

Songsmith – Austin  
August Critique Session  
August 16, 2021

The Songsmith – Austin May Critique Session was held via Zoom (moderated by the amazing Tara Heflin) from 7:08 pm to 9:14 pm on August 16, 2021. We had 11 Zoom attendees and heard nine stellar works in progress.

DC's Kevin Mallory started the August session with his song "Dark Clouds" a wonderfully moody song about a broken relationship which also had a killer bridge where he nicely varied the rhythm and structure from the verses and chorus. A few minor comments concerning the music were offered. Super work, Kevin!

Michael Wesley Stinson sent his song "The Long Way Home", which described a parent's worries about a grown wayward child. Michael's images were very supportive of the feel and prosody. A few listeners offered a few overall lyric changes to clarify the singer's position. Great start, Michael!

Dori Weaver sent in her hilarious song "Cock a Doodle Blues", written for a musician friend. The group really enjoyed this classic upbeat blues tune and offered several lyric changes to help it become even more blues-oriented, as well as clarifying the song's tense from the singer's point of view. Wonderful, Dori – thanks!

Joe Strouse sent a re-write of one of his older songs entitled "They Called Her Styrene", based on the title of a short book by artist Edward Ruscha. The listeners offered several lyric possibilities for this song about misdirected introverted scientists.

Chris Meyer sent in his great re-write of "Until Closing Time (Hey There Joe)", a country lament about drinking in a bar where the singer has many regrets. Everyone really liked Chris' serious editing (including a 6/8 from 4/4 tempo change). Comments were few and it was clear that Chris was successful with the time he invested – nice nice nice!

Scott Badger sent his song of an ending relationship, entitled "Let Me Go", which wonderfully described the singer's hurt feelings. Comments concerned some lyrical clarification and (again) Scott's totally heartfelt vocal. Several lyrical alternatives were offered for Scott to consider. Great work!

Greg Livingston and Amy Guentzel sent in a Halloween line-dancing song, entitled "Spooked By Luke", describing how family members are startled by one of the children. Great upbeat blues and vocals, there were very few comments for making it stronger. Y'all are on a roll – thanks for the trick *and* treat!

Mary Dawson wrote the music and lyrics for a wedding song, "Close To Your Heart", created for her daughter's wedding. This totally heartfelt song was from the parent's point of view and warmly described the joy of that day. The group really enjoyed this well-constructed song and no real changes were offered. Super work, Mary!

Long-missing Scott Joffe appeared and sent in his song “Next” an upbeat tune about a relationship break up. Beautifully sung by his daughter Susannah, this Dark Pop song was very well constructed and effectively described the overall lost feeling. A few lyrical suggestions were offered by the group. A real keeper, Scott – great work!

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 for free. Please send your lyrics (Word format, please) and your mp3 to Tara Heflin ([tara.incognito@gmail.com](mailto:tara.incognito@gmail.com)) before 4 pm (Central time) for the Salado and Austin meetings. You can send lyrics and your mp3 to Martha Gak at [Marthagak@hotmail.com](mailto:Marthagak@hotmail.com) before 4 pm (Central time) for the DFW meeting

We hope to see you on Monday, September 20th or sooner!