

Firebird

SYMPHONY BALL

2019

Presented by
SYMPHONY LEAGUE OF KANSAS CITY



The Kansas City Symphony is recognized as a leader among American orchestras with many notable achievements including Visitors' Choice and Grammy® Awards.

As the orchestra for the Kansas City Ballet as well as the Lyric Opera of Kansas City, the Symphony organization is one of the most important contributors to the cultural life of the region. With 80 full-time musicians, the Kansas City Symphony continues to be an invaluable asset to the nearly two million metropolitan area residents.

Complementing its full schedule of over 130 concerts annually, the Symphony enriches the lives of the community 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 70,000 students and educators and more than 250,000 community members.

The Symphony League is honored to host the primary fundraising event for the Kansas City Symphony, the annual Symphony Ball. Not only does the black-tie gala raise crucial funds for the operating costs of the Symphony, it also provides League members an opportunity to expand friendships and foster camaraderie while working on a worthy project which impacts our community.

The Symphony League was founded in 1942 as the Young Women's Committee of the Philharmonic Association with a mission to expand the interest of classical music in the community and provide financial support to the orchestra. In 1983, the newly renamed Symphony League launched the first Symphony Ball.



THE FIREBIRD SYMPHONY BALL 2019 marked the opening of the 2019-20 Kansas City Symphony season and the League chose a theme of brilliance and enchantment based on Igor Stravinsky's Suite from *The Firebird*. Additionally, the event commemorated several important milestones: the 15th anniversary of Michael Stern as Music Director; the 100th anniversary of the birth of Michael Stern's father, the renowned violinist Isaac Stern; and the 250th birthday of Beethoven.

For the first time, the Symphony League elected to present this celebratory Ball in the magnificent Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts. Within the Kauffman Center is Helzberg Hall, the performance home of the Kansas City Symphony, where the extraordinary talents of the musicians are showcased and Muriel Kauffman Theatre, where the Symphony performs with the opera and ballet. Brandmeyer Great Hall, a large seven-story glass enclosed area, serves the two performance halls.

Planning for the Firebird Ball began in February 2019. The Firebird Symphony Ball Kick-off Party for League Ball Committee members was held in April at a patron's unique house on a scenic bluff. The Benefactors' Party was held in the evening three days prior to the Ball and was hosted by two underwriters in a newly renovated designer house. Donors who contributed \$1,500 or more to the Ball received a special invitation to attend the Party.

Although all Symphony League members participated in the Ball, the Ball Committee consisted of 45 women. The sub-committees were Advisors, Ambience, Ball Day, Ball Launch Party, Benefactor Party, Communications, Corporate, Invitation Assembly, Mailing/Database, Menu, Program Book, Publicity, Registration, Reservations, Silent Auction, and Thank-You Notes. Each sub-committee was led by a Chairman who attended monthly meetings with the Ball Chairman.

*Music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind,
flight to the imagination and life to everything.*

~PLATO



The Firebird Symphony Ball was held on September 7, 2019. The festivities began with a cocktail hour and silent auction on the stage of the Muriel Kauffman Theatre in the Kauffman Center where guests were welcomed by a band playing soft jazz. The guests were then ushered into Helzberg Hall for the performance by the Kansas City Symphony, led by Maestro Stern. Selections included works by Beethoven and pieces frequently played by Isaac Stern. The finale was the Suite from The Firebird by Stravinsky accompanied by a subtle but brilliant light show.

After the performance, guests were escorted to their assigned tables in the Kauffman Center's Brandmeyer Great Hall for a multi-course dinner. When dessert and coffee were served, guests could remain at their tables to chat or return to the stage of Muriel Kauffman Theatre, which had been converted into a dance floor, where Kansas City's premier dance band, Lost Wax, performed. As guests were leaving the event, a complimentary coffee bar, donated by The Roasterie, provided hot beverages while valet attendants retrieved cars.

Rita and Lamar Hunt, Jr. served as Honorary Chairmen for the Firebird Ball. They were recognized for their unwavering support of the Symphony and of the community through their ownership in family organizations, including the Loretto Companies, the Kansas City Chiefs and the Kansas City Mavericks. Kauffman Center underwriters, Julia Irene Kauffman and Shirley and Barnett Helzberg, and Kansas City Mayor, Quinton Lucas, were welcomed as special guests. In a gesture of appreciation, the Symphony musicians were invited to join guests at the Ball for dinner after the performance and those who attended were seated at tables with patrons.

Challenges associated with holding the Symphony Ball in an entirely new venue were addressed as they emerged. Orchestrating the flow and determining solutions to logistics issues in an enormous event space were essential. Many budgetary adjustments were necessary as well to accommodate the venue change. The result was a sold-out event with over 600 guests attending and generating a net profit of \$604,405 for the Symphony.

The entire staff of the Kansas City Symphony as well as several members of the Board of Trustees participated in the Firebird Ball. On the day and night of the Ball, twelve Symphony League member volunteers were on-site as well as thirty-two Kauffman Center volunteers. Several staff members from the Kansas City Symphony were also on hand to assist with the auction, ticketing and check-out.

All of the Firebird Ball printed and visual materials were created and developed by Walz Tetrick Advertising, including the logo, benefactor letters, invitations and signage. Their inventiveness and attention to detail extended the Firebird theme even to the smallest of items, including table number signage, silent auction displays and the wrappers for the Andre's Chocolates Ball favors.

Jackie Middelkamp, Ambiance Chairman, worked closely with Dan Meiners of Studio Dan Meiners to design the table settings, floral arrangements and overall décor for the evening. In addition, they developed the concept of a spectacular abstract "Firebird" with multi-colored fabrics to drape from the ceiling in Brandmeyer Great Hall for the event.

Like the brilliant feathers of the legendary Firebird, the evening was filled with color, light and beauty in a flash of innovation with enchanting music to support the Kansas City Symphony.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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