



## **Symphony Executive Director to step down in 2019**

**KANSAS CITY, Mo.** | May 24, 2018 — The Kansas City Symphony today announced longtime Executive Director Frank Byrne will conclude his career with the Symphony on August 31, 2019.

“It is my privilege to lead and serve this organization, and one of my most sacred responsibilities is to plan for the Symphony’s future without me,” Byrne said. “When I depart, I will have been with the Symphony for nearly 19 years — a great run. The organization is very strong both artistically and financially, and 2019 is the ideal time for this important transition.”

Symphony Board Chair William M. Lyons said, “Frank Byrne has been a driving force behind the growth and success of the Kansas City Symphony. During his tenure, all aspects of Symphony operations have grown dramatically and have achieved new levels of excellence. It is undeniably at the center of the performing arts in Kansas City. The Symphony’s contribution to the cultural health of our community is a direct result of Frank’s intelligent, energetic and committed leadership. He has positioned the organization beautifully for continued success.”

Byrne joined the Kansas City Symphony in November 2000 as General Manager, and in July 2002, then-Board Chair Shirley Helzberg asked him to move into the Executive Director role. Under his leadership, the Symphony has thrived, set records for ticket sales, earned and contributed revenue, and has greatly expanded its programming and outreach. The Symphony’s annual budget has grown from \$8 million in FY2001 to nearly \$19 million for FY2019. The Symphony’s fiscal year runs July 1 through June 30.

“I have known no Executive Director more dedicated to the institution, more committed to details while never losing sight of the greater end, or more in love with music, than Frank Byrne,” said Music Director Michael Stern. “Frank thinks like a musician and lives like one, and he will leave an indelible mark on the Kansas City Symphony. His organizational insight and fiscal stewardship are abundantly evident in our growth and our stability. His greatest contribution remains his advocacy for the musicians and his tireless devotion to great music; and because of this, he was the essential catalyst to transforming the Symphony’s culture into what it is today. I have been privileged to have had in Frank a great collaborator in our shared musical adventure. As his colleague and friend, I have benefitted from his counsel, humor, hard work and vision, and I could not be more grateful.”

The Symphony board will begin a national search to identify the next Executive Director.

“There is no orchestra in America with greater potential or spirit than the Kansas City Symphony, so this will be a fantastic opportunity for the right person,” Byrne said. “I will assist any way I can to assure the Symphony’s continued success.”

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

To learn more about the Kansas City Symphony, visit [kcsymphony.org](http://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 250,000 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 Grammy® Award-nominated music of contemporary composer Adam Schoenberg (released January 20, 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](http://kcsymphony.org).