

In Conversation with President Mark Rabideau



Thank You for Allowing Me to Serve Our Society

Moments of transition invite us to reflect upon the steadfast care we've received along our journey and upon those close to us who afford space to dream about what's next. And as such, I'd like to take, in my final newsletter, a moment to thank those who do this work in my life.

In January 2021, my presidency began amidst stark reminders about the importance of our work as musicians and music educators as we strove to create a more joyful, inclusive, and connected world. A global pandemic shuttered our classrooms and concert halls. The public execution of George Floyd reminded us of the inequities we can witness in society and within our Society. And a divisive election spotlighted what can happen when we decide difference is dangerous.

CMS launched a repository of resources and a fleet of webinars to help us invent better practices for teaching in a hybrid world. President Eileen M. Hayes championed equity and inclusivity as a hallmark of her leadership, leaving her indelible mark upon our organization as these values became central to our mission. And together, we have shown over and over again that we can lead change across our profession and within our communities.

We, too, have sharpened our message about why our Society is an essential investment for academics and artists across our profession, resulting in growth in membership and engagement, an expanded reach into international markets, and improved fiscal footing for our future. This good work was conducted by members of our Society and our Executive Office Staff and supported by those close to us.

Among the great joys of serving as CMS president, is a monthly invitation to connect with colleagues serving within this capacity for our sister societies. "The Five Presidents" represent the Society for Ethnomusicology, Society for Music Theory, American Musicological Society, Society for American Music, and The College Music Society. During our time together, an ethos of *One for All, All for One* permeated our discussions about the challenges and opportunities our organizations face and how we might invent a music profession driven upon shared values. Jan Miyake, Michael Buchler, Patricia Hall, Steve Swayne, Georgia Cowart, Melvin Butler, Tomie Hahn, Douglas Bomberger, and Daniel Goldmark, thank you for your wisdom and fellowship.

Our Society benefits from both volunteer and professional leadership, as we envision our best future while remaining rooted in our history. During my time as president, I have benefitted immeasurably from the visionary and steadfast leadership of two remarkable executive directors, Bill Pelto and Jeff Loeffert. Gentlemen, thank you for co-creating ideas that drive change and stewarding our Society with integrity and care. I, too, benefitted from the leadership of Hannah Pearson. Director Pearson, thank you for becoming inseparable from the good conducted by our Society.

And to the Executive Office Staff, you are the backbone of CMS. Julie Johnson, you greet our members joyfully at every national conference, setting the tone that CMS is more than a society of professionals, but of colleagues and friends. Shannon Devlin, your strategies and tactics for increasing membership are proof positive of your professionalism. David Schafer and Brianna Buck, behind the scenes you keep us connected through the digital world. Thank you for your quiet, expert skills. Charlie Chadwell, in such a short time you have become the face of how we gather. You make us feel cared for with every detail detailed.

Board Members, Committee, Council and Program Chairs, thank you for articulating and executing your charges as they intersect with CMS' Common Topic. As elected servants of CMS membership, you have enlivened our Society and done the heavy lift of leading change within music in higher education.

Looking out on the horizon of Past-Presidents allows us to trace the arc of impact CMS has made during its 65-year history. I've been lucky to know many of our Past-Presidents, and blessed to have been befriended by a few. Tayloe Harding, you are a mentor-of-a-lifetime and my closest friend. I am sorry for the countless times I've embarrassed us both because of my inability to hide my unabashed admiration for you: our profession's most

consequential dean. Keith Ward, just this morning you called to check-in on me, offer gentle, sage advice. Thanks for 35-months of messages after each newsletter. (I'll look forward to tomorrow's with anticipation.) Betty Anne Younker, yours is the leadership I hope to emulate: kind, thoughtful, clear. We went to Missoula together as servants of the Society and came home dear friends.

My presidency was always meant to carry forward the heavy torch of President Eileen M. Hayes to what I am already confident will be a wildly successful presidency of Brian Kai Chin. What a gift to have been mentored by a president who exudes such strength, grace, and persistence of purpose. And how will I have known that she would then become a most trusted confidant and beloved friend? Sister Hayes, thank you for your wisdom, support, and love.

Brian Kai Chin, your limitless creativity and contagious enthusiasm will energize your presidency. And the vision embedded within your 2024-2025 Common Topic has already inspired me to know that CMS has not yet seen its best days. Echoing Past-President Eileen M. Hayes' post from November 2020: The College Music Society holds free and fair elections. Every member of the Society has one vote. All CMS voting is verified by the Board of Director's Secretary and at least two staff persons at the national office. It is a privilege to hold an office within the College Music Society, and officers strive to comport themselves accordingly. There will be a peaceful transition of responsibility between the presidential terms of Mark Rabideau and President-Elect Brian Kai Chin on December 31, 2023.

Laura Rabideau, you surround me with the love and safe space to dream. Thank you for being the one person who always sees me, my happily-ever-after.

Thank you to the CMS membership for allowing me to serve as your president. I've loved and I will miss the work greatly. CMS has been the place where, professionally, I feel most like me. Thank you for welcoming me as my whole, complicated, messy self.

And thanks for joining the conversation,

Mark Rabideau
Associate Dean for Faculty & Student Affairs
University of Colorado Denver
President, if just for a moment more, College Music Society