

Songsmith – Austin Monthly Critique Session Monday, March 18, 2019

The Songsmith – Austin Monthly Critique Session was held in the conference room of Congregation Beth Israel on Monday, March 18th from 7 to 9:30 pm. We had nine attendees and heard seven great works in progress.

We continued exploring songwriting metaphors by discussing metaphorical songs – including the metaphors within the Eagles' Hotel California.

John Stearle (and again, his stoic guest) started the session with a recording of his song "White Bread Girl", another in a series of songs for an upcoming play that John is developing. This humorous song described a first date/meeting between singles and her self-description. Great effects and the group provided a few lyrical comments. Keep going John!

Adrian Nye played guitar and sang "Armadillos" a description of Dallas-area folks driving their armadillos to work (a metaphor, indeed). This very funny song emphasized the over-the-top images of these rodents becoming our commuting transportation. Very well written – only a few comments were given. Great work, Adrian!

Stewart Moser played his latest song "Not A Care", a lament about people not being more active in issues (including friendliness). Stewart's chords, as usual, were most excellent. Suggestion from the listeners included some clarity to who was speaking and a possible change of the first and second verses. Most excellent, Stewart!

Greg Livingston played his song, co-written with Sean Van Zant, entitled "The Great Beyond" which described the singer's exhortations to the listening crowd to join in. This very anthem-like song had great movement, Sean's guitar work, and a memorable chorus. Comments included some minor lyric re-thinking as well as adding a bit more detail to the story. Great start, guys!

Joe Strouse brought "After The Circus Leaves Town", a metaphor for the breath of relief that ensues after adversity has passed. The group suggested some more detail and some other possibilities for what the circus could be.

Mary Dawson (yes -THAT Mary Dawson) played a recording of a song that was co-written by Peter Moon and Peggy Frank, entitled "Be Love", an optimistic tune about how the world could be made a better place. This Nashville-produced tune was enjoyable and the group's suggestions included rethinking the amount of title repetition (especially at the end of the song). Wonderful, Mary!

Greg Livingston played a recording of his song "Love Me Love Me Love Me", where the singer is attempting to attract another. Great energy and great chorus repetition in this song. The group clearly enjoyed it and offered several lyric, phrasing, and tempo suggestions – including a slight revision to the ending. Nice work Greg – thanks!

As always, the Songsmith - Austin monthly critique session meets on the third Monday of each month in the most excellent and spacious conference room at Congregation Beth Israel, 3901 Shoal Creek Blvd, Austin, TX 78756. It's located on Shoal Creek Blvd, just north of 38th Street (near Central Market, Seton Hospital, etc...), and just west of Lamar.

Our next session is Monday, April 15th. The holiday meetings continue - we hope you can join us!