47th Symphony Designers’ Showhouse/April 23-May 15, 2016
Kansas City Symphony Alliance
Kansas City Symphony, 1703 Wyandotte, Ste. 200, Kansas City, MO 64108
Orchestra Size: Group 2
Kansas City Metro Population: 2,340,000

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Project Description: Focus: Increase fund raising goals by reaching out to our community’s youth. Embracing change in this long term project was critical to its success in presenting the 47th consecutive Symphony Designers’ Showhouse to the Kansas City Metro area. Professional designers in our geographic area submit bid boards with written design concepts for their chosen design area within the Showhouse and go through the selection process. This group has supported our project by committing their expertise to a specific area in the home for all these years. With the support of corporations and vendors in the community we are able to present a grand home with all profits going directly to the Kansas City Symphony.

After contracting with the homeowner the first exposure of the property is Public Preview weekend coupled in some years with an antique sale. The empty bare bones property is toured by the public and discounted tickets are sold to come back to the finished designed home. After the transformation of the property by the community’s designers often located in a Historic District listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Alliance opens the property to the public. Most often the chosen property encompasses:
- three stories with an additional servants’ staircase,
- a carriage house, and
- ample room for a large tent for parties.

Focusing on inviting high school and college level students viewing the before and then after transition via school tours/field trips encourages those “would be” designers by exposing them to successful professionals’ work. Visitors vote for their favorite design area and this year Johnson County Community College four year design degree students under the direction of their instructors won this honor. It is satisfying to invite those students back after finishing their schooling and awarding them a design area as professionals. You will find their design area on page 51 of the program book.

Our first class Orchestra expends considerable energy reaching out to our community’s youth to ensure its future and our Alliance is doing the same.

Project Timeline:
- Close previous year’s house turning keys back to homeowner and immediately pursue next year’s property.
- Acquire the twenty committee chairs and secretary arranging location for monthly meetings.
- Prepare event calendar and review budget.
- Homeowner signs contract with Symphony and date is set for Public Preview.
- Review, gather the many signed committee contracts and forward to Symphony for counter signature.
- Set Preview/Bid Days (2) for designers to evaluate property and choose Symphony for counter signature.
- Set Preview/Bid Days (2) for designers to evaluate property and choose design area they would like to bid on announcing date bid boards and written design concepts are due.
• Announce Showhouse location at Christmas luncheon. At this point publicity may begin.
• Accept bid boards and make selections.
• January 2 or thereafter designers may begin work informing PR Chair content for program book.
• Open property to public end of April for 3-4 weeks.
• Close Showhouse to public, designers make repairs and move out the following week.
• Return Showhouse keys back to homeowner to enjoy their newly designed property.
• Take KCSA’s supplies back to storage.
• Hold wrap up meeting to critique process and get ready for next year.

The period of time to prepare the property is traditionally five months beginning with Public Preview weekend and concluding with a three to four week period open to the public. Our history and yearly presence in our community brings approximately 7,000 visitors to the Showhouse annually. Within this five month period there are also:
• private parties by area corporations,
• a marvelous boutique with as many as forty vendors,
• wine and beer raffles, and
• unique events held in a large tented area on the property.

Financials/47th Symphony Designers’ Showhouse: Total Revenue: $123,097; Total Expenses: $40,355; Net Revenue/Donation to the Kansas City Orchestra: $82,742;

Collaborations: The Alliance partners with many Sponsors who provide their products free of charge to help designers enhance their awarded design areas. Examples of donations from our community businesses:
• Outstanding public relations,
• the program book publication,
• landscaping,
• plumbing fixtures,
• all paint to be used by designers,
• wallcoverings,
• counter tops,
• insurance inspections,
• bug control,
• installation of exceptional lighting fixtures throughout the home,
• blacktop, etc.
• In addition, many businesses are ticket outlets.

Many have become continuing Sponsors offering products to designers. This is a great opportunity for these Sponsors to lower their advertising budget with exposure to the Showhouse visiting public and recognition in the Showhouse program book.

Volunteers: Our Kansas City Symphony Alliance members house sit while in preparation. Many community groups join our membership (100-120) to host in various design areas while the property is open to the public. We do ask our members to commit to 20 volunteer hours per year.

Successes: Fund raising goals are expanded with each successful year.

What learned: As you may surmise after these many years there is a master plan in place for the success of this project. With new talent added to our membership yearly our successes are heightened allowing larger donations to our outstanding Orchestra on an annual basis.