



2015 Press Kit

1. [Release](#)
2. [Event Schedule](#)
3. [Info Sheet](#)
4. [Photos](#)

Updated May 6, 2015



Media Contacts:
Beth Buchanan
(816) 218-2621
bbuchanan@kcsymphony.org

Jeff Barker
(816) 218-2626
jbarker@kcsymphony.org

Kansas City Symphony's Free Memorial Day Weekend Celebration Grows Bigger, Better for 2015

Event features concert, fireworks, expanded family activities, The Elders, John Amos, U.S. Air Force Band of Mid-America, plus 8 other local groups

KANSAS CITY, Mo. | April 22, 2015 — Kansas City's best Memorial Day weekend concert and party, Bank of America Celebration at the Station, just keeps getting bigger and better — and this year is no exception.

As the largest event of its kind in the Midwest, the Kansas City Symphony expects more than 50,000 people to attend the 13th annual free concert event on Sunday, May 24.

Thousands will gather in front of Union Station to picnic, listen to patriotic tunes and cap off the evening with a massive fireworks display set to the backdrop of the National WWI Museum at Liberty Memorial. While the event is a holiday celebration, it also serves as a special tribute to America's armed forces of past and present. This year, the concert will commemorate the 40th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War. Concurrently, the National WWI Museum is sponsoring the American Veterans Traveling Tribute (AVTT) Vietnam Wall, an 80-percent-size replica of the Vietnam Memorial, from May 22-25.

"There's no event during our season to which we look forward more to than our annual Celebration at the Station for Memorial Day weekend — and thanks to our friends at Bank of America, it really has grown over the years into a huge event!" said Michael Stern, music director of the Kansas City Symphony. "It's amazing to look toward Liberty Memorial from our stage, seeing 50,000 fellow Kansas Citians gathered to mark the holiday with friends and family. It's a moment of real civic pride to celebrate together. But it also affords all of us at the Symphony, with our music, a chance to say thank you to the entire city, as we honor the real and most profound meaning behind Memorial Day. For all of these reasons, this event is much more than just a concert."

Local Irish American folk rock band, The Elders, are special guests for the evening, performing "Building a Boat" and "Please Come Home" with the 80-member Kansas City Symphony. Continuous pre-concert entertainment on the main stage will include the prestigious U.S. Air Force Band of Mid-America "Phoenix Brass," A La Mode Quintet (local swing band), Vine Street Seven (local big band-style jazz group), Diverse Jazz Quartet and Allegro Choirs of Kansas City: SPIRITO (young men's choir).

National Guard veteran, actor and former Chiefs running back John Amos will serve as guest host and narrator for the evening. Senior leadership from the United States Army Garrison Fort Leavenworth and Whiteman Air Force Base will be in attendance along with other guests of honor.

New this year is an expanded family area and stage — the Celebration Family Zone — with fun for all ages, including appearances by the Youth Symphony of Kansas City Brass Ensemble, Drum Safari (a community drumming circle), School of Rock, Science City and the Chiefs Rumble Drum Line. The family area also will have chalk art drawings, face painting, a hands-on craft station plus the Bush and Jamie Helzberg Instrument Petting Zoo where children can try their hand at various orchestral instruments.

At 8 p.m., the Symphony will take the stage for an inspiring set of patriotic orchestral music, including the 1812 Overture, complete with three live firing cannons managed by “Truman’s Own” of the Missouri Army National Guard, Battery D. At 9:45 p.m., all heads will turn skyward toward the National WWI Museum at Liberty Memorial for a spectacular display of choreographed fireworks, bursting to the beat of American favorites. This annual fireworks display is the city’s most blazing of the year with more than 1,500 shells deployed.

KCPT 19 will broadcast the event live and is scheduled to rebroadcast the event several times during Memorial Day weekend.

KCPT and other public television stations throughout the region will rebroadcast the event over the Fourth of July weekend. Check local listings for broadcast dates and times. To join in on social media, the official event hashtag is #CelebrationKC.

Event schedule overview for Sunday, May 24. View detailed [event schedule](#).

Time	Event	Location
1 p.m.	Grounds open	Main St. & Pershing
1-7:15 p.m.	Pre-concert entertainment	Main Stage & Celebration Family Zone
8 p.m.	Symphony concert begins	Main Stage
9:45 p.m.	Fireworks begin	Over Liberty Memorial

For photo requests, interviews and other media inquiries, please contact Beth Buchanan at (816) 218-2621, bbuchanan@kcsymphony.org, or Jeff Barker at (816) 218-2626, jbarker@kcsymphony.org.

###

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, while also serving as the orchestra for the Kansas City Ballet and Lyric Opera of Kansas City, and often welcomes guests of international acclaim as part of its Classical and Pops subscription series.

Complementing its full schedule of concerts, the Symphony strives to enrich the lives of Kansas City residents by providing music education opportunities for children and adults, including KinderKonzerts, Young People's Concerts and an instrument petting zoo. Highlights each season include a range of free masterclasses, 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 Symphony in the Flint Hills every summer.

Additionally, the Symphony has released four CDs with Reference Recordings — *Shakespeare's Tempest*, the Grammy®-winning *Britten's Orchestra*, an Elgar/Vaughan Williams project and most recently, *Miraculous Metamorphoses*, which highlights composers Hindemith, Prokofiev and Bartók. Three additional projects have been recorded and slated for future release, including the music of contemporary composer Adam Schoenberg (recorded June 2014), the great Symphony No. 3 (Organ Symphony) and other works of Saint-Saëns (planned for 2015 release) and Holst's *The Planets* (recorded January 2015). The Symphony and Michael Stern also have recorded for the Naxos label. KCS 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 www.kcsymphony.org.



2015 INFO SHEET

What: The Kansas City Symphony's 13th Annual Bank of America Celebration at the Station
Free patriotic concert event with fireworks

When: Sunday, May 24, 2015.

- **1 p.m.** Grounds open
- **1 - 7:15 p.m.** Pre-show music and family-friendly activities
- **8 p.m.** Kansas City Symphony concert
- **9:45 p.m.** Fireworks

Where: South plaza of Union Station and the north lawn of the National WWI Museum at Liberty Memorial; the intersection of Pershing and Main Streets in Kansas City, Mo.

Who: Kansas City Symphony conducted by music director Michael Stern, with special guests of honor.

Special main stage musical guests:

- **The Elders** — *a six-piece Irish American folk rock band, that formed in Kansas City in 1998.*
- **U.S. Air Force Band of Mid-America "Phoenix Brass"** — *a group of 12 enlisted professional musicians with repertoire including symphonic band masterworks, traditional marches, modern compositions and jazz.*
- **A la Mode Quintet** — *a classic Kansas City swing band with a splash of blues, folk, and Latin grooves.*
- **Vine Street Seven** — *an ensemble that honors the legacy of the "golden era" of Kansas City's world renowned jazz history, exclusively performing big band-style tunes from the '30s and '40s.*
- **Diverse Jazz Quartet** — *a Kansas City ensemble playing jazz heavily influenced by modern day genres while keeping a firm grasp on tradition.*
- **Allegro Choirs of Kansas City: SPIRITO** — *an elite vocal ensemble comprised of young men from the Kansas City area.*

Guests of honor:

- **Senior Leadership from U.S. Army Combined Arms Center Fort Leavenworth (Kansas) and Whiteman Air Force (Missouri).**
- **John Amos** — *veteran of the 50th Armored Division of the New Jersey National Guard and Honorary Master Chief of the U.S. Coast Guard. Amos also has had a 40-year career in Hollywood, with a starring role on "The West Wing." He also is a former running back of the Kansas City Chiefs. Amos will serve as guest host and narrator for this year's event..*

- **Missouri Army National Guard, Battery D, “Truman’s Own”** — *managing the firing of three cannons during the 1812 Overture.*
- **Color Guards** — *each military branch will be represented.*
 - The U.S. Army Color Guard supported by the Greater Kansas City Recruiting Company
 - The Color Guard from the 9th Marine Corp Regiment Kansas City
 - The Navy Operational Support Center Kansas City Honor Guard
 - The Air Force Honor Guard from Whitman Air Force Base, Missouri
 - U.S. Coast Guard Color Guard from PPC Topeka

Other noteworthy items for the 13th Annual Bank of American Celebration at the Station:

- This year the program will commemorate the 40th anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War.
- Concurrent with the Vietnam War commemoration, the National WWI Museum is sponsoring the American Veterans Traveling Tribute (AVTT) Vietnam Wall, an 80 percent in size and 100 percent in content replica of the Vietnam Memorial the weekend of the event.
- The Kansas City Symphony concert program will include a photo montage on giant screens flanking the stage. The Northeast Kansas Chapter of Gold Star Mothers has organized the photo collection. A Gold Star Family Member is an individual whose loved one has died during a military conflict.
- The Kansas City Symphony will again sponsor the Kansas and Missouri ***Remembering Our Fallen exhibit*** — *walls of photo montages inside Union Station created to honor and remember men and women who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the Iraq or Afghanistan wars.*

Kansas City Symphony media contacts:

- **Beth Buchanan**, (816) 218-2621, bbuchanan@kcsymphony.org
- **Jeff Barker**, (816) 218-2626, jbarker@kcsymphony.org

Event hashtag: #CelebrationKC

Event website: kcsymphony.org/celebration

Event photos: kcsymphony.org/GalleryCtl/SectionAct/68

Event video from 2013: youtube.com/watch?v=2Vf3nsqx_Xs

KCPT 2012 broadcast, part 1: youtube.com/watch?v=JYJP4kcWG98

KCPT 2012 broadcast, part 2: youtube.com/watch?v=RqOvBthFQGc

Activities in the expanded Celebration Family Zone:

- **Kansas City Symphony Bush and Jamie Helzberg Instrument Petting Zoo** — *an interactive display for children and their families to see and hear the different instruments of the orchestra — up close and personal!*
- **Special family stage guests** — *Experience acts by local Kansas City gems, including Youth Symphony of Kansas City Brass Ensemble, the School of Rock, Drum Safari (a community drumming circle), Science City and the Chiefs Rumble Drum Line.*
- **Family activities** — *the Celebration Family Zone will have fun for all ages, including face painting, chalk art and hands-on crafts.*
- **Food trucks** — *Many of Kansas City's most popular food trucks add to the festival atmosphere by selling a wide variety of food and beverages.*

Additional questions, [contact us](#).

For media inquiries, photos, logos, video, etc., please contact Beth Buchanan at bbuchanan@kcsymphony.org, (816) 218-2621 or Jeff Barker at jbarker@kcsymphony.org, (816) 218-2626.

###

[Return to top](#).