

A close-up portrait of actress Jillian Shea Spaeder. She has curly brown hair pulled back, looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. She is wearing large, ornate gold hoop earrings and a dark blazer over a light-colored top. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light blue.

[NYOTA Magazine ]

# star power

**Jillian Shea Spaeder**

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I used to play Little League softball (and sang the National Anthem on Opening Day a few times).

My parents thought about making “Shea” my first name but thought “Shea Spaeder” sounded like a French restaurant.

I used to get into trouble at school a lot for talking during class!

## GET TO KNOW JILLIAN

My first acting/singing role was as the planet Mars in an elementary school musical.

My favorite pretend pals growing up were my teddy bear Skippy and my baby doll Kelsey.





# JILLIAN'S PLAYLIST

The Beatles // Yesterday

The Beatles // A Day in the Life

John Mayer // My Stupid Mouth

Queen // Don't Stop Me Now

Harry Styles // To Be So Lonely

The Wrecks // Favorite Liar

The Band Camino // What I Want

Taylor Swift // Cardigan

Shawn Mendes // No Promises

Ed Sheeran // New York







# JILLIAN SHEA SPAEDER

Interview by Carol Wright | Photographer: Storm Santos

**Jillian Shea Spaeder took a risk and moved from Philadelphia to Los Angeles to pursue an acting career. It's a risk that paid off and allowed her to star in shows like *Walk The Prank* and in movies such as *Godmothered*. Now, she is focusing on creating original music and cementing herself as a young talent to watch in Hollywood. We talked to Jillian about her single "3:43 am" and her advice for aspiring actors.**

**Growing up did you often put on performances?**

As a child, I loved putting on shows in my basement for my family and friends. I would spend all day rehearsing, making tickets, and setting up the "stage" and seats. Sometimes my friends would help, but usually, I was a one-girl production — ticket taker, usher, refreshment person, and of course the star of the show!

**You moved from Philadelphia to Los Angeles to pursue acting. Were you nervous when you took this leap?**

I've lived in the suburbs of Philadelphia my entire life, so moving completely across the country was definitely scary. After meeting my manager, we went out to L.A. for pilot season in 2015, and that's when I booked *Walk the Prank*. Once that happened, my parents thought it made more sense to move to L.A. but still plan to come back to Philly a few times a year to see my siblings. The show would be shooting in L.A., living there would give me more acting opportunities, and it would be convenient for my dad whose work is based in Northern California. Now, both L.A. and Philly feel like home to me.

**Tell us a bit about your latest movie *Godmothered*. What about the movie interested you?**

*Godmothered* is about a young fairy godmother-in-training (Eleanor) who finds out her chosen profession is becoming extinct. Wanting to prove that people still need fairy godmothers, she heads to Boston to help a little girl whose letter she found. When she gets there, she realizes that the little girl is now a widowed mom of two girls. I play the older daughter, Jane, who is a gifted musician but has performance anxiety. Eleanor tries to help Jane and her whole family find their happily ever after. I was excited about this movie role because I got to sing and play guitar in the role.

**Did you find there were similarities between you and your character Jane?**

Like Jane, I sing and write songs with my guitar, and we both channel our emotions into our music. But Jane has trouble singing in public, which I've never had trouble doing, and she's introverted, which is the opposite of me. We do have one other similarity, though, and that's believing in magic...I am a huge Harry Potter fan!







**Outside of acting you also sing and create music and you covered the song "Rise Up" for *Godmothered*. Was it exciting to combine your two passions for the film?**

Jane really was a dream role for me. Filming *Godmothered* with such a talented and well-known cast was already a pinch-me moment, but also being able to do three things that I love (acting, singing and playing guitar) made it even more special. And then singing "Rise Up" with a choir behind me was surreal.

**Your song "3:43 am" was produced by Blue and your song "Worth My Time" was produced by Avenaim. What did you learn from working with them?**

I love working with both David and Mike, because they both have an incredible ear for production. David often has unique ideas for song arrangement, so when I'm writing the next song I try to think about how he might arrange it. And Mike is an incredible drummer, so he sometimes "hears" a rhythm that completely changes the tempo from what I originally wrote, and we end up with a cool, upbeat song instead of a ballad. They also both work with me as a peer, incorporating my ideas and changes into the music. I've been really fortunate with all my producers that way.

**Tell us about your original song "You and Me." What inspired the lyrics?**

When I wrote "You and Me," I didn't have anyone specific in mind. I sometimes just think of writing from the perspective of a person experiencing something, even if it's not something I've experienced personally. In this case, the person realizes she has been waiting too long for someone she loves to love her back the same way.

**Do you have a certain process when it comes to songwriting?**

Often, if I'm in the mood to write, I actually sit in the car with my guitar. Sometimes it's in the garage, and other times I drive somewhere and park. I guess that works for me because it's quiet and there's nothing around to distract me!

**During the pandemic have you been focusing on learning new instruments or creating new songs?**

I haven't learned any new instruments during the pandemic, but I did a lot of writing and recording. One song, "i don't know," I actually wrote and recorded the same day at home. Then my dad and I produced it (also at home!), and we released it a few days later. I also did a video for this song with my friend Lilia filming me from a safe distance.

**What advice do you have for aspiring singers?**

Just sing! If it's what you love to do, then sing as much as you can. Put yourself out there. Try to sing on a stage somewhere, or post yourself singing. Write music if you're inspired. With the internet, you have lots of options for performing and sharing your voice!







# JILLIAN'S TOP PICKS

BOOK:  
HARRY POTTER  
AND THE  
ORDER OF THE  
PHOENIX

MOVIE:  
SILVER LININGS  
PLAYBOOK

TV SHOW:  
THE OFFICE

FASHION TREND:  
FUN SOCKS







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