

## MUSIC MATTERS

Kristin Velicer, *acting associate principal second violin*



**How did it feel to be back for the first concert in Helzberg Hall this season?** Absolutely incredible! Having the full orchestra back on stage, hearing the lush sound, and feeling the energy and love from our audiences was really special. Opening the season with Mahler was a perfect way for us to really make the statement that we are back!

**How has the pandemic changed how you approach your work with the Symphony?** I am in awe of our patrons, donors, and the whole community! They stuck with us through the pandemic, and that is really inspiring. Our community values the arts highly and their devotion and support are deeply, deeply appreciated by all of the musicians and the entire organization.

Going forward, I believe that music will play an even more important role in bringing us all together. During the pandemic while we were playing with smaller instrumentation to accommodate safe distancing, we had the opportunity to explore repertoire that was new to us or, in some cases, newly composed. This included exciting and compelling works composed by women and people of color. We were able to hear directly from a number of these composers about their inspiration and intentions. This connection with the composers deepened our understanding of the music and inspired our performances. I truly hope that we can bring all this fantastic repertoire to our audiences in the coming seasons.

**What is something the orchestra started doing the pandemic that you want to see continue now that we are closer to normal?** The Mobile Music Box was created out of a brainstorming meeting, and it turned out to be a phenomenal success. The musicians have really enjoyed bringing music to every corner of our community. We create our own programs, pick our own groups, mix and match repertoire and play all sorts of musical styles from classical to pop to rock. The joy we experience up close with the audiences, many of whom have never experienced the Symphony live, is exciting. We have had people follow the Mobile Music Box all around the greater Kansas City area hoping to catch nearly every performance! It has allowed us to bring music to schools when the schools couldn't come to us. It has been a lot of fun and I am so happy that it will be continuing even as our normal concert schedule resumes.

**What are some of the things you like about fall?** I love everything about fall! The leaves changing, cooler weather, being able to drink hot drinks without completely melting, sweater weather, and walking on trails in the leaves. Also, fall means the Symphony season is back in full swing!

Learn more about Kristin >>> [kcsymphony.org/musician/kristin-velicer/](https://kcsymphony.org/musician/kristin-velicer/)