

Songsmith – Austin
October Critique Session
October 16, 2023

The Songsmith – Austin October Critique Session was held via Zoom from 7:05 to 8:54 pm on October 16, 2023. We had 10 Zoom attendees and heard eight wonderful songs in various stages of creation. Another very interesting learning session, including the career of Joseph Pujol (see John Stearle’s masterpiece, discussed below) and the evolution of writing a song.

Chris Cavello submitted his song “The Seasons Shift”, in which the singer describes the anticipation of seasonal change. Chris really captured the feel of the stifling heat here in Texas, with great descriptions. And that cool Fmaj7 chord kept it interesting, too! Comments included a few minor and melodic lyric considerations - thanks, Chris!

John Stearle sent in “La Fartiste”, a very funny ode to Joseph Pujol (aka, Le Pétomane), a Frenchman who made a career out of his ability to control his abdominal muscles by farting songs (among other things). Everyone exclaimed that John was back in usual form with this song and no one suggested any changes. You go, John!

Greg Livingston and Amy Guentzel (GrAmy) provided yet another episode of their rock opera with a song entitled “How Will I Go On?”, a beautiful ballad to losing love. The group agreed that this song was beautifully done (with a very minor lyric suggestion for consistency) and almost evoked tears. Great work!

Joe Strouse emailed his co-write with Brent Allen, “A Heart That’s Not Afraid Of Breaking”, describing the singer’s fear of losing a new love. Comments were very positive and provided several excellent lyric suggestions.

Mitch Lobrovich submitted his song “My Friends”, describing the singer’s love for crazy friends. This draft had great descriptions, great rhymes and definitely had a group-singalong feel, like “Sweet Caroline”. There were several minor lyrical suggestions (including point of view). Super start, Mitch!

Stewart Moser send his song “Planted A Seed”, a clever metaphor for the previously unknown effects of a relationship. Cool chords (a Stewart hallmark) and great rhymes helped this song stand out well. Comments from the listeners included a very minor lyric consideration, but overall, another very well done song!

Kevin Mallory provided his song “Morning Light”, a grooving grunge-inspired tune about the singer’s relationship going south. With massively excellent descriptions, Kevin’s song pulled the listeners in quite well. Comments were few and included a minor melodic change to the chorus start. Outstanding, Kevin!

Chris “the man, the moderator” Meyer provided a cool revision of (from last month) and a bonus video of his work’s hip-hop song “Polycarbonate 70th Birthday Song”. Everyone enjoyed the revisions and seeing Chris’ co-workers from around the world in this video. Yes, a raise is due, Chris - thanks!

Joe briefly yammered about the overall songwriting process and embracing the changes that inevitably occur when creating a song. Let the song lead you down the path, don’t force it.

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 - always free – no dues, guilt, or other financial obligations.

As always, we’re looking for Zoom-knowledgeable maven 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.

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