

**Songsmith – Austin Monthly Critique Session**  
Monday, January 18, 2021

The Songsmith – Austin Monthly Critique Session was held via Zoom (moderated by the just nearly omni-present Tara Heflin) from 6:57 pm to 9:33 pm. We had 10 Zoom attendees and heard nine excellent works in progress.

John Stearle started the session with a song (and accompanying video), entitled “Let’s Get This Party Started”, a very funny song about pathetic impending change in government. John’s excellent use of repetition really made this song move nicely. Comments included a few minor lyric changes, but overall, very enjoyable. Thanks, John!

Stewart Moser sent his song “Fingernail Moon” - a sweet, yet wry tune about a romance and how the sliver of the moon sees it all. The group liked this song and offered several comments concerning the meaning of slight references that Stewart included, to which Stewart did a good job of resolving. Cool, Stewart!

Joe Strouse responded to Tara’s request for a song about Mozzarella Stick, describing the pleasure of devouring the hot goodness. Comments were positive and encouraged some further exploration of commercial possibilities.

Dori Weaver sent her roots-based song “Roots Run Deep”, a wonderfully performed song about family ties sung in an Americana roots style. Dori’s used of only a few instruments helped accentuate the emotion in her voice and in her lyrics. Comments included some minor lyric suggestions to keep it colloquial. Great work, Dori!

Rick Cates sent in a draft of his song contest entry “Don’t Mess With Texas”, a 30 second long country tune/commercial. Rick’s great country voice and guitar work really made this ditty bounce. Comments included a few possible lyric changes. Great work, Rick!

Long-absent critique session member Chris Meyer (currently in Chicago) sent in his song “She’s Easy On The Eye”, a country ballad about a woman who has high standards. Chris’ descriptions were just great and the listeners suggested a potential point of view change, as well as other lyric possibilities. Super, Chris - welcome back!

Greg Livingston sent his love song “Beautiful Girl”, a sweet, acoustic guitar-oriented song about how this love has made the singer a better person. Great emotion in this song - the group really liked this song’s sentiment (and, of course, Greg’s outstanding vocals) and suggestions included some lyric possibilities to consider. Wow - thanks!

Songsmith’s founder Mary Dawson brought a co-write with the amazing Eulalia King, “When A Dream Won’t Die”, a power ballad with the words of the Rev. Martin Luther King in mind. Beautifully sung by Eulalia and well produced in 2008, listeners had very few suggestions to make this son stronger. Great work, y’all!

Tara played Joe Strouse's recently written song "Mr. Remy", a creepy and fictional song about a neighbor - including a warning from the singer's parents about staying away. Comments included a few possible lyric changes.

Finally, Joe described an upcoming Facebook page for Songsmith members who are interested in participating in February for FAWM (February is Album Writing Month) - creating 14 new songs in 28 days. Please contact Joe ([Strousongs@gmail.com](mailto:Strousongs@gmail.com)) if you're interested in joining this annual challenge.

If you'd like to be included next month, please contact Tara Heflin ([tara.incognito@gmail.com](mailto:tara.incognito@gmail.com)) and send her your lyrics (Word format, please) and if you'd prefer that we hear a recording, please also send an mp3 of your song before 4 pm (Central time) on Monday, January 18th.

See you on Monday, February 15, 2021!