

Astral Locksmiths

Also known as the 'azure locksmiths', the 'blue concierge' and sometimes simply the 'magpies', the Astral Locksmiths are a quasi-militant [Freespacer](#) organisation based out of the former-IWL established [Blue Rift](#) fortress-planet, [Arsenal](#).



Technically speaking, their main purpose is to maintain the [ley line](#) system and protect it from outside interference, but they are also often tasked with refugee support missions, and the safeguarding of Free State technological secrets.

Their core values revolve around insuring an independent future for the Freespacer race, safeguarding those in need, and using stealth to complete missions with as little violence as possible.

History

With the first actions being performed in their name being around YE 33 by several separate dissident military groups, it is difficult to discern exactly when the Astral Locksmiths became the organisation that they are today. This is because it primarily started as a volunteer group through the polysentience, with no quality assurance to determine who could join.

Cinereal's planet was specifically chosen as a base of operations in YE 35, because it finally allowed the selection process to become more airtight and strictly moderated. During the first few months alone, there was a flurry of activity whilst they followed the immediate tactical concerns of their new-found mother figure. Chief of which was the immediate removal of all the gate system prototypes, manufacturing technologies and related scientists from [Null and Void](#), the system in now-Nepleslian space where they were originally developed. The backlash from DION-settled freespacers was severe, but the Locksmiths cared little seeing as absolute independence from foreign powers was a core concept of their organisation as a whole.

Freespacers living within Nepleslian territory could still use the ley line system, through Nepleslian craft as of YE 38 now require examination and authorization before transit.

There is still a great deal of confusion whether the Astral Locksmiths actually represent the best interests of the Free State as a whole or not, as many of their actions can be seen as rightful paranoia considering their recent past, but also very insular and unconstructive in inter-species terms.

Membership

Individual 'locksmiths' can only be recruited after an intense selection process on the part of Arsenal's resident AI Cinereal, itself a massive conglomeration of symbiotic [syntelligences](#). This process includes both personality profiling and a [polysentience](#) history check.

Since much of Arsenal is completely automated, pay is given directly to individual members upon the completion of services rendered, often in the form of pure resources and food goods, specifically set aside in special caches. There is no set uniform, though traditionally salvaged chrome gears found 'in the wild' during missions are worn as badges and talismans to informally denote one's status. Crews who have been serving for many years may also chrome-plate their entire voidwalker suits, which in combination to the multitude of jangling cog icons can begin to make them look like bizarre silver space knights over time.

True to the freespacer way, there are no ranks, and such odd shows of memetic artwork are often the only way to tell a newbie from a veteran.

Still a relatively young organisation, individual member quality is all over the place, but the high ratio of former Independent Worlds League soldiers makes them not a force to be underestimated on small organised offensive operations.

Area of Operation

The Astral Locksmiths take their name from exclusive use of the Freespacer's ley line gate system, which they guard from use and manipulation on the part of other factions. Many of these gates are spread throughout Nepleslian space, but many secret ones also exist in Yamatai, Lorath and NMX locals, as well as considerably far into the lawless galactic north.

Rather than fight to defend individual gates, however, many are simply destabilized and destroyed the moment their location is compromised. The threat of allowing enemy forces to reverse-engineer the technology or hack the access codes, and thus gain a direct travel route to Arsenal's deepest reaches, is simply too great. [SAINT](#) could in many ways be considered their direct opposition, rather than the Yamatai Star Army itself, but any intelligence agency who attempts to subvert Freespacer interests is one that will quickly earn their hostility off the record.

It's also worth mentioning that there is actually a second gate network, too, one that they do not maintain or control. Built separate from the civilian network by the IWL during the chaos of the [Freespacer Schism](#), this aged, fragmented, and unreliable system is now mostly used by criminal and mercenary elements. They are currently attempting to map it, but efforts are unfocused, and become out of date extremely quickly as new unauthorized gates spring up in secret.

Regular Forces



The "*Silent Guardian*", a Nomad gunship operated by the Astral Locksmiths.

Locksmith vessels are normally painted gleaming silver as a matter of pride, but their actual state of spaceworthiness varies greatly from vessel to vessel. The only real distinction in fleets is between roles, and between syntelligence and organic-crewed craft, due to operational differences.

Type	Quantity	Crew
"Divine Comedy" State-Issue Ayame	6	Mixed
Nomad-Class Solarfoil Corvette	75	Mixed
Crewed Phantasm Variants	100	Mixed
Phantasm Gunships Mk. II	200	Type 5 Syntelligences
Phantasm Gunships	400	Nonvolitional Automata
Medium Maintenance Vessels	614	Mixed
Traveller Shuttles	2008	Mixed
Long Range Observation / Maintenance Drones	5016	Nonvolitional Automata

OOO Notes

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