

# Video Part 1 transcription:

## Question 1: How did you get involved with the Nashville Shakespeare Festival?

**Jack:**

Well, first, I was a fan. I came to Nashville in 2011, and I saw a play in the park, and I immediately became a fan. I had been into Shakespeare for a few years before I came here in Boston and so I came here and one of the first things I wanted to see was their Shakespeare, and I loved it. I thought it was great.

**Natalie:**

For me, the way I got involved in the Festival was the same. I saw Shakespeare in the Park in 2014 for the first time and then my roommate was taking an acting class with one of the directors who works frequently with Nashville Shakespeare, Santiago Sosa. Just through that class I came and observed and met Santi and became friends with him and was just saying I loved to score. At that time I had just finished my Junior year at Belmont. Then he approached me after that and said "Hey, so I'm doing Romeo & Juliet Winter 2016, do you want to be the sound designer?" I was like "WHAT?! Yes!"

## Question 2: How did you approach putting such an iconic film to music?

**Jack:**

Chelsea, who was playing Ophelia, she didn't have a song because we didn't have a song written so she was just singing this song.

**Natalie:**

Right, yeah! A Grace Potter song.

**Jack:**

Yeah, just something she could sing, and I think Denice was like "Yeah, you know, you could write something along those lines."

**Natalie:**

And that was like our angle.

**Jack:**

It was a very traditional, gospel blues, so we were able to do that.

**Natalie:**

Yeah... and so I felt... and then it kinda was like that song he was just talking about, "How All Occasions Do Inform." Although that song wasn't ever sung in it, the melody of that became the

main theme for Hamlet, and you can hear it throughout played on a simple electric guitar, a very warm sound. So, even though the song wasn't sung, that melody was used predominantly throughout the play in the underscore.

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I remember during the "To be or not to be" speech, that one specifically, we were kind of each, we had a general place that we had decided we were going, but we kind of improv'd that off each other. Each night we were just kind of watching the guy playing Hamlet real intently and just kind of seeing how he was shaping his words.

### **Question 3: What elements of the play did you want to emphasize through the music?**

#### **Natalie:**

We had to explore a lot of the different shades of sadness like the wondering and the intrigue and like and especially the actor who played Hamlet had a lot of moments of like almost sarcastic like "Ugh, of course this is happening!" type of things, and so how do you portray that?

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And for this, where there is a lot of dark and heavy themes, death and stuff like that, I think one of the strongest parts of this play was that it is not just like "DEATH!" the entire time, it's like "Let's talk about what this is," and so I think we did this pretty successfully. We were very intent with the music to make it just exploratory and not so heavy the entire time.

### **Question 4: What instruments were used in the music?**

#### **Natalie:**

Well, we only had three instruments up there, and so it was guitar, keyboard, and the drumset, which was a multitude of things. But, on my keyboard, I remember I had a piano sound, some different synth sounds, a brass trumpet sound, and some string sounds. I know the trumpets were only used for like the royal entrance when they came in.

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Mainly because of Jack, we picked the guitar to be kind of like Hamlet's voice and so that was very intentional.

#### **Jack:**

Yeah, because an electric guitar, you know, it can scream, it can cry, it can moan, it can just do all kinds of things.

### **Question 5: Do you think the music matched the image of Hamlet?**

**Denise:**

We wrote a little prologue, because in the play you never get to see Hamlet and Ophelia together when they're not fighting, and, so, I wanted to show that they actually did have a good relationship, and that she was really, she loved him. That they had love for each other. So, we started it right off with them sitting on the edge of the stage-

**Jack:**

Oh, was that with that one that we wrote?

**Denise:**

Oh, was it?

**Jack:**

Yeah, it wasn't the Hamlet motif, it was "He is Dead and Gone"

**Denise:**

It was it was "He is Dead and Gone." It was the "He is Dead and Gone" motif.

**Natalie:**

It was! You're right. Oh, wow!

**Denise:**

Which, it was really, so that, I just wanted to make sure that everyone felt like right now is the play, and it's not a long time ago and it's right immediately. Hamlet and Ophelia were sitting right on the edge of the stage like they weren't even up on the set or anything, and, so, they just sort of appeared and it was really just kind of immediate and now and alive and I just wanted to make sure that because people do have preconceived notions about what this play is and they think "Oh it's a Kenneth Branagh or David Tennant or whoever but we had Sam Ashdown and he is my favorite Hamlet of all time. He is so brilliant, so, I really wanted it to be ours, and it was!

**Question 6: How did you decide what music to include in the intermission playlist?**

**Natalie:**

I used Grace Potter as a reference just because that was Ophelia, the actress's, reference for picking her first song, and, like we said, we kind of based her ending song on what she just came in with. So, it was kind of like, Grace Potter is like a little bit of folk a little bit of just kind of like acoustic pop yeah just we had just kind of a couple things. So, I picked things that not only fit that sound, but also songs that fit pieces of the story. And then some of them, like I found this one beautiful song that was just really simple, but it was called "Hamlet Accidentally," and I had never heard of it, but I just like searched "Hamlet" on Spotify and it came up and it fit perfectly in the thing.

**Jack:**

Which one was that?

**Natalie:**

It was like: [\*hums tune then sings\*: All that I have is gone, all that I have]

**Jack:**

Wow!

**Natalie:**

Yeah, I know.

**Jack:**

That was called "Hamlet"?

**Natalie:**

It was called "Hamlet" on Spotify, so I was like, "Oh yeah!" And then of course you've gotta have "Ophelia" [\*sings\*: "O Ophelia!"]. Like, you've gotta have that, it's, like, necessary. But yeah... there's just... I tried to pick everything in there not only to fit with like the sound that I curated for the playlist but also each song was meaningful for just, like, parts of the story.

END OF FIRST VIDEO