



JENSEN ARTISTS

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Yolanda Kondonassis

Yolanda Kondonassis is celebrated as one of the world's premier solo harpists and is widely regarded as today's most recorded classical harpist. Hailed as "viscerally exciting" (*The Chicago Tribune*) and a "brilliant and expressive player" (*The Dallas Morning News*), she has performed around the globe as a concerto soloist and in recital, bringing her unique brand of musicianship and warm artistry to an ever-increasing audience. Also a published author, speaker, professor of harp, and environmental activist, she weaves her many passions into a vibrant and multi-faceted career.

Praised by *Gramophone* for her "keen sense of dramatic timing and a range of colour that's breathtaking," Kondonassis has sold hundreds of thousands of albums and downloads worldwide and her extensive discography, released on the Telarc, Azica, Oberlin Music, New World, and Channel Classics labels, includes over twenty titles.

She was nominated for a Grammy Award for Best Classical Instrumental Solo for her latest recording, featuring the world premiere of Jennifer Higdon's Harp Concerto with The Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra as part of the album *American Rapture* (Azica Records, 2019). Her 2008 album of music by Takemitsu and Debussy, *Air* (Telarc), was also nominated for a Grammy Award. Other lauded releases include Alberto Ginastera's Harp Concerto on *Ginastera: One Hundred; American Harp; Solo Harp: The Best of Yolanda Kondonassis; Ravel: Intimate Masterpieces; Music of Bright Sheng* (including the world premiere recording of Sheng's Concerto for Harp and Orchestra, written for Kondonassis); *Salzedo's Harp; Debussy's Harp; The Romantic Harp; Music of Hovhaness*; the first-ever harp recording of Vivaldi's *The Four Seasons; Quietude; A New Baroque; Pictures of the Floating World; Sky Music; and Scintillation*. Her many albums have earned universal critical praise as she continues to be a pioneering force in the harp world, striving to make her instrument more accessible to audiences and pushing the boundaries of what listeners expect of the harp.

Since making her debut at age 18 with the New York Philharmonic and Zubin Mehta, Kondonassis has appeared as soloist with numerous major orchestras in the United States and abroad such as The Cleveland Orchestra, English Chamber Orchestra, Hong Kong Philharmonic, Detroit Symphony, Dallas Symphony, San Diego Symphony, Houston Symphony, NFM Wroclaw Philharmonic (Poland), Orquesta Sinfonica de Puerto Rico, Phoenix Symphony, Buffalo Philharmonic, Odessa Philharmonic (Ukraine), New World Symphony, and Florida Orchestra, to name a few. Other appearances include engagements at Carnegie Hall, Avery Fisher Hall, the 92nd Street Y, and Taiwan's National Concert Hall.

Kondonassis' performances have been a feature at renowned festivals throughout the United States, including the Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival, Marlboro Music Festival, Minnesota Beethoven Festival, Spoleto Festival, Strings Music Festival, Tanglewood Music Festival, Bravo! Vail, Great Lakes Chamber Music Festival, Mainly Mozart Festival, and others. She has been featured on CNN and PBS, as well as Sirius XM Radio's *Symphony Hall*, NPR's *All Things Considered* and *Tiny Desk Concerts*, *St. Paul Sunday Morning*, and *Performance Today*.



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As a chamber musician, Kondonassis has collaborated with artists such as the Shanghai, Jupiter, Rossetti, JACK, Biava, and Vermeer string quartets, pianist Jeremy Denk, guitarist Jason Vieaux, violist Cynthia Phelps, and flutists Marina Piccinini, Joshua Smith, and Eugenia Zukerman. The Kondonassis/Vieaux duo released their debut album, *Together*, in January of 2015 on Azica Records; *Gramophone* praised their “almost rapturous sense of cohesion.”

Committed to the advancement of contemporary music for the harp, Kondonassis has promoted countless new works through her numerous recordings and premieres. She presented and recorded the world premiere of Bright Sheng’s *Never Far Away: Concerto for Harp and Orchestra* with the San Diego Symphony and most recently, she was the dedicatee and soloist in the world premiere series of Jennifer Higdon’s *Harp Concerto* after close collaboration with the composer. Kondonassis’ extensive discography includes works by Rorem, Rochberg, Erb, Liebermann, Paulus, Fitch, Lash, Montsalvatge, Takemitsu, Cage, and Carter, among others.

As an author, composer, and arranger, Kondonassis has published four books to date: *The Composer’s Guide to Writing Well for the Modern Harp*; *On Playing the Harp*, a comprehensive guide to harp technique and methodology; *The Yolanda Kondonassis Collection*, a compilation of her many original transcriptions, arrangements and compositions for the harp; and *The Yolanda Kondonassis Christmas Collection*, featuring Kondonassis’ most popular arrangements from her acclaimed disc, *Dream Season: The Christmas Harp*. Carl Fischer Music publishes all of her works.

Kondonassis carries her passionate artistic commitment to the protection of natural resources, air quality and climate change. Royalties from several of her projects are donated to earth causes and she is the founder and director of *Earth at Heart*, a non-profit organization devoted to earth literacy and inspiration through the arts. Her first children’s book, entitled *Our House is Round: A Kid’s Book About Why Protecting Our Earth Matters*, was published in 2012 by Skyhorse Publishing and praised as “the perfect children’s introduction to environmental issues” by The Environmental Defense Fund. The book was licensed as a featured title by Scholastic Books.

Born in Norman, Oklahoma, Kondonassis attended high school at Interlochen Arts Academy. She continued her education at The Cleveland Institute of Music, where she received her Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees as a student of Alice Chalifoux. Kondonassis’ long list of national and international honors includes top prizes in the Affiliate Artists National Auditions in New York, the Maria Korchinska International Harp Competition in Great Britain, two Solo Recitalists Grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, and a 2011 Cleveland Arts Prize. In addition to her active performing and recording schedule, she heads the harp departments at Oberlin Conservatory of Music and The Cleveland Institute of Music and has presented master classes around the world. Yolanda Kondonassis plays a Lyon & Healy Salzedo Model concert harp.

For more information on Yolanda Kondonassis, visit www.YolandaHarp.com.



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Acclaim

"Kondonassis's colorful harp playing is smooth, resourceful, ever-musical." – *The Los Angeles Times*

"[Yolanda Kondonassis'] performance abounds with affectionate detail ... she plays with a keen sense of dramatic timing and a range of colour that's breathtaking."

- *Gramophone Magazine*

"Kondonassis has poise and sensitivity—if your hair doesn't stand on end, you're shaving too close." – *The New York Daily News*

"Kondonassis played with technique, musicianship, and rhythm ... an exquisite evening."

– *The Washington Post*

"Yolanda Kondonassis is a harpist who handles the repertory of her instrument with considerable poise and musicianly energy ... powerful playing." – *The New York Times*

"A brilliant and expressive player . . ." – *The Dallas Morning News*

"Yolanda Kondonassis lived up to her impressive credentials ... a triumph of virtuosity." – *The Milwaukee Sentinel*

"... flat-out fabulous." – *The New Jersey Star Ledger*.

"A dazzling technique unfailingly governed by impeccable musical judgment." – *The Detroit News*

"... phenomenal technical prowess and radiant musicality . . . Kondonassis put her inspired artistry on display time and time again, mesmerizing her listeners and dispelling any doubt that she is today's leading harpist." – *The Deseret Morning News*

Medium Biography (674 Words)

Yolanda Kondonassis is celebrated as one of the world's premier solo harpists and is widely regarded as today's most recorded classical harpist. Hailed as "viscerally exciting" (*The Chicago Tribune*) and a "brilliant and expressive player" (*The Dallas Morning News*), she has performed around the globe as a concerto soloist and in recital, bringing her unique brand of musicianship and warm artistry to an ever-increasing audience. Also a published author, speaker, professor of harp, and environmental activist, she weaves her many passions into a vibrant and multi-faceted career.

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Short Biography (380 Words)

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Kondonassis is committed to the advancement of contemporary music for her instrument, with recent premieres including works by Bright Sheng and Jennifer Higdon. Her extensive discography includes works by Rorem, Rochberg, Erb, Liebermann, Paulus, Fitch, Lash, Montsalvatge, Takemitsu, Cage, and Carter, among others. Her most recent book, *The Composer's Guide to Writing Well for the Harp*, was released by Carl Fischer Music in 2019.

In addition to her active solo, chamber music, and recording schedule, Kondonassis heads the harp departments at Oberlin Conservatory of Music and The Cleveland Institute of Music, and presents masterclasses around the world.

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