



Golden Voices

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Narrator Yearbook

NARRATOR YEARBOOK 2003

The Narrator Yearbook is a showcase for audiobook narrators listeners should know. The AUDIOFILE editors have selected actors whose performances capture our attention each year. These narrators may be new to audiobooks, or they may have worked for years and recorded dozens of books. Each narrator received critical acclaim during the year, and their performances are sought after by listeners. These narrators make a serious commitment to audiobooks as part of their artistic careers.

Here we showcase six narrators whose 2003 audiobooks achieved stellar quality. The AUDIOFILE editors recognize these actors for their outstanding contributions to the art form of audiobook narration.



Scott Brick Scott Brick is one of the fastest-rising stars in the audiobook galaxy. His list of recordings is approaching 200 titles--and that's in less than five years. In 2003 alone, Scott's work has been celebrated with seven Earphones Awards and the Science

Fiction Audie for [DUNE: THE BUTLERIAN JIHAD](#). Frank Herbert's classic science fiction series has provided Scott with eight multi-hour titles so far, plus the opportunity to develop a glossary of words and pronunciations found in the books. (Fans can find--and hear--the words online at www.dunenovels.com). Scott's other recordings include works by top-selling fiction writers Nelson DeMille, Orson Scott Card, Tom Clancy, Dennis Lehane, and Brad Meltzer, as well as a smattering of literary classics from Kurt Vonnegut, Stephen Crane, and Joseph Conrad. His understated approach to each book serves him well, and whether he is handling a roomful of Russian generals or a series of dizzying scene changes, the listener stays with him for every word. Scott seems to know just when to add vocal color and how to pace the narrative so it never flags. Look for upcoming history titles such as Nathaniel Philbrick's [SEA OF GLORY](#) to showcase Scott's talents. His passion for baseball was put in play when he recorded [MONEYBALL](#), and somehow, around his rigorous recording schedule, he also finds time to write screenplays and comic book projects. 2001, 2003

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Narrator Interviews

- [Jim Dale](#)
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Jim Dale The year 2003 brought Jim Dale many honors and accolades. June 21 was the much-anticipated release date of the fifth Harry Potter book, [HARRY POTTER AND THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX](#). Record-breaking sales ensued, and Jim grabbed another milestone--a Guinness World Record for Most Character Voices in an Audiobook for the 134 different characters he enacted. "I had to know all the characters from the inside, see the world through their eyes, and love who they were, whether hero or villain," Jim says. And then at the Queen's Royal Birthday Honours in October, Jim was made an MBE, Member of the Order of the British Empire, for his work "promoting English children's literature." Early in the year, Jim starred Off Broadway in *The Comedians*, which earned him a Drama Desk Award and Off Broadway's Lucille Lortel Award. These accolades add to a growing list that includes a Grammy(r) nomination for [HARRY POTTER AND THE SORCERER'S STONE](#); an Oscar(r) nomination for the lyrics to *Georgy Girl*; an Audie Award for Best Solo Narration, 2001; and Earphones Awards for four out of five of the Harry Potter audiobooks. This December Jim plays Scrooge in *A Christmas Carol* at New York City's Madison Square Garden Theater; if you miss it, he has recorded the Dickens classic as well. 2003 Yearbook.

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Jenna Lamia Jenna Lamia brings a fresh, captivating voice to the audiobook world, and with only a few audiobooks under her belt, she has had amazing success. Her performance of [THE SECRET LIFE OF BEES](#) was a 2003 Audie Award Finalist in the prestigious category of Best Female Narrator. Director Paul Ruben shared his excitement about their work on the audiobook, saying, "Only good actors make good directors, and she's one of them. A natural." [GIRL WITH A PEARL EARRING](#) was her first audiobook, and an Earphones Award Winner. We celebrate [HOPE WAS HERE](#) with another Earphones. She has an attentive ear for the nuances of speech patterns and regional inflections, yet makes an effort not to overprepare. "I let the characters grow and take care not to be too knowing," she says. "I come to the story as the listener does, allowing it to unfold." Jenna's success is not just in audiobooks; a big break came with her 1998 performance in *Ah, Wilderness* on

Broadway, and recently she starred in *Bed Bound Off Broadway*. She's now in Los Angeles where she had a role in HBO's *Oz*. Movies on the way include Audrey Tautou's *Nowhere to Go But Up*. Jenna's interest in audiobooks will likely keep open some time for narration in the coming months. 2003 Yearbook.

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Lisette Lecat South African-born Lisette Lecat has captivated scores of listeners with the adventures at the No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency, where Mma Ramotswe parks her tiny white van. Whether describing bush tea or the wisdom of Botswanan morality, Lisette's reading enlivens author Alexander McCall Smith's keen understanding of "ubuntu"--loosely translated as "humanity towards others." Lisette shares a love of Africa in other resonant portrayals of African literature and history, including [DON'T LET'S GO TO THE DOGS TONIGHT](#), and works by Nadine Gordimer, Nancy Farmer, and Caroline Alexander. While sub-Saharan locales may be a specialty, Lisette brings a nuanced familiarity with place to other settings as well, drawing on her world travels and her knowledge of Spanish and French. Lisette's narration is subtle and elegant, allowing the author's work to stay prominent while bringing vitality to each character and situation. Recent ensemble readings include *A VENETIAN AFFAIR* by Andrea di Robilant and Tracy Chevalier's [FALLING ANGELS](#). Lisette is also an accomplished playwright, with a Broadway credit for *The Scent of Roses* starring Julie Harris. She is working on additional scripts, but audiobooks are (happily) a primary focus of her talents. She records for the American Foundation for the Blind, which accorded her the prestigious Scourby Award in 1999, and for Recorded Books. 2003 Yearbook

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Tom Stechschulte A recent reviewer said, "One difference between simply listening and having a listening experience is Tom Stechschulte." Tom seems to inhabit his characters and shares the full power of each with listeners. His fluency with Southern accents and speech patterns has brought him a sterling group of writerly work: [AVA'S MAN](#) by Rick Bragg, *THE RABBIT FACTORY* by Larry Brown, [BITTERROOT](#) by James Lee Burke, [SCORCHED EARTH](#) by David Robbins, and [THAT OLD ACE IN THE HOLE](#) by Annie Proulx. He's skilled at capturing the essence of accents, avoiding

wrong notes that make them less than believable to the knowing ear. Tom likes a close association with the production team while recording, and says he depends on this collaboration to guide his work. A jazz fan, Tom remarks that intonations he hears on archival jazz recordings sometimes make their way into his stable of characters. A recent triumph is Tom's performance of [SHUTTER ISLAND](#) by Dennis Lehane. In addition to his skill with dark, maniacal characters, Tom easily expresses the humor of David Handler's Stewart "Hoagy" Hoag and has a stack of awards for his children's titles, including Robert Newton Peck's *HORSE THIEF* and Harold Keith's [RIFLES FOR WATIE](#). Of special interest and due out in December 2003 is his narration of Tim O'Brien's celebrated *THE THINGS THEY CARRIED*. 2001, 2003 Yearbook

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Suzanne Toren Suzanne Toren's enticing storytelling style has served her well in a 30-year career of recording audiobooks. We have celebrated Suzanne for her variety of work--from the contemporary social comedy [LE DIVORCE](#) to the literary [STORIES OF I.L. PERETZ](#) to the kid-friendly Henry & Mudge series. Daily recording has not diminished what she calls her "sense of adventure" as she begins each new book, and she particularly enjoys the many roles she gets to play--the Mexican-American mineworkers of Barbara Kingsolver's [HOLDING THE LINE](#); the Lower East Side Jewish family in Sydney Taylor's [ALL-OF-A-KIND FAMILY](#); the orphan twins in [RUBY HOLLER](#) by Sharon Creech. She tells us that while allowing the story to emerge, she discovers something new and different in each project. She loves to "enter the universe of the author," and we, as listeners, are treated to her astute understanding of the text. Suzanne's ability to intuit an author's intent brings listeners to the heart of a character and the setting--as in her performance of Queen Noor's autobiography, [LEAP OF FAITH](#), which thoughtfully creates an absorbing listen. In preparing, Suzanne says she follows advice she heard years ago: "Allow what you receive to land in your heart and then come out of your mouth." Honored by the American Foundation for the Blind's Scourby Award for Narrator of the Year in 1988, Suzanne is indeed a narrator whose intelligent voice is one all listeners should know. 2003 Yearbook

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