

Songsmith – Austin
December Critique Session
December 20, 2021

The Songsmith – Austin September Critique Session was held via Zoom (moderated by oh-so amazing Tara Heflin) from 7:11 pm to 9:46 pm on December 20, 2021. We had 13 Zoom attendees and heard eight amazing works in progress.

Joe challenged everyone to an optional writing challenge entitled “Festivus” – any song describing the fictional holiday (that appeared in a classic Seinfeld episode).

Accordingly, John Stearle improvised on the challenge with his song “Fartofus”, describing how a family name evolved over many years. John’s “gas-story” lesson was hysterical, filled with everything (and more) than you’d imagine. And great guitar strumming. Comments included a few structural and lyrical changes, as smell(!).

Kevin Mallory continued our session with his song “Deep Within” another Nirvana-style rocker dealing with depression and how the singer is dealing with it. With a great pre-chorus and stellar chorus, the listeners really enjoyed it. A few comments were made concerning the bridge lyrics, but, well done, Kevin – thanks!

Stewart Moser sent in his song “Dream Logic”, concerning dream fogginess where the singer’s creativity opens up and things are a bit askew, such as blue is red and red is blue. The prosody for this dream-like song was excellent and a few lyrical comments were shared by the listeners. Nice work, Stewart!

Joe Strouse also embraced the challenge with “Festivus” – a Greek chorus style song which incorporated the items in Frank Costanza’s creation. The group seemed to enjoy this ditty and heartily (and perhaps somewhat reluctantly) joined in on the chorus.

Greg Livingston and Amy Guentzel sent in their song, entitled “Rock On” a continuing Greg tune about Desiree and her quest for stardom. Their voices in this song really rocked on during the second half of the song where they shared great fun. A few comments included shortening the song. Fun or serious? Excellent, y’all!

Scott Badger sent his song, “Being There”, which beautifully described the singer’s anticipation of watching a partner (or child?) grown over time. Again, this song was very well constructed which the group enjoyed. Suggestions included the need for Scott to decide which relationship was best for the song and perhaps a bridge. Great work!

Scott Joffe sent his song “The Blade” which described a teen’s dealing with and recovery from cutting. This eye-opening song was beautifully crafted and very effective. Comments included a few challenging lyric suggestions for the bridge but was a heartbreaking address of this destructive habit. Wow, Scott – wonderfully done.

Leora Salo played her song “Journey To Mecca” a wonderfully-produced (and performed) song from her 2009 CD release **The Quiet Heart**, about pretentious

people and their shallow ideas toward attaining spirituality. Comments were very positive about this jazzy tune and few suggestions were offered – great, Leora – thanks!

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 for free. Please send your lyrics (Word format, please) and your mp3 to Tara Heflin (tara.incognito@gmail.com) before 4 pm (Central time).

We're looking for Zoom-knowledgeable volunteer to run the meeting (audio and visual) for the DFW meeting. If you're interested, please contact Mary Dawson @ Mary@MaryDawson.com.

We hope to see you on Monday, January 17, 2022 or sooner!