



JOB POSTING
Creative Director

POSTING DATE: November 3, 2025

REPORTS TO: Chief Marketing and Experience Officer (CMEO)

SUPERVISES: Graphic Designer
Copywriter
External vendor partner functions (Direct mail, Radio and TV advertising, Video content production)

WORKS CLOSELY WITH: Director of Marketing, Box Office Manager (internal to team)
Director of Production, Director of Development, Director of Education (internal to KCS)
Vendor partners (external to KCS)

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.

Position Overview

The Creative Director is a strategic leader responsible for developing and executing creative, design, and marketing content within the Kansas City Symphony's Marketing and Sales team. Reporting to CMEO Julius Lai and serving as a Team Lead within the Marketing and Sales organization, the Creative Director collaborates closely with team members to deliver world-class marketing to complement KCS's world-class product on stage. This is not a typical non-profit marketing role. KCS has national and global aspirations so we are applying commercial best-practices to build a Marketing and Sales team that can operate with quality at that scale.

The ideal Creative Director candidate is an accomplished professional with a commercial marketing background who is drawn to the opportunity to do transformative, purpose-driven work as part of a small, tight-knit team. You are a self-motivated problem-solver who is comfortable applying structure when needed to unstructured problems. While knowledgeable, you are a lifelong learner with a growth mindset. You love the energy that comes from doing hard work that you believe in. You are willing to both give and receive help. At the end of the day, “getting it right” is more important to you than “being right”. If this rings true, we’d love to hear from you!

Key Responsibilities

Marketing Workflow

- Oversee end-to-end Creative operations, ensuring routine, high-quality execution of creative, design, and marketing assets within established budgets and SLAs. Own and optimize the Creative teams’ calendar and timeline.
 - Execute creative assets as needed alongside Graphic Designer.
- Develop Creative strategy across all channels. Lead execution and ongoing optimization. Relevant channels include: email, social media, SMS, digital ads, print and OOH ads, radio, TV, website, and mobile app.
- Develop and execute KCS Brand strategy. Partner with Director of Marketing to ensure brand consistency across all marketing channels.

Team Management

- Build and manage a high-performing Creative team; provide clear direction, mentorship, and performance feedback
- Develop KPIs and reporting for assessing Creative performance, using data to assess ROI and drive optimizations
- Manage and allocate budgets effectively across Creative workflow
- Lead regular Creative reviews, campaign kickoffs, and performance reviews
- Partner effectively with Director of Marketing and Box Office Manager to ensure strategic alignment between teams
- Partner effectively with external vendor partners to ensure reliable, timely, quality execution of work

Innovation and New Capability Building

- In partnership with the CMEO, be a thought leader and co-builder in developing the KCS brand, including evergreen campaigns that effectively tell key KCS stories season over season

Collaboration

- Collaborate effectively with key internal partners such as CEO, Music Director, Production, Development, Education, musicians, etc.
- Oversee and own relationships with key external partners such as agencies, consultants, vendors, etc.

Other duties as assigned.

Key Performance Indicators

- Marketing Team achievement of annual goals defined for ticketing revenue, attendance, and YoY household growth.
- Timely, quality execution of Creative operations while adhering to annual Budget.
- Positive 360 feedback from team, KCS leadership, KCS org partners, and external partners.

Qualifications and Experience

- Minimum of 10 years of experience leading Creative teams in high-performing marketing organizations, preferably in weekly/daily cadence industries such as live entertainment, sports, hospitality/travel, or eCommerce. Experience with cultural and non-profit organizations is beneficial but not required.
- Proven track record in planning, executing, and optimizing Creative activities in team with revenue targets.
- Proven track record in team leadership, managing complex budgets, and executive communication (written and verbal).
- Expertise in collaborating across functions (sales, artistic, ops, finance, technology, etc.) to deliver exceptional work.
- Bachelor's degree (or equivalent) is required.
- Expertise with Adobe Creative Suites (InDesign, Illustrator, Photoshop)
- Proficiency with Microsoft Office and marketing tools is required. Example tools include: Monday.com, Facebook/Instagram, Canva, and/or others as needed.

Core Competencies

- Self-motivated problem-solving with a bias for action.
- A knack for simplifying the complex and organizing the unorganized.
- A growth mindset, thirst for learning, and drive for continuous improvement.
- 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.
- A spirit to serve: the customer, the KCS mission, your teammates, and yourself. This is your engine for excellence.

Other Requirements

- Flexibility. Due to our performance schedule weekend and evening work will sometimes be required.
- Ability to operate in a standard office environment on location at the KCS offices.

Compensation and Benefits

- Target base salary range is \$80-100k, commensurate with candidate 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 (optional) cover letter addressed to Julius Lai, Chief Marketing and Experience Officer, articulating why you are interested in this specific role.

Please send applications via email to AJ Harbison at AJHarbison@kcsymphony.org.

Applications will be accepted through November 28, 2025. Interviews are expected to commence via Zoom on a rolling basis starting late November through early December. Finalist interviews will be conducted in person in Kansas City.