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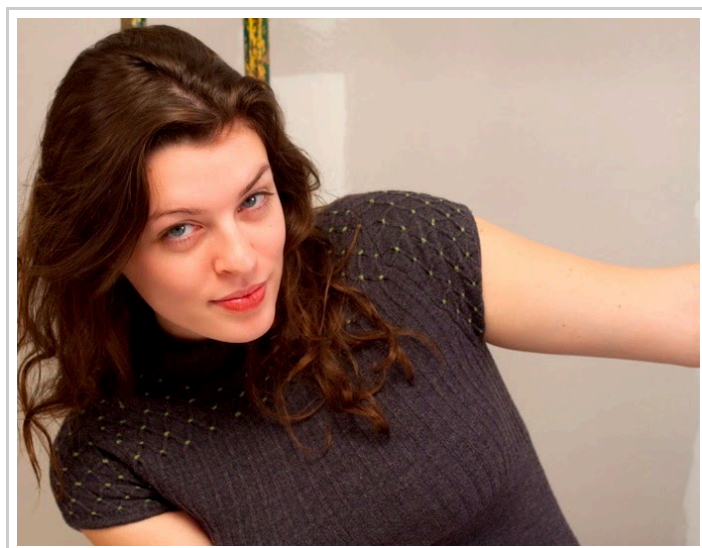
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THURSDAY, MAY 29, 2014

New York Philharmonic EarShot Readings: Composer Spotlight - Julia Adolphe

SoundAdvice sits down with **Julia Adolphe**, one of the composers selected to participate in the **New York Philharmonic EarShot Readings** in June, part of the inaugural NY PHIL BIENNIAL. Her piece, *Dark Sand, Sifting Light*, will be read on June 3, followed by feedback from the New York Philharmonic musicians, maestro Alan Gilbert, and mentor composers.



American Composers Orchestra: What was the inspiration for your piece that will be read at the New York Philharmonic EarShot Readings? How has that been incorporated into the work?

Julia Adolphe: The inspiration for *Dark Sand, Sifting Light* came from the sonic experience of hearing music in the distance. I've always loved the sound of a piano

ABOUT SOUNDADVICE

SoundAdvice is the place where composers and artists share the inside story of their work with listeners and audiences. Here you'll find insights into the creative process. Whether in rehearsal, a readings program, or concert, these artists share the anticipation, the challenges, risks and rewards of putting themselves on the line, creating a new piece of orchestra music and hearing it realized "right before your ears."

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being heard from an open window, a familiar melody drifting into focus from far away. When writing for the orchestra, I thought about how the piano sits far back from the audience. I decided to treat the piano as if it were a distant soloist, surrounded by the larger environment of the full orchestra. The piece begins with fragments of a piano melody. A story formed in my mind that I attempted to capture: someone is poised beneath an apartment window, overhearing a pianist practicing. The person listening begins to daydream. This is represented as each note of the piano melody is sustained and colored by the orchestral instruments. The piano music becomes larger than life in the listener's mind as her thoughts wander and the orchestral sounds transform.

ACO: What were your first thoughts when you were chosen to participate in these Readings, which are part of the inaugural NY PHIL BIENNIAL?

JA: Complete excitement! I am so honored to be included in such a landmark event by one of the world's greatest orchestras. The series of events are so diverse and compelling and I am thrilled that my music will be included among composers whose works I love and respect. Plus, New York City is where I grew up and I am overjoyed to return and contribute to its vibrant cultural life.

ACO: Since you were selected, have you further developed your piece? How have you been preparing yourself and your work for the Readings?

JA: Absolutely. I re-examined the entire piece and made changes to the orchestration. In particular, the second half of the work has a fast section with many overlapping layers. I re-orchestrated in an attempt to clarify the most important motifs in each moment and build greater drama towards the climax.

ACO: During the Readings your work will be workshopped with Alan Gilbert, mentor composers, and New York Philharmonic musicians. What do you hope to gain from this experience?

JA: I hope to gain as much insight into the art of orchestral composition as I possibly can. My goal is to be open and receptive to all of the feedback given to me, to listen with my ears wide open, and to ask as many questions as possible!

ACO: Is there anything you'd like the musicians who will read the work, or the audience that might hear it, to know about your piece in advance?

JA: I hope that anyone who experiences my music will enjoy and engage with the sounds that transpire. If the music lasts longer than the moment and creates a meaningful memory within a listener, then I will have done my job.

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- ▶ [April](#) (1)
- ▶ [March](#) (4)
- ▶ [February](#) (5)
- ▶ [January](#) (3)

▶ [2013](#) (22)

▶ [2012](#) (20)

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