

Jesse Henkensiefken

Doctor of Musical Arts, The University of Kansas  
Master of Music, The Manhattan School of Music  
Performance Certificate, Park University  
Master of Music, The University of Kansas  
Bachelor of Music, The University of Kansas

A Kansas native, Jesse Henkensiefken performs regularly as both a cellist and conductor. He serves as the Kansas Wesleyan University (KWU) director of orchestras as well as the assistant conductor and principal cellist of the Salina Symphony. He concertizes throughout Kansas, the Midwest and the U.S., having appeared at the Kansas City Lyric Opera House, NYC's Kaufman Center, the Eastman School of Music and Lincoln Center, to name a few. He has also performed throughout the Caribbean, having worked in Guadalupe and the Bahamas. He is the recipient of the 2014 Woodworth Career Development Grant for conducting and was awarded the Mu Phi Epsilon Foncannon Conducting Scholarship Award in 2013. Henkensiefken has studied conducting at both the Manhattan School of Music and at the University of Kansas.

In 2015, he had the privilege of traveling to the Tchaikovsky State Moscow Conservatory in Russia, where he had further training under the direction of Anatoly Levin. His other mentors include George Manahan, David Gilbert, Nikolai Uljanov, Paul Vermel, Leonard Slatkin and Kurt Masur. He was assistant conductor for the MSM Contemporary Opera Ensemble from 2012-14 and was director of the Ars Viva Chamber Orchestra from 2009-14. He has made guest conducting appearances with the String Orchestra of Brooklyn, the Salina Youth Symphony, the Kansas Music Educators Association and the Salina Community Theater, where he won 2015-16 "Best Musical" and "Best Musical Direction" awards. He was also a conducting participant in the 2010 South Carolina's Conductors Institute as well as the 2013 'Beyond the Baton' Conducting Seminar. As a cellist, Henkensiefken has participated in master classes with world-renowned musicians including Yo-Yo Ma, Peter Kondrashin, Daniel Weis, Libby Larsen, Mark O'Connor and Zuill Bailey.

He was a Sorbel Award Winner at the 2011 Mu Phi Epsilon International Music Competition and has been principal cellist for orchestras including Ensemble du Monde (NYC), the Empire State Sinfonia (Brooklyn, NY) Kansas City Philharmonia (Parkville, MO) and the University of Kansas Symphony Orchestra (Lawrence, KS). In addition, Henkensiefken has made solo appearances with the Sine Nomine Chamber Orchestra, Lawrence Chamber Orchestra, West Coast Trans-Siberian Orchestra, Manheim Steamroller, Ensemble de Monde and the KWU String Orchestra. He performed at the 2011 St. Georges International Music Festival in Guadalupe and was principal cellist during the 2013 Ensemble du Monde Bahamas Residency. During the 2006-2007 season, he was a substitute cellist for the New World Symphony. In 2014, Henkensiefken created the annual KWU International Music Festival; a prestigious series of events that bring world-class performers and pedagogues to central Kansas for a week of music making. Currently he resides in Salina Kansas with his wife, Tatiana Tessman who is KWU Artist in Residence and Director of Piano, and their daughter Sophia Elise.