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## A Star is Born – Julia Lukas, A Fresh Face, a Young Image of Julia Roberts, By Adrienne Papp



Julia Lukas

The great ones seem to know it at an early age. With many of the world's most talented people there seems to be a moment, a turning point when they clearly understand their destiny and commit themselves to a single-minded pursuit of their career goals.

That's what happened to **Julia Lukas**. The talented young actress, photographing as a young **Julia Roberts**, has had a series of images, and visions, which led her to believe, and believe very strongly, that after numerous setbacks in her youth, she is now poised to take the next big step in a highly promising acting career, taking aim, literally, at the stars.

It was in her native country of **Lithuania**, that Julia's creative ambitions were to emerge. Her earliest memory of her first steps along her chosen career path was at the age of six, when she performed in a school pageant and sang as part of the production. "I remember people cheering for me as I received an award," Julia says. "And I just felt that this was my place, that this was where I fit. It was something I needed to do. I liked the fact that I had been accepted by so many other people."



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Julia Lukas

Her home life at that point was unfortunate and very rough. Galina, Julia's mother, was frequently subject to abuse, and her father had a serious drinking problem. "Even when I was pregnant with Julia he would beat me and kick me and demand money," Galina remembers. "There was nothing anyone could do. In those days abuse like that wasn't taken seriously, no jail sentence, or punishment of any kind. My poor children would hide knives under their pillows thinking they would have to defend themselves or their mother." Later, Galina found Julia's diary, which contained a volume of writings and songs about her fears and the violence in her family, her way of dealing with the traumatic moments in her young life. Truth be told: I personally have interviewed many of the most successful and recognized people in our lifetime. The common denominator in each has always been two major factors that stood out each and every time: Overcoming terrible, almost inhuman circumstances by a force of unstoppable sheer will; and working harder than anyone around them by believing so tangibly in their dream that they can actually touch it, verbalize it, taste and feel it! Rare indeed. It has therefore become my conclusion that when the person within becomes stronger and greater than the person without, which is their outside circumstances: they have mastered their lives! From there on it is just the question of time.



Julia and her brother moved to **New York** with their mother shortly after the ongoing traumatic experiences at home when she was just six years old. The family had a lot of relatives in America who encouraged them to start a new life in the land of promises and freedom. It was a very difficult transition at a sensitive time in Julia's life. "It was so unlike Lithuania, where I could just play and roam around as a young child," Julia says. "New York seemed like a hectic, almost dangerous place to me at that age. It was so simple at home, and in New York, the lights, the skyscrapers, the intensity, the never-dying ongoing life: I felt like an outsider, and I had never seen people of different races before. It was very intimidating. Also, it was difficult for me to leave my home, as my father remained in Lithuania. I didn't know any English and a lot of people were cruel to me and made fun of me. It was so different from where I had come from."

After a short stay in New York, Julia's family boarded a bus to **Baltimore** in 1997 to stay with relatives in a small two-bedroom apartment there. It was close quarters, with three generations of the family living there, but Galina was able to get jobs sewing to support her family. Now in the fourth grade - she had been bumped up a grade due to her intelligence - Julia learned English quickly and began to assimilate into the new culture, looking for ways to get herself onstage in her new country. She soon found herself in a school production of *The Little Mermaid* and then *Annie* with the Millbrook Day Players. "It was just very whimsical and fun and confirmed to me that this was what I should be doing," she says.

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Julia Lukas

Another confirmation came in a moment she saw the classic film *Mogambo* in English for the first time. "I had seen the film in Lithuania and absolutely loved *Grace Kelly*," she says. "She epitomized everything I wanted to be as an actress. And I loved the other classic American actresses like *Audrey Hepburn* and *Marilyn Monroe*. But seeing *Mogambo* in English in my adopted country seemed like a sign for me and confirmed that these actresses were now to serve as role models in my career. I actually felt so close to them emotionally that it seemed like I might be a reincarnation of them in some way."

In Baltimore, Julia continued to assimilate into the American lifestyle and also acted in middle school productions like *Guys and Dolls*. Moving on to high school she began to concentrate on the dramatic arts, taking all the courses available, developing a sense of acting as a real vocation, and began following the business and the industry award shows.

Although Julia was finding her way into acting roles, problems continued to plague the family's personal life. Julia's grandmother was diagnosed with breast cancer, and her brother started hanging out with people who were involved with drugs. Despite the best efforts of the family, Roman was unable to stay away from bad influences and in 2009 Julia's brother overdosed and passed away. That was a terrible blow to everyone, but especially to Julia, because her brother had been the one who was always by her side, who was there for her when her mother couldn't be and had been the person always encouraging her in her pursuit of acting. When soul mates part, parts of the soul depart! The pain then can only be expressed through art when creativity wins over destruction. And, that is what Julia did.



Julia Lukas

Roman's death also had a disastrous effect on her father, although he had never reconciled with the family and his children. He died of a heart attack when he got the news. "That was a very, very painful time for me," Julia says. "It set me off on a full week of reflection. I had lived so many lives, moving from Europe to America, adapting to a different culture, becoming a mother myself at an early age. But I felt like I really hadn't lived a life for me. I hadn't really fulfilled my destiny. I wanted to be an actress, to perform on Broadway. That was what I felt I was born to do."

Then, at the age of 15, while visiting the *International Spy Museum in Washington DC*, Julia had a defining moment, an epiphany that focused her ambitions and career goals. "They had an exhibit for the *James Bond movies*, and when I came to one point I just stopped dead in my tracks, in front of the case that had an *Oscar* on display," Julia recalls. "I think the Oscar might have been for sound effects, but for me I suddenly could see myself holding an *Oscar* onstage, and it was so real that I could feel the weight of it. And from that moment on I knew that this was something I wanted to pursue with all my might. I couldn't give up on my dreams."



Julia Lukas

The adolescent years being typically confusing and full of pitfalls, Julia found herself pregnant at the age of 16. She ended up marrying the father, but the union was annulled when she was 18. "My mother gave me full support at this very confusing time," she says, "but I had to drop out of school and continue my education at home." Julia also had a car accident that year, breaking a bone in her neck. "That was a terrifying moment," Galina says. "I looked over at her and her face was just covered with blood where pieces of shattered windshield glass had cut her." Julia had another health scare shortly thereafter when doctors found an orange-sized abdominal tumor on her hip and had to have it removed. It turned out to be benign. "That was so scary," Julia says, "I thought I was going to die." "The first diagnosis was not very good," her mother recalls, "but we decided to get another opinion. So I took her to see another doctor. Julia asked the doctor 'Am I going to live,' and he told her 'not only are you going to live, you are going to outlive me.' And she asked him 'Will I be able to walk,' and he told her 'Not only will you be able to walk, but you will also be able to run.'"



Julia Lukas

Once she had recovered, Julia was determined to fulfill her destiny and enrolled in summer classes on acting for TV and commercials with BettyAnne Leesburg-Lange and started to seriously pursue her dream. "I wanted to work hard to make things happen, and I was also taking serious classes in drama and acting in *Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream*," Julia says. "But I also wanted to make sure that I was well-rounded, like the great actresses Audrey Hepburn and Marilyn Monroe. I want to be funny and make people laugh, but I also love drama and want to move people in a very human way. I want the kind of roles that will allow me to prove myself and show my talent. I want to show that I was more than just another pretty face, I want to be the girl who comes on your screen and makes you feel and makes you smile."

Julia's dedicated efforts have resulted in a number of recent credits, including TV work on "*The Brotherhood*" and "*The Men that Built America*," and she continues to expand her repertoire by adding skills like acoustic guitar, ballet (6 years with Jenny Male, Lester Holmes, and Adrienne Duckett) jazz and hip hop dancing and fluency in foreign languages including Russian and British, Southern, New York, French, Australian and Irish accents.

Now, the struggles finally behind her, Julia's luck is beginning to turn, the result of her natural gift and sheer determination. After many years of heartache and misfortune Julia is now getting in sync with the talents she knows she has to offer to the world, as her momentum is building. This coming May Julia will graduate from the *University of Maryland College Park* with a degree in theater performance and will be moving confidently into the world of *performance arts*.





Julia Lukas

This courageous and drop dead gorgeous woman is making not only her mother very proud, but also those young adults who seek for a mission and values in life! Now remarried, Julia's mother, Galina, remains committed to seeing her daughter succeed the way she knows she can. "She has been the biggest part of my life, and I must always fully support her," Galina says. Not many young, talented beauties have such a strong and stable support system. There is a lot to take away from Julia's story for everyone!

And succeed is just what Julia intends to do. "I have things to do, parts to play and, I hope, trophies to collect," she says. This is an attitude that won't be denied, a confidence that will lead her to a self-fulfilling destiny. "When I was younger it was my brother who stood beside me, who had a lot of confidence in me and encouraged me to reach for my dreams. He is gone now, but in my dreams I see him standing beside me as I am accepting my Oscar."



A Playful Julia Lukas

And, that is the only way to think one's life to success: believing it to the point of feeling, tasting and touching it. The mind is a directing force that if used right can propel one to endless possibilities. This young, talented, enduring and fresh face can bring the rest of us to joy, or a great deal of self-examination. **Julia Lukas** chose success, light, happiness and a mission to become a star to inspire, enlighten and give us hope: She is a woman of her own, on her journey of endless possibilities.

*About the Author of This Article:* **Lady Adrienne Papp** is a recognized journalist, economist and feature writer who has written for many publications including **Savoir**, **Beverly Hills 90210**, **Malibu Beach**, **Santa Monica Sun**, **The Beverly Hills Times**, **Brentwood News**, **Bel-Air View**, **Celebrity Society**, **Celeb Staff**, **It Magazine**, **Chic Today**, **LA2DAY**, **West Side Today** among many others. She is the President and CEO of Los Angeles / New York-based publicity company, **Atlantic Publicity** and publishing house, **Atlantic Publisher**. Adrienne writes about world trends, **Quantum Physics**, entertainment and interviews celebrities, world leaders, inventors, philanthropists and entrepreneurs. She also owns **Atlantic United Films** that produces and finances true stories made for theatrical release or the silver screen. **Spotlight News Magazine** is owned by **Atlantic United, Inc.** Dame Adrienne Papp is a member of the **International Press Academy**.

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