



Kansas City Symphony guarantees no changes to musician salaries, benefits through current 2019/20 season

KANSAS CITY, Mo. | March 26, 2020 — The Kansas City Symphony leadership and musicians have reached an agreement to guarantee musician salaries and benefits through the end of this current season.

“Due to COVID-19, the Symphony has had to cancel or postpone more than 20 concerts and that loss of revenue is extraordinary,” says Executive Director Danny Beckley. “In these uncertain times, other orchestras have had to make difficult decisions regarding compensation. Thanks to many years of fiscal discipline, strong community support and an ongoing culture of collaboration and transparency between our musicians and leadership, we are pleased to announce that salaries and benefits will remain unchanged for the current season for both Kansas City Symphony musicians and staff. We are receiving a tremendous response from our patrons, offering new and increased philanthropic support for the Symphony during this unprecedented time by way of new gifts and donating unused tickets back to the Symphony. With this generous support, we will be able to emerge on the other side of this crisis with inspired strength to perform great music for our community once again.”

Symphony Musicians’ Committee Chair Kristin Velicer agrees and says the musicians are eager to play together again.

“The musicians are deeply appreciative of this agreement,” Velicer says. “We would like to thank Board Chair Patrick McCown and Executive Director Danny Beckley for their leadership throughout this process. This agreement continues the culture of mutual trust and respect throughout the organization. The musicians look forward to performing for our audiences in Helzberg Hall at the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts as soon as possible.”

The Symphony’s [2020/21 season](#) was recently announced with concerts starting in the fall. Subscription sales are continuing strong with renewing subscribers and new season ticket holders.

The Symphony also has been busy creating ways to stay connected with audiences digitally.

“This commitment to our musicians and staff enables us to supercharge our creative endeavors in service to our community,” Beckley says. “We have several exciting new projects underway to serve the great people of Kansas City, bringing comfort through music at a time when it is most needed.”

Recently, the organization launched the first episode of a new podcast called “[Beethoven Walks into a Bar...](#)” featuring three hosts from the Symphony family: David T. Beals III Associate Conductor Jason Seber, Principal Flute Michael Gordon and Education Manager Stephanie Brimhall. The lighthearted podcast shares behind-the-scenes stories about working for an orchestra, and the hosts chat about various music topics as friends would over a pint at the pub.

Additionally, Beckley has been working to release another new podcast highlighting archived Symphony performances.

“We will soon be starting a second new podcast,” Beckley says. “Each episode will be a curated listening experience as we rediscover some of the Symphony’s best moments from the past decade. Stay tuned for more information.”

Symphony Education Manager Stephanie Brimhall is also preparing fun music education materials to share digitally with parents who are looking for ways to keep their young ones engaged and learning while at home.

To watch, listen and learn more about the Symphony, visit 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 130 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 seven highly praised CDs to date with Reference Recordings. The latest release features Holst's *The Planets* and *The Perfect Fool*. The Symphony and Michael Stern also have recorded for the Naxos label. Kansas City's NPR affiliate, KCUR 89.3 FM, broadcasts Kansas City Symphony performances each week. More information on the Kansas City Symphony is available at kcsymphony.org.