The Voice

When Steve Kamer ’81 talks, people listen.

There is really no way to escape the appealing, dulcet tones of Steve Kamer’s ’81 voice. He was heard during the Sochi Winter Olympics. His voice graces the trailer of the Oscar-winning film Argo. It is he who politely asks you to “stand clear of the closing doors” on the New York/New Jersey PATH Train. Kamer’s was the voice you heard before seeing Geraldo Rivera, Phil Donahue, Martha Stewart, and Regis Philbin. He’s urged you to buy your entertainment center at Circuit City, the one who reads the copy for the Deborah Norville-helmed show Inside Edition.

Kamer’s career as a voice actor comes as a surprise to his mother, Phyllis. As soon as her son could walk and talk, she recalls, he was following her around the house interviewing her with a Coke bottle, hairbrush, or any other object that resembled a microphone. And, perhaps most notably, Kamer is the one who reads the copy for the Deborah Norville-helmed show Inside Edition.

Kamer’s voice is joyful, bordering on delirious: “And somber mode: “Plus, the tragic death of Philip Seymour Hoffman and how he overdosed on heroin.” Then, in another blink, his voice is joyful, bordering on delirious: “And the latest spring fashions!”

It all works beautifully. The power of that voice, whether you want it to or not, gets you swept up in the moment. Suddenly you can’t help but wonder how posterity will remember Philip Seymour Hoffman. Or exactly how high hemlines might creep up next spring. Or how you’d really like to sit in a La-Z-Boy to better prop up your formerly stinky feet while watching that TV you bought at Circuit City. After you turn it on, you won’t have to search too long to come across more of Steve Kamer’s persuasive pitches. And yes, they will all worm their way into your brain.

When Kamer was 8, his parents took him to see the game shows that intrigued him. “It wasn’t the single digits,” Kamer recalls. “But it was the one that made my mind work as a disc jockey job. They wanted voice actors who were trained in acting.”

Kamer worked at WNSR (which later became MX105) for nine years, getting the inside track on the air. “I was a fan of television since I was in the single digits,” Kamer recalls. “But it was the game shows that intrigued me.” It wasn’t until he was 8 that he decided to become a disc jockey. “That job, steady and lucrative, allowed me to joyously revisit the good old bad habits of my radio days.”

“I’ve been Deborah Norville’s announcer for 18 years. Before I got there, it seemed like they had a new announcer for that show every year. They couldn’t settle on what they wanted. I started in 1997 and have kept the job ever since.”

“If I do anything on that show that I can’t do on any other job,” says Kamer with a laugh. “It’s classic announcer style. At the beginning of the show there might be 10 different stories that are going to be on that episode. It’s my responsibility to shift gears when I repeat each story so each one sounds different.”

Kamer provides a demonstration. Turning the schmaltz dial up to 11, he goes to work.

“Inside Edition” is backstaged at the Super Bowl with all the action and activity you didn’t see anywhere else!” Then, in the blink of an eye, that wonderful voice slips into slow

A Steve Kamer and his very first interview subject.

Photograph by Jordan Hollender

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