

Songsmith – Austin  
April Critique Session  
April 17, 2023

The Songsmith – Austin April Critique Session was held via Zoom from 7:10 to 11:14 pm on April 17, 2023. We had fourteen Zoom attendees and heard 12 great songs in various stages of creation. Chris Cavello described his experience with songwriting comments using ChatGPD and Joe touched on using perfect vs imperfect rhymes in songs with examples from two well-known songs. As usual, the mighty mighty Chris Meyer provided the moderating duties for this marathon session and got an A+ (again) for his efforts. Thanks, Chris!

Chris Cavello started the session with his song “Sailing To Corfu”, a very laid-back song about an experience he had years ago on the Adriatic Sea. Great images, great melody and the listeners really liked this song. Comments included potential changes to lyrics to make the song stronger. Chris briefly touched on the lyrical and musical comments from ChatGPD (for this song), including Chris’ revisions using the chords ChatGPD recommended. A very, very interesting experiment/glimpse into the future and we appreciate his bringing this innovation for our consideration.

Newcomer Molly Trindle played her Celtic-inspired song “Chasing The Boglights”, an instrumental (in progress) which had captivating rhythms and unique instruments. Everyone really liked the song and suggestions included some more melodic theme repetition for her final version. Welcome, Molly – thanks!

Mike Harris provided yet another co-write with Joe Clark entitled “Don’t Walk Out Now” a double meaning song about gambling and potentially losing a love interest. This country rocker had great motion and covered a lot of ground. The group had a number of lyrical (and a few production) notes. Thanks, Mike and Joe!

Mary Dawson sent her newest song (co-written with Brian Wooten) entitled “Semper Fi”, a spirited tribute to the US Marine Corps. With super melody and great images, listeners thought that this song has great potential without being sappy or predictable. Several minor lyric comments were offered, as well. Great work, Mary and Brian!

Song Joffe sent in his song “Done It Wrong” a guitar/vocal tune about the difficulty in dealing with paralyzing self-doubt. The group really liked the emotion in this work and offered a few small lyrical considerations to help make this one stronger. Another very thoughtful and well-crafted song from Scott – thank you!

Stewart Moser sent another recently-written song “One Of These Days”, a description of being very ready for a life-style change, especially relating to work. Stewart provided great chords, effective stop/start and (as usual) intriguing lyrics. The listeners liked the pop/Beatle-esque feel and offered a few lyrical comments. Thanks, SB!

Alex Gaw (accompanied by his newborn daughter) sent in his re-write of “Still Gonna Rain”, professing the singer’s presence to help a loved one in distress. This song had

great feel and images and the group could tell that he had re-worked it nicely. A spirited discussion about the chorus lyrics ensued and hopefully it helped. Cool, Alex!

Joe Strouse sent in “Long Before You”, which described the singer’s tortuous path travelled before meeting a loved one. The group appreciated the descriptions and offered great suggestions with phrasing and lyrical clean up.

John Stearle provided a re-write of his song “By The Light Of The Moon”, describing the singer’s nightmares and then reaching reality. John definitely worked on this to make it clearer and resolved quite a few comments from last month. Additional comments included some lyrical possibilities. Nice work, John – thanks!

Jacquelyn Fraley sent in her musically-demoed song “Miracles”, describing the singer’s awe and appreciation for life’s surprises (big and small). The production was very well done and Jacquelyn solicited lyrical comments concerning one of her verses. Great to have you back with us – thanks, Jacquelyn!

Greg Livingston and Amy Guentzel (GrAmy) provided parts 9 and 10 for their song “Dance In The Dark”, a spoken-word musical tune about the meeting of fictional characters Estrella and Tristan. The chorus was very well done and listeners offered several production/lyrical comments – thanks y’all!

Chris Meyer provided a re-write of his song “Briars And Brambles”, describing the singer’s observations about life’s weeds and making allowances. Everyone liked this piano-based song and suggestions included a few very minor lyric possibilities to help support the title. Great work, Chris!

Finally, Joe lightly discussed the perfect and imperfect rhyme effectiveness in two songs “Merry Go Round” (Kasey Musgraves) and in “Something Like That” (Tim McGraw). Joe also cited three books which discussed rhyming effectiveness by Sheila Davis, Pat Pattison and John Braheny.

Songsmith meets three out of the four Monday nights each month. As always, Songsmith has a Salado meeting (2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month), the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday for the Austin meeting, and a DFW meeting (4<sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:Mary@MaryDawson.com).

We hope to see you on Monday, May 15th, 2023 or sooner.