



**MISSY
MOZART**

COMPOSER **MISSY MAZZOLI** MAKES WAVES WITH HER MOVIE-INSPIRED SCORE FOR OPERA PHILADELPHIA'S SPLASHY SEASON PREMIERE.

BY A.D. AMOROSI

All the right notes! Missy Mazzoli is back in her hometown to open Opera Philadelphia's 42nd season.

Reflective avant-garde composer and keyboardist Missy Mazzoli has won dazzling acclaim and critical respect for her somber, swelling pieces, which have resonated through such hallowed halls as Carnegie Hall and London's Barbican Centre. She also leads a music ensemble, Victoire, whose albums feature guests like Wilco and The National. "I'm definitely no purist," Mazzoli says of her

classically based sonic style. "Once you start writing and working in opera, you just can't enough." But where she got her start—and where she'll surely nail down one of her finest achievements—is Philadelphia. Born in Lansdale (she currently resides in Brooklyn), Mazzoli has been working in Philly since 2012 as composer-in-residence for Opera Philadelphia; her upcoming opera, an adaptation of Lars von

Trier's dark 1996 film *Breaking the Waves*, has its world premiere at the Kimmel Center on September 22. "I started playing music very early on as a kid, and it was most certainly classical," she says. But that never made her a classical-only baby: by her mid-teens, Mazzoli had "a Pixies-sounding punk rock band of my own," and spent her fair share of time hitting the Philly clubs. "Don't tell my mom, but I

used to sneak out to go dance at Shampoo and see concerts at Electric Factory," she says with a laugh. As for debuting the tragic *Breaking the Waves* through Opera Philadelphia ("make no mistake, it is a hard story to watch," she recalls of the film), the in-demand modernist composer was delighted by how "eclectic this company is" and the city's evolving fan base. "It's quite a scene." operaphila.org ■

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