



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

[Mission, Vision, Programs](#)

[Organization Summary](#)

[Organization History](#)

[Organization Achievements](#)

[Organization Goals](#)

[Organization Structure](#)

[Concert Series 2020-2021](#)

[Education Initiative: KCJO JazzWorks!](#)

[Artistic Director, Clint Ashlock](#)

[Executive Director, Lea Petrie](#)

[Musician Biographies 2020-2021](#)

[Board of Directors 2020-2021](#)



### MISSION STATEMENT

Through performances and education programs, The Kansas City Jazz Orchestra preserves the rich heritage of jazz, nurtures its growth, and encourages its appreciation as an art form for all ages.

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### VISION STATEMENT

The Kansas City Jazz Orchestra is an internationally acclaimed, premier performing arts icon providing jazz entertainment and education.

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### ORGANIZATION SUMMARY

The Kansas City Jazz Orchestra is one of the nation's preeminent big bands, performing familiar favorites, artful arrangements, and fresh new works for audiences at home and abroad. A proud representative of Kansas City's jazz tradition, the ensemble currently boasts a four-concert series at the beautiful Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, numerous engagements with local and regional venues and presenters, and an ever-growing education program. The Kansas City Jazz Orchestra is committed to "celebrating the past and embracing the future" in all of its artistic endeavors, and the programs it delivers are innovative, yet rooted in tradition.

From its inception, the KCJO has delivered outstanding performances of big-band jazz at the highest level. Beginning with just two concerts per season at the Unity Temple on the Plaza in Kansas City, the KCJO has over time not only added more performances to its series, it has also seen significant growth in attendance, encouraging a move to the esteemed Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts in 2012. The organization hopes to continue adding more performances in the coming seasons and is thrilled to announce the launch of a second ensemble and performance series with a focus on new composition and innovative musical content in the 2021-22 season. The ensemble, Riff Generation, will begin performing in the first half of 2022.

Integral to the KCJO mission is jazz education, and the organization continues to expand and refine its education programming for all ages. From students of jazz to casual listeners, we aim to offer events and content that enrich the understanding and encourage the exploration of every element of the genre. Jazz history, theory, musicianship, and so much more are highlighted through the various components of our education initiative, KCJO JazzWorks!

In addition to our annual concert series and our education programs, the KCJO also performs for numerous venues and events around the region in a variety of settings. Partnering with local and regional organizations such as Union Station, the World War I Museum, Kansas Public Radio, the Midwest Trust Center, and the Topeka Jazz Workshop, the ensemble and its smaller chamber groups entertain audiences with classic big band repertoire, lively dance music, and special programs.



## ORGANIZATION HISTORY

In April 2003, The Kansas City Jazz Orchestra was founded by Gene Hall, a retired attorney, Jim Mair, Professor of Jazz Studies at Kansas City, Kansas Community College, and his wife, Mary Mair. Seventeen of the finest professional jazz musicians from the Kansas City area were chosen for the orchestra, with Jim conducting it. The ensemble was modeled after the Columbus, Ohio Jazz Orchestra which at the time had been performing over 30 years.

The first concert of The Kansas City Jazz Orchestra was held on November 21, 2003 at Unity Temple on the Plaza, which was their venue for 9 years. In 2010, the Mairs stepped down and the Board of Directors was expanded under the leadership of Board President, Gene Hall. The organization is now administered by an excellent professional staff.

Following Jim Mair as Artistic Director/Conductor, the Board of Directors selected the brilliant musician, Kerry Strayer, for the position and he served in that capacity until his death in August of 2013. The baton was then passed to the dedicated and tireless Clint Ashlock. Clint completed his Bachelor of Music in Trumpet Performance at Fort Hays State University, and received two Master's degrees in Jazz/Studio Music and Music Composition from the University of Missouri-Kansas City. He spent 14 years teaching at a number of area universities and colleges and is an enthusiastic music educator.

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## KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

In 2012, The Kansas City Jazz Orchestra moved to the esteemed Helzberg Hall in the Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts. Its season consists of four concerts and welcomes the Greater Kansas City and surrounding region to performances.

In 2018, the Jazz Orchestra was invited to represent Kansas City at the annual jazz festivals of Hannover, Germany and Szczecin, Poland, in celebration of Kansas City's designation as the only UNESCO City of Music in the United States and one of only 47 in the world. Hannover and Szczecin are two of Kansas City's 13 Sister Cities around the globe.

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## GOALS FOR THE FUTURE

The Orchestra will soon realize a long-planned goal with the launch of its new ensemble, Riff Generation; while continuing the mainstage season featuring big band works, we will cultivate a new series to be played in smaller venues featuring purely original compositions. KCJO strives to secure a Grammy nomination for one or more of these original compositions or a recorded album.

Additionally, expansion of our KCJO JazzWorks! education initiative is planned over the next several years. It is our goal to help train the next generation of talented Kansas City musicians through masterclasses with visiting guest artists, in-school programs, and outreach events for all ages, such as Listening Parties and Jazz Chats.



## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

The Orchestra is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization governed by a board of directors and two co-equal directors – Artistic Director Clint Ashlock and Executive Director Lea Petrie. The Musicians are contracted with the organization but have been considered resident artists since the formation of the Orchestra.

The organization has a strong fiscal foundation and is grateful to all the foundations, trusts and individuals who have made The Kansas City Jazz Orchestra one of the best of its kind in the nation. To all who have contributed through our fundraising events, we salute you. Your support is vital in helping us provide the artistic excellence you have come to expect from the KCJO.

Kansas City is the home of jazz, and The Kansas City Jazz Orchestra is one of its finest representatives.

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## CONCERT SERIES 2021-2022

Friday, October 8, 2021

### **Bird Lives!**

Charlie Parker: a monumental figure who helped create the musical language of bebop, which is still being used 80 years later. On this concert, we will feature music from Bird's most iconic album, Charlie Parker with Strings, and the mastery of alto saxophonists Jaleel Shaw, David Valdez, and Bobby Watson.

Tuesday, Dec 7, 2021

### **Hallelujah Holidays**

After Charlie Parker's brilliant cultivation of bebop, a number of new stylistic directions emerged in the 1960s jazz landscape, and of those nothing grooved harder than Soul Jazz. Artists like Ray Charles and Aretha Franklin dominated the airwaves just as Cannonball Adderley and Horace Silver infused jazz fans' ears with powerful music. For this year's holiday concert, KCJO will fill Helzberg Hall with sounds celebrating and paying homage to this great movement in the music.

Saturday, March 12

### **Just the Two of Us**

SMOOTH JAZZ BIG BAND? Huh? That's right, it's going to happen - and whether you're already a huge fan of Grover Washington and George Benson or if you still need convincing, we can tell you that KCJO is going to blow the roof off with a completely fresh take on contemporary jazz.

Saturday, May 14

### **Roaring KC**

In Kansas City's historic 18th and Vine Jazz District, a rollicking, riffing, and rambunctious music was the soundtrack of the 20s and 30s, and it lasted all night long. Join us as we dive into the music of Jay McShann, Bennie Moten, Count Basie, and others, and celebrate our city's history and heritage.



### EDUCATION INITIATIVE: KCJO JAZZWORKS!

The Kansas City Jazz Orchestra believes firmly that familiarity and understanding are the first steps to love and appreciation, and with this in mind, we strive to educate people of all ages and backgrounds about jazz through our education initiative, KCJO JazzWorks! Our resident musicians are not only outstanding performers, but many of them are also celebrated educators. We offer a variety of educational events and materials, created and led by these incredible musicians and our guest artists, including:

#### **Workshops and Clinics**

In these flexible-format events, students benefit from the expert perspective of some of Kansas City's finest jazz musician-educators. Jazz education is part of our mission, and we strive to provide engaging and inspiring guidance to the next generation of jazz lovers and practitioners.

#### **Masterclasses**

KCJO masterclasses give students and lifelong learners the opportunity to observe or perform for jazz icons and local jazz masters. The language of jazz has been passed down from generation to generation, and we continue that tradition through these classes where participants can learn not just to play, but to be true musicians.

#### **JazzWorks! Video Digest**

Delving into topics ranging from Kansas City jazz history to performance mini-classes for aspiring musicians, KCJO's digital education series is equal parts entertaining and informative, and a fun and engaging way for people of all ages to learn about jazz. Subscribe to our YouTube channel to stay up to date!

#### **Jazz Chats**

Artistic Director Clint Ashlock leads guest artists and jazz experts in informal discussions that allow attendees to gain a little insight into the composers, musical elements, and historical context of featured repertoire. These engaging chats are opportunities to get to know the music and the musicians on a personal level, and to connect with them on a deeper level. Jazz Chats are offered one hour before each concert in our annual series and are free to attend.

#### **Listening Parties**

Listening Parties, hosted in collaboration with the Kansas City Public Library, are one-hour sessions of live music and discussion of influential musicians, albums, and movements in jazz, curated and presented by our KCJO musicians. These free events are designed to foster interest, knowledge, and appreciation for jazz, one of Kansas City's most iconic exports.

#### **Free or Discounted Concert Tickets**

The Kansas City Jazz Orchestra believes that the first step to loving music is hearing and experiencing it, and we strive to ensure that all students have access to outstanding jazz performance. We invite school ensembles, groups from extracurricular student programs, and individual students to join us for minimal or no cost.



Visit our website at [www.kcjo.org](http://www.kcjo.org) or contact us directly to learn more. Email: [info@kcjo.org](mailto:info@kcjo.org) Phone: 816-225-4949

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#### ARTISTIC DIRECTOR: CLINT ASHLOCK

Trumpeter/composer/bandleader Clint Ashlock grew up in the Kansas City area. An in-demand musician across various genres, Clint is a dedicated and tireless contributor to the scene. He has performed with such luminaries as Aretha Franklin, the Temptations, Clark Terry and Natalie Cole, as well as being a mainstay on the local Kansas City performing circuit, most notably with his 'other' big band, New Jazz Order, small group Forward, and as a member of various groups such as The Project H and the Marcus Lewis Big Band. Ashlock has produced a number of recordings, including "New Jazz Order," featuring Bobby Watson, as well as a recent release with Denver pianist Ben Markley entitled "The Return."

As a student of jazz, Ashlock reflects the lineage of his hard bop idols such as Lee Morgan, Freddie Hubbard and Woody Shaw, and his big band writing is heavily influenced by Duke Ellington, Thad Jones, Kerry Strayer and Dan Gailey. Ashlock was recently featured as a soloist at the First Jazz Education Festival in Shanghai, China, and at the International Trumpet Guild Conference in Sydney, Australia, as well as winning the Downbeat Student Music award for best big band arrangement.

He completed his Bachelor of Music in Trumpet Performance at Fort Hays State University, received two Master's degrees in Jazz/ Studio Music and Music Composition from the University of Missouri-Kansas City. He spent 14 years teaching at a number of area universities and colleges and is an enthusiastic music educator.

Clint has served as Artistic Director for The Kansas City Jazz Orchestra since August 2013.

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#### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR: LEA PETRIE

Lea Petrie, a Kansas City native, brings her love of music and more than 15 years of fundraising experience and arts administration to KCJO. Most recently she served as the Project Manager for the City's inaugural Open Spaces Art Experience and has been a part of the fundraising teams at the Kansas City Ballet, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, and the Lyric Opera of Kansas City. She earned her Bachelor of Arts in Theatre and Spanish from Missouri State University. Lea and her husband Will live in Central Hyde Park with their two sons.



## MUSICIANS

### Saxophones

#### *David Chael*

David Chael is a Kansas City native. He performs regularly with Bram Wijnands, the Roger Wilder Quartet, the Westport Art Ensemble, Horacescope, the Jim Lower Big Band, Boulevard Big Band, the Kansas City Symphony Orchestra, and the Brad Gregory Sextet. Chael graduated from the University of North Texas where he performed with the celebrated One O'clock Lab band. He has been a member of KCJO since 2003.

#### *Bob Long*

Bob Long is the Director of Jazz Studies/Saxophone Instructor at Missouri Western State University. He holds the BME and MA degrees from Truman State University, with additional graduate study at the University of Missouri-Kansas City Conservatory of Music and Dance. As an educator, his ensembles at both the high school at collegiate level have performed at regional and national music conferences and festivals. As a performer, credits include the Des Moines Big Band, the Latin group Ashanti, Des Moines Symphony, as well as backing such acts as Frankie Valli and The Four Seasons, Lou Rawls, and Manhattan Transfer, to name a few.

#### *Doug Talley*

Doug Talley is a graduate of the University of Kansas and the University of North Texas. He is a recipient of the Kansas Governor's Arts Award and the Johnson County Library Pinnacle Award for arts in education. His discography includes four recordings on the Sea Breeze label with the Trilogy and Boulevard Big Bands, numerous other projects with KC area musicians, and five recordings with his own jazz quartet, including the critically acclaimed Kansas City Suite. Doug is a Founding Member of the KCJO.

#### *Brad Gregory*

Originally from Edmonton Canada, Brad Gregory attended the University of North Texas where he was a member of the One O'Clock Lab Band. Brad is also an alumnus of the Houston Jazz Orchestra. After working in New York City as a professional jazz musician for several years, Brad began a full-time career in the plastics industry and relocated his family to Kansas City. He performs regularly with the Boulevard Big Band, Jim Lower's Big Band, as well as with Molly Hammer's Quintet and his own groups, KC Reeds and Rhythm and the Brad Gregory Sextet. He has been a member of the orchestra since the spring of 2009.

#### *Mark Cohick*

Mark Cohick has played baritone saxophone since junior high school, and has played with the UMKC Jazz Ensemble, the S.S. Norway Big Band, Trilogy Big Band, Boulevard Big Band, New Jazz Order and the People's Liberation Big Band. Cohick plays all woodwind instruments, and has played with Kansas City Symphony, Ballet and Opera, toured Europe with Broadway shows and recorded for radio, TV and film. He has been with KCJO since 2012.



## Trumpets

### *Steve Molloy*

Stephen Molloy is a lifelong founding member of the KCJO. When he's not fulfilling his roles as a Trumpet Artist in Residence at Missouri Western State University and Instructor of Applied Brass at Kansas City Kansas Community College, he can be found performing in many KC area venues as a show musician for the Starlight Theater, KC Repertory Theater, and the Music Hall. He remains routinely sought after as a musician for numerous travelling artists from all stylistic backgrounds and venues, and has performed in backup roles for Aretha Franklin, They Might Be Giants, Natalie Cole, Barry Manilow, Johnny Mathis, Martina McBride, Lou Rawls, and many more. He has performed as a sub/extra with the Kansas City Symphony and is a member of the St. Joseph Symphony. He is also a founding member of the Fountain City Brass Band and has previous experience as a musician for Walt Disney World and as a lead trumpet player for the Glenn Miller Orchestra. He holds a BA in Music degree from St. Cloud State University, and an MM in Trumpet Performance from the University of Kansas.

### *Jay Sollenberger*

Jay Sollenberger attended Wichita State University and the University of North Texas where he performed with the renowned One O'Clock Lab Band. Jay toured and recorded with the Stan Kenton Orchestra, the Woody Herman Orchestra, the Buddy Rich Big Band and the Jazz/Rock group Chase led by trumpeter Bill Chase. He has freelanced in Kansas City since 1980 and has played with the Boulevard Big Band, the Vine Street Rumble, and at Starlight Theatre. Jay is a Founding Member of the KCJO.

### *Bob Harvey*

Bob Harvey earned degrees from Missouri Western State University and Michigan State University. He has been Principal Trumpet in the St. Joseph Symphony for 30 years. He taught in the Lee's Summit School District for 29 years, and served as an adjunct for Missouri Western and Ottawa universities. He has performed and recorded with the Boulevard Big Band, Trilogy Big Band Vince Bilardo Orchestra, and the Kerry Strayer Orchestra. Bob played in the TD Pack Band for over 20 years, 10 as lead trumpet. He is active as a guest artist and clinician, performing with and running master classes for area middle and high schools. He frequently serves as clinician, adjudicator and/or soloist for area Jazz Festivals. Bob is an Educational Representative for Meyer Music. He is a Founding Member of KCJO.

### *David Aaberg*

David Aaberg serves as Director of Jazz-Commercial Music at the University of Central Missouri, a position he has held since 1986. In 2011 he received the Outstanding Jazz Educator Award from the Missouri Association for Jazz Education. David holds BA and MM degrees in Composition from Central Washington University and a DMA in Composition from The University of Texas at Austin. He regularly performs in the Jim Lower Jazz Orchestra and Boulevard Big Band, and has played lead trumpet with the Louis Neal Big Band since 2004. His playing and arrangements can be heard on numerous recordings with the Boulevard Big Band and the Trilogy Big Band. As well as playing in the KCJO trumpet section, David also serves the organization as a staff arranger. He has been a member of KCJO since 2006.





## Trombones

### *Jeff Hamer*

Jeff Hamer studied trombone at the University of Missouri – Kansas City Conservatory of Music and Dance. He has performed on more than twenty recordings, including Tim Whitmer, the New Vintage Big Band, Kerry Strayer Orchestra, Boulevard Big Band, and others. As a freelance artist he has performed with Natalie Cole, Debby Boone, and with such touring groups as the Jimmy Dorsey and Guy Lombardo Orchestras. Jeff is the Director of IT with 360 Architecture.

### *Earlie Braggs*

Earlie Braggs is best known as a jazz trombonist, however he is equally proficient as a vocalist and bassist. In addition to his first CD as a leader, the Earlie Braggs Quartet/It's About Time, he has recorded with the Kerry Strayer Septet, the New Kansas City Seven, the Jazz Heritage Orchestra (Cleveland, OH.), and the Gull Lake Jazz Orchestra (Gull Lake, MI.). Earlie has also performed with Kansas City's own Claude "Fiddler" Williams and Jay "Hootie" McShann, Benny Golson, Nancy Wilson and has toured Europe with the Illinois Jacquet Big Band.

Steve Dekker Steve Dekker is currently the Director of Instrumental Music at The Pembroke Hill School in Kansas City. Steve has also taught jazz trombone and arranging at the UMKC Conservatory of Music. Steve holds BS and MM degrees in trombone performance and jazz composition from Towson University where he studied under Hank Levy who composed for the bands of Stan Kenton and Don Ellis. Steve was also a member of the First United States Army Band where he played lead and jazz trombone and bass guitar. Steve performs regularly with the Boulevard Big Band, the Jim Lower Jazz Orchestra, Starlight Theater, the Music Hall and has recorded with numerous artists including Tom Harrell, Eddie Daniels, Frank Mantooth, Bob Kindred and Pete Christlieb. He has been a member of KCJO since 2012.

### *Paul Roberts*

Paul Roberts has been performing in Kansas City since the mid-1980's both as a bass trombonist and pianist. Paul has served in bands with both the Marine Corps and the Army as a musician, arranger and conductor. He also took charge of leading several of the unit's musical ensembles. Paul holds a bachelor's degree in Music Composition from the University of Missouri - Kansas City Conservatory of Music and Dance. He has subbed with the Kansas City Symphony and currently performs with a variety of local bands including the "J Love Band" and "Glamour Profession," an 11-piece Steely Dan tribute band that he arranges for and leads. In addition to being a fine bass trombonist and pianist, Paul is an excellent composer/arranger and is one of KCJO's staff arrangers. He has been a member of KCJO since 2008.



### Rhythm Section

#### *Charles Williams – Piano*

Charles Williams is a Kansas City musician, pianist, trombonist, band leader, private piano instructor, producer, writer, and clinician/educator. Charles is current pianist for the Kansas City Jazz Orchestra and has been since it was founded. As a performer, Charles plays at many local venues with his own trio, accompanies many local vocalists, and is pianist for The Louis Neal Jazz Orchestra. Mr. Williams is very dedicated to supporting the American Jazz Museum & Blue Room.

Artists Mr. Williams has backed include Ernie Andrews, Houston Person, Harold Jones, Clark Terry, Randy Brecker, Bobby Watson, Deborah Brown, Ann Hampton Callaway, New York Voices, Wycliffe Gordon, The Four Freshmen, Cannonball and Nat Adderley, Dizzy Gillespie, Max Roach, and many more. Charles has an Associate in Arts Degree from Penn Valley Community College, and also studied at the UMKC Conservatory.

#### *Rod Fleeman - Guitar*

Rod Fleeman has been a professional guitarist for over 30 years. Following his studies at the University of Miami, Rod moved to New York City where he toured and recorded extensively with the jazz fusion group Dry Jack. Since returning to Kansas City in 1981, he has toured and recorded with such artists as Marilyn Maye, Karrin Allyson, Jay McShann, Claude Williams and Interstring. Rod currently serves on the staff at the University of Missouri - Kansas City Conservatory of Music and Dance and the Kansas City Kansas Community College.

#### *James Albright – Bass*

James Albright holds a music degree from the University of Nebraska, Lincoln. While in Nebraska, he performed with the Lincoln Symphony and the Omaha Symphony. In 1992 he came to Kansas City, and currently makes his living playing, teaching, and recording music. James continues to use his classical bass skills through his principal bass positions with the Northland Symphony and Liberty Symphony in the KC area. He teaches bass at his private studio, at William Jewell College, and at Missouri Western State College. In addition to the Kansas City Jazz Orchestra, he performs with a wide variety of the groups, including Tim Whitmer, the Terry Hancock Band, the Ones, A La Mode, Triple Play, and the Bon Ton Soul Accordion Band. He is equally at home in the classical, rock, country, jazz, and pop music styles, on both upright and electric bass. His on-stage persona makes him as much fun to watch as he is to hear. He has been with KCJO since 2008.

#### *John Kizilarmut - Drums/Percussion*

Active composer and arranger, John Kizilarmut has performed and recorded with a wide range of artists and ensembles, including Matthew Wilson, Branford Marsalis, DJ Starscream, and the Des Moines Symphony. He is a frequent guest performer and clinician at percussion and jazz festivals throughout the midwest, and most recently performed with TOCA artist Jamal Mohamed and Marimba One artist Matthew Coley at the 2013 PASIC convention in Indianapolis, IN.



*Sam Wisman* – Drums/Percussion

Sam Wisman is a versatile fixture in Kansas City's creative music scene. Sam is a member of the People's Liberation Big Band, Kinnor Philharmonic, Marimba Sol de Chiapas, Owen/Cox Dance Group, HoraceScope, and the Roger Wilder Quintet & Trio. Sam has performed with the Kansas City Symphony, Lyric Opera of Kansas City, Ensemble Iberica, the Topeka Symphony, Weird Al Yankovic, Shirley Jones, Krystle Warren, Bobby Watson, The Sons of Brasil, and plays regularly with Molly Hammer, Mark Lowrey, Chris Hazelton, Ken Lovern, Matt Hopper and many more. He has worked extensively as a percussionist in musical theater including the Kansas City Repertory Theater, Starlight Theatre, The Music Hall, New Theatre & Restaurant, Unicorn Theater, Musical Theater Heritage, and the Coterie Theater. Sam has helped to premiere works by Harry Connick Jr., Stephen Schwartz, Shirley Jones & Richard Maltby Jr., Jodi Picoult, Henry Krieger & Bill Russell, and Ahrens & Flaherty. You can also listen to Sam as a DJ for Jazz Afternoon on 90.1 FM KKFI. He has been with KCJO since 2014.

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