

## Kondonassis & Azica Records are among 2020 Grammy Award Nominees

by Mike Telin



Yesterday the Recording Academy announced that Cleveland-based Azica Records' release of Jennifer Higdon's *Harp Concerto* performed by Yolanda Kondonassis and the Rochester Philharmonic, conducted by Ward Stare, had received a Grammy nomination in the Best Classical Instrumental Solo category. The recording on the album *American Rapture* was produced and mixed by Alan Bise, and engineered by Bruce Egre. Commissioned by Kondonassis, Higdon's concerto was also nominated for Best Contemporary Classical Composition.

"This nomination is always such a huge honor with all the amazing talent out there. To be in this small group is humbling and I'm thrilled beyond belief," Kondonassis said in an email. "Enormous thanks go to Jennifer Higdon, Ward Stare, The Rochester Philharmonic Orchestra, Alan Bise, Bruce Egre, and Azica Records. These projects are never easy, but what an amazing team to make it all happen!"



In an interview this past July, Kondonassis told *ClevelandClassical.com* that the concerto is "a wonderful collection of short stories that fit together even though they're all completely different. I think that's one reason why people seem to like the piece so much." Of the recording, which was made live, the harpist said, "A live orchestral concerto recording is in some ways scary business: you never know what's going to happen. Strings can break, strange noises come out of nowhere. Azica did such an amazing job — honestly, with the sound they got, you almost wouldn't know it was live — they managed to focus in on so much of the richness happening on stage." Click [here](#) to read the in-depth article about the piece.

“As the owner of Azica Records it is always a great honor to be recognized by the Recording Academy with a Grammy nomination,” Bruce Egre said in an email. “It is especially meaningful this year as the nomination goes to harpist and longtime friend Yolanda Kondonassis. Her career speaks for itself and she deserves this recognition.”

The Grammy Awards will be presented on January 26, 2020. Click [here](#) for a complete list of nominees.

In addition to a busy performing career, Yolanda Kondonassis teaches at the Oberlin Conservatory and the Cleveland Institute of Music. Her new book, *The Composer's Guide to Writing Well for the Modern Harp*, is now available from Carl Fischer Music.

In 2015 Azica Records release of guitarist Jason Vieaux's solo album, *Play*, won a Grammy Award in the category of Best Classical Instrumental Solo. Bruce Egre and Alan Bise also serve on the faculty at CIM.

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