

# LECTURES... WORKSHOPS... SEMINARS...

All lectures, workshops, and seminars are held at Voicetrax's studios in Sausalito or online depending on the current State and/or Federal Health & Safety Mandates. We realize that with the multitude of classes to choose from it may be a bit daunting to know what curriculum strategy would work best for your specific situation. We encourage you to contact our team for guidance at (415) 331-8800. Any member of our team who answers the phone can help you identify the courses that are most appropriate for your needs at each particular stage of your training. For actual dates and prices of classes, please see the registration form in your bi-annual registration packet or on our website at [www.voicetraxsf.com](http://www.voicetraxsf.com). See page 8 for legal disclaimer.

The following courses have been ADDED or REVISED since the annual 2021 Voicetrax catalogue was first published.  
Use this mid-year catalogue in conjunction with the annual 2021 catalogue when reviewing class descriptions.



BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND!

## For Intermediate/Advanced Students

### BE A BAD MOTHERCHUCKER

**Director:** Chuck Kourouklis

**Length:** 10-hour weekend seminar

**Class Notes:** This course includes a pre-class homework assignment. Students must have home recording capabilities.

This barn burner of a seminar is part roller coaster ride, part memory jolt, and ALL an exercise in The Grand Unifying Theory for Voice Actors. Most voice-over pros are actively auditioning these weird, arcane, totally-out-of-context-one-sided character scripts. Now here's THE question: to fill in all those missing pieces and get that darn character off the page, how many of you are remembering to use the tools you've acquired over the years at Voicetrax? Like, E V E R Y T H I N G? Chuck will pry the sarcophagus open and dust off some impactful tools you might have forgotten. Get ready for "anything goes" – spontaneous improv, spontaneous direction, turn-on-a-dime changes. And when the dust settles, you'll be one bad-ass motherchucker, just like our wonderful Mr. Kourouklis. Consider the resulting swagger a free gift with purchase.

### DESTINATION TRUTH

**Director:** Melissa Gray

**Length:** 12-hour four-week workshop

**Class Notes:** This course includes homework assignments.

In this workshop, Melissa will challenge you to think, breathe and voice from the standpoint of quintessential theatre acting techniques. Develop a critical ear and increase your ability to absorb what's being offered as you take direction and make instantaneous adjustments as you navigate back and forth between monologues from plays and voice-over copy. Exercises are designed to enhance the believability of your reads and develop a fuller, richer sense of your unique individuality that the microphone cannot help but reflect! If only a significant amount of audition voice-over scripts called for real performances, so you could put all you learned in this class to practical use. Oh wait... *thaaat's riiiight, only 99% of all voice-over audition copy does!*

### DIRECT THYSELF: THE VOICE 1 2 3 VARIATION

**Director:** Samantha Paris,  
Vicki Baum

**Length:** 10-hour weekend seminar

**Class Notes:** This course includes a pre-class homework assignment. Students must have home recording capabilities.

It's common knowledge to most that have been around the voice-over industry for even a minute that self-direction is the name of the game when it comes to home auditioning, especially with the popularity of numerous online casting sites. These days you are pretty much on your own to create an attention-grabbing, competitive audition which can be a very isolating experience. But you're not alone! You'll be put through the paces of directing yourself as you pre-record scripts at home. Over the weekend, The Lovely Ladies of Voicetrax, Samantha and Vicki will provide feedback for your home recordings and take you through live performances of commercial and narration scripts obtained exclusively from online casting sites that give aspiring working voice actors a monumental opportunity to stretch, grow and book jobs on the way to signing with an agent. You may even find yourself sitting in the director's chair where you'll realize that by having to articulate a clear analysis of a script as a director for your classmates, you will gain confidence in your ability to break it down for yourself when you have to, 'cuz as a working voice actor, you're gonna have to!

### GOT GAME?



**Director:** Chuck Kourouklis,  
Brian Sommer

**Length:** 12-hour 4-week workshop

**Class Notes:** None

How lucky are we that we have two of the most accomplished & prolific video game actors in the Bay Area in our back pocket: Chuck Kourouklis and Brian Sommer! This dynamic duo have put their heads together and created quite the curriculum. Because of Chuck & Brian's extensive experience, both having appeared in League of Legends, The Walking Dead and The Wolf Among Us (*seeing a pattern perhaps?*), they are in a unique position to give you advice, guidance and direction from BOTH sides of the sound booth glass. Not only can they speak expertly on what a producer is looking for since they've booked once or twice or, oh that's right... *hundreds of times*, but they are also in a position, being actors themselves, to delve deep into the actor's process and teach you what it takes to create a memorable audition that *gets you cast*. Needless to say, this class is intensive, involving and relevant – so come ready to play!

## IMAGINATION REVISITED

**Director:** Samantha Paris, Roni Gallimore

**Length:** 12-hour four-week workshop

**Class Notes:** This course includes a pre-class and weekly homework assignments. Students must have home recording capabilities.

Did you ever wonder how your British princess or slacker boyfriend character would tackle a dog food script? Well, it's time to unleash your inner six-year-old and explore your imagination the way you did as a child. Before each of the first three weeks, you'll create a character and *then come to class as the character you created*. Inhabiting the character from every angle will stretch the boundaries of your imagination and you'll recognize you are ultimately *way* more creative than you ever thought possible. Spend three weeks digging deep with Roni into each character's backstory while performing commercial and character scripts. With help from Roni and your peers, figure out which of your three concepts was your strongest character embodiment, and perform as that character for Samantha in the final week. Commit to the character deep dive and just go for it. Stretching your acting muscles has never been so freeing!

## IMPROV FOR VOICE ACTORS LEVEL 2

**JUICED** w/Pro-level exercises!

**Director:** Anna Mathias

**Length:** 10-hour weekend seminar

**Class Notes:** None

As an auditioning, working professional, you know when you can't improvise (i.e. medical narration, television commercials, etc.), but what about when you are allowed to? Can you? What separates the contenders from the pretenders is being loose, creative and coloring outside the lines. You're an artist; did you really just read that comedic radio spot *exactly* as it's written? If you answered yes, then it's time to join Anna in this seminar designed specifically for working professionals that includes improv exercises she has performed with her celebrity buddies like Dan Castellaneta and Edie McClurg. Leap off the improv cliff, feed your imagination and be inspired to reach new heights through the magic of relaxation and playfulness. Get ready to "yes-and" your way into a variety of hilarious predicaments. Don't stay stuck in your rut. Answer the call to shake things up!

## OFF THE PAGE

**Director:** Tasia Valenza

**Length:** 10-hour weekend seminar

**Class Notes:** None

As you start to really amp up your performances to a working professional, real-world, competitive level, one of the hardest things to do is to take words that you didn't write and might not ever say, at least not in the way they've written it (*have you EVER said introducing while sharing an exciting secret with a best friend?!?*), and make them feel genuine, alive and real, aka "getting the words off the page". Professionally performing since childhood both in front of the camera and behind the microphone, Tasia will employ her tricks of the trade, literally born from a lifetime of breaking down scripts of all flavors, to assist you in digging deep to flush out the true meaning of the script while developing the skills necessary to get unnatural voice-over copy to sound off-the-cuff and true. Approach commercial scripts as "mini plays" from a true actor's perspective to get the most of out the script and your performance.

## SIDE-SPLITTING

BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND!

**Director:** Brian Sommer

**Length:** 12-hour four-week workshop

**Class Notes:** None

Often when you audition for characters either for video games or animation, you're provided with several random lines from the script, a little background information (*if you're lucky*), a brief description of the project and *maaaaaybe* a picture of the character. From that unpredictable and oftentimes minuscule amount of information, you're tasked with coming up with a fully developed character, figuring out how the unrelated lines you're provided fit into the story and demonstrating as much range as possible in the process. And how does improv factor into all of this? If you want to find out how one of the busiest character voice actors does it, join Brian for this step-by-step dissection of the character auditioning process. You'll end up with a deeper understanding of why performing characters involves so much more than just the ability to "do voices".

## TAKING ON THE PROTOTYPES

**Director:** Thom Pinto

**Length:** 10-hour weekend seminar

**Class Notes:** This course includes a pre-class homework assignment.

Producers frequently cast voices or write character specs using "prototypes" as a frame of reference. Whether they're looking for someone who sounds like the hot "celebrity du jour" or a veteran voice actor who is highly regarded within the industry but not a household name, this workshop will give you a chance to immerse yourself in a wide variety of styles while listening, duplicating, and broadening your own vocal range by "borrowing" from the most sought-after spokespeople and character actors. By mimicking another actor's syncopation, tone or attitude it will not only widen your interpretation possibilities, but it can open the door, inspire creativity and be the foundation of a whole new character for you to develop.

## THE ABCs & 123s OF TOYS

**Directors:** Chuck Wedge, Gavin Hammon, Lauren Kelly

**Length:** 12-hour four-week workshop

**Class Notes:** This course includes pre-class as well as weekly homework. Students must have home recording capabilities.

Let loose in the playground of educational toys and apps! You'll spend time with three Voicetrax Alums: Leap Frog producer, Chuck Wedge and prolific toy voice actors Gavin Hammon and Lauren Kelly. You'll learn about this genre from both sides of the glass as award-winning toy producer, Chuck will explore the development side of this industry including the different sub-genres in this field and the different roles within a specific product. Gavin, having performed literally tens of thousands of lines for toys, will review the specific skills toys demand including consistency, diction and, of course, acting! Then with Lauren, you'll explore the ever-expanding world of gibberish, made popular by The Sims video game franchise, that is a distinct and very marketable skill, that when mastered can really bring in the bookings. Lauren will take you through several exercises that will teach you how to create a creature including improvisational tools, different ages of the same character, singing, sound effects and what to do when there isn't a script at all!

## THE ACTOR NARRATOR

**Director:** Melissa Gray

**Length:** 18-hour six-week workshop

**Class Notes:** This course includes homework assignments.

How many times have you heard, it's not about your voice, it's all about the acting? *All the time*, we'd guess, but with narration, too? You better believe it. Approach different forms of narrative copy from a true actor's perspective, through various acting techniques including content, themes, emotional subtext, energy, variety and pace. Learn to investigate the given circumstances of your narration copy from the standpoint of performing it, not just vocally, but with your whole being. Work to create a strong pre-life that brings the story off the page while recalling real-life experiences to enhance emotional resonance. Heighten your awareness of phrasing and connecting more on a sensory and emotional level resulting in an increased "vocal presence." Melissa will assign each student a monologue from a play and help identify the inherent acting beats, verbal actions, subtext and arcs which you will then transfer to various forms of narrative copy that are prevalent in today's auditioning world. You will learn to "dialogue" your copy as duets so that your monologue reads will be enhanced by a quality of genuine listening and conversation.

## THE TAMING OF THE MIC

**Director:** Chuck Kourouklis

**Length:** 9-hour three-week workshop

**Class Notes:** None

If you've ever puzzled over how to show greater range and imagination in your voice acting, this class presents specific microphone techniques that can help you breathe life and variety into your performances. From practical, technical issues like how to minimize "p"-pops and over-modulation, to creative ideas on how to establish a sense of scene, create the sonic environment and define your characters, Chuck will reveal the many tricks-of-the-trade that he's developed during his 20 plus years in the broadcast and voice-over industries that will immediately take your performances from 2D to a full three-dimensional experience for the audience. It should go without saying, but we'll say it anyway: If you want to be a musician you need to learn to play the instrument, so if you want to be a rock star voice actor you need to be able to do the exact same thing with the microphone.

## THINK VISUALLY, ACT VOCALLY

**Director:** Chuck Kourouklis

**Length:** 12-hour four-week workshop

**Class Notes:** None

Now that you've built a strong foundation in the fundamentals of voice acting, there's no time like the present to start dissecting the individual voice-over sub-genres since they require different performance styles. There are many components that contribute to a stylized performance when lending your voice to television visuals. Chuck will ask you to consider all the factors visual elements add, and how you can use them to shade your performance in a distinct way. What kind of influence should a television commercial that emphasizes wide open spaces have on your interpretation? Would a tight, detail-oriented shot mandate a difference in your approach? And what kind of impact does the music make on your acting choices? And finally, what are the implications of all this on where you should position yourself on the microphone? Explore all these factors to make your performance just that much more specific as you play and have fun in the television voice-over sandbox. Ultimately, you'll be able to leverage that knowledge to be the actor that gets the script, and therefore, the actor that *gets the job!*

## VOICE-OVER ANGEL

**Directors:** Thom Pinto, Chuck Kourouklis, Vicki Baum

**Length:** 10-hour weekend seminar

**Class Notes:** None

Gain wisdom, confidence and the ability to think on your feet from this role-playing seminar as Thom utilizes his fellow directors to throw numerous different real-world recording situations at you born from his wealth of personal experiences including running a session from your home studio with a director that's inexperienced and can't articulate what they want, a producer who doesn't want to direct you live (*cuz he's just too busy*) and you're supposed to figure it all out, or what about a live session where multiple directional approaches are thrown out at you? Don't fret, you are not alone! Thom will serve as your "angel", determined to earn his wings by helping you learn to deal with adversity, uncertainty, insecurity and a host of other confidence assassins that can undermine an actor's ability to give their best performance. Feel more in control and better prepared to handle the art of self-direction even under the most challenging and demanding real-world circumstances.

## WALK ON THE WILD SIDE

**Director:** Brian Sommer

**Length:** 10-hour weekend seminar

**Class Notes:** None

Performing a dialogue by yourself is artistically unsatisfying. If you had a choice, wouldn't you rather have another actor in the booth to feed off of and react to? *Of course, you would*, but alas, this is rarely the case anymore. A multitude of factors – from technology to infectious pandemic – have driven nearly all auditioning to the home studios of voice actors and made wild lining (performing one side of a dialogue), an inescapable, yet vital part of every working voice actor's daily life. In this fast-moving seminar you'll learn to bring one-sided dialogues to life by creating shape and variety by focusing on responding to the partner that doesn't exist anywhere except in your imagination. Brian will share his tricks of the trade to assist you in making the most of your wilding opportunities.