

Songsmith – Austin
March Critique Session
March 20, 2023

The Songsmith – Austin March Critique Session was held via Zoom from 7:10 to 10:13 pm on March 20, 2023. We had twelve Zoom attendees and heard eleven impressive works. Joe talked about Point of View in lyrics with a somewhat famous example (to be discussed at the end of the session).

Mike Harris provided another co-write with Joe Clark – a love song entitled “I’m Lost In Your Neon Eyes”. With very memorable choruses and story, the listeners provided quite a bit of feedback, including a different title to add intrigue. As usual, another great work from these two – thanks!

Chris Cavello provided his song “Shape A Life” – inspired by a recent vacation - which had a great tropic feel (including a sax and trombone), great descriptions and a nicely doubled vocal in the chorus. There were several small lyric suggestions from the group about the verses. Nice song, Chris – thanks!

Chris Meyer provided a re-write of his song “I Still Do” (from last month), describing a former love and the singer’s regrets. Chris’ re-write really pared the length down and the listeners were very impressed with the results. While there were a few lyric suggestions, his hard work has paid off - super, Chris!

Joe Strouse sent in one of his recent FAWM songs, “Rob’s Blues”, which described the singer’s inability to feel as young as he once had. This song was suggested by Joe’s cousin and comments included a few lyric and bridge melody suggestions.

Greg Livingston and Amy Guentzel (GrAmy) provided parts 5-7 for their song “A Poetry Of Light”, a spoken-word musical tune about the meeting of fictional characters Estrella and Tristan. Again, this was a definitely novel approach for spoken word/sung poetry and comments included a few technical suggestions. Looking forward to 8-10 - thanks!

Stewart Moser provided a recently-written love song “The Perfect You For Me”, complete with great title repetition in the chorus and (as only Stewart can do) inclusion of interesting words (and a Greek reference) not normally found in songs. Listeners provided some minor lyrical feedback, but all in all, another cool Stewart Moser song!

Mitch Lobrovich sent his song “Nice To Finally Meet You”, a descriptive country rocker about a long-lost relative and a “boom” surprise in the great chorus. Wow. The surprise was worth the wait and everyone really like this song. There were only a few minor suggestions to strengthen this song. Very memorable, Mitch – thanks!

John Stearle provided his song “By The Light Of The Moon”, a song with the singer describing nightmares and confusing them with reality. John’s descriptions were very good and comments included clarifying a few of the images so as to keep the story flowing. Very interesting work, John – looking forward to the re-write!

Mary Dawson sent in a song (co-written with Bruce Greer) entitled “Just For Today”, which was named for a 12-step program mantra in which the singer describes the things needing to be done on the road to recovery. The production was wonderful and lyric suggestions were very few. This is a great, heartfelt song, Mary – thanks!

Alex Gaw sent in a recording of his song “It’s Gonna Rain”, a superbly descriptive love/support song/metaphor about how there will always be challenges in life. The group agreed that the lyrics were excellent and painted the story quite well – and offered a few minor structural and lyric suggestions. Super work, Alex – thanks!

Long-missed Jacquelyn Fraley sent in her finished/produced song “Giddy Up”, an up-tempo song about a cowgirl who doesn’t exactly let the grass grow under her feet, as they say. Everyone enjoyed this very catchy song and it was definitely an ear worm. Great work, Jacquelyn – and great to have you join us again!

This month’s songwriting discussion concerned Point of View in Bob Welch’s (Fleetwood Mac) well-known song “Ebony Eyes”. We discussed how we could help make this classic song even stronger by deciding on the best Point of View perspective (direct address, first-person narrative, second-person narrative or third-person narrative). While we await for the co-writing credit, we’ll continue discussing more songwriting tools next month.

Songsmith meets three out of the four Monday nights each month. As always, Songsmith has a Salado meeting (2nd Monday of each month), the 3rd Monday for the Austin meeting, and a DFW meeting (4th Monday of each month) where your songs can be heard and you can get feedback - always free – no dues or other financial obligations.

As always, we’re looking for Zoom-knowledgeable volunteer to run the audio and visual portions for the DFW and Salado meetings. If you’re interested, please contact Mary Dawson at Mary@MaryDawson.com.

We hope to see you on Monday, April 17th, 2023 or sooner.