

Name

# 2023-08-16 Pit Stop with Erin Bennett.mp3

Date

August 22, 2023

Duration

1h 14m 24s

4 speakers

Karen Commins

Anne Flosnik

Erin Bennett

Speaker5

## Start of Transcript

### **[00:00:02] Karen Commins**

I want to welcome everybody to Pit Stop. It's your fortnightly mid-week rest area to refuel your drive. I'm Karen Commins. I'm an audiobook narrator and I'm the chief cartographer for NarratorsRoadmap.com, and I'm your host for Pit Stop. With me today in the copilot seat, as always, is my lovely friend and award winning audiobook narrator Anne Flosnik, who hosts the Narrator Uplift show here on Clubhouse. How are you this afternoon, Anne?

### **[00:00:29] Anne Flosnik**

Great. Lovely to be here and excited to meet Erin.

### **[00:00:33] Karen Commins**

Yes, I haven't met Erin either. And so this is a true excitement. Exciting time.

### **[00:00:39] Anne Flosnik**

Yeah.

### **[00:00:39] Karen Commins**

Every other Wednesday audiobook narrators who have vocations beyond narration pull into Pit Stop. They're sure to inspire you to follow your interests and use all of your talents and gifts. Want to let you all know the conversation is being recorded so you'll be able to relisten or catch parts you missed. Feel free to comment in the chat and raise your hand in the app if you want to be part of the conversation because we would love to hear from you. So thanks so much to everybody for joining us and I am super excited to welcome Erin Bennett to Pit Stop. Erin is an audiobook narrator, actress, singer and voiceover artist whose passion for storytelling informs her love of narrating audiobooks. Winner of multiple Earphones and Audie nominations, her genres vary widely, with 500 titles ranging from contemporary fiction to mysteries, nonfiction to fantasy. She has performed in regional theaters on both coasts, and her voiceover work spans animation, radio plays, video games and commercials. So welcome to Pit Stop, Erin. We're so glad you're here.

### **[00:01:47] Erin Bennett**

Oh, thank you so much, Anne and Karen for having me. It's such a pleasure to be here. Yay.

### **[00:01:53] Karen Commins**

Well, I am excited to meet you. I've seen your name for so long and I'm sure we've crossed, but I don't think we've ever actually gotten to have a conversation. So the next hour is going to be a pure delight.

### **[00:02:06] Erin Bennett**

I had conversations with both of you in my mind, if that counts for anything. Oh, and I've recommended. I've sent many people to you, so, you know, maybe that's. Maybe that's just how it works. We look at each other's little avatar pictures and think about one another. And one day, one day, one lovely day. In the future, we'll actually get to meet. Yes.

**[00:02:30] Karen Commins**

And I look forward to that. But Facebook and now Clubhouse have to stand us in the meantime. You know, I saw on your LinkedIn profile that you earned your Bachelors of Fine Arts from Boston University. Are you from Boston?

**[00:02:44] Erin Bennett**

No, not at all. I'm from a little town in northern California called Napa, as in the Napa Valley, but little town. I wanted to. I wanted to. I wanted to go someplace that was. That had a strong classical theater program. The head of our program had been the head of LAMDA, which is the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Arts for 13 years. And we had an exchange program where I did part of my junior year in London. So it was it was a match made in heaven. And also, to be completely honest, I was a little intimidated by New York City. I wasn't quite ready for to to try to try my hand at a place like NYU, but Be You when I went, was one of the top the top kind of classical education acting schools. So it was a it was an intense four years. We started with 50 actors. We ended up with 17. They they do these vicious cuts and you kind of, you know, come out of it going, I survived. And then it's just in time to dump you into the real world. Um, and the out of the frying pan into the fire, so, so to speak. But I loved my time there. I learned things like the international phonetic alphabet that have served me well in my narrating career. I didn't know I was going to be a narrator back in those days, but I found that my education has served me in in every way, as in my career as an audiobook narrator. So that's a wonderful thing to look back and go, Oh, the arts education actually had some benefit. It all comes together.

**[00:04:33] Karen Commins**

What were you dreaming of at the time? Where did you see yourself going?

**[00:04:38] Erin Bennett**

Well, I think my kind of my fever dream would have been to be in, say, like a Stephen Sondheim musical on Broadway, something that required to me, you know, just the heights of of understanding text and acting and also singing at the same time. That's kind of like that's kind of like the home run derby for for me is something like that or a great play or Shakespeare doing Shakespeare for, you know, 2000 people without a microphone. Those were. Yeah, those. But but actually, as I as I got out, you know, my my fantasies and my my dreams about what I thought and acting career was going to be changed as I say, went into a recording studio for a first time for the first time. Um.

**[00:05:36] Karen Commins**

Well, tell us about that. What was that first studio experience? What were you doing there? Well, what was it for?

**[00:05:43] Erin Bennett**

I was getting ready. I was getting ready to graduate from from Bu and someone suggested to me, you should make a you should make a demo, like a commercial demo to send to radio stations or, or whatever. And I thought, okay, well, I can do that. The school has a little facility, and I went through a newspaper, went through magazines and tore out magazine copy. And then I went and went through my CD collection and picked little bits of music. And I, you know, I made my own little commercials, whatever. And I cut them together and I sent them out to I sent them out to a bunch of places and. That was kind of my first inkling by being being in a studio that. That I kind of I was intrigued. I was intrigued by what I was doing in a way that wasn't, you know, like an audition where I'm coming up to something and my heart's pounding and I'm doing 30s of a monologue. Along with 60 other people in a in a room, you know, on Eighth Avenue in a rehearsal studio and sweating through through my. Through my clothes, I felt comfortable. And creative when it was just me and my voice.

**[00:07:07] Karen Commins**

I love that story. How you used magazine articles in your own CD collection to create your own demos and then having the confidence in what you've done to actually put them out in the world. You know, so often I think we create something and then we start second guessing ourselves and Oh, no, nobody's going to listen to this. I shouldn't send it out kind of thing. And and it does kind of go against the traditional wisdom of getting somebody to produce a demo for you.

**[00:07:37] Erin Bennett**

Well, this it was probably a good thing that I you know, I have to say the caveat, this was really before, you know, 2007, 2008, when everything suddenly was online, I, I don't think I would have wanted my first attempt, my first stab at commercial copy to have been my own thing that I did when I was 22. Um, I would say, you know, my, my, my commercials and things

that I've done, I'm pretty careful about what's what's out there on the Internet because I have learned. I've learned that once it's out there, it's out there forever. And that can be that can be freeing and that can be that can also be constricting. Um, I think it's different, you know, tens of thousands of hours of probably of my voice is out there on the internet, on, on with the books that I've done. They're, they're there. But, you know, when you're, when you're competing in tight markets for for voice over work. You want it to be tight and professionally produced, that that is very different from my experience as an audiobook narrator. I actually do not have any audiobook demos really? Because. I have you know, I have so many audio books I can just link to link to samples from. So the world is kind of different in that sense from the audio book world. And I love them both, but they're different. They're different animals.

**[00:09:14] Karen Commins**

Did you move back to California from Boston and immediately start sending out commercial demos or what? How did this transpire?

**[00:09:24] Erin Bennett**

So not not immediately. Right after I graduated, I actually had a job at the at at Bu I was teaching a musical theater class for a summer program. And then I lived in New York City for about a year. And I did some I did some shows. I kind of got my my feet wet. I got, you know. I got my little baptism by fire, auditioning and just doing the doing the grind. But. Then I had an opportunity to be managed by someone in LA. And since I'm from California and actually almost all my extended family is down in LA. I said, Oh, well, sure, you know, give it a shot. Move to LA. The manager then completely disappeared as soon as I moved. That was that was such a that was such like. That's such an LA story. Like, I remember this guy took took a. I took my boyfriend at the time and I out dancing in New York City, telling us about the great management company he was opening in LA and how he was going to manage both of us. And then as soon as we moved to LA, he promptly disappeared.

**[00:10:41] Karen Commins**

It's so disheartening, though.

**[00:10:43] Erin Bennett**

Oh, my gosh. Mean that I'd actually forgotten about that for for a long time. And then and then my boyfriend at the time is now. My husband reminded me and I went, Oh my God, do you remember that? How traumatized we were by that? But oh.

**[00:10:56] Karen Commins**

Good. I'm glad it was he who reminded you and not us, because I didn't want to dredge up bad memories for you.

**[00:11:03] Erin Bennett**

No, no, no, no, no, no. This is. This is part of. This is the wonderful thing about. I love that word. Bittersweet, because the further it gets in the rearview mirror, it gets less bitter and more sweet. It just it's just a like the bitterness leaves the the the bitterness and the sting of it when it happens is so feels so all consuming. But I hadn't thought of it in years. Uh, and, and somehow it came up in conversation. I went, Oh, wow, Remember that? Remember that? Remember when that happened? Remember how how devastated we were? Do you remember how we. We had to pick ourselves up and, you know, find another way. But that's all this career has been is picking up, picking yourself up and finding another way to to various degrees of poverty and success and resilience.

**[00:11:57] Karen Commins**

So how did you make your way into audiobooks?

**[00:12:00] Erin Bennett**

Okay. So that that is that is a situation where I have to say I had pretty decent timing for once in my life. So when after we all just sort of fast forward a little bit, so, so we came to LA and I started I had the great fortune to start making some TV commercials that that were just kind of when they started to want real. People don't know if you guys remember this, but they started to really want they started to really kind of move away with some commercials away from glamor. And they started to want people who were kind of quirky and kind of naturalistic. And I made some commercials and I did some substitute teaching, and I started working in the regional theater and things were, you know, moving along and. And then I was the way I got into audiobooks was I was recording a BBC radio play for the TV show Torchwood, which I don't know if you guys remember. They filmed us, they filmed a series, they filmed a year at Paramount in L.A. And I had to go audition for this radio play. I had to audition on camera. I had to put on the outfit and the makeup and do the hair and everything and audition on camera for something that was going to be completely off camera.

**[00:13:20] Erin Bennett**

Didn't matter what I looked like except, you know, I guess in that moment I thought, Oh God, that's so la. I don't know if you can tell, but I often feel very much like a fish out of water in LA. I feel like the most non la person who's in LA, but, but I just I just have to embrace the absurdity and love it. So. So we're, we're so I was really excited because it was, I guess the cast of Torchwood. John Barrowman God bless him. He they the, I guess the Brit, the British are nuts about the radio plays still, which I love because, you know, they were recording these alongside their, you know, their on camera TV show Torchwood. So they needed the part of like an American marine biologist or something I auditioned for. I got it. I was recording it. They recorded it old school with no mikes. And you have soft scripts and everybody's in the same room recording dialog, just like you're in a movie. It's like just like an old fashioned radio play. The tech and the techniques haven't changed. I love it. And literally a producer stuck his head out toward the end of the day, asked me if I did audiobooks. I lied through my teeth, said I did. And had my first book.

**[00:14:41] Karen Commins**

Wow.

**[00:14:42] Erin Bennett**

Wow. Um, and I in a panic, I went and consulted. So. So that's. That sounds almost like it kind of happened out of the blue. I had been doing some wonderful regional theater plays with some fantastic audiobook narrators and had started to notice what do all these great actors who I'm doing stuff at the Pasadena Playhouse with and a Noise Within and these great we were doing a Noel Coward play with, um, uh, some audiobook folks. And I was like, What? What do they all have in common? The nicest actors in Los Angeles, the most talented actors in Los Angeles who were doing the plays that I love, who were taking time to talk to me and include me, you know, as I'm kind of wandering or bumbling around the Pasadena Playhouse. Who. What do they all have in common? And they all did audiobook. They all did audiobooks. So I was starting to become aware. Um. That this was something that actors I admired all had in common. And I was just getting kind of getting interested. And when I had this this experience where I was kind of dropped into doing my first audiobook, um. And I remembered at lunch. I remember Martin Jarvis was in the break room and his wife, Rosalind Ayres, who of course, I've grown up listening to both of them, and my jaw was just kind of on the floor. Um, we're all eating, all eating lunch together, you know, like, it was a perfectly ordinary day. And I remember that first day I went home and I felt like I had been beaten up. My. My whole body was just. Saw. And I thought, What? What am I doing? You know what? I'm in way over my head. Um, this is. This is bad. This is this is how can anybody do this? And then, you know, by the fifth day, the final day, um. I think I thought, well, that's it, You know, that's that's the end of that.

**[00:16:54] Karen Commins**

It was fun while it lasted. It was fun.

**[00:16:56] Erin Bennett**

While it lasted.

**[00:16:57] Karen Commins**

And maybe not so fun because you felt beat up, I'm sure because of all the tension you were holding in your body of, you know, feeling nervous or they're watching or all those feelings that we all relate to.

**[00:17:10] Erin Bennett**

I didn't know where to put, you know, I was worried about my my P's and my, you know, and my characterization. And, you know, I had to really cram reading the book. And it was so all consuming. Yeah. And I guess it was, you know, it was a serious job. And a serious job that requires absolute focus. But but flexible focus. You know, like you have to be there giving a performance, but you have to be relaxed enough to to survive it.

**[00:17:50] Karen Commins**

Well. So obviously the fun wasn't over because that may have been the first, but we know it wasn't the last.

**[00:17:57] Erin Bennett**

I know, I know. It's so funny. I'm coming up on like five, 500 or something. It's it's a I started in that first book. I'll never forget it. It was June of 2012. You know how some dates are just kind of in there? That was that was the day my first my first book and I think it was reviewed an audio file, you know, it was like it was I was like, oh, man, you know, talk about talk about just being dropped into it. I was learning on the job. I this was during a time when there was a huge surge in demand for audio. I think this was audible was suddenly putting out huge swaths of content and content. I'm not saying that word anymore of of

book of Books, you know, And there was a huge demand. And I just happened to be an actress working in the next. Room over, you know, from someone who, you know, was can you can you do this? You know, I'm sure I'm sure they were pelting him with projects. I think people started to get overwhelmed with, you know, oh, we got to do this and we got to do this, we got to do this. And they needed people and. Yeah, I was I was very fortunate to start start during that time. I'm, I'm very I'm very sensible of the. That the timing was good. And when I think of all all the other things I've wanted to do, you know, and things that I've loved and that have happened and haven't happened and oh, wouldn't it have been great to, you know, grow up doing Clifford Odets plays in the 1930 feeling like you're born in the wrong time, or that there's something about your talents that don't line up with what's happening in the culture. Yes. Um. I got lucky. I got lucky. That. They needed people and I was there. But you still what it comes down to? No, no, no, no.

**[00:20:01] Anne Flosnik**

Because you're still here, Erin. And that takes talent. You know, all these years and all the changes that you've seen in your career, because it's not static from starting in 2012. There's the whole digital revolution and goodness knows what.

**[00:20:15] Erin Bennett**

That's right. You're. Yes, absolutely.

**[00:20:20] Karen Commins**

I want to go back for a second. You said I'm not using the word "content" anymore. And this is kind of this is kind of jumping around a little bit. But I know you were quoted today in a Washington Post article titled AI is Coming for your audiobooks. You should be worried. Does that have to do with your sentence? I'm not saying the word content anymore.

**[00:20:42] Erin Bennett**

You know, I see stuff just comes out of my mouth and I don't know. Well, because I'm.

**[00:20:47] Karen Commins**

Thinking maybe I shouldn't talk about making content either. So I'm curious why you said that. You know.

**[00:20:52] Erin Bennett**

What? I'm glad you mentioned it. I because I have been following, you know, I'm on I'm striking with our with our fellow Sag-aftra brethren and our writers with the WGA who are have been making really salient points about about when everything is reduced to the concept of content that this is just stuff to fill. To, you know, to to fill a void, you know, that it's not a book or it's not a screenplay or a teleplay or or a novel that that let's call these things. Let's give them the honor and the dignity of what they are. You know, works of art, an article, a poem, a play, a playwright. You know, these like I, I forget sometimes that words have meaning. That they really have meaning. They have Uber meaning and. And I mean that in the original sense of the word. Not like ubermensch not, not, not, not Uber of the car. So trying to like get back to brass tacks and go, what? What do I do? Do I narrate content? Do I create hours of content that can then be manipulated and know I'm narrating an audiobook? I'm an actor who's narrating an audiobook. This is somebody's work. This is somebody's livelihood. And this is my work and my livelihood, too. So I'm just trying to be more circumspect and not use not use the words of, you know, I'm not just grist for some some mill, some content mill. We're not. We're artists and we're. We're creating. We're creating. Things that are that have value. And I just want to. That's my long way of saying, you know, I want to try to be conscious about the words that I use when they're important. Yes.

**[00:22:52] Karen Commins**

I really like that philosophy. You know, I split my time between being a narrator and being a website owner, but I develop a lot of stuff for that site. Like right now I'm working on creating a video course. I mean, it's going from a thought in my mind to an actual thing that people can use, and I have thought of it as content and I love what you just said because that really does diminish it. I mean, it's taking me hours, weeks, months, and it diminishes the work that's going into it, the thought, the creativity. And now you've got me. I'm not going to say content anymore either, so.

**[00:23:37] Erin Bennett**

Well, didn't know I was going to suddenly put a ban on the word content for myself until it flew out of my mouth. Well, we're all.

**[00:23:42] Karen Commins**

Going to raise that banner now. It's like, no, it's not content.

**[00:23:45] Erin Bennett**

But why not? Like, let's let's make it not content. Let's let's talk about what you're creating. And there's there's so much noise. There's so much noise on everywhere we look on on these devices that we hold in our pockets. And I feel like I'm surrounded by content, but I'm if I know what's good for me, I'm looking for something of quality. And that's what I should be putting in my brain and my in my consciousness and your videos that are carefully curated and and and crafted. Um, you know, I don't want a class that with. You know, some of this junk that just kind of keeps me clicking around mindlessly click bait. Yes. Yeah, yeah.

**[00:24:38] Karen Commins**

Yeah. That's such a great point. And whether I'm creating videos, I mean, obviously I'll link to a lot of things that other people have done, but I'm only linking to stuff that I think is really good and valuable to the narrator community. I don't link to just anything, and you have to be a credible person giving credible advice for me to want to share what you're saying. And I think that's true of all of us in this field that, you know, there's so many people coming into it, flooding in seems like, you know, we we want people to know what are best practices and how to approach this thoughtfully and as a serious career.

**[00:25:18] Erin Bennett**

And I appreciate so much your thoughtfulness about that because, you know, I like I said, I you know, I'm kind of this fish out of water in LA and, you know, I'm surrounded, I'm surrounded by this dream factory. And there's such a dark side to that dream factory. And I see it every day. You know, I, I've, I've learned I've learned to be a little more sanguine and and humored by it. Then, you know, before in the days when I was going from commercial audition to commercial audition in my, you know, little rattletrap matchbox car, you know, like trying, trying to give this air of, you know, oh, I'm a successful person. Wouldn't you be lucky to have me, you know, doing all that? All that crap and that that sort of, you know, come to LA. It'd be a be a big star. I mean, it's all around us. And I feel like there's some of that in the voiceover world too. And there's a lot of there's a lot of fantasy. I mean, I mean, to be completely honest with you, I have to say, when I was a kid and actually this this lasted a hell of a lot longer than it should, this concept, in my mind, I was like, one day I'm going to go to New York City.

**[00:26:35] Erin Bennett**

And you know what I thought New York City was? I thought New York City was some amalgamation of, like movie musicals I'd seen in the 40s plus the Muppets. Take Manhattan. Um, where, you know, like, suddenly they just all, like, go to Broadway and, you know, like, they just I think I, I'm one of those people who can be so taken in by the power of the mediums that were, that were surrounded by movies, audio books. The things I read, it it takes it takes on a kind of a life of its own. So I understand when people come to the the town that I live and work in and they kind of have a not clear idea of what it is, I can understand somebody who's sitting somewhere around around this country or around the world thinking about what a career in audiobook narration must be like and. And, you know, they may think of it as some kind of like the movie version that I have in my mind of what New York City was. You know, it's. I have such kind of a capacity for.

**[00:27:49] Erin Bennett**

Yes, imagination on one on one hand, but also like a little bit of self-delusion on the other that I try I really try to recommend people come to your sites because I want them to get. Information from people who aren't necessarily trying to make a living off of off of, you know. Selling dreams off of dreams. Yes. Yes. So. So the fact that all this information is available and that you've curated it and put it out there for free, I just go. You know, I couldn't have I couldn't have made you up in my head and tied you in a prettier bow and presented you as a gift to two aspiring narrators. Because, you know, there's a lot of. You know, there's there's there's there's an industry. This is a business. And that's something that I didn't realize for years and years and years. I just thought, I love Shakespeare. I, you know, I rolled around on the floor for four years doing my vocal exercises, and they've helped me and they're and they're wonderful. And I can create characters and interpret scripts and things like that. But that has very little that has bupkis to do with the business.

**[00:29:12] Karen Commins**

Well, I said I was going back to your content about your comment about content, but I also want to go forward. But it's also kind of back because you mentioned a few times about feeling like you are in the wrong century or born at the wrong time. And a big reason I wanted to have you on is because you're also a professional singer. And I'm so fascinated with your group, The Harmony Dolls, I mean, because you all sing Lennon Sisters songs (editor note: it should be Andrews Sisters) and you dress up like them. I mean, it's. Yeah, it's so incredible to me. How did this even come about?

**[00:29:50] Erin Bennett**

So I did a I did a musical at the well, it was called the Falcon Theater. It's now called the Garry Marshall Theater here in Toluca Lake. I did a musical with my friend Gail Bianchi. She asked me to audition for this group doing Andrews Sisters music. And I said, Oh, I love Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy and don't sit under the apple tree. And they needed a they needed a soprano, somebody to do the sort of the higher line. Although the Andrews sisters were like, I heard this once from, I think one of our band members, he said, The Andrews sisters really thought of themselves like saxophones. They they jump all over. They don't stay the high. The soprano doesn't stay on the high Line. They they they got bored easily. They flew they fly into each other's vocal lines all the time. So it's really quite, quite remarkable. To to sing. And the ladies that you see there in that picture, Gail Bianchi and Megan Briones, who's the the producer. Um, I've been singing with them for, gosh, I think almost ten years now. And we have a ball. We have a seven piece band. We perform with We had the great honor of performing at the First Ladies luncheon in Washington, D.C. last year.

**[00:31:15] Karen Commins**

Yes. Was I mean, I was just so thrilled for you to see when I read that story and I had that in mind. That's why I was thinking, I've got to talk to her because this is such a disparate thing for your from your audiobook narration.

**[00:31:29] Erin Bennett**

Well, I mean, I've been singing since I was a kid, and this was kind of the perfect way to, to, to keep my toe in it, you know, the, the days of me, you know, auditioning for big musicals or to go on, try to go on tour or something are just not happening. It's not, um, that's, that's just not aligning, I think, in either my desires or my or my ability right now. Um, and this is such a wonderful way to shake the dust off and get to sing with a band and a trio and, um. I love this music. I mean, when I sing it. When we sing like Begin the Beguine or. Their seasons mean. Some of these songs people would look at and be like, Oh, that's so cheesy, or so treacly or so sentimental. And I just go, All I can do is shake my head because this music is timeless to me. And. You know, I studied piano as a child. My my mom said, hey, if you want to be a you want to be a singer on Broadway, you should. You're going to learn how to read music. And I'm so grateful she did. And my father was a. Self-taught was he's alive. But but like in his youth, he was a self-taught trumpeter and pianist and guitarist. So my sister is a composer. So we have we have musical music kind of flowing. Through our family and. Yeah, I love I love singing with these with these gals. And we, you know, it's it's something that has a I would want to say like a limited audience. It's not. I mean this is approaching music of. This is the 40s. You know, it's really 30s and 40s. It's. It's really from long ago. But.

**[00:33:27] Karen Commins**

But as you said, it is timeless.

**[00:33:28] Erin Bennett**

It is. I think it is. And I love I love singing it.

**[00:33:33] Karen Commins**

Did did you get to meet Jill Biden at that luncheon?

**[00:33:37] Erin Bennett**

No. They they keep they keep everybody pretty far away from the dais where oh, where where everybody was sitting. And a good thing, too, because I, of course, came home with Covid for that. So I came home, I looked at my husband. I said, I'll be in the I'll be in the other room. I'm going to stay there until I'm over this. But, gosh, it was worth it. I think. I think I know where I where I got it. It was at the luncheon and, you know, it just but had a big smile on my face. I was like, here we go. Paxlovid.

**[00:34:17] Karen Commins**

Well saw in 2021 that you sang for the 80th anniversary of Pearl Harbor, and you thanked the USO for having you back. So do you do engagements with the USO often?

**[00:34:30] Erin Bennett**

We do. We do sometimes. You know, a Covid. Covid was very difficult, that kind of stuff. A lot of things stopped. And and also, you know, I'm not the we're not the only three that you see in that picture we've got. We've got about three different casts of of ladies, which is great because I couldn't possibly go on all the gigs. I mean, they just did one at the Bel Air Club a couple of weeks ago that looked gorgeous. Um. Uh, so we've got like three Sopranos, three mezzo, three altos. And that's great because everybody travels everybody's, you know, doing different things. And so when I, you know, when I get these these gigs, I really treasure them.

**[00:35:15] Karen Commins**

I wondered how you were managing to split your time between doing that and being in a recording studio, narrating a book.

**[00:35:25] Erin Bennett**

Well, what's nice is that a lot of these gigs are on the weekends and I try to keep a schedule a pretty strict 9 to 5, 9 to 5 Monday through Friday recording schedule. And I really try to give myself weekends off.

**[00:35:42] Karen Commins**

Serena Scholl wrote in the chat that she has an idea for you. She said she's not sure if this fits, but have you heard of Lizzie and the Triggerman because maybe she uses opening acts or would like to hire you, I guess.

**[00:35:56] Erin Bennett**

Oh, my gosh. Thank you so much. I'll send that on to our producer.

**[00:36:02] Karen Commins**

So you're not having to do all the scheduling of the group. You have a producer that's doing that.

**[00:36:10] Erin Bennett**

Oh, Karen, that is a that is a job. That is a job that I do. I cannot do. Um, I am very. I'm very, very pleased to get to get an email saying, here it is. Can you do it? And checking my calendar. That is, as you know, it's it's so much it's so much work and so much time. So yes I'm very I'm very happy to to leave that and the, you know, the self-promotion and the competition and bidding on jobs, all the things they do is its own its own small business.

**[00:36:52] Karen Commins**

Because guess you're still having to promote yourself as a narrator, even as prolific as you are.

**[00:36:58] Erin Bennett**

Oh, Karen, it's yes, I have avoided it. I have avoided it to the extent that I can avoid it, but I can't avoid it any longer. I think something happens when you kind of have been around a while. Um, you know, you can get there are there are. There are new people all the time. And, you know, my fight I think now is probably not a fight, but my challenge is to stay stay relevant. Is that what the is that what the people are calling it these days to stay top of mind? And, you know, because I was new to everybody once. Um, but there are new producers. New publishers. I'm, you know, I always want to be new to people and not, you know, we've heard her a thousand times.

**[00:37:47] Karen Commins**

So yeah, Anna and I have talked about that a lot. Anne, you're always saying, Oh, there's new people coming and new.

**[00:37:54] Anne Flosnik**

Yeah, yeah. You've got to keep on your toes. And it isn't even just that, it's just the whole industry. Everything about what we do changes so rapidly. And the people that are casting us the whole gamut of it, the skills we need, the landscape of, you know, the variety of things that we need to be doing and aware of, it just doesn't stop.

**[00:38:16] Erin Bennett**

Yes, it doesn't. And when. Okay, here's here's the here's the the I don't know the thing. I'm just going to use it because I don't have the right word. Here's the here's the thing that kind of makes me take pause. So I was on the planning committee for last last year. I was co-chair of of the production track at at AIPAC. And so when we'd be thinking of people sometimes, like who would be a great panelist for blah, blah, blah, blah, blah. Well, who comes to the top of your mind? Someone you've worked with or worked for, and maybe somebody comes into your mind because you've, I don't know, seen them on social media or seen something, an article they were featured in or whatever. And I go, How do how does that happen? How do we create perceptions of people? Who we might not not have ever met before, but we need to know who they are in this business. And some of that is a social media presence. It's essential. So I know. So would I. What I loved just being, you know, working away in a studio and closing the door at, you know, 330 in the afternoon, picking up my kid from preschool and and being done with it? Yes, of course I would.

**[00:39:38] Anne Flosnik**

Yeah, but at least we had those days, Erin. I mean, the people coming now, that's the genie doesn't go back in the bottle kind of a thing. The way we march forward is the way it continues on. It's never going to go back to to those halcyon days that we knew. So at least we had them. But we're moving with the times and and that's a good thing.



**[00:39:57] Erin Bennett**

And we'll we'll raise a glass to those times. I remember when I was still doing in-person auditions with my my voiceover agent in Beverly Hills for and this is, this is not audiobook related. This is other, other voice voiceover stuff. I used to sit in the waiting room and some of these, some of these older guys, you know, who were like, you know, like here, here, young pup. Let me tell you the way it used to be. Let me tell you, let me tell you a tale. Sit by. Sit by the fire. And let me tell you the way it used to be before. You know, when when this business was x, blah, blah, blah, blah. So I know I know that this all comes in waves. We're all doing something for ten years and then it changes or and here it seems to even change much quicker than that. Um, yeah. I don't know about you, Ann, but my first script was, was a paper script. I was in a studio, lunch was provided, I had a director and an engineer. That's those days are those days are he still here? Maybe for some. But that was that was a. Yeah, there are lots of things. Lots of things have changed. And here we are in clubhouse.

**[00:41:17] Karen Commins**

And brilliance used to fly in to their studio.

**[00:41:21] Anne Flosnik**

I know. And put me up. Yeah, yeah.

**[00:41:25] Karen Commins**

Oh no.

**[00:41:27] Anne Flosnik**

It's all good. You know, It has to all be good. And so I'm just saying I'm glad I had those times, but now I, you know, have to embrace what it is going forward.

**[00:41:36] Erin Bennett**

Yes. And you know what? I think where would I be without audiobooks? I sometimes I think, you know, I, I feel like the OG, like, you know, bottom the weaver in Midsummer Night's just let me play every part, you know, like just was always that person. I was always that person. So you know here I just get to let it let it fly and and go where? You know, where. Where would I be and, and the nicest, the best people in the world. Like, I mean that sincerely. I don't know. I wouldn't want to be in. I don't know how plying my trade would look if I weren't narrating. I've got a much more balanced, happy life. Um. And I'm grateful for it every day. But. But, Anne, Karen, we're still going to we're still going to have a little glass of brandy and.

**[00:42:37] Anne Flosnik**

Oh, yes, here's to that.

**[00:42:40] Karen Commins**

Well, don't drink, but I'll be there with coke. How about I mean, Coca Cola, not the other kind of Coke.

**[00:42:46] Erin Bennett**

Coke, you know, Coca Cola, whatever your pleasure is. I'm not judging.

**[00:42:54] Karen Commins**

Well, I realized that didn't come out quite the way I wanted.

**[00:42:57] Erin Bennett**

They got sparkling water in every flavor. Now, don't worry. We've got. We got something for everyone.

**[00:43:04] Anne Flosnik**

We do. And we can't let you go. I'm sure you have a more refined question about this, Karen, But now that you're, you know, moving along and you have your role in the APA, you have to tell us all about that. Oh, yeah.

**[00:43:16] Karen Commins**

Exactly. I was just. Great minds think alike because I was going there, too.

**[00:43:20] Anne Flosnik**

I know you were!

**[00:43:22] Karen Commins**

She is officially the VP of voice talent for the Audio Publishers Association.

**[00:43:29] Erin Bennett**

Okay. So let me tell you what that means in English. Yeah. I don't understand what an executive producer or an executive vice president or a senior VP people with all these cool corporate titles, I need to I need to read a list somewhere and educate myself because, um, basically what that means is here's, here's here's my goal as VP of voice talent communications within the APA is to serve the members of the APA, particularly those who are audiobook narrators to foster communication and partnering with the people who we who who we make audiobooks with. I want to foster development and relationships between producers, publishers and narrators because we're all partners in the business. And I know coming from an actor's perspective, coming from an actor's point of view, I know not everybody who who's who is successful in audiobooks comes from this background. But just using my own experience, it can often feel like a very unmatched, unbalanced kind of kind of relationship. And what I'm trying to do is to to work with people on all sides of the audiobook, audiobook making, um, enterprise. To learn more about the business of audiobooks and to kind of humanize each other. Um. Like. So going going back to, like, my weird thing, like the movies I watched as a child, like, kind of informed my young adulthood to kind of an absurd extent. I kind of thought like, you know, a producer of anything was like a guy sitting at a big table with a big cigar and a, you know, like a ha ha, you know, it's like straight out of like, Who framed Roger Rabbit? I mean, this is like, you know, I maybe it's just because I'm.

**[00:45:37] Erin Bennett**

I've been easily intimidated by my experience in the kind of the Hollywood, the little corner of Hollywood which I was involved. Um, that and as an actor, I have felt so small and so, you know, sort of like Oliver Twist, you know, Please, sir, I want some more, you know, like, can I please, please pour some gruel into my bowl so I can pay my rent? You know, like, it's it's it's kind of a it's kind of an icky position to be in. And I was in it for quite a long time, um, feeling, you know, Can I ask for this or. I want. I want, I want, I want so much. Please pick me, please. And. And now in my. You know, now that those days are kind of comfortably a bit in the rear view mirror to some extent. I kind of want to go. No, I'm I'm a big, important piece of what these folks are making. They can't make it without me. So maybe I should realize my own worth on one hand and another hand. Try to better understand where those folks in the business are coming from so I can I can partner with them rather than. You know, sitting on my hands, waiting, waiting to be chosen or hoping, hoping that something comes in. I'm not saying that still doesn't happen. It sure does slow August at the moment, but, you know, trying to empower, um, empower narrators were members of the Audiobook Publishers Association and. You know, let's stand up and be counted and let's let's let people know what we need and let's find out what everyone else needs so we can so we can provide it.

**[00:47:33] Karen Commins**

Are you going to New York regularly for meetings for that, or is it all on the phone or.

**[00:47:38] Erin Bennett**

We just had we just had the big board meeting in New York. That was very exciting meeting, meeting everyone face to face, having having the board meeting Robert's Rules of Order. Is that is that what it's called, you know, motion and. No I and you know, just the, the the officialness of it and the you know it's it's serious on on on one hand, you know, this is a trade association and this is a this is a powerful industry. But ultimately. We're all we're all people. And so I'm trying to get to know my fellow board members as people. And also as business partners. Uh, to. To that end, there's a brand new. Series of webinars that I'm going to be hosting called The Business Hour. And that's all going to be on the. A website that you can sign up for if you're a member of the APA. There's one.

**[00:48:51] Karen Commins**

Next. Is it next week or week after next?

**[00:48:53] Erin Bennett**

Yeah, it's the 20 the 25th, I believe. 9 a.m. Pacific time, 12 p.m. Eastern Standard Time. And we're going to first guess we're going to talk to Michelle Cobb, who's the executive director, but also an indie producer herself, indie publisher. So we're going to talk to her and then also talk to Ronnie Butler, the wonderfully talented actor who is the outgoing VP of Voice Talent Communications. So we're going to kind of see what he's learned from his time and and then in the future mean we're going to talk to Adam from Positron. We're going to talk to producers, studio owners, publishers, actors. Um, I also wanted to make my email available for anybody who wants to contact me for any reason. Anything they'd like to be brought up. Um, I'm keeping everything, by the way, completely confidential. I'm never going to reveal names if you have, you know, a touchy situation or something that you're like, I really want to keep this quiet. I'm using all of this. I want to use narrator's

experiences, narrator's concerns and questions, narrator's complaints and rants and narrator's comments and and reviews about good things that are happening in the business, completely confidentially shared with with many of our guests when we're having conversations. So if anyone wants to email me. Um, is it okay if I put my email in the chat?

**[00:50:24] Karen Commins**

Absolutely.

**[00:50:25] Erin Bennett**

Okay, great. I'm going to figure out how to do that. Oh, how can you? It's like it's like walking and chewing gum at the same time. Um, I will figure out how to do that.

**[00:50:35] Karen Commins**

Oh, if.

**[00:50:37] Erin Bennett**

Here we go. Okay. Erin.

**[00:50:40] Karen Commins**

Oh, okay, great.

**[00:50:42] Erin Bennett**

Here it goes. I've got it.

**[00:50:43] Karen Commins**

Great. You are empowered.

**[00:50:47] Erin Bennett**

Well, I. You know.

**[00:50:49] Erin Bennett**

Let's have a look at it.

**[00:50:51] Erin Bennett**

Here we go. Let's. You know, I want. I want us to feel. I did. I did this for kind of selfish reasons, I got to say, like. I went, What is what is keeping me from. I don't know, maybe feeling as confident as I should. What is keeping me from From. I don't know. What? What? What prevents me from feeling equal to any situation I'm in where there's a publisher in the room. What? What's that little tiny thing in my voice that goes. Mhm. You got to be really careful now or you know, you don't say the wrong thing or I'm one of those foot in the mouth people like when I, when I don't feel completely comfortable, I'm the person who just says something kind of awkward and then there's that dead silence and then and then the, you know the, the polite person covers it or changes the subject. But I know when I'm not totally comfortable. So I was like, what? What is what is keeping me from feeling this way? And I think part of it is keeping us I have a sense of mystery with the the publishers in the Audiobook Publishers Association.

**[00:52:10] Anne Flosnik**

Mhm.

**[00:52:11] Erin Bennett**

And I want to change that. I think knowledge is power.

**[00:52:17] Anne Flosnik**

Yeah. Will the episodes be? No. The webcast. Will they be recorded, Erin?

**[00:52:23] Erin Bennett**

They will, and I believe they will be available to, to re to rewatch. Um, much as this chat is available to, to replay. Correct.

**[00:52:33] Karen Commins**

It will be. And in fact it will be on podcast platforms in a couple of months. So.

**[00:52:40] Erin Bennett**

Oh my gosh. Oh you're you're so ahead of the game. Oh, you're so ahead of the game. She's amazing. I love I love that you

I love that you play the harp like like, like a renaissance queen.

**[00:52:51] Karen Commins**

I think Renaissance Queens played it better!

**[00:52:56] Erin Bennett**

And and then and but you're but you're the most tech savvy. Like what? What is this cool thing called Clubhouse? Like, what the hell? I'm stuck in the Stone Age. This is. People are complicated and magical, and I. I just love that. Um.

**[00:53:12] Anne Flosnik**

So you are the perfect person to be spearheading this new initiative. The perfect bridge and conduit, for want of a better word, for, you know, what you're visualizing between the producers, the narrators and the whole industry. Coming to solve what it was.

**[00:53:33] Erin Bennett**

Thank. And I want I want us. There's so much there's so much that's happening that there's so much that's happening that is happening so fast. I'm also one of those people who always feels like I'm the last to know. I'm the last to hear. And I'm like, like, why do I don't want to? And it doesn't mean that. It doesn't mean that I have to gossip. It it. But it means that. I want to be. I want to be thinking. About. Yeah, I just. I just want to know more. And for so long, I was so happy to put my head down, be in my booth from, you know, 930 to 3 and, you know, and just and, and be thankful, you know, that the work that the work kept coming. Yeah, but. I don't know. I guess. I don't know. I'm a I'm a mom. And I'm thinking, you know, if I'm going to if I'm going to like, you know, if my kid's going to go to college, eventually she might not want to. It's not for everybody. But if she does, you know, I'm going I've got a I'm in this for the long haul. Yes. And. I want to be. I want to be smart and I want to help. I want to help other narrators. If anyone feels a fraction of the way I do, sometimes intimidated. I want to help. I want to help them. And there and there by helping myself. And I also want to humanize. I think there are kind of a lot of things that I'm not saying. Publishers sit in a in an ivory tower and have no concept of what we do. But I have I have a big concept of what I do and what my life is like and what and what other narrators who I talk about, what their lives are like. And I want everybody to succeed. So, you know, I want to I want to rise you know, let's let's lift that tide and lift all the boats with it. Yeah.

**[00:55:30] Anne Flosnik**

Well, you're going to be the perfect lady for that.

**[00:55:33] Karen Commins**

Absolutely.

**[00:55:34] Erin Bennett**

Oh, just talk a lot. You ask questions and it just all comes out. I spent a lot of time by myself talking to myself. Can you tell in this booth?

**[00:55:46] Anne Flosnik**

No. You are good and true, Erin. And it shines forth. And you know your heart's in the right place and you are a fabulous communicator. So that's all it takes. You know, good heart and mind and say what you think you know, and you are.

**[00:56:02] Erin Bennett**

Thank you. That means a lot to me. And I will tell you, I'll be completely honest with you after that first board meeting, which was, I think five, five hours in person, 4 or 5 hours in person, I did I did go back to the the hotel and I collapsed. And I think I napped for like 45 minutes. I just was dead to the world because it it is it is a lot. It is a lot. But it is also exciting. There are so many businesses that are trying to stay alive in this time right now. Yes. Um, I don't want to say that I like, have a smell like a radar for for desperation or anything like that. But. But what what is so nice about audiobooks is that as long as I've been involved in them, they've been a rising, expanding industry. And it is exciting to be in something that's that's rising for a while. During my regional theater career, as soon as I would work at a place it would go, it would go, it would go dark like the season is, you know, this was like around oh seven, oh eight. Yes. Um.

**[00:57:12] Karen Commins**

And there's no connection between those two statements because you said as soon as I work there, it would go dark.

**[00:57:19] Erin Bennett**

No. And what did I do? You know, And then, like, realize. Right, Because that's, that's that's an immature actor's perspective about everything, right? Everything is all about me. And it's my fault that it was bad, right? Like. Right. That those are those are that's the that's the psychological mindset of I didn't blame myself but but that was always the like I knew I knew to sort of filter that out after a while. But that was that was my first impulse was like, oh, what did I do? But but then I realized, you know, I don't the theater has been dead for years and keeps keeps rising. But I did have that sense that something about this career that I loved so much, first of all, wasn't able to pay a living wage in Los Angeles. Just have to say it. Sorry. There it is. Without without, you know, supplementing it with commercials and voiceover work and all that stuff. But, I mean, not even to make a, you know, 1 or 2 bedroom apartment, it's just that's just the reality that nobody tells you. And things have just gotten just exponentially worse. The Mark Taper Forum here is closing their season. You know, these are tough times, also post-COVID. So to have to have sort of felt that. Happening. As audiobooks started to rise. And I was talking to, you know, I'm sitting on the Pasadena Playhouse fire escape with Mark Bramhall.

**[00:58:47] Erin Bennett**

Right. And we're just talking about how great, you know, Noel Coward is or whatever. And, you know, I realized that he was able to make a living being and being in regional theater, making, you know, a top theater salary for this town, doing eight shows a week, but also narrating audiobooks going, Oh, this is how we survive. So I am very aware that this is also about survival. Our our union health insurance. Um, this is how a lot of people in the arts can make a living. Um. And I don't take any of that lightly. I think that's kind of a sacred calling. Um. So. Yeah, I'm. I'm. I'm like, I'm proud of of what actors have achieved. And I'm. I'm proud that in this world of, you know, 240 characters and tiny, tiny little short 22nd videos on TikTok, that there are people who have appetites for 11 hours of audio books. Mm hmm. That is just that's a miracle that I never saw coming. Ever. Ever. Like. I never knew. I thought that was just like, something quaint from, like, my childhood. Like listening to The Hobbit that I, you know, that I carried over. But the fact that as everything gets shorter and attention spans get smaller and all this that people would want to. Invest in hours and hours of listening to a human voice. Mean.

**[01:00:34] Anne Flosnik**

And to that point, Erin, do you remember the day when you would record or anybody of our era would record an audiobook and then automatically having finished the complete one, you go on to the abridgment, and that's a thing of the past.

**[01:00:48] Erin Bennett**

No, and I don't. I don't remember that. I do.

**[01:00:52] Anne Flosnik**

I predate you. No, no, no.

**[01:00:56] Erin Bennett**

No, I. But I am. I am. I'm so eager. I'm so. We need to learn about this. We look, I was talking with a with a bunch of folks earlier on who had no concept. They had no concept that. That things were ever, you know, using tape or that you went into a studio with, you know, a director that things were live directed. So so people have. Um, people have ah, we have to be educated or that's such a small, a small stable of narrators, sometimes worked for only one publisher.

**[01:01:36] Anne Flosnik**

Yes, yes. And did books that they were wildly inappropriate for. And the whole world has changed. Just everything. But I was kind of making the point, though, that now it's more long form, more and more and more in what we do. There aren't abridgments anymore. They have gone. And so that's kind of an odd thing, which it's. I'm saying it to prove your point. Yes. Yes. You know. Yeah. Bolster that in that there is there is a desire. Well now because it's so much easier instead of having to go and you know those cassette cases would be big. I mean if you had a 30 CD book that was a big doorstop of a thing and now you just walking around, anybody is with their phone and they have a library.

**[01:02:21] Erin Bennett**

And it's there. It wasn't weren't abridgments specifically for the length of the cassette tape, I believe, because you could only get something like 47 minutes on each side. So you had to you had to you were limited by the amount that you could get on on each side. I mean, I have my first like my dad's Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy six cassettes. I mean, I remember how each one side A and Side B started in each one because I wore those things out.

**[01:02:51] Anne Flosnik**

Bless you. Oh.

**[01:02:56] Erin Bennett**

Yeah.

**[01:02:56] Anne Flosnik**

Yep, yep. And the bridges had whole careers like John McElroy and Lisa Kahn. They abridged audiobooks.

**[01:03:04] Erin Bennett**

Lisa Kahn! Oh, see, see, I'm learning something every day. Um, you know what we should have, You know what we should have. I think for one of these Business Hours, we need to have a fireside chat with the, the old, the old hoary days of old age, three days of old when ice covered the earth the way it was. Yes.

**[01:03:28] Anne Flosnik**

Perspective.

**[01:03:29] Erin Bennett**

Yes, perspective. That's it. Perspective.

**[01:03:33] Speaker5**

Yeah.

**[01:03:33] Anne Flosnik**

Well, we've been. Because you can't know where you're going. If you don't know where you've been. Well, you know what I mean. Or it's better to know where you've been. That's history.

**[01:03:42] Karen Commins**

Yes.

**[01:03:44] Erin Bennett**

Absolutely. We need we need perspective so that, you know, that's that's part of and publishing, you know, it's a very it's a very ancient art form, if you will. Maybe not as old as people telling stories around a campfire or a, you know, bale caves. But it is still it's, you know, and it's and it's mostly and it's been print for so long. Yes. Audio is such a relatively new arm that I think we need to understand that that's, you know, a gigantic ship that moves, that moves slowly. And, you know, the way things are now, you've got to be sort of like a speedboat, you know, running around and adapting and, you know, a book up here and a. All the different ways that you market books and indie publishers and all this stuff are a very different kind of boat, if you will. So and each.

**[01:04:41] Anne Flosnik**

Boat that we ride in demands a new technological skill. That's the other thing. I mean, once upon a time, all you had all in inverted commas you had to do was be able to narrate the book. That was your only job. Now look at all the hats that we have to wear, and they will not get less. They will get more, I predict, and maybe it will be. The industry is still very young, but at some point somebody will write a history of this, Erin, and you, Karen and myself will be in it, I hope. Look at.

**[01:05:08] Erin Bennett**

That inglorious, inglorious audio.

**[01:05:13] Erin Bennett**

Of this, this.

**[01:05:14] Erin Bennett**

Little Apogee plug in USB mic that's going into my phone, you know? You know, it just kills me. I used to listen to these things. Everyone's listening on this crappy little MP3, right? When we have the gloriousness of wave files available to us. Um, but, you know, this technology is just going to get bigger and better sometime. Someday it's going to be stereo surround perfect sound coming out of everybody's phone. Somehow they'll do it or.

**[01:05:47] Anne Flosnik**

Some some sound that we don't even know about yet that isn't called stereo. It's called something else because it's bound to be something else. Erin It's always something else that demands another learning curve, but it is the way it is. Maybe we can smell.

**[01:05:59] Erin Bennett**

The audiobook at that point.

**[01:06:02] Karen Commins**

I'm not sure we'd want to.

**[01:06:04] Anne Flosnik**

Yeah. Absorb it. Yes. Osmosis. Osmo Audiobooks.

**[01:06:11] Karen Commins**

Well, this has really been such a wonderful conversation, Erin, and we're already past the hour, but I cannot let you get away without answering a Pit Stop Hot Seat question. Oh, and I think the one I'll ask you is because you've talked about watching movies and certainly all the books you've read. Which fictional character do you wish was real and why?

**[01:06:35] Erin Bennett**

Oh, it's got to be. It's Merlin from The Once and Future King.

**[01:06:40] Karen Commins**

Interesting choice. And why?

**[01:06:41] Erin Bennett**

Because. So the once and future king when Merlin is transforming the wart. Right, Arthur. Young King Arthur into animals so he can see the world like a king would or like a peasant would. Um. Oh, gosh. Merlin was probably the either Merlin or Gandalf, probably from the Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit. Interesting. Both. Both fantasy characters. I just. I've always wanted to take tea with a wizard.

**[01:07:18] Karen Commins**

It sounds like it would be fun.

**[01:07:20] Erin Bennett**

Yes.

**[01:07:22] Karen Commins**

And do you have any advice you can share with other people who want to expand their horizon beyond narration?

**[01:07:30] Erin Bennett**

Beyond, beyond narration.

**[01:07:32] Karen Commins**

Yes, because like, you're narrating and you're singing and. And now you're taking on this part with the APA in a greater capacity and.

**[01:07:42] Erin Bennett**

Okay. So I would say. I would say learning to trust your gut. Over your head is is really hard to do. I work at I'm working at it every day. But I find that it's times that I've had an instinct and trusted it. That have led me to a good a good opportunity rather than just thinking of something from the top down and working it out logically. So, you know, if your love of music, you know, it leads you to some pretty esoteric stuff. Well, look, you know, I'm in the Harmony dolls. I'm singing this stuff all the time. There's a there's a place for your for your art, I guess. Yeah, there's a, there's a place. There's a place for all this to go. I just wish everyone a. A smooth journey is possible. It's never smooth and it's never easy. But it's worthwhile.

**[01:08:43] Anne Flosnik**

Yes. Keep the faith.

**[01:08:45] Erin Bennett**

Yes.

**[01:08:46] Anne Flosnik**

Yeah. And you are the perfect person at the helm. Now that will be helping us all to keep the faith. And it's wonderful to have that line of communication with you privately, to express, you know, the things that are on our mind, and then you'll be able

to bring those to higher levels.

**[01:09:03] Erin Bennett**

Please do. I'm keeping I'm keeping copious notes about communications I'm getting from actors. I'm categorizing them into, you know, possible topics of conversation for the Business Hour. So everything that is sent to me, I read and I'm making notes of. So I take it very seriously what my fellow actors have to say.

**[01:09:24] Anne Flosnik**

Marvelous.

**[01:09:25] Karen Commins**

And your email address is in the chat. If people want to scroll up and find it because you had left that earlier.

**[01:09:33] Erin Bennett**

Do you please do you.

**[01:09:35] Karen Commins**

Do you have any final words or anything you want to plug or you know what's coming up for you?

**[01:09:39] Erin Bennett**

That's that's coming up for me. The Business Hour is coming up. That's kind of the the big thing that I'm the the overarching thing that I'm looking at. Uh, you know, there are so many highs. Highs and lows and. You know, I've been I've been booked. I've been booked pretty consistently and solidly for for ten years now. And I'm I'm very lucky to be able to say that I'm looking at, you know, a little bit of a lighter schedule. I'm trying to trust that. So, you know, I'm practicing what I preach all the time. Like a lot of this doesn't feel easy and it doesn't feel comfortable. But I'm trying to expand. Expand what I can do. And. And. And leaving, leaving room for new ideas and new things to come. So it's so hard when you're just trying to plug away and be like, I want I want 100 books or I want 150 books or I want 200 books. And to just go, you know, maybe sometimes the universe is leading you in different directions and try to try to flow with it rather than fight it.

**[01:10:53] Speaker5**

Yes.

**[01:10:55] Karen Commins**

Where were you five or 6 or 7 years ago? Because I could have used that then. I still have that today. Mean so I appreciate you saying that so much of that maybe the universe is trying to lead us in a different direction than we imagined. And probably the things we want are coming to us, but in a way we didn't expect is what I think. Yes.

**[01:11:20] Erin Bennett**

And and and some of it means that there's time without without immediate work. But I have to I have to believe that the seeds that I'm sowing, like I forget sometimes about the work that I've put in, I forget that there were some actors we met. We met at a recording studio and paid a, you know, paid a small fee to the engineer and the leader. We did a commercial voice over workout group. I used to drive once a week to Santa Monica and do this from 7 to 10. After after hours. We just did it to ply our. To just practice and work out. I forget sometimes that I did that. That I sat on that freeway and I schlepped over after my working day, after my auditioning day. And I did it just so that I could be better at what I'm doing and that all that work and all that hassle and all that sitting on the freeway. Uh. Had had benefits. Years later that I you know, that I wasn't I wasn't realizing it in the moment. But now they've come to fruition. And so now I've got to you know, sometimes I've got to plant the seeds now and water and make sure it's got plenty of sunlight knowing that something's going to sprout a little bit down the road that I don't even know about yet.

**[01:12:45] Anne Flosnik**

Exactly. I so agree with all of that.

**[01:12:50] Karen Commins**

And on that positive note, I think it's time for everybody to get back on the road. So we're going to conclude today's Pit Stop. The recording will be available on Clubhouse later today and probably sometime next week. I'll post it with a transcript and links on NarratorsRoadmap.com. And I'm thrilled to report. Pit Stop is now also available on your favorite podcast platform including Apple and Audible. Anne, who is coming up tomorrow on Narrator Uplift.?



**[01:13:19] Anne Flosnik**

Carol Monda, another industry legend.

**[01:13:23] Erin Bennett**

Hooray. Yes.

**[01:13:26] Karen Commins**

Yes, that will be fun! Well, I appreciate everybody joining us today. We've had a lot of comments about the it was a fantastic discussion, Erin, And I hope all of you will take another road trip with us on August 30th when we'll talk with audiobook narrator and publisher Joe Hempel. In the meantime, I hope you find joy in every journey and live the life of your dreams. Thanks so much to Anne Flosnik for all your great questions and support. Thanks again, Erin, for this delightful conversation. It's been a joy to talk with you.

**[01:14:01] Erin Bennett**

And it's a privilege and an honor. Thank you, Anne and Karen. Thank you so much.

**[01:14:05] Anne Flosnik**

Oh, thank you. You're a star, Erin. You really are.

**[01:14:08] Karen Commins**

And thanks to all of our audience for your comments and enthusiasm and for spending time with us today. Hope you all have a wonderful week, and we'll see you soon.

End of Transcript



Automated transcription by Sonix  
[www.sonix.ai](http://www.sonix.ai)