

Songsmith – Austin  
December 16, 2024 Critique Session

The Songsmith – Austin Critique Session was held via Zoom from 7:04 to 9:50 pm on Monday, December 16, 2024, moderated by jet-setting (and out-of-final-exams) Chris Meyer. We had 13 attendees and heard 13 most excellent songs in various stages of creation.

Kevin Mallory sent in his song “Rock And A Hard Place”, which described a difficult relationship and the singer’s dilemma. This well-written song (killer chorus!) got a few comments from the listeners relating to very minor changes to the verses. Great having you back, Kevin - thanks!

GrAmy sent in a revision to their song “Half A Heart Like Mine”, retitled as “Lost Pieces”, a beautiful duet about about overcoming loss and love. Everyone appreciated and commented on the great emotion and feeling in this song - especially Amy’s vocal echoes and made suggestions for raising the song’s tempo. Thanks!

Scott Badger provided the group with his AI-assisted (and December writing challenge) song “Dream Girl”, about a recurring dream (nightmare?) that the singer has. As usual, Scott’s production was excellent and suggestions included switching one of the verses with the chorus to make the song stronger. Thanks, Scott!

Mitch Lobrovich sent his jazzy song “Solo” describing the singer’s blind date with a potential mate. This song sounded like a Michael Franks tune and had excellent rhymes and melody. Comments included possibly changing the title to “Uncharted Waters”, as well as a few potential (minor) lyric considerations. Super work Mitch!

“Wile” Bill Basinski sent his song “Belch Burp Toot Tweep and Farp”, a serious tune disguised as a humorous one about the United States’ political system. Bill included (as usual) great visuals and one suggestion recommended a melodic rise on the chorus to help it stand out from the verses. Nice work, Bill!

Joe Strouse provided his December challenge song “Your Dragon” about how the singer’s love interest is protected by the singer in trying times. Comments included reworking the second verse to help the listener better understand what happened.

John Stearle didn't disappoint with his song "Peein' On Livestream" - describing a live interview with Vivek Ramaswamy and his subsequent bathroom trip, in which the mic was not turned off. Reminiscent of songs by Jonathan Richman, this was classic John (!) and listener suggestions included some very minor lyric changes. It's a splash, John!

Recent winner of the American Songwriter Magazine's Song of the Year, Michael R. J. Roth sent his co-write (with Harri Wolf and Katherine Bracken) entitled "Without Knowing The Night", describing overcoming love's challenges. This great song used wonderful metaphors. Beautifully written and everyone appreciated it. Thanks, Michael!

Gerald Lucas provided his AI-assisted song "Will I Ever Move On", a stunning country song about losing a loved one. The very effective chorus had everyone's attention and listeners agreed on its impact. Comments were minor, which included the song's length. So sorry for your loss, Gerald - thanks for the song.

Scott Joffe sent his song "Go", a song describing the singer reaching a point in life where an important decision needs to be made. The listeners liked this (as usual for Scott's songs) and minor suggestions were offered concerning the bridge (including whether it's needed or not). Great work, Scott - thanks!

Stewart Moser sent in his 1994 hit "Finally Got Your Blues", a paid-my-dues song featuring a friend providing stellar electric guitar solos. This rocker was a significant change for Stewart's usual singer-songwriter tunes and the group enjoyed this one as well. Great surprise, Stewart - thanks!

Mary Dawson sent in "Only Those" a Christmas song about rejoicing in the spiritual (and not material) moment of the season. This professionally-produced song was well done and comments from the group included some potential tempo changes in the chorus to keep the momentum going. Super, Mary - thanks!

Our moderator, Christopher Meyer, played a very cool demo of his co-write "Hey Covestro", recorded in a studio in Germany with his talented co-workers. Everyone has totally enjoyed hearing the excellent progress in this song - thanks, Chris!

Joe briefly discussed the creation and history of SEAHPLSACS (Seventeenth Ever Annual Holiday Pot Luck Snack and critique Session). Additionally, Joe challenged everyone to write a song from a title for next month. His example was "Stop Sign". The twist is that the writer should list two different things that the song could be about, then

the writer discards those and write it about a *third* thing. Not for the faint of heart, yet (as the name implies) a challenge, nonetheless.

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 person 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 you on Monday, January 20th, 2025 or sooner!