

SYMPHONY IN C

Rossen Milanov, Music Director

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

February 12, 2015

CONTACT:

Pamela Brant, President

856.963.6683 (office)

609.680.6905 (cell)

pbrant@symphonyinc.org

“Rising Stars” String Competition for Student Musicians Winner, Violinist Jason Vassiliou

COLLINGSWOOD, NJ – The nationally-recognized **Symphony in C** announces the winner of the Rising Stars Competition, Jason Vassiliou. **Jason Vassiliou** is a sophomore distinguished honors at Conestoga High School in Berwyn PA. He is currently a violin student of Hirono Oka, of Cherry Hill, NJ, who plays with the Philadelphia Orchestra. **Symphony in C’s “Rising Stars” String Competition**, was open to young violinists, violists, cellists, and double bassists ages 12-18 who reside in, or their teacher resides in Southern New Jersey or the Philadelphia area. Nine students were selected to compete in the final auditions last Sunday in Haddonfield.

“The Rising Stars competition is the result of community engagement efforts to increase participation in our annual Concerts for Young People,” Symphony in C President Pamela Brant explains. **“The winner will perform with Symphony in C in the annual “Concerts for Young People, on Thursday, February 26, 2015,”** so this is the perfect way to increase awareness and participation in Symphony’s programs while creating a unique opportunity for talented, young instrumentalists.”

Jason Vassiliou is a sophomore distinguished honors at Conestoga High School in Berwyn PA. He is currently a **violin student of Hirono Oka, of Cherry Hill, NJ**, who plays with the Philadelphia Orchestra. Previous teachers include Ellen DePasquale and Julian Meyer. He is a recipient of the Starling Violin Scholarship at Temple University Music Prep Center for Gifted Young Musicians where plays in the Youth Chamber Orchestra, and a quartet. Jason also holds a Settlement Music School Advanced Study Scholarship as a member of the Braverman Quartet. Additionally, he is a member of the first violin section of the Philadelphia Youth Orchestra.

Previously, he has been the concertmaster of Philadelphia Young Artists Orchestra, of Luzerne Music Center Jr. Orchestra, Temple Music Prep Chamber Players, Schuylkill Valley Area Orchestras, and PA District 12 StringFest Orchestras. As the grand prize winner of the 2015 Symphony in C Rising Stars Competition, Jason will be soloing with the orchestra in February. In 2014, he won the Delaware County Symphony Concerto Competition, and will solo with them in May 2015. He was also chosen as a soloist for the Spring 2012 Concert of the Temple Music Prep Chamber Players Orchestra. He has also placed in concerto competitions for Old York Road Symphony Concerto Competition (2013 honorable mention); Bucks County Symphony Youth Concerto Competition (2013 2nd place), in the 2012 Kennett Symphony Jr. Instrumental Competition (1st place), and 2011 Tri-County Association Youth Festival Jr. Strings Division (1st place).

Jason is also a composition and music theory student of Sandrine Erdely-Sayo, a composer and concert pianist based in Philadelphia, PA. Jason's compositions that have been performed include: a string quartet, *Satanic Dance*, premiered at Center Stage Strings Music Festival in Three Rivers, CA (summer 2014); *String Quartet No. 5* performed at the Temple University Music Prep (2013 Spring Concert) and Luzerne Music Center, NY (summer 2012); *Dance in Four* for quartet, as well as a *flute and oboe duo*, played at the Luzerne Music Center (summer of 2013); and the *Quartet in A minor* and *Quartet in e minor*, played at the Spring 2007 and Spring 2008 concerts of Classic Strings Orchestra at Temple Music Prep. In 2014 and 2012 he was a Finalist in the American Society of Composers Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) Foundation Morton Gould Young Composers Competition with "A Disjointed Waltz for String Quartet" (2014) and the first movement of his *String Quartet No. 5 in a minor*, "Maelstrom" (2012). In 2009, the *String Quartet in A minor* won the Delaware Valley Philharmonic Orchestra Youth in Arts Competition and an orchestrated version was played in March 2009.

Jason has participated in his high school Orchestra, Chess Club, Science Olympiad Club, Model UN Club, and has published poems in the high school Literary Magazine. He has attended summer music programs at Center Stage Strings, CA and Luzerne Music Center.

About Symphony in C: Symphony in C is one of three professional training orchestras in the United States preparing musicians and conductors who are on the cusp of world-class careers through concert, educational outreach and professional development programs. Performing at the Gordon Theater at Rutgers Camden Center for the Arts in Camden, New Jersey, Symphony in C serves over 90,000 people annually through its critically-acclaimed

concert series, educational outreach programs and radio broadcasts. Symphony in C has been designated a Major Arts Institution by the New Jersey State Council on the Arts and strives to continue making artistic, educational, and economic impact on a regional, national and global scale.

This program made possible in part by funds from Cooper University Health Care, L-3 Communications, East, New Jersey State Council on the Arts/Department of State, a Partner Agency of the National Endowment for the Arts, The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, Horizon Foundation for New Jersey, and the William G. Rohrer Charitable Trust. Symphony in C is a member of the South Jersey Cultural Alliance (SJCA).

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