

Raise Every Voice

TK Audio Hosts Act One Voiceover Class

Tom Krol, founder of TK Audio in Chicago, has been hosting a "Voiceover for Actors" class for Act One Studios; a course that provides training for both on-camera and voiceover work.

The class, which meets at Krol's studio, is run by two people who have already made it in the industry, Norm Bouch er and Anne Jacques.

Graduating with a degree in theater from Michigan State University, Krol notes that Bouch er has lots of experience as an on-camera actor and voiceover artist. He has already worked in radio, television and film. The Act One website gives Norm credit for performing in theatres such as Marriott Lincolnshire, Drury Lane Evergreen Park, Madison Repertory and Chicago Dramatists. He has also appeared on the CBS series "Early Edition," which shot in Chicago.

Jacques has been acting for over 25 years, working as an on-camera talent and voiceover artist for some time. Act One's website gives her credit for performing at the Oak Park Shakespeare Festival, Red Hen Theatre and Forum Theater. She has also appeared in "Ocean's 12"; "One Life to Live"; "Early Edition"; and the British Channel 4 release "Death of an American President."

This talent provides lots of options for upcoming actors. Krol mentions that having instructors with extensive backgrounds helps fledgling talent learn more about the field.

Krol has 20 years of experience working in the music, audio and talent fields. While working with Act One, Krol takes

on the title of voiceover producer. He says his experience with film, sound and voiceover work forces him to take a new approach to challenging students.

"I bring those years of experience so that when a question comes up in class, I give the 'this is what I've seen in my experience in studios' as sort of an answer to that question," Krol says.

An extensive music background has helped Krol aid students with their tone. Excelling on the guitar, piano and drums has landed Krol deals with Atlantic Records. The last time you were listening to music from the Xbox video game "Halo II," you may have been listening to a tune from Krol.

"When I direct for a demo, I get into producer mode," Krol says. "When I do that, I bring my experience from music in there. I have experience as a composer and as a musician. My brain automatically feels the inherent tempo in a voiceover piece, so my brain already knows what tempos would work."

These tempos also appear in the voices Krol listens to on a daily basis. Krol has the ability to use his vocal chords as an instrument. His experience as a professional singer helps him make suggestions to actors when they're having a hard time in class. This experience makes Krol more sensitive to when actors are tired because he does it himself. His background helps him to get more out of the actors.

Krol also mentions that he is keeping his expectations high for Act One.

"These actors are not people that are just taken off the street," Krol says. "They are already experienced actors that realize it is hard to break into the business. We give them the studio experience to expose them to that world of production and what it's like to work with a producer so that they're developed and ready for when the agents get them."

Krol is also looking to develop a Spanish voiceover class to complement the existing courses. "There's a lot of Spanish voiceover talent in Chicago," Krol says. "You don't have to record actors in Mexico, Miami or L.A. We already have a lot of talent in Chicago and we would like to cultivate more."

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