

To My Colleagues,

Thank you to all of you for what you do to advance the cause of music and art. For many reasons, it will be essential that we actively advocate for our discipline in the coming years. And thank you to the 510 members who chose to join us in Washington, D.C., for the CMS 2024 National Conference. I found it cathartic to be with such compassionate, committed, and brilliant colleagues during a time of national change and uncertainty. I know that holding a national conference near the U.S. Capitol during the week of a presidential election caused extra anxiety for all of us. Still, I was grateful to be with you all and feel more determined now than ever in our mission to use music to change the world.

As I had an opportunity to express several times in person, I want to publicly thank our 2024 National Conference Program committee: Rachel Roberts (chair), Jessica Muñiz-Collado, Alex Zacharella, Chris Jenkins, and Nicole Molumby. The sessions were diverse, captivating, and engaging... simply too many amazing things to see at any given time!

Thank you to the College Music Society staff: Jeff Loeffert, Executive Director, for your outstanding leadership; Hannah Pearson, Director of Operations, for your excellent follow-through and capacity; and Charlie Chadwell (CMS Conference Planner) and Grace Nelson Poe (CMS Administrative Intern) for your outstanding conference planning and execution.

Regardless of how you feel about the outcome of our national election (thank you to all who voted!), there is little doubt that we are entering an “era of uncertainty.” It is unclear what the future will hold for higher education, intellectualism, and the arts in American society. It is unclear how state and federal regulations will impact our mission and programs. It is unclear how our state and federal regulations around immigration will affect our current and future students.

For most of us, uncertainty can create anxiety. As I spoke at the opening plenary at the conference Thursday morning, a colleague of ours recently quipped that “the antidote to anxiety is action.” These words struck me deeply in the days after the election. Weeks later, I confirm that I believe wholeheartedly in the concept of action as a means to move forward with positivity, heal our hurts, and embolden our work with each other in music and the arts. I am choosing to use this moment to call me forward with renewed focus to “double-down” on my auspicious mission to make the world a better place through music and to train the next generation of socially conscious artists. Every musician and educator I know has a similar mission; it’s always the same end goal, and there is no one way to be engaged. I know that I am talking about more than simply moving anxiety into action, but I want to encourage all of us to dig in and engage with one another. Whether that’s through CMS, your local community, your students, or your school, I believe that we can significantly impact those we care about around us.

Last, to follow up on the conference, I invite all of you who have not yet done so to [complete the Presidential Task Force survey to reevaluate our mission, vision, and values statements](#). We aspire to complete this work in the coming months, and together with the brainpower of the CMS Board, we aspire to share this with the CMS community later this academic year.

With a spirit of joy and optimism, I wish you a smooth end to your semester or quarter and a restful and rejuvenating couple of weeks before the new year and next term begins!

BC

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'BK Chin'.

Brian Kai Chin  
President, College Music Society