

Pop-Culturalist Chats with Karen Strassman



Karen Strassman's voice may sound familiar to you. She's the voice behind many popular anime shows (like *Bleach* and *Code Geass*), animated movies, and video games (like *Persona* and *World of Warcraft*). But, she's also an experienced actress on screen in shows like *Weeds* and *Workaholics*.

Currently, she's taken on the role of Dr. Slotnick on [Preacher](#). We got to chat with her about her character and what it's like to do voice acting and acting on screen.

P-C: What appealed to you about playing Dr. Slotnick?

Karen: When I auditioned for the Dr. Slotnick, the character was not very specifically defined, so there was a lot of room for me to create something. In fact, when I got the audition sides, there was no mention of nationality or

accent. I did a take without an accent for my audition, and then I did a second take with the German accent, just because it felt like it would be fun to do. Apparently, everyone liked what I did with the German thing, so we went ahead with that choice. I did my own work of deciding who she is and some backstory. From there, between wardrobe choices, the strict hair and harsh make-up, we continued to mold the character. Once on set, the director Wayne Yip chose the cool glasses you see me wearing on the show, and Dr. Slotnick really came to life. The creators/writers/producers gave me a lot of freedom and encouragement to really create an original character.

P-C: Can you describe Dr. Slotnick in five words?

Karen: Freakishly brilliant wounded driven genius.

P-C: *Preacher* is in its third season. What was it like stepping into a cast and crew that have been working together for some time?

Karen: Firstly, I want to say that it's a fantastic set to work on. Every single person is really welcoming and makes you feel like you belong there immediately. There is a constant sense of collaboration between everyone. I worked mostly with Dominic, Pip, and Jonny. What an honor! These guys are so committed and so real, no matter how wacky the material becomes. You completely believe them every second.

One of the things that so struck me when I was watching the series and preparing for my role was no matter how crazy and "out there" a script might be, and how "characterly" most characters in the show are, all the actors in the show make their characters so very real, human, and grounded. So, you feel they are completely real and get truly involved in their lives. You feel for them and with them. As I was preparing for my episodes, I wanted to create a character that was really fun and out there, but also feel as real and believable as all the other characters on the show.

P-C: You also do quite a bit of voiceover work. How did you get into that?

Karen: I started in France when I was 20, dubbing French movies into English. I was the American voice for Juliette Binoche, Emmanuel Heart, Vanessa Paradis, and many others. From there I started to get cast in a lot of animation and then video games. I've just been constantly working ever since. I'm a very lucky girl.

P-C: Do you find voice acting versus acting on screen more challenging or less? Why?

Karen: Each medium has its own challenges. In voiceover, more often than not, you are usually alone in the booth, working with the director, the engineer, and maybe some of the clients on the other side of the booth (unless you are doing a group record for original animation), and you have to imagine all of the other characters interacting with you. You have to imagine everything, really—the location, the temperature, the atmosphere, the other characters emotions, etc. Since the audience can't see you, you have to let everything come through the voice.

Working for TV and film is magical, as you are on set or on location, looking in the eyes of your fellow actors, and completely immersed in the atmosphere and the world of the project. But there are many more elements to juggle because of this, of course, like making sure you are standing in just the right place for the camera, not blocking your partner's light, picking up a fork at the same time that you did in a previous take, having to memorize new pages of dialogue at the very last minute. In the end, you still have to create a moment that feels spontaneous, wonderfully human, real, and yes, magical!

P-C: Is there a genre of TV or film that you have yet to explore that you'd like to with your acting work?

Karen: I have a new film coming out soon called *The Onania Club* by Tom

Six. This bold, daring social commentary is a very new genre for me, and I'm very excited about it.

Pop-Culturalist Speed Round

Last TV Show That You Binge-Watched

The Handmaid's Tale

Favorite Movie

I just watched the movie *Frances* again! I think Jessica Lange is amazing, and the film in many ways is more relevant than ever...

Favorite Book

It's hard to say what my favorite all time book is, but I'm just re-reading *The Surrender Experiment* by Michael Singer, which is fantastic.

Artist/Musician You Could Listen to on Repeat

Joni Mitchell

Place You Most Want to Go

I love traveling, but if someone offered me a choice of a luxury hotel in the most beautiful place in the world or to be on a film or TV set with an amazing group of creative people, weaving a deeply human and magical world together for audiences to be able to travel along with us in the fabric of life and human experiences...I would always choose that.

Person You'd Most Like to Meet

Darrell Calkins

Make sure to follow Karen on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

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