

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: August 30, 2011

Contact: Leslie Johnson, Director of Marketing & Special Projects
215-735-6770, Leslie@AstralArtists.org

ASTRAL ARTISTS ANNOUNCES ITS 2011-2012 CONCERT SEASON

PHILADELPHIA, PA – Astral Artists has announced its 2011-2012 Concert Season, which includes the Philadelphia recital debuts of four Astral artists, the *Philadelphia Brahms Festival*, the *Spiritual Voyages Festival*, and *Rising Stars*. Astral's concerts are held at the Trinity Center for Urban Life (2212 Spruce Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103), the Church of the Holy Trinity (1904 Walnut Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103), and in the Perelman Theater of the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts (260 S. Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102). Tickets range from \$18-\$30 for General Admission, \$16-\$25 for Seniors, and \$5 for Students 30 and under, and can be purchased by calling 215-735-6999 or by visiting AstralArtists.org.

“We are thrilled to announce Astral's 2011-2012 Concert Season, which offers the opportunity to experience many of Astral's marvelous artists in their Philadelphia recital debuts, as soloists with Symphony in C, and, for the first time ever, in two thrilling festival days,” said Astral's Artistic Director, Julian Rodescu. “We look forward to welcoming new and returning audiences to our exciting array of concerts.”

The season opens with the Philadelphia recital debuts of two Astral artists, pianist Alexandre Moutouzquine and violinist Kristin Lee. Mr. Moutouzquine is featured on Sunday, September 25, 2011 at 3pm at the Trinity Center for Urban Life, in a formidable program that includes the Philadelphia premiere of John Corigliano's *Winging It*, Robert Schumann's *Fantasy in C Major, Op. 17*, and Alexander Scriabin's *Twelve Etudes, Op. 8* and *Fantasy in B minor, Op. 28*. On Sunday, November 6, 2011 at 3pm, also at the Trinity Center for Urban Life, Ms. Lee presents a recital program that includes Poulenc's *Violin Sonata*, John Adams' *Road Movies*, Ysaÿe's *Sonata No. 3, “Ballade,” Op. 27*, Messaien's *Thème et variations*, and Brahms' *Sonata No. 3 in D minor, Op. 108*.

The *Philadelphia Brahms Festival* will be held on Saturday, December 3, 2011, with concerts at 1pm, 4pm & 8pm, all at the Church of the Holy Trinity on Rittenhouse Square. Now in its third year, the festival, sponsored by the Leo Model Foundation and Jacobs Music, celebrates the beloved composer with performances by Astral artists and distinguished special guests. The 1pm “Obsessed With Beethoven” program includes Beethoven's *Septet in E-flat Major, Op. 20* and the rare opportunity to hear Brahms *Serenade, Op. 11* for nine instruments. “Baroque Brahms” at 4pm includes Handel's *Piano Suite*

No. 1 in B-flat Major, as well as Brahms' *Variations and Fugue on a Theme by Handel*, *Cello Sonata No. 3 in E minor, Op. 38*, and *Piano Quartet in C minor, Op. 60*. The 8pm "Sextets for Agathe & Florence" program features Astral violinists Benjamin Beilman and Kristin Lee with special guests, violists Ida Kavafian and Steven Tenenbom and cellists Peter Stumpf and Peter Wiley, in Brahms' *Sextet No. 2 in G Major, Op. 36* and Tchaikovsky's *Souvenir de Florence, Op. 70*.

On January 29, 2012 at 3pm, at the Trinity Center for Urban Life, Astral soprano Yulia Van Doren makes her Philadelphia recital debut. Garnering consistent praise for her recent performances in the Boston Early Music Festival's acclaimed production of Steffani's *Niobe* and the Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra of San Francisco's tour of Handel's *Orlando*, *OperaNow!* calls Ms. Van Doren "the Anna Netrebko of early music" and the *Financial Times* says she "sings gloriously" and with "dynamic sensitivity." Joined by Stephen Stubbs, one of early music's foremost lutenists and Baroque guitarists, Ms. Van Doren's recital will include selections from the Baroque, rarely performed versions of Schubert Lieder with Baroque guitar, works by Hildegard von Bingen and Benjamin Britten, and traditional folksongs in new arrangements for voice and lute.

As a winner of the coveted Knight Arts Challenge Philadelphia, on Saturday, February 18, 2012 at the Church of the Holy Trinity, Astral presents its *Spiritual Voyages Festival*, a one-day, three-concert celebration of the music and poetry of African-, Asian-, and Latin-American cultures. At the 1pm "Raise Your Voice" concert, Astral artists and special guests, including Astral graduate soprano Karen Slack and the African Episcopal Church of St. Thomas Chancel Choir, perform spirituals by Evelyn Simpson-Curenton, Alvin Singleton, and others alongside poetry written by Maya Angelou, Sonia Sanchez, and more. At 4pm, Astral flutist Julietta Curenton makes her Philadelphia recital debut, accompanied by pianist Steven Beck. Ms. Curenton's program includes Philippe Gaubert's *Fantasy*, Bach's *Partita in A minor*, Schubert's *Introduction and Variations on "Trockne Blumen,"* and spiritual arrangements for flute and piano by her mother, composer Evelyn Simpson-Curenton. "From The Andes To The Yangtze" at 8pm features Astral artists in works by Golijov, Piazzolla, Gabriela Lena Frank, and Vivian Fung, along with the poetry of Gabriela Mistral, Ngyuen Quyen, and Cheyanne Whien. The program also includes Villa-Lobos' *Bachianas Brasileiras No. 5* with Astral soprano Disella Lãrusdóttir, Astral cellist Susan Babini, and seven cellists from the Curtis Institute of Music, as well as performances by the Gamelan Semara Santi of Swarthmore College and the Indonesian Cultural Club Dance Troupe.

On Monday, April 2, 2012 at 7:30pm in the Perelman Theater of the Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts, Astral's season concludes with its annual *Rising Stars* concert. Astral artists are featured as soloists with Symphony in C under the baton of Music Director Rossen Milanov. Flutist Angel Hsiao performs Mozart's *Flute Concerto No. 1 in G Major, K. 313*, clarinetist Benito Meza solos in Nielsen's *Clarinet*

Concerto, Op. 57, and violinist Benjamin Beilman performs Bruch's Violin Concerto No. 1 in G minor, Op. 26.

Programs, artists, dates, times, and venues are subject to change.

###

Founded in 1992, **Astral Artists** is a non-profit organization that plays a vital role in the discovery and development of the nation's most gifted classical musicians. Selected from a nationwide pool of applicants at competitive annual auditions, Astral artists are provided with invaluable career development guidance; debuts in Philadelphia and New York City; numerous performance opportunities via Astral's critically-acclaimed concert series; collaborations with world-renowned musicians; auditions for major presenters, managers, and conductors; and world premières of compositions written for them and commissioned by Astral – **all at no cost to the artist**. Astral reaches approximately 10,000 community members annually through concerts and extensive community engagement programming. Astral's impressive list of graduates includes soprano Angela Meade, bass-baritone Eric Owens, pianist Simone Dinnerstein, and cellist Mark Kosower. **For more information about Astral Artists, please call 215-735-6999 or visit AstralArtists.org.**

Note to Editors: Photograph are available upon request;
please contact Leslie@AstralArtists.org.