buyer making direct contact with the buyer, the voice actor is usually working on several time-sensitive projects benefits by adjusting brand messaging so as not to on any given day, each requiring different voice types, undersell the majors nor overwhelm the minors. If the different writers, music composers, artists, on-camera buver works exclusively through agents, for example, actors, set designers, budgets, etc. The buyer is the respect this etiquette. This doesn't mean you can't ultimate problem solver at the center of the creative reach out directly, but make sure your agent's contact process. The problem that matters most to the buyer info is appropriately featured. Even if a job doesn't is the one that has to be solved today. immediately materialize, your agent will appreciate the new contact and remember you fondly.

Knowing this is important because it shapes the way you interact with the buyer when seeking to sell your The buyer manages both the creative and the services. When voice actors send demo reels to administrative process. However, the voice actor and the buyer, for example, they're assuming the buyer agent split these duties. The voice actor focuses on operates like an agent (or facilitator), taking the time to the voiceover performance and agent handles the administrative issues like scheduling auditions and curate and categorize voices for later use. But buvers don't do this-they hire agents for this purpose. It's the bookings and collecting payments. Because voice agent and other facilitators who must think in terms of actors are in direct contact with the buyer during maintaining a relevant stable of quality voices actors recording, they also play a critical role in cultivating from which to choose when the call from the buver a positive business rapport. Simple things like being comes in. punctual, attentive, friendly, agreeable, and flexible can mean the difference between one booking and Buyers divide into two camps: product type and twenty.

production quality. On the product side, you have Buyers and facilitators are professional marketers. They are literally sales people. They are highly acquainted with day-to-day sales strategy and tactics. Don't take their skill for granted. In fact, go out of your way to understand and appreciate what they do. When they choose you as the voice actor, it reflects on their expertise. As a voice actor, you must bring value to the table, not just gratefulness for the booking. When you book a job, you become part of a team. Be a team player. Knowing how buyers and facilitators think is the best way to earn their trust and build a lasting relationship.

the actual projects, like TV and radio commercials, audiobooks, video games, toys, radio imaging and so on. On the quality side, you have various degrees of expertise and financial support. Some buyers are highly-trained, experienced marketers overseeing global brands, while at the other end of the spectrum could be a first-time, self-published author trying to find someone to record a book for a potential royalty share. In other words, not all buyers think alike and the voice actor has to tailor his job searching tactics accordingly. Make the effort to put yourself in the shoes of the



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