

STRATA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

STRATA TO PERFORM THE WORLD PREMIERE OF STEPHEN PAULUS'S TRIO CONCERTANT AT MERKIN CONCERT HALL ON SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 21 AT 8:00 PM

New Work Designed for Appreciation on Multiple Levels by Novice and Connoisseur

NEW YORK (October 15, 2010)— [Strata](#), the classical trio known for its “deft ensemble playing” and “talent...worth getting worked up about,” according to *The Washington Post*, is headed to Merkin Concert Hall at Kaufman Center on **Sunday, November 21** for the **world premiere** of **Stephen Paulus's *Trio Concertant***. The 8:00 pm concert also includes ***Seven Glances at a Mirage*** (2003) by Jonathan Leshnoff and ***Riddle*** (1999) by Robert Maggio, pieces composed specifically for the ensemble, and Béla Bartók's ***Contrasts***.

Strata's **Metaclassical Music Project** commissions composers to create music that is not only dramatic, challenging, and engaging to performers and sophisticated listeners, but accessible to students and new music neophytes as well. “We are interested in what composers will create when they start out with the intention to instruct,” says the ensemble's violinist/violist James Stern. “Recognizing that some of the most successful concert music has its roots in settings far removed from the concert hall—rural countrysides, private salons, military recruiting shows, rituals both solemn and celebratory—the Metaclassical Music Project asks composers to envision the educational outreach presentation as the setting of origin and the concert hall as the setting of destination.”

The project's inaugural work comes from renowned composer [Stephen Paulus](#), who has composed more than 400 works, including 60 works for orchestra and 10 operas, for esteemed institutions including the New York Philharmonic, Cleveland Orchestra, Atlanta Symphony Orchestra and Los Angeles Orchestra. His choral catalog alone includes more than 150 works ranging from three minutes in duration to the hour-length oratorio on Holocaust themes entitled, *To Be Certain of the Dawn*, recorded by Osmo Vanska and the Minnesota Orchestra for BIS.

Paulus has embraced the project's philosophy with a 30-minute, seven-movement work, which exploits register, contrast, and spatial elements (location of the instruments with respect to each other). He notes, “I have treated the trio almost like a mini orchestra. There is *pizzicato* and *arco* writing for the violin, as well as harmonics. And, sometimes the violin plays in the lowest part of its range while the clarinet plays above. The piano part, which covers the entire range of the keyboard, is full of chords and clusters as well as pointillistic touches.” For Paulus, the key learning feature in his *Trio Concertant* is its unique use of contrast.

Strata, which consists of **Stern**, pianist **Audrey Andrist**, and clarinetist **Nathan Williams**, has performed together for 20 years. The trio has served as resident ensemble at the Banff Centre for the Arts and appeared in New York City under the auspices of the International Society for Contemporary Music. In 2005, the ensemble's San Francisco

Composers Inc. performance garnered the group a place on San Francisco Classical Voice's "highlights of 2005."

The concert and commission are funded by a Rauch Family Memorial Music Grant, awarded to projects that help build audiences for classical music.

Merkin Concert Hall at Kaufman Center is located at 129 W. 67th Street in Manhattan.

Tickets are \$33 (general admission) and \$9 (students and seniors) and they can be purchased at the box office, by calling 212-501-3330 or at www.merkinconcerthall.org. For more information on Strata, visit www.stratamusic.org.

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