

YOLANDA KONDONASSIS

Harpist

Hailed by the *New York Times* as a harpist with “powerful playing and musicianly energy,” Yolanda Kondonassis is recognized as one of the world’s foremost harpists, performing both as a concerto soloist and recitalist throughout the United States, Far East and Europe.

Since making her debut at age 18 with the New York Philharmonic and Zubin Mehta, she has appeared as soloist with numerous major orchestras such as The Cleveland Orchestra, English Chamber Orchestra, Detroit Symphony, New York Chamber Symphony, Philadelphia Chamber Orchestra, Houston Symphony, Orquesta Sinfonica de Puerto Rico, Phoenix Symphony, Buffalo Philharmonic, New World Symphony, Florida Orchestra and Hong Kong Philharmonic, to name a few. Other solo appearances include engagements at Lincoln Center, the 92nd Street Y and Taiwan’s National Concert Hall. Highlights of the upcoming season include the world premiere and recording of Bright Sheng’s *Never Far Away: Concerto for Harp and Orchestra*. Composed for Ms. Kondonassis, the work is underwritten by the San Diego Symphony, the Dallas Symphony, the Grand Rapids Symphony, and Oberlin Conservatory of Music for a premiere season in 2008-2009 with Ms. Kondonassis as soloist.

As a Telarc recording artist, praised by *Gramophone* magazine for the “clarity, colour, and rhythmic vitality of [her] playing,” Ms. Kondonassis has won universal critical acclaim for her thirteen discs, which include much of the standard repertoire, as well as her own transcriptions and compositions for harp. With over 100,000 albums sold worldwide, her latest recording, *Salzedo’s Harp: Music of Carlos Salzedo*, was released in 2007. Considered one of the world’s preeminent performers of the works of Carlos Salzedo, Kondonassis presents an authentic and exciting glimpse of Salzedo’s genius in this new collection. Her upcoming Telarc release, entitled *Air*, features the parallel works of Claude Debussy and Toru Takemitsu and will be available in October, 2008.

Other recordings include *Debussy’s Harp, The Romantic Harp*, her own (and the first-ever) harp transcription of Vivaldi’s *The Four Seasons* with the Orchestra of Flanders, an all-Hovhaness album, featuring the world premiere recording of his *Spirit of Trees, Quietude, A New Baroque, Pictures of the Floating World, Dream Season, Sky Music*, and her debut album, *Scintillation*. Her recording of Mozart’s *Concerto for Flute and Harp*, with flutist Renée Krimsier and the English Chamber Orchestra, was released on the Channel Classics label.

A devoted chamber musician, Ms. Kondonassis has performed at the Marlboro, Spoleto,

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Tanglewood, Vail, Bay Chamber, Strings in the Mountains, Innsbrook, Great Lakes, and Mainly Mozart Festivals. She has collaborated with members of the Alban Berg, Guarneri, Shanghai, and Vermeer string quartets. She also appears regularly in concert with the Rossetti String Quartet, violinist Chee-Yun, and flutist and CBS commentator, Eugenia Zukerman.

Ms. Kondonassis' first book, *On Playing the Harp*, a comprehensive guide to harp technique and methodology, was published in 2003 and has quickly become a bestselling addition to the harp pedagogy literature. Her second book, *The Yolanda Kondonassis Collection*, is a compilation of her many original transcriptions, arrangements and compositions for the harp. Her latest publication, *The Yolanda Kondonassis Christmas Collection*, features Ms. Kondonassis' most popular arrangements from her highly acclaimed CD, *Dream Season: The Christmas Harp*. Ms. Kondonassis' works are published by Carl Fischer.

Ms. Kondonassis' long list of national and international honors includes top prizes in the Affiliate Artists National Auditions in New York and the Maria Korchinska International Harp Competition in Great Britain. The first harpist to receive the Darius Milhaud Prize, she is committed to the advancement of contemporary music, and has premiered several works composed expressly for her, including Donald Erb's *Sonata for Solo Harp*, which she recorded for the New World label. The recipient of two Solo Recitalists Grants from the National Endowment for the Arts, Ms. Kondonassis has been featured on CNN and PBS television as well as National Public Radio's *All Things Considered*, *St. Paul Sunday Morning*, and *Performance Today*. In addition to her active performing and recording schedule, Ms. Kondonassis heads the harp departments at the Cleveland Institute of Music and Oberlin College Conservatory, and has presented master classes around the world.

As an orchestral harpist, Ms. Kondonassis has performed, recorded and toured as guest harpist with the Cleveland Orchestra, the San Francisco Symphony, the Saint Louis Symphony and the Atlanta Symphony.

Ms. Kondonassis was born in Norman, Oklahoma, where she began studying the harp at age 9. She attended high school at Interlochen Arts Academy and 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.

For more information about Yolanda Kondonassis, visit www.yolandaharp.com.

FALL 2008 PLEASE DESTROY ALL PREVIOUSLY DATED MATERIALS.

Note: For printed programs, please use the above text as written or, if space is limited, refer to the condensed program biography.

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