



KANSAS CITY
SYMPHONY

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Kansas City Symphony Welcomes Special Guest Patti Austin to 15th Annual Bank of America Celebration at the Station

The Symphony's 15th annual Memorial Day weekend event centers on a patriotic concert with vocalist Patti Austin, plus pre-show music, activities for veterans and families, and fireworks

KANSAS CITY, Mo. | May 25, 2017 — The Kansas City Symphony has announced Grammy® Award-winning vocalist Patti Austin will debut as special guest and host for the 15th annual Bank of America Celebration at the Station on Sunday, May 28, held at Union Station.

As the largest FREE Memorial Day weekend event in the Midwest, with around 50,000 people expected to attend, the Kansas City Symphony continues to expand its annual gift to the region while honoring the men and women who have paid the ultimate sacrifice.

Grounds open at 3 p.m. with opportunities to enjoy pre-concert entertainment by the Airlifter Brass of The United States Air Force Band of Mid-America and A La Mode. Also on site will be more than a dozen food trucks, a multitude of family-friendly and hands-on activities in the Lee Jeans Family Zone as well as an area to learn about veteran services in the newly-added Grantham University Veterans Place.

At the heart of the Grantham University Veterans Place will be a model tiny home by [Veterans Community Project](#) (VCP). In 2015, the organization launched Veterans Village in Kansas City, Kan., a community of 50 transitional tiny homes for homeless veterans, and has since received national attention for their efforts. Other highlights of the Veterans Place include the V.A. Mobile Vet unit, Warrior's Best Friend, RideKC's illustrated "Honoring Veterans" bus, Bank of America's financial health information and resources for veterans and active-duty military, as well as Grantham University's tent with even more resources and opportunities for veterans.

At 8 p.m., Music Director Michael Stern will conduct the Kansas City Symphony and guests in a 100-minute, no-intermission concert filled with patriotic works such as "Stars and Stripes Forever," "Armed Forces Salute" and Tchaikovsky's ever-rousing "1812 Overture" with live cannons firing from the platform north of the National World War I Museum and Memorial.

In homage to the great chanteuse Ella Fitzgerald (who would have been 100 this year), [Austin](#) will sing songs Fitzgerald was known for, such as "Anything Goes," "Mack the Knife" and "Get Happy." Members of the Symphony Chorus will accompany her on several selections.

Continuing the centennial of the United States' entrance into WWI, the program includes a medley of Great War-era songs that the Symphony commissioned expressly for this event. To acknowledge what would have been the 100th birthday of President John F. Kennedy, the Symphony will perform an orchestral suite from the film "J.F.K.," scored by John Williams. Special guest Jim Birdsall (announcer for CNBC and NFL Films) and members of the U.S. Air Force Band of Mid-America also make their returns to the stage during the concert. Vietnam Veteran John Musgrave from Baldwin City, Kansas, will read one of his poems, accompanied by music of Aaron Copland.

The program culminates at 9:40 p.m. with a grand finale. All eyes will turn skyward for the city's largest display of choreographed fireworks, presented to the beat of patriotic music and overlooking the National World War I Museum and Memorial.

Attendees are encouraged to use the [Kansas City streetcar](#), which is free to ride, and will operate until 11 p.m. The streetcar runs a 2-mile loop with 16 stops from the River Market area through downtown and Crossroads Arts District to Union Station, which is the event stop. Most area parking costs \$10-15 cash per car. There also will be numerous road closures in the area, including at Pershing Road and Main Street. For detailed parking and closure information, view a map [here](#).

As the event draws near, the Symphony will post more details regarding pre-show entertainment, special exhibits and more at kcsymphony.org/celebration and on the Symphony's [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) accounts. The official event hashtag is #celebrationkc.

Event schedule at a glance [here](#).

Concert program [here](#).

Kansas City Public Television (KCPT) will broadcast the event live on Channel 19 and re-air the event on Memorial Day, Monday, May 29. The rebroadcast airs regionally on Independence Day as well.

For interviews, photography or other media requests, please contact Communications Manager Beth Buchanan at bbuchanan@kcsymphony.org or (816) 218-2621.

High-resolution publicity photos of Patti Austin and the Kansas City Symphony's Bank of America Celebration at the Station event are available for download [here](#). To learn more about the Kansas City Symphony, visit kcsymphony.org or call (816) 471-0400.

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About the Kansas City Symphony and Chorus

Founded in 1982, the Kansas City Symphony has established itself as a major force in the cultural life of the community. Praised for performances of uncompromising standard, the orchestra is the largest in the region and enjoys a national reputation under the artistic leadership of Music Director Michael Stern. The Kansas City Symphony Chorus is a volunteer, 160-member ensemble led by multi-Grammy® Award-winning conductor, Charles Bruffy, that continues its long tradition of excellence as the choral voice of the Kansas City Symphony. The Kansas City Symphony performs more than 100 concerts each year, often welcomes guests of international acclaim as part of its Classical and Pops Series, and serves as the orchestra for the Kansas City Ballet and Lyric Opera of Kansas City.

Complementing its full schedule of concerts, the Symphony enriches the lives of Kansas City residents by providing music education opportunities for children and adults, such as KinderKonzerts, Young People's Concerts, an instrument petting zoo and concert comments. Highlights each season include a range of free master classes, events and concerts reaching more than 200,000 community members, including the annual Bank of America Celebration at the Station concert each Memorial Day weekend and performing at Symphony in the Flint Hills every summer.

The Symphony has released six highly praised CDs to date with Reference Recordings, with the most recent release featuring the music of contemporary composer [Adam Schoenberg](#) (released January 2017).

The Symphony and Michael Stern also have recorded for the Naxos label. Kansas City Symphony performances can be heard locally each week on KCUR 89.3 FM, Kansas City's NPR affiliate. More information on the Kansas City Symphony is available at kcsymphony.org.