



College-Conservatory of Music

Ensembles and Conducting

University of Cincinnati
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4 March 2025

California State University, Sacramento

Dear Graduate Admission Committee Members:

I am pleased to offer an enthusiastic recommendation for Chet Chwalik in his application for the Master of Music program at California State University, Sacramento. I observed his excellent academic work and performances while he pursued a B.M. in Jazz Studies here at the University of Cincinnati College-Conservatory of Music. I was the department head for his major area and his conductor in the Jazz Ensemble (big band).

Chet is a superb jazz pianist and trumpeter, an accomplished artistic improviser, a skillful arranger and composer, and a versatile musician knowledgeable about a wide variety of styles. As a soloist in our big bands and combos, he was featured on numerous concerts and showed a very creative solo style as well as a strong grasp of the tradition. His jazz compositions and arrangements also demonstrated a talent for melody and form. He was a disciplined student, curious, hard-working, mature and reliable. His seriousness and his hunger for new information made him one of the faculty's favorite students with whom to work. His potential to grow as a performer, teacher and scholar in your graduate program is of the highest level. Although I have not worked with him since his B.M. studies, I have followed his performing and teaching online. His pedagogical materials are very methodical and effective, and his leadership qualifications are extensive. These professional experiences have given him the maturity to excel in performing, arranging/composing, teaching, and music director roles.

Chet was well liked and highly respected by our faculty and students. His serious yet warm personality would make him an outstanding graduate student.

I give Mr. Chwalik my highest recommendation for your M.M. degree, and I believe he will thrive in your program.

Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rick VanMatre', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Rick VanMatre
Professor Emeritus of Jazz Studies
Director of Jazz Studies 1983-2010
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