



JOB POSTING

Chief Production Officer

POSTING DATE: July 1, 2025

REPORTS TO: President & CEO

SUPERVISES: Production Team (Director of Artistic Administration, Director of Education and Community Engagement, Director of Orchestra Personnel, Production Manager, Stage Manager, orchestra librarians, staff conductors, chorus leadership, full-time production support staff, and a host of contractors and vendors)

WORKS CLOSELY WITH: Chief Marketing and Experience Officer, Chief Financial Officer, Chief Development Officer, Music Director

In only its 42nd season, the Kansas City Symphony (KCS) has already become one of America's most vibrant major orchestras, quickly gaining national and international recognition. The Symphony is entering its second season with world renowned conductor and composer Matthias Pintscher as its Music Director, and the positive energy and buzz around this orchestra is intensely optimistic and forward-moving.

Continuously creating live music experiences in Helzberg Hall at the prestigious Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, the Symphony serves Kansas City's metro population of more than 2.2 million people and welcomes tens of thousands of visitors across a huge swath of the Midwest as well. The Symphony's 80 full-time musicians perform in diverse and dynamic musical experiences in orchestral and chamber formats each season. The Symphony also serves as the orchestra for the Kansas City Ballet and the Lyric Opera of Kansas City, enriching the community's cultural landscape.

While the Kansas City Symphony ranks among leading American orchestras, it also stands out as one of the most agile. The lean operation of just over 30 full-time staff enables the organization to be fast and nimble, with the excitement of a startup but the polish, stature, connections, and resources of a major cultural institution. Its \$25M annual operating budget is fueled by the strongest ticket sales per capita in the sector, along with healthy annual contributions and a \$135M endowment provided by Kansas City's exceptional civic culture of philanthropy. A wide range of programming spans every genre from classical and concert opera to rock, film with live orchestra, and all manner of contemporary artists. The orchestra aspires to do more and to be more for all the people of Kansas City and surrounding regions, and the growth trajectory is exciting, rapid, and palpable.

Nothing signifies this rapid ascent more than the orchestra's debut on the world stage in 2024. While other orchestras are pulling back from global commitments, the Kansas City Symphony is boldly stepping forward, having accepted invitations to be presented in Europe's top concert halls, including Amsterdam's Concertgebouw, the Berlin Philharmonie, and the stunning new Elbphilharmonie in Hamburg. The orchestra's sold-out performances in 2024 triggered immediate re-invitations, and the orchestra is developing funding and plans to support a return to be presented once more by all of these venues in 2026.

It is truly an exciting time for the Kansas City Symphony, and central to this forward motion is the newly created position of **Chief Production Officer**.

Position Overview

The Chief Production Officer (CPO) is a strategic leader responsible for the operational execution of all Kansas City Symphony performances, experiences, and events in a variety of venues. Reporting to President & CEO Danny Beckley and serving as a key member of his Executive Leadership Team, the CPO collaborates closely with peers— Chief Financial Officer Sara Lohe, Chief Marketing and Experience Officer Julius Lai, and Chief Development Officer Eva James Toia—to deliver extraordinary musical experiences that engage, inspire, and grow audiences.

The ideal candidate for Chief Production Officer has the artistic ingenuity of a theatrical producer, the organizational expertise of an orchestra manager, the business savvy and innovative resourcefulness of an inventor-entrepreneur, the persuasive talents of an experienced negotiator, and the courage and emotional intelligence of a strong leader.

Key Responsibilities

Production Leadership

- Oversee end-to-end production management, ensuring flawless execution of concerts and events within established budgets.
- Lead a team of over a dozen in-house specialists in production management, stage management, orchestra personnel, music library, artistic administration, conducting staff, education, and community engagement. Supervise the oversight of the KCS Chorus, an auditioned volunteer chorus with professional leadership.
- Direct planning of concerts, rehearsals, and orchestra services, and non-orchestral services including oversight of Mobile Music Box activities led by the Director of Education and Community Engagement.
- Work closely with the President, Music Director, Artistic Advisor, and Director of Artistic Administration to shape the offerings of the orchestra in accordance with strategic leadership in experience and market strategy led by the Chief Marketing and Experience Officer.
- Integrate external specialists, including audio engineers, lighting designers, and other technical experts, to elevate production quality and audience experience.
- Negotiate competitive contracts with vendors and contractors, continually pursuing the best terms and service possible for the Symphony.
- Ensure successful execution of all Symphony services and events, serving occasionally on concert duty rotation as well. Attend most performances, oversee logistics for touring and run-out programs, and build positive relationships with presenters.
- Provide oversight of relationships, contracts, and key connection with partners, including the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, the Lyric Opera of Kansas City, the Kansas City Ballet, the City of Kansas City, and others.
- Oversee occasional orchestra touring leveraging contracted specialists with whom the orchestra has strong and capable relationships.
- Participate in the planning and execution of special events, including limited fundraising events.

Orchestra Management

- Serve as the primary executive responsible for orchestra operations, managing musician relations, Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBA) compliance, and oversight of orchestra personnel management.
- Foster a collaborative, respectful environment between musicians and management, proactively addressing issues and promoting open communication.
- Lead collective bargaining negotiations with musicians and related union entities, stewarding organizational interests while ensuring optimal working conditions.
- Oversee electronic media activities and compliance with national media agreements. Negotiate as needed with the Musicians' Committee and the national AFM leveraging KCS membership and leadership in the Electronic Media Association.
- Supervise the music library, ensuring proper licensing and permissions with publishers, composers, guest artists, and conductors, leveraging KCS membership and leadership in the Orchestra Music Licensing Association.
- Develop systems for effective communication and project management, coordinate concert duty schedules, and oversee procurement and development of run-out and fee concerts.

Experience Strategy

- Collaborate closely with the CMEO to craft innovative experience strategies designed to resonate deeply with audiences.
- Translate high-level creative concepts into actionable, executable plans.
- Advocate constantly and passionately to musicians, guest artists, production personnel, venues and vendors for the creation of audience-centric experiences that drive meaningful engagement and audience retention.

External Collaboration

- Oversee the engagement and management of high-level external artistic collaborators (guest artists, conductors, choreographers, directors, set designers), fostering creative partnerships.
- Oversee relationships and interface with venue management, notably the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, aligning on scheduling, technical specifications, and audience experience requirements.

Strategic Leadership & Resource Oversight

- Represent and advocate for the vision and strategy set forth by the President with the Executive Leadership Team.
- Develop and manage departmental budgets meticulously, providing clear forecasts and ensuring financial sustainability.
- Contribute actively to executive-level strategic discussions, influencing the operational readiness and effectiveness of the Symphony.
- Oversee the development, management, and communication of schedules and operating plans related to orchestra services, venue utilization, and related operational areas.

Other duties as assigned.

Key Performance Indicators

The success of this role will be assessed on the efficient, effective, and cost-optimized performance of the production team in the execution of concerts, rehearsals, and events and operational support of the same. Specifically, this includes:

- **Timely and effective communications:** Ensure that parties know what they need to know, when they need to know it, so that people across the organization feel respected, informed and aligned in their work.
- **Cost control:** Deliver on budget and continually seek ways to improve impact per dollar spent, containing costs, through a combination of creativity, relationship building, and negotiation.
- **Effectiveness of financial planning and monitoring:** Develop accurate annual and project budgets and monthly forecasts that neither understate nor overstate actual production needs.
- **Optimal orchestra resource management:** Leverage the talents and roles of musicians, production/event staff and contractors, guest artists, venues and vendors for the optimal benefit of the Symphony and its audiences in accordance with the vision set forth by the President and Music Director. Balancing good relations with labor unions (principally musicians and stagehands, represented by AFM and IATSE) while also maximizing effectiveness of delivery in service to organizational strategy.
- **Effectiveness of artist support:** Provide the best working conditions possible to support musicians and guest artists in rehearsal, performance and delivery of high-quality music experiences for audiences, while minimizing costs and maximizing quality and memorability of experience. Enable artists to perform at their very best, in a shared pursuit of artistic excellence in service to audiences.
- **Data competence:** Ensure the production team is measuring the right things with the right amount of accuracy and precision, and make timely reports on these to inform tactical refinement and iteration across the organization.

Qualifications and Experience

- Minimum of 10 years of management experience in theatrical production, orchestra management, or live event leadership, preferably with major performing organizations.
- Proven track record in creative production planning and execution within high-profile, audience-centric environments.
- Demonstrated success in team leadership, managing complex budgets, and operational logistics.
- Expertise in collaborating with artistic talent, technical specialists, and venue partners to deliver exceptional experiences.
- Strong familiarity with labor negotiations.

Core Competencies

- Exceptional problem-solving ability, leveraging creativity and innovation combined with project management, operational planning, and execution capabilities.
- Outstanding communication skills, both written and verbal, adept at inspiring teams and advancing relationships.
- Superior organizational and financial management skills with keen attention to detail.
- Passionate commitment to symphonic music, audience engagement, artistic innovation, and organizational excellence.

Other Requirements

- Flexibility. Frequent weekend and evening work will be required.
- Ability to operate a computer for prolonged periods, lift moderately heavy items, drive, and climb stairs.

Compensation and Benefits

- Competitive salary commensurate with experience
- 403(b) retirement plan
- Comprehensive healthcare coverage
- Generous vacation and PTO
- Relocation support to Kansas City

The Kansas City Symphony is an Equal Opportunity Employer. We encourage applications from all qualified individuals without regard to race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, national origin, marital status, disability, or veteran status.

Application Process

Interested candidates should submit a resume and compelling cover letter addressed to Danny Beckley, President & CEO, articulating thoughts on the creation of music experiences and specific reasons for interest in this role.

Please send applications via email to Mr. Beckley's assistant, Young Young Wang at ywang@kcsymphony.org.

Applications will be accepted through July 31, 2025. Interviews are expected to commence in the first two weeks of August via zoom, with finalist interviews occurring in person in Kansas City during the second half of August.