

# ERIC BACKUS

**COMPOSER, SOUND DESIGNER, EDUCATOR**

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www.ericbackus.com

## **SUMMARY**

A fun and creative sonic artist with over 15 years professional experience as a composer, sound designer, and audio engineer. Enthusiastic collaborator, providing exceptional music and sound for a variety of mediums including live performances, podcasts, and film. Passionate mentor and educator to middle school, high school, and undergraduate students. Pronouns: He/him.

## **TEACHING**

### **Northwestern University - Evanston, IL**

Mentor theatre sound design and composition students serving as assistant designers on the production *Everybody*. Spring 2023.

### **Columbia College - Chicago, IL**

Mentored theatre sound engineering students on musical theatre mixing for productions of *Cabaret* and *Head Over Heels*. Spring 2022.

### **Trollwood Performing Arts School - Moorhead, MN**

Developed and taught musical theatre sound design curriculum for high school and middle school students. Led and mentored student sound crews in a musical theatre production. Summer 2021.

### **Bolingbrook High School - Bolingbrook, IL**

Mentored theatre sound engineering students. Fall 2020.

### **New Trier High School - Northfield, IL**

Mentored theatre sound engineering students. Spring 2018 - Fall 2021.

### **Arizona State University - Tempe, AZ**

Presented special lectures on theatrical sound design and engineering to musical theatre students. 2013-2017.

### **Walter Payton College Prep. - Chicago, IL**

Mentored theatre sound engineering students. Spring 2015.

### **Phoenix Country Day School - Paradise Valley, AZ**

Mentored musical theatre students. 2006 - 2011.

### **New School for the Arts and Academics - Tempe, AZ**

Developed curriculum for music courses in compliance with Arizona state and "No Child Left Behind" guidelines for charter schools. Taught middle school courses on music theory and music history. 2004-2006.

## COMPOSITION

Collaborate with theatre directors, podcast producers, and video producers. Present examples of music research and facilitate conversations about musical style, aesthetic, period, and emotion. Create unique, genre-blending original music for film, plays, podcasts, acting reels, and promotional videos.

Composed more than 40 unique scores for theatrical productions to date - inspired by a wide range of musical genres including jazz, Western classical, pop, and ambient/electronic.

Carefully program software instruments to create nuanced, lifelike performances with MIDI recordings. Utilize Logic Pro X to mix and master cues for playback and publication.

## SOUND DESIGN

Work Off-Broadway, regionally, and throughout Chicago, designing sound on over 130 theatrical productions to date. Versatilely design in a variety of spaces ranging from 50 seat storefronts to 1,000 seat auditoriums to 4,000 seat amphitheatres. (Full theatrical credits resume at [www.ericbackus.com](http://www.ericbackus.com))

Create compelling soundscapes and dramatically appropriate sound effects that compliment the overarching narrative and engage the audience.

Mix a variety of live performances including plays, musicals, concerts, and dance. Mix recorded audio for musical tracks, streaming videos, and podcasts.

## RECORDING AND EDITING

Record voiceovers on location or in project studios using field-recorders and/or professional grade microphones. Process low quality recordings and clean up unwanted environmental noise using iZotope RX.

Edit voiceovers, sound effects, and music.

Record music for song tracks, post-production audio, and streaming video.

## PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Independently manage time to work on multiple projects simultaneously, completing projects to meet deadlines.

Manage and catalogue a personal library of digital audio assets including sound effects, recording files, and software instruments.

Supervise and coordinate production teams locally and remotely to execute physical installation of sound equipment.

Find creative solutions that fit budgetary constraints and utilize existing resources.

## RECOGNITION

2023 Non-Equity Jeff Award Nomination - Sound Design  
*Solaris*, Griffin Theatre

2023 Non-Equity Jeff Award Nomination - Original Music in a Play  
*Solaris*, Griffin Theatre

2019 Jeff Award Nomination - Sound Design, Midsize  
*Wolf Play*, The Gift Theater

2019 Jeff Award Nomination - Sound Design, Midsize  
*The Absolute Brightness of Leonard Pelkey*, American Blues Theater

2019 Syracuse Area Live Theatre (SALT) Award Nomination -  
Sound Design of a Musical  
*Murder for Two*, Merry Go Round Playhouse, NY

2023 Non-Equity Jeff Award Nomination - Sound Design  
*A Wrinkle in Time*, Lifeline Theatre

2010 AriZoni Award - Best Sound Design for a Musical  
*The Rocky Show*, Arizona State University Lyric Opera Theatre

2010 AriZoni Award Nomination - Best Sound Design for a Musical  
*La Cenerentola*, Arizona State University Lyric Opera Theatre

## SKILLS

Music composition  
Sound mixing/editing  
Music and voiceover recording  
Theatrical storytelling  
Mentoring and teaching  
ProTools, Logic Pro, QLab, Kontakt, iZotope RX, misc. audio plugins;  
Adobe Design Suite, Vectorworks, MS Office, Zendesk  
Team leadership  
Time management  
Collaboration  
Customer service  
Zamboni driving

## EDUCATION

Arizona State University - Tempe, AZ  
*August 2006 - May 2010*  
BA in Theatre  
Focus on Theatre Design & Production and Music  
Graduated Cum Laude