

# KC STUDIO

## 2021-2022 ANNUAL REPORT

**No other arts organization impacts the arts in our region more than *KC Studio***



NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2021

## **Celebrating 15 years stimulating audience development and support for the arts**

You know our flagship magazine featuring informed authoritative coverage of the best art, dance, music, theater, film and literary arts in Kansas City. But that's not all.

We also have a robust presence on **social media**, **monthly arts reviews** on [kcstudio.org](https://kcstudio.org) and a partnership with **Google Arts & Culture** featuring over 150 images in an ongoing virtual exhibition.



20 E. Gregory Blvd. | Kansas City, MO 64114 | 816-361-0616 | [aefkc.org](https://aefkc.org)

### **THE ARTS ENGAGEMENT FOUNDATION OF KANSAS CITY BOARD MEMBERS:**

Jim Blair, Dalene Bradford, Mo Dickens, Danielle Doerhoff Hill, Joan Horan, Kathy Liao, Cesar Lopez, Linda Lyon, Susan Schmelzer, Ph.D.; Guyon Townsend III, President; Heidi Nast, Executive Director; Pete Browne, C. Stephen Metzler †; Director Emeritus

## FROM KC STUDIO'S CO-FOUNDERS



The Wallace Foundation sounded an alarm: *“Experienced journalists are being squeezed out ... this gap needs to be filled or the transmission of arts news is likely to weaken demand for the arts. Attracting and engaging new audiences is challenging for arts organizations because, even as the number of arts groups has grown, national rates of participation in the arts have declined, arts education has waned, and competition for ways to spend leisure time has increased.”* – **The New York Times**

Kansas City is not immune to this trend: although the arts here are exploding, nearly every media outlet has slashed or discontinued its arts coverage. *KC Studio* seeks to fill the gap by providing high-quality coverage bimonthly. Arts coverage is essential for KC cultural organizations to grow audiences and maintain and increase support.

*KC Studio*, a 501(c)(3) published by The Arts Engagement Foundation of Kansas City, is the metro's leading independent journal of the visual, performing, literary and cinematic arts. Our mission is to build audiences and increase participation in the arts through informed, expert coverage of the region's cultural offerings. Since *KC Studio's* inception, our print contributors have covered more than 11,000+ arts organizations, galleries and independent artists. *KC Studio* also provides monthly online reviews of theater, classical music and dance performances and visual arts exhibitions, written by specialists in their fields.

75% of our budget comes from earned revenue while 25% from contributed support. Contributed support allows us to provide vital coverage of artists and arts organizations. Coverage is critical for building new audiences and supporters. To further our mission, we are committed to expanding our base of contributed support to allow us to feature more organizations in print and online.

Great cities possess a strong arts and cultural scene, and support of the arts is an essential part of a city's success and community growth. The best way to further stimulate audience development begins with making people aware of our city's many wonderful art and cultural opportunities. That is an essential part of *KC Studio's* mission, and we strive to fulfill it in a lively, engaging way that gets people excited and involved as participants in and patrons of the arts.

### PLEASE HELP US CELEBRATE 15 YEARS!

**As always, we thank you for your support with *KC Studio*.**

**H. Guyon Townsend III**  
**President & Publisher**

**Heidi Nast**  
**Executive Director**



KC Studio Edition 1, May/June 2008

## FROM THE EDITOR

PHOTO BY MARK BERNDT



Alice Thorson, Editor, *KC Studio*

### **Hello valued *KC Studio* family and patrons,**

### ***KC Studio* celebrates our 15th Anniversary in 2023 and coverage of more than 11,000+ artists, organizations, galleries, and museums since 2008!**

As we head into our 15th anniversary year, *KC Studio* continues to build on our record of energized and insightful coverage of all sectors of Kansas City's diverse and multitalented arts community.

In the past year alone we have introduced our readers to topics and talents ranging from Gavin Dell and his establishment of a new animation academy in the Crossroads; a lively contingent of up-and-coming Latinx artists who are making their mark in the city's galleries; a series of new, locally produced films, including a mini-documentary on KC's lowrider community and Sandy Woodson's documentary about the "Womontown" community that settled in KC's Longfellow Neighborhood; a heartfelt remembrance in words and images of Jim Leedy, who made an indelible mark on the city as an artist, educator and entrepreneur; and a fascinating account

of the Lyric Opera's 1971 performance of "Jesus Christ Superstar."

Our Honors and Artist to Watch profiles encompassed the achievements of singers, sculptors, musicians, painters, actors and photographers. Other stories have covered the activities and contributions of people like veteran KPR folk DJ Bob Williams, Lone Jack-based auctioneer Dirk Soulis and Vietnamese coffee shop founder Jackie Nguyen, who help give the Kansas City cultural scene its unique and vibrant character.

In every issue we advance and review important performances and exhibits from the city's major arts organizations, including Lyric Opera KC, Kansas City Symphony, Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, UMKC Conservatory of Music and Dance, KCRep, the National WWI Museum and Memorial, and the Kansas City Museum. We also keep readers in the know about savvy and ambitious smaller groups like KC VITAS Chamber Choir, and the challenging and stimulating productions emanating from KC's vibrant theater community.

We are fortunate to be able to share the ideas and insights of established columnists, including Julius Karash (Business and the Arts); Steve Paul (See Hear: Rambling around the Arts) and Libby Hanssen (Concert to Come), as well as specialists in their fields such as Harold Smith (African American art and culture), and Emily Spradling (LGBTQ+ cultural issues).

In addition to varied editorial offerings from our roster of seasoned experts, in the past year *KC Studio* published an 8-page sponsored profile on The Volland Store in November 2021. In March 2022, in partnership with The Charlotte Street

Foundation, *KC Studio* printed and poly-bagged a special booklet celebrating the organization's 25th anniversary funded by The Jedel Family Foundation. In 2022 we also welcomed new Arts Consortium members: Theater League, Powell Gardens and Park ICM to our pages, where they tell their own stories.

In the past year, *KC Studio* has also worked to develop a robust online presence through our regular online reviews. In a 12-month span, we've covered 25 visual art exhibitions and 65 theater, dance, and music performances. In 2021 - 2022, *KC Studio* covered 795 artists, organizations, galleries, and museums as well as literary and cinematic endeavors.

**Currently, your donation is more important than ever. Paper shortages and postal increases have strained our budget, and like all the city's non-profit cultural organizations, *KC Studio* has felt the financial impact of the COVID-19 crisis, even with the reopening. 75% of our budget comes from earned revenue, and we remain in recovery mode in these post-pandemic times, with a goal to return to 2019 sales in earned revenue.**

**Your gift of any amount would make a huge impact on our ability to continue coverage of our lively arts community.**

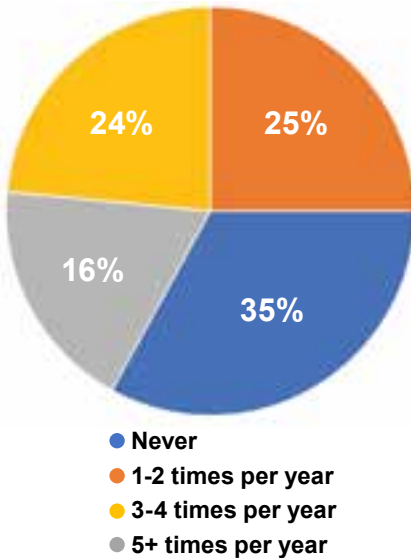
**We ask you kindly to remit your tax-deductible gift in the enclosed envelope or donate online at [www.aefkc.org/donate](http://www.aefkc.org/donate). Your support will allow us to "fill the gap" of arts coverage in Kansas City.**

**Happy 15th Anniversary to *KC Studio*, Happy Holidays and thank you in advance for your continued support.**

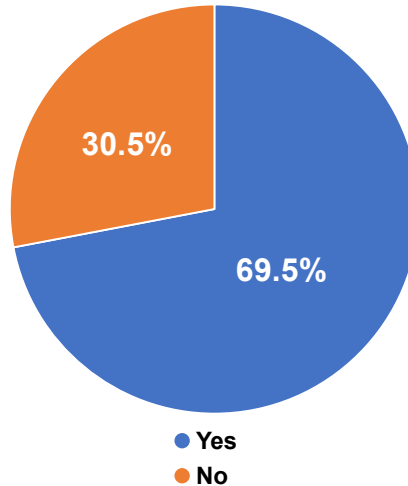
## AUDIENCE AND REACH

***KC Studio* readers are actively engaged in the arts and use our coverage to help make their choices of what to attend.**

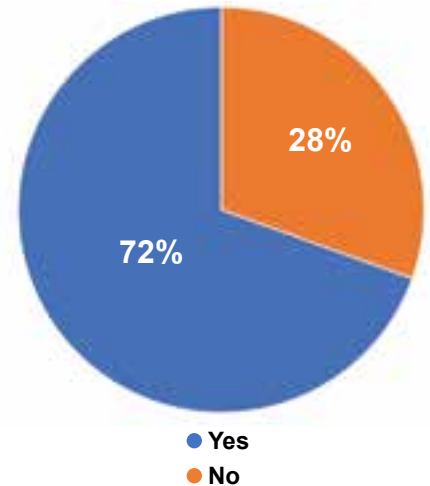
**75% of surveyed *KC Studio* readers attend art gallery openings annually**



**69.5% of surveyed *KC Studio* readers attend guest lectures at galleries or the public library**



**72% of surveyed readers have used *KC Studio* to make decisions about specific arts activities**



*Readership Survey, December, 2021*

## TESTIMONIALS FROM SATISFIED READERS

“A brief note to tell you how much I enjoyed the piece you wrote on the Linda Hall Library’s Frankenstein exhibition in the current issue of *KC Studio*. Thanks so much for taking an interest in our work! Many thanks.” — **Lisa Browar, President, Linda Hall Library**



Kansas City is fortunate to have a magazine that is about the arts in our lively city as New York and Chicago. *KC Studio* is full of wonderful things with Alice Thorson as editor and many well-known outstanding writers of all the arts. I’m always excited when *KC Studio* arrives in my post box every other month of the year. Thank you for *KC Studio* for Kansas City, we love you.” — **Jane Voorhees**

“*KC Studio* helps make the Entire Greater Kansas City community not only great...it also adds a degree of informed sophistication for all of us and for our visitors.” — **Stanley Bushman**



“I enjoy reading your high-quality magazine and admire the range of topics you cover. I especially enjoy profiles of people and their connection to the arts. Keep up the good work!” — **Judie Becker**



“Our executive director, Michael Donovan, receives *KC Studio* in the mail, and he and I fell in love with the story about and the beautiful photos of Tuba Christmas. Thanks to your online magazine, we are able as of today to feature the story and the photos on our website homepage (plus our Facebook and Twitter cover photos). We credit and link to *KC Studio*, the Symphony and Mr. Barcus. We’ll have the photos and the links up all month long.” — **Barbara MacRobie, Public Information Coordinator, Missouri Arts Council**



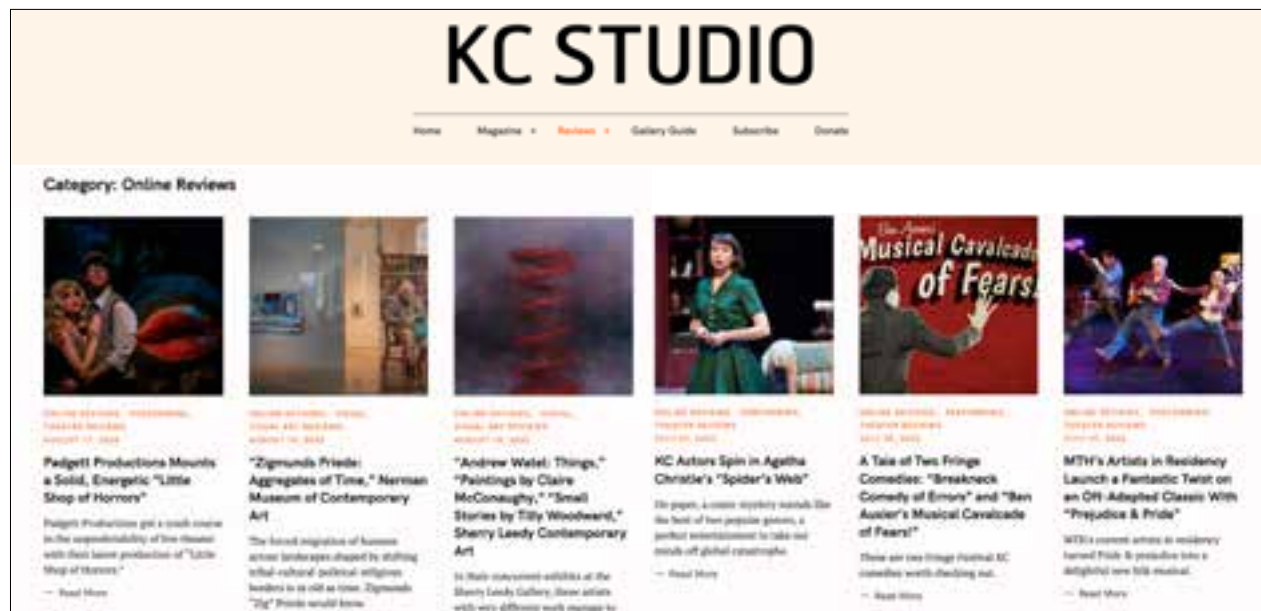


## ONLINE PRESENCE

### KCSTUDIO.ORG POSTS ONLINE REVIEWS EVERY WEEK

Critical art reviews are important to 75% of surveyed *KC Studio* readers. Many of *KC Studio*'s expert contributors also write online reviews for kcstudio.org. Readers can find new reviews every week of the best in visual arts, performing and Classical Music & Dance. Calendar year 2021–2022 all social media platforms and the organizations are notified about the review to share on their website and constituents the day of release. These platforms promoted by *KC Studio* are FREE OF CHARGE to the organization or gallery and can be found on our Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn, and our biweekly newsletters. To date, *KC Studio* has reviewed 50 performing/Classical Music & Dance and 30 visual.

*KC Studio*'s online reviews are made possible by: Visual Art Reviews – The Lighton Fund; Performing and Music Reviews – Leonard and Irene Bettinger Philanthropic Fund, Mike and Julie Kirk and the Muriel McBrien Kauffman Family Foundation.



### ONLINE REVIEWS TESTIMONIALS

"Thanks for keeping classical music journalism alive in KC!"  
— **Deborah Sandler, General Director and CEO, Lyric Opera of Kansas City**



"Thank you for the exposure and the link. We'll be sure to share. Our best . . ." — **Jeff Barker, Director of Marketing, Kansas City Symphony**



"Wow, I am so pleased to hear that SOMEONE will be doing performance reviews since our Kansas City Star decided that they are unimportant. Thank you!" — **Don Loncasty, Kansas City Chorale**



### GOOGLE ARTS & CULTURE



In fall 2019 *KC Studio* joined the **Google Arts & Culture US Partnership**. This is a wonderful opportunity to expose a worldwide readership to the visual and performing artists and the organizations that present them covered in *KC Studio*. All photographs are shot by our talented staff photographer, Jim Barcus.

## SOCIAL MEDIA REACH

Reaching younger people and connecting them to KC's vital arts scene is essential to building our city's future art audience. *KC Studio* appeals to younger readers by posting content on popular platforms.



**Facebook: 7.7k Followers**  
**6.9k Likes**



**Instagram: 2,867 Followers**  
**76% are 25-54 years old**  
**Gender: 65% Women / 35% Men**



**Twitter: 8,833 Followers**



**LinkedIn: 551 Followers**



## COMMENTS FROM KC ARTS INFLUENCERS

PHOTO BY MARK BERNDT



**JOSÉ FAUS**

"The latest copy of *KC Studio* arrives at the house. In its pages, I recognize friends and makers, and others whose names have dropped in conversations. Critical reviews, interviews and profiles fill the pages. Upcoming shows and exhibitions set the calendar, while memorials honor the passing of key figures in the arts firmament. With every issue, this project becomes the chronicle of a metropolis in the process of embracing the mantle of a cultured city."

— **José Faus**



**PETE BROWNE**

"Kansas City is fortunate to have this highly regarded journal celebrating the thriving literary, visual, and performing arts in our midst. *KC Studio* uniquely pairs extensive digital content with a beautiful print publication, immersing the reader in its well curated pages and inspiring a desire to explore more in person. I consider *KC Studio* critical infrastructure in our growing arts economy and count the publication as essential to an engaged community." — **Pete Browne/President of the Board; Kansas City Public Library**



PHOTO BY JIM BARCUS

**KAREN & BOB PAISLEY**

"It's impossible to overestimate the critical importance of *KC Studio* Magazine for arts coverage in Kansas City and the surrounding regions. It's the only platform offering insightful newsworthy coverage of the arts in our region. We depend on them to reach audiences, and audiences rely on the magazine for information, inspiration and direction to great arts experiences. The mutual benefit created by their presence is significant. They are vital to the health of the arts ecology here in Kansas City. Thanks, *KC Studio*!" — **Karen Paisley and Bob Paisley, Co-Founders and Producers, Metropolitan Ensemble Theatre aka MET**



**GORDON KAUFFMAN AND ANNE MARIE KAUFFMAN**

"More than a magazine, *KC Studio* showcases the uplifting spirit and events of our community. That takes talent, and we know it when we see it. It also takes the right resources: leadership with a purpose, a capable staff of people who care, local support, and a strong network of contributors — and of course, the ability to put it all together into a quality publication. Kansas City is fortunate to have this in a single journalistic periodical. True to the creativity of the Arts, *KC Studio* continues to reinvent itself. Every issue brings a fresh new look. Thanks, and Kudos!" — **Gordon Kauffman The Kauffman and Wise Family**

**ALLAN A. KING**

"*KC Studio* magazine is as essential to the KC art scene as the Nelson-Atkins, Kemper Museum, KCAI, and all the other art venues in the metropolitan area. Contributors are topical experts, and their writings are professional and in depth. Alice Thorson's editorials are insightful and informative, and, when necessary, she challenges institutional policy and decisions (as it should be). If you really want to know what's happening with art in KC, this is the go-to publication. I LOVE this magazine!"

— **Allan A. King**





## COMMENTS FROM KC ARTS INFLUENCERS *(Continued)*



PHOTO BY MISHA KLIGMAN

### AMY KLIGMAN

"KC Studio's exclusive focus on the Kansas City art scene, with an emphasis on being a platform for visibility for Kansas City's artists, is a key contributor to the arts ecosystem. KC Studio helps foster feedback and audience, both of which are key needs for artists trying to build their career."

— **Amy Kligman, Executive/Artistic Director, Charlotte Street Foundation**



### SUE AND LEWIS NERMAN

"The arts are fundamental to our humanity. They inspire us —fostering beauty, creativity, empathy, and curiosity. Kansas City is strengthened by our vibrant arts community which makes it a great place to live, work and thrive."

— **Sue and Lewis Nerman**



PHOTO BY TINT

### PETRA KRALICKOVA

"KC Studio is a key partner for The National Museum of Toys and Miniatures in our work to connect with the community and fuel the art of imagination. From highlighting upcoming exhibits to placing a spotlight on fine-scale miniatures and antique toys, we're grateful to have the support of KC Studio to help tell our story."

— **Petra Kralickova, Executive Director, The National Museum of Toys and Miniatures**



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE KAUFFMAN CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

### PAUL SCHOFER

"The Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts is proud to support KC Studio for its excellent work in providing greater awareness in the wonderful arts offered throughout the Kansas City community. Their arts coverage is exceptionally thorough and regularly spotlights stories not often available elsewhere. We at the Kauffman Center are honored to have been featured in many of them." — **Paul Schofer, President and Chief Executive Officer, Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts**



PHOTO BY BOB GREENSPAN

### JULIÁN ZUGAZAGOITIA

"I feel that it is very important to support an arts publication in our robust arts community. I served as an advisor in the creation of KC Studio's Arts Consortium and believe in their publication. I grew up gaining my own passion for the arts through the pages in magazines that led me to where I am today."

— **Julián Zugazagoitia, CEO, Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art**



## FINANCIAL INFORMATION

COVID impacted the entire country with business and venue closures and Kansas City was not immune. While **KC Studio** was able to continue robust editorial coverage on artists and arts organizations and the creative ways they continued to create their art during the pandemic, there was a significant impact on earned revenues on the magazine.

The good news is that revenues are steadily returning to pre-covid levels and that our contributed support has been on the rise. This past fiscal year we hired a talented consultant to assist us in our sales and marketing efforts and develop **new** online and digital offerings important to our long-term vitality.

If you remove the one-time consultant's cost and Lighton International Artist Exchange Program costs, totaling together \$78,545, we would have shown a surplus of \$22,378 for the fiscal year as opposed to a loss of \$114,851 in the middle of the pandemic. We are making strong improvements and we anticipate this will continue into the current fiscal year.

Financials at a Glance				
	2021-2022	2020-2021	Change	Percent
<b>Revenue</b>				
Contributed Support (1)	\$ 268,451	\$ 192,449	\$ 76,003	39%
Lighton International Artist Exchange Program	\$ 10,000	\$ -	\$ 10,000	
Arts Organizations	\$ 257,803	\$ 157,927	\$ 99,875	63%
Commercial Advertising	\$ 128,690	\$ 110,871	\$ 17,818	16%
	\$ 664,944	\$ 461,247	\$ 203,696	44%
<b>Program Expenses</b>				
Salaries & Wages	\$ 344,082	\$ 306,312	\$ 37,771	12%
Printing	\$ 92,240	\$ 60,689	\$ 31,551	52%
Postage	\$ 34,372	\$ 27,096	\$ 7,276	27%
Freelance Editorial (1)	\$ 68,387	\$ 63,925	\$ 4,462	7%
Other Expenses (Web, Shipping, Supplies)	\$ 6,628	\$ 5,111	\$ 1,517	30%
Sales Expense and Contract Labor	\$ 10,535	\$ 3,796	\$ 6,739	178%
Lighton International Artist Exchange Program (2)	\$ 22,970	\$ 23,713	\$ (743)	-3%
Overhead (3)	\$ 127,951	\$ 125,498	\$ 2,453	2%
Other Administrative (4)	\$ 71,805	\$ 19,824	\$ 51,981	262%
PPP Loan Forgiveness	\$ (57,860)	\$ (59,865)	\$ 2,005	-3%
	\$ 721,111	\$ 576,098	\$ 145,013	25%
Net Income	\$ (56,167)	\$ (114,851)	\$ 58,683	-51%

(1) Contributed Support included one time grant of \$45,000 to produce Charlotte Street Publication

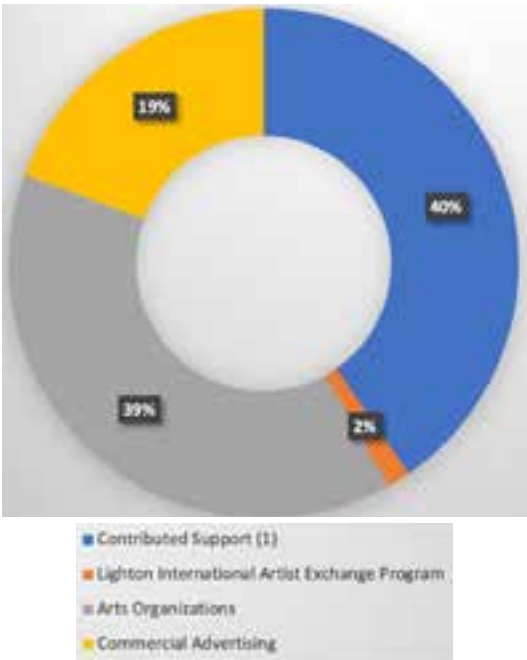
(2) The Arts Engagement Foundation serves as administrator of the The Lighton International Artist Exchange Program. It has a net zero cash-flow impact on operations.

(3) Overhead includes: rent, accounting serices, phone, utilities, web design and hosting, online and social media services

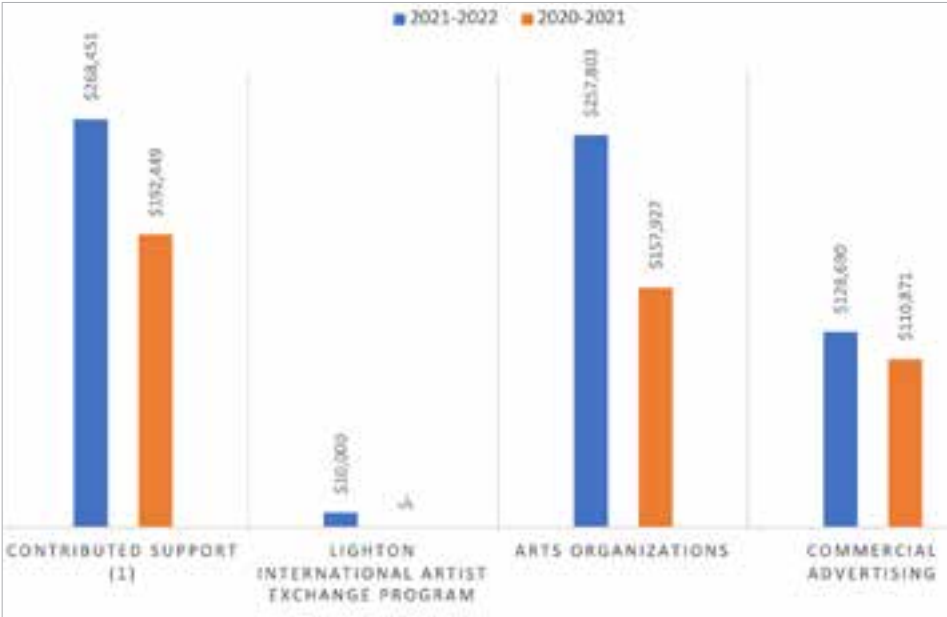
(4) Includes one-time consultant fee of \$55,575 to assist in sales and markeing initiatives.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION (Continued)

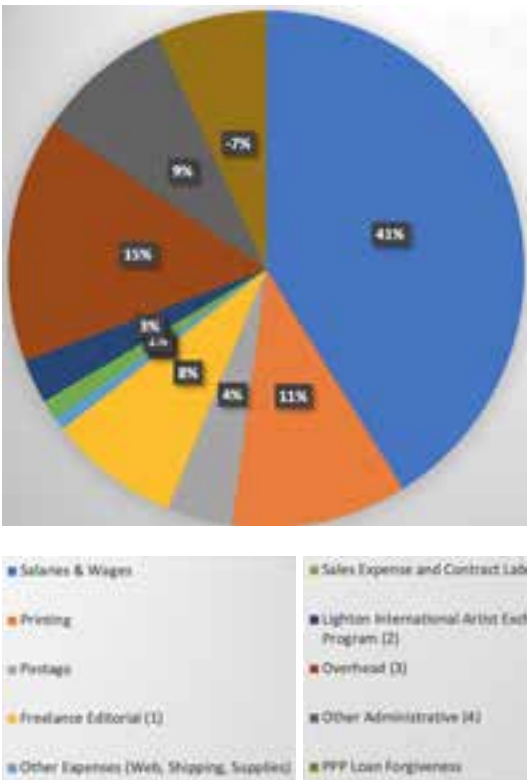
REVENUE 2021-2022 FISCAL YEAR



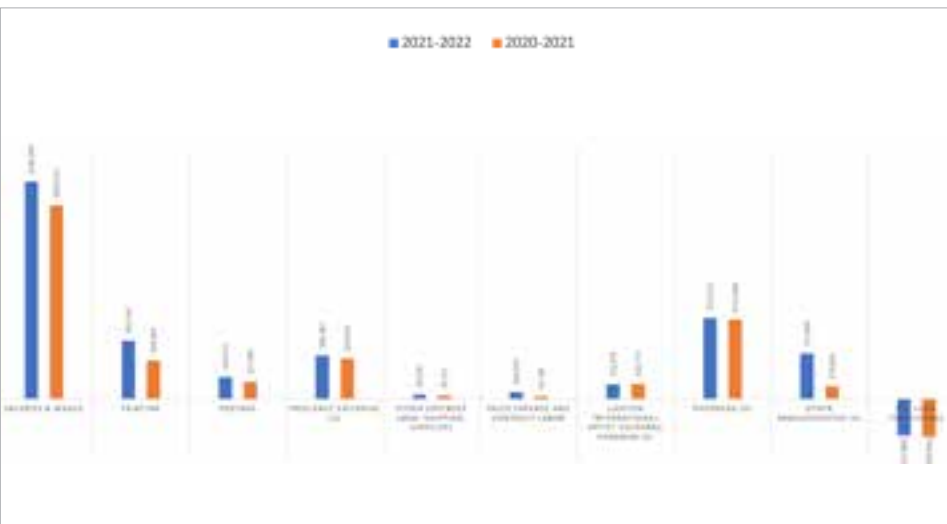
REVENUE BY SOURCE



EXPENSES 2021-2022 FISCAL YEAR



EXPENSES LAST TWO FISCAL YEARS



# KC STUDIO

COVERING KANSAS CITY'S PERFORMING, VISUAL, CINEMATIC AND LITERARY ARTS

KC Studio Magazine is published by The Arts Engagement Foundation of Kansas City, a 501(c)(3) philanthropic organization dedicated to promote engagement and increase participation in the arts in Kansas City. We would like to thank the following Foundations, organizations and individuals for their generous support.

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American Jazz Museum

Harriman-Jewell Series

Kansas City Public Library

Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts

Midwest Trust Center at JCCC

The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art

Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art

Park University International Center for Music

Powell Gardens

Theater League

## ARTS PARTNERS

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Kansas City Museum

Metropolitan Ensemble Theatre

National WWI Museum and Memorial

Olathe Public Library

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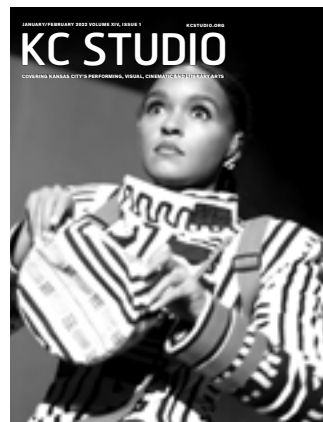
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