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### LILY AFSHAR PREMIERES USPENSKY ON FIRST CHAMBER MUSIC ALBUM

(MEMPHIS, TN) – When Lily Afshar learned that Vladislav Uspensky's *Musical Sketches on Pushkin's Eugene Onegin* had never been released, she became a guitarist on a mission.

That mission has led to the release of Afshar's first chamber music album (September 24 via Archer Records), which features the *Musical Sketches on Pushkin's Eugene Onegin* as well as works by Paganini and Piazzolla.

"The inspiration for this recording began with my curiosity of Uspensky's *Musical Sketches on Pushkin's Eugene Onegin*," Afshar says. "The fact that it is based on Pushkin's novel, and the unique instrumentation for eight musicians – drums, bass, clarinet and strings with guitar – intrigued me. Knowing the story and listening to the programmatic piece clearly explains the character of the hero and heroines created by both Pushkin and Uspensky while blending 19th Century with the 20th."



To the Uspensky premiere, Afshar added a favorite: the classic *Sonata Concertata, Op. 61* by Niccolò Paganini. *Musica da Camera* closes with a spirited live recording of *Histoire du Tango* for guitar and violin by Astor Piazzolla, performed with violinist Joy Wiener at the Buckman Performing Arts Center in Memphis.

"Sometimes wonderful musical moments happen on stage, which cannot be created in a studio," Afshar says. "That night, the audience gave us the energy and spark to bring the tangos to life. We brought out the rhythmic and melodic elements of the dances – it was a night to remember."

The title of the album finds Afshar in a playful mood, inspired by the cinematic nature of the recordings she'd chosen.

"In Italian, the word 'camera' means 'chamber,'" Afshar explains. "In a light moment, the title *Musica da Camera* was proposed with a photograph of me alongside not a guitar, but a camera! It made me laugh and it was different and fun- just like the music."

*Musica da Camera* releases in the U.S. on September 24 in physical and digital format and in the United Kingdom in October. For information on Lily Afshar's touring schedule of performances and master classes, visit [www.LilyAfshar.com](http://www.LilyAfshar.com).

## Musica da Camera

### 1. Musical Sketches on Pushkin's Eugene Onegin

for guitar & chamber ensemble by Vladislav Uspensky (WORLD PREMIERE)

*Performed by Lily Afshar, Jim Gholson, Daniel Gilbert, Tim Shiu, Anthony Gilbert, Leonardo Altino, John Chiego, Frank Shaffer*

1. The Ball
2. Tatiana
3. Ol'ga
4. Quadrille
5. Onegin
6. Mazurka
7. Lensky
8. Theatre

### 2. Sonata Concertata, Op. 61

for guitar & violin by Niccolò Paganini

*Performed by Lily Afshar and Tim Shiu*

1. Allegro Spiritoso
2. Adagio assai espressivo
3. Rondeau

### 3. Histoire du Tango

for guitar & violin by Astor Piazzolla

*Performed by Lily Afshar and Joy Wiener*

*(Recorded live at Buckman Performing Arts Center, Memphis)*

1. Bordel 1900
2. Cafe 1930
3. Nightclub 1960
4. Concert d'Aujourd'hui

## ABOUT LILY AFSHAR

*Lily Afshar is like a breath of fresh air in the world of classical guitar. Her solo, chamber, and concerto appearances combined with her adventurous recordings have earned her the status of "one of the world's foremost classical guitarists" according to Public Radio International. The Washington Post described her onstage performances as "remarkable, impeccable." But perhaps equally as important is her reputation for expanding the contemporary classical guitar repertoire. Afshar's collaborations with international composers have resulted in premieres of new works by Carlo Domeniconi, Reza Vali, Garry Eister, Gerard Drozd, Loris Chobanian, Arne Mellnas, Kamran Ince, Barbara Kolb, Marilyn Ziffrin, David Kechley, and Salvador Brotons. Afshar's first recording "24 Caprichos de Goya, Op. 195" was released in 1994 and her second "A Jug of Wine and Thou" in 1999. Her third and fourth recordings "Possession" (2002) and "Hemispheres" (2006) feature a combined total of eight world premieres. "Hemispheres" reached No. 7 on Billboard's Top Classical Albums Chart in 2006. "One Thousand and One Nights" was released in 2013. Afshar's grandparents were born north of Iran in Azerbaijan and later moved to Tehran where Lily was born. She was 10 years old when she began learning the guitar. She graduated with a Bachelor of Music and a Master of Music degree in guitar performance from The Boston Conservatory and the New England Conservatory of Music. At Florida State University, where she studied with Bruce Holzman, Lily became the first woman in the world to gain a Doctorate of Music in guitar performance. She has studied at the Banff Centre for Fine Arts and the Aspen Music Festival with Oscar Ghiglia. She received Diplomas of Merit from the Accademia Musicale Chigiana in Siena, Italy. She was selected to play for Maestro Andrés Segovia in his master classes held at the University of Southern California. Lily was honored with*

*the 2011 Distinguished Alumni Award from the Boston Conservatory, and the 2000 Orville H. Gibson Award for Best Female Classical Guitarist in Los Angeles. Her other awards include the Top Prize in the Guitar Foundation of America Competition and Grand Prize in the Aspen Music Festival Guitar Competition, among others. She received the Tennessee Arts Commission Individual Artist Fellowship Award in Music and an NEA Recording Award. She is a three-time winner of the Annual "Premier Guitarist" awards given by the Memphis Chapter of the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences and she was chosen as "Artistic Ambassador" for the United States Information Agency to Africa. Lily is head of the University of Memphis guitar program where she received the 2000 Board of Visitors Eminent Faculty Award, and the 2008 Alumni Association Distinguished Teaching Award. Lily regularly conducts guitar master classes in conjunction with her touring and performs in guitar festivals around the world.*

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