

Songsmith – Austin  
May Critique Session  
May 20, 2024

The Songsmith – Austin Critique Session was held via Zoom from 7:10 to 9:11 pm on Monday, May 20, 2024, moderated by the perpetually able and creative Christopher Meyer. We had nine Zoom attendees and heard eight super songs in various stages of creation. Joe also talked about creating a new song from a written-out story.

Mitch Lobrovich started the session with his country song “Cabin In The Woods”, an ode to the singer’s love about love’s longevity in form of a metaphor. Very well done, with great descriptions, the listeners really liked the song and the ideas that Mitch presented. Suggestions were lyric-based and very helpful. Thanks, Mitch!

Michael Wesley Stinson brought his song, entitled “Last Everything”, which provided excellent descriptions about the early stages of falling in love. Michael’s bridge was especially compelling and comments included a potential opportunity to set the place earlier in the song, as well as a few effective lyric possibilities. Super, Michael!

Scott Badger sent a re-write of his song “What I Like About You”, which included a new (and effective) bridge. This outstanding song was a shy person’s appeal to a potential love interest and was well written with consistent use of descriptions and melody. Suggested possible changes were generally lyric-based. Thanks, Scott - another winner!

Stewart Moser sent in his song “Lucky”, an upbeat tune after deciding how to deal with the craziness in today’s world. Great chords, great rhymes (especially in the chorus) and very singable. Comments included a potential re-write for commercial use with a well-know aquatic rodent. Brilliant work, Stewart - thanks!

Joe Strouse sent his older-white-guy song-noir rap about solving a murder, “Looking For A Suspect”. Suggestions included fixing a continuity error (ha!) as well as some possible phrasing changes to the end of the song and the bridge.

John Sterile brought a tribute to a professional football player relative, entitled “Randy Gradishar Made It To The Hall”. This song celebrated Randy’s stellar career with the Denver Broncos and upcoming 2024 induction into the NFL’s Hall of Fame. Great work which his family (including Randy) will be proud to hear - super, John!

GrAmy sent their own surprise version of Joe Strouse's 2022 song "Recipe", a very suggestive jazz tune about cooking. Greg and Amy's slightly revised lyrics and voices really gave this song new dimensions and brought it to life. Suggestions were few and an overwhelmed Joe remarked that nothing needed changing. Wow - thanks, y'all!

Chris Meyer played an mp3 of his re-written and soon-to-be-professionally-produced song "Brighter Place (Hey Covestro)" written in conjunction with co-workers from Germany, China, and Japan. This song was very well done and the listeners can't wait to hear the final version so we could all say that we knew him when! Best wishes, Chris!

Finally, Joe talked a bit about creating a story and how to turn it into a song. Using this month's song as an example, Joe offered an optional song writing challenge with the following steps:

- 1) Spend no more than 20 minutes writing a story.
- 2) For the next 1 hour and 40 minutes: separate each line and read them out loud - a rhythm will emerge which you can use in your song. Additionally, a title will appear as will a chorus/refrain. Create an appropriate melody for the chorus and then, in the verses. Add a bridge if appropriate/needed.
- 3) Above all, stay open to changes/diversions from what you initially thought the song would be/sound like. Amazing things will happen!
- 4) Send it to Chris for next month's meeting.

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 - always free – no dues, guilt, or other 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](mailto:Mary@MaryDawson.com).

We hope to see (and not tax) you on Monday, June 17th, 2024 or sooner!