

## **Songsmith – Austin Monthly Critique Session Monday, February 18, 2019**

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

We continued exploring songwriting metaphors with some additional exercises in colliding adverbs and adjectives, as well as nouns and verbs. Great results! We'll explore another metaphor exercise next month as well.

Wendy Lang (from Brisbane, Australia) sent lyrics and a copy of her song "Take Back The Night". This inspired tune was an anthem for women to feel safer at night, which relates to murders of women in Brisbane. Group comments included some minor re-arranging to make the anthem feeling stronger as well as some minor phrasing suggestions. Great start, Wendy!

Aaron Clift played his song "Dark Secrets" – a song about the singer dealing with relationship difficulties. The listeners really like this prog-rock tune and suggestions for making it stronger included some minor verse tweaking as well as minor lyric changes relating to the use of metaphors (!) in describing the difficulties. Super work, Aaron!

Stewart Moser played "Long Live The King", a lament to the passing of a leader, along with some samba-esque chords, which were, as usual, quite excellent. Comments from the group included a bit more clarification of the song's lyrics to help the listener understand/sympathize with the song's intent and message. Very thoughtful, Stewart!

John Evans played guitar on his song "Lost In A Dream", an inspirational song relating to a father's recent passing and the singer's spiritual relationship. This song was a beautiful tribute and the group offered several great comments concerning minor changes for the verse and the chorus. Definitely could tell that John had put a lot of work in this song – it's almost done!

John Stearle (and again, his stoic guest) brought his song "Baron's Song", another of a series of songs for an upcoming play that John is developing. This serious, yet humorous, song described a meeting place for singles and the angst related to meeting potential mates. Listeners provided a few lyrical comments to help make this one stronger. Go John, go!

Greg Livingston played his song "You Move Me" a song co-written with Sean Van Zant, which described love, in terms of diamond brilliance. Greg's very strong chorus and vocal (think Steve Perry) were super and comments included some minor lyric re-thinking (as well as a possibly different title). Great work, guys!

Newcomer Sean Van Zant played his song "Inside", a co-written (with Greg Livingston) lament about losing a relationship which, hopefully was for the better. Sean's guitar work was outstanding and the group's feedback was mainly related to a small amount of lyric clarification/story development and phrasing. Welcome, Sean!

Joe Strouse brought "Every Building on Sunset Strip", an ex-con's lament about how the Sunset Strip had changed while he was incarcerated. Comments included modifying the chorus a bit to relieve the repetition a bit and introducing the ex-con's circumstances.

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, March 18<sup>th</sup>. We hope you can join us!