

Connecticut Songsmith

Newsletter of the Connecticut Songwriters Association



CSA is an educational, non-profit organization dedicated to improving the art and craft of original musical and lyrical composition. Serving music's artisans and craftsmen since 1979.



February 2009
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Combining Arts,
Education, and
Community Outreach

1979 - 2009 : 30 Years of Combining Arts, Education, and Community Outreach

WHAT ABOUT THE MUSIC ?

A workshop in basic techniques of music theory and composition

In Search of the Lost Chord

Have you ever found yourself searching for a chord to create a sound that you hear in your head, but you just can't find it? Do you find yourself using the same set of chords over and over for all your songs? Do you want to make an exciting transition to a bridge but can't find the way to get there?

The February CSA meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 10 7:15 pm at the Mystic Chamber of Commerce, 14 Holmes St. (directions on page 2)

The program will be presented by Bill Pere, recently named one of the "Top 50 Innovators and Guiding Lights of the Music Industry" by Music Connection Magazine. Bill is a formally trained musician, in all aspects of composition including arranging, chord structure, orchestration, and counterpoint. Bill has developed several basic techniques that anyone can use which do not require extensive musical knowledge. These will enable you to develop fresh chord progressions, musical transitions, melodic turns, rhythmic figures, and modulations. These strategies will work for guitar, keyboard, or any instrument.

This presentation has been given to many groups of professional music educators who have taken the techniques back to use in their classes.

This meeting is free to members, \$5 for non-members. See you there, and bring a friend!

CRITIQUE SESSIONS

Following the program, as time permits, there will be a critique session. To participate in the critique session, members may bring a song on CD (or do it live), with 20 copies of typed lyric sheets, and receive constructive feedback. Critique sessions are a good forum for works in progress or rough demos. For best feedback, note on your lyric sheets the intended genre and audience for your song, and what your goals are (i.e. picked up by a commercial artist, self-produce, etc.). The programs at most CSA monthly meetings are free to members, \$5 to non-members, applicable toward membership if you join within 30 days. Members are encouraged to bring a friend who might be interested in what CSA offers. .

SNOW ADVISORY: In the event of snow, please check the CSA website for up-to-date info on meeting status.

CSA EVENT CALENDAR

(for complete listing see www.ctsongs.com)

Feb 10	CSA Meeting -- Mystic Chamber of Commerce Music Theory Workshop
Mar 10	- CSA Meeting - Glastonbury
Mar 27-28	Singer-Songwriter Conference, Cape May NJ
Apr 11	- Annual C SA Collaboration Workshop - Mystic
May 09	Spring Pro Workshop - Marci Geller from NYC
Jun 09	CSA Meeting - Glastonbury YMCA
Jun 14	CSA Summer Showcase/Picnic - JB Williams Park
Jul 06	- CSA Meeting - Wesleyan Univ.
Aug 30	CSA Summer Showcase/Picnic - JB Williams Park
Sep	CSA Meeting -Glastonbury YMCA
Oct	CSA Meeting- Workshop
Oct	CSA Day of Praise Collaborative Performance
Nov 09	CSA Meeting - Wesleyan Univ.
Dec 5	13th Annual LUNCH Holiday Show - Stonington
Dec	TBA

Guiding Songs Along the Path from Creation to Realization to Proliferation

COMBINING ARTS, EDUCATION, AND COMMUNITY OUTREACH FOR 30 YEARS

DIRECTIONS TO MEETING LOCATION

**How to
Get There!**

DIRECTIONS FOR MEETING: Mystic Chamber of Commerce Conference Room (14 Holmes St) : Coming North on I-95, take Exit 89. Go right off the Exit onto Allyn St
Go about 2 miles and come to a light and the intersection of Rt 1. Turn left onto Rt 1 and go a short way to the 5-way intersection overlooking Main St, Mystic. Proceed down the Main Street of Mystic, across the drawbridge, to the flagpole (Holmes St). Turn left at the flagpole onto Holmes. Pass a few storefronts and you'll see a red brick building, #14 Holmes St. To park, turn right just before the brick building onto Church St, and park in the lot behind the brick building. The entrance for the Chamber of Commerce is at the far right as you face the rear of the building. Go down the corridor. The room is on the right. Coffee and Snacks available !

GET A TAX DEDUCTION FOR YOUR OLD STUFF !

If you have any old music or office equipment lying around or just old "stuff" that you don't need, consider donating it to CSA and you'll get a generous tax deduction !

CSA is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization and all items donated to us can be deducted at their maximum fair market value. We have helped many folks get nice deductions for their old items, which certainly can be useful to us either in our regular CSA programs or our community outreach programs through LUNCH.

We can use any office equipment and supplies, old computers, any type of music and studio equipment, and any type of item that could be used for auction or raffle. We'll provide a tax receipt that will give you the best possible tax-deduction.

If you have anything that you might like to donate, contact Bill Pere at bill@billpere.com

HAVE YOU GOTTEN A FRIEND TO JOIN CSA YET ? Make it a goal for 2008 to get at least one new person to become part of the CSA community ! **We need your help to spread the word !**

NEED A BARCODE UPC symbol for your CD ?



If you want to sell your CD's through retail outlets or through online stores like CD Baby or Amazon, a barcoded UPC is required. CSA can provide a unique number for your product that meets CD retailing requirements. No one else would have your UPC number (you need a different number for each different product you have). For a one time cost of \$20 per UPC, CSA will give you a number and a barcode (or you can use the number to make your own barcode). To obtain a barcode, send \$20 per UPC and your e-mail address to CSA, PO Box 511, Mystic CT 06355. You will receive your UPC via e-mail, or by regular mail if you prefer.

IN MARCH

The snowstorm in the northern half of the state on January 6 prevented lots of folks from coming to the January meeting. In response to the requests for another opportunity to attend the presentation on branding yourself and your music, we will give that presentation at the March meeting in Glastonbury, Tuesday March 17, 7:15pm at the YMCA.

CALLING ALL WRITERS

ANNOUNCING THE CSA 2009 COMPILATIONS

Get your songs in by October 31, 2009 to insure eligibility! *(after 10/31, contact us for status)*

CSA Compilation CDs have received radio airplay and are displayed at national conferences, and the digital downloads pay artist royalties.

- 1: **SONGS of SOCIAL RELEVANCE** - We're continuing to collect songs that address an issue of social importance -- hunger, homelessness, the environment, substance abuse, global warming..... This is your chance to speak out and be heard. TIP: Don't just write a song that preaches -- Make your point by showing it, not telling it.
- 2: **SPIRITUAL/INSPIRATIONAL SONGS** - Our 3rd collection in this very popular series. See our previous Spiritual/Inspirational collections "Share the Journey" and "Along the Road" for examples of songs that fit this category.
- 3: **HOLIDAY SONGS** - One of the favorite categories -- CSA has released four great holiday collections. The holidays keep coming, and so do the songs!
- 4: **GOOD OL' COUNTRY SONGS!** - Always popular, and there is no lack of good quality country songs in CSA. NOTE: Because of the many great CSA country songs, submission is not a guarantee of inclusion.

GUIDELINES

- At least one writer must be a current CSA member
- All songs must be professionally produced, up to 'radio-ready' standards.
- Social Relevance songs must address a specific topic and social issue, such as hunger, homelessness, substance abuse, the environment, global warming, etc...
- Spiritual Inspirational songs must be appropriate to the category. See examples on the previous CSA Compilations "Share the Journey" and "Along the Road".
- Songs for the Humorous/Novelty compilation must be appropriate for the theme of the collection. Songs should feature unusual topics, tongue-in-cheek lyrics designed to bring a smile to the listener, or to just present a totally whimsical idea or story.

Please specify for which CD Collection you are submitting.

- Any musical style is okay
- Submission is NOT a guarantee of acceptance. Songs will be selected based on :
 - Appropriateness to the theme
 - Song Crafting
 - Production Quality (must be professionally recorded and radio-ready)
 - Available space on the CD (if there are more acceptable submissions than can fit on the CD, those submitted earlier and those of shorter length will be given greater consideration.)
- Songs must not violate the terms of any third-party agreement (e.g. with a publisher). Unsigned songs are preferred. If a song is under contract to a publisher, a signed release from the publisher must be provided.
- Songs may not have been included on any previous CSA CD Compilation
- Submissions will not be returned.
- At CSA discretion, songs from the compilations may be made available for digital downloads, with royalties paid to the writers.

TO SUBMIT, PLEASE SEND THE FOLLOWING:

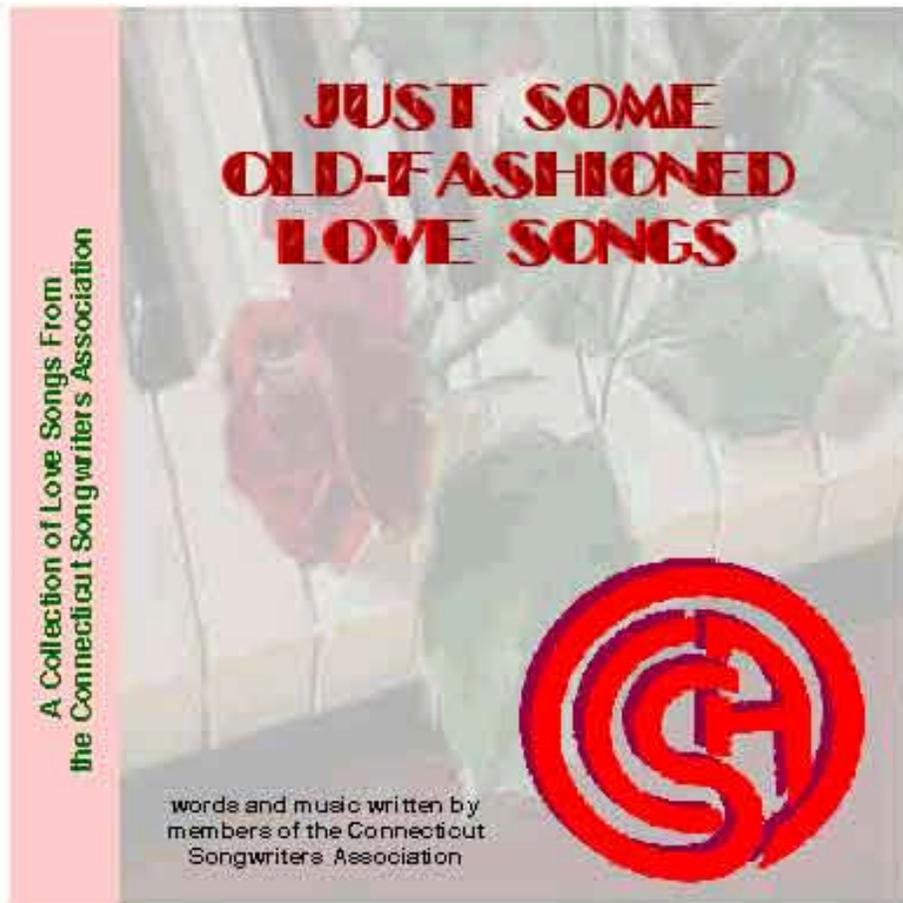
- A recording of the song on CD, suitable for duplication (put your name and contact info on the CD)
- Clearly indicate the TIME of the track, in minutes: seconds
- A lyric sheet (put your name and contact info on the lyric sheet)
- A signed release form, printed out from the CSA web site (www.ctsongs.com)
- A non-refundable one-time \$10 per song processing fee payable to CSA.
If you want your complementary copy to be mailed to you, please include \$2 for postage.
(there are no additional costs, whether a song is accepted for inclusion or not)

Send your recording, lyric sheet, release form, and \$10 (+ \$2 postage) to CSA, PO Box 511, Mystic CT 06355.

IF YOU HAVE A SONG which is not yet fully produced and you want to know if it acceptable for consideration before doing the production, you may bring it to a CSA critique session

CSA IS PROUD TO ANNOUNCE the 18th Release in our Compilation CD Series.

The Love Song Collection



Track List

1. Streets of L.A. 4:42 (*Ron Brault*)
2. Old Man 4:38 (*Bill Pere*)
3. I'll Believe in You 4:20 (*Linda Bonadies*)
4. Sandalwood (*Kay Pere*)
5. Black Sky 3:10 (*Gary Breton*)
6. The Truth 3:48 (*Bob Levy*)
7. The Trouble With Love 4:07 (*Paul McCarron/Bruce McDermott*)
8. My Old Fashion Girl 3:27 (*George LaFlame/E. Wellman*)
9. Seasons of Your Love 6:04 (*William J. Brennan*)
10. Meant To Be 5:50 (*George Tiff*)
11. I Haven't a Clue 4:21 (*Joseph Muscatello*)
12. This Is Your Wedding Day 2:35 (*John Tranghese*)

full details and ordering info at the [CSA Website](#).

GET YOUR SUBMISSIONS IN FOR THE 2009 CSA COMPILATIONS!

see page 4 for themes and details

THE UN-COMFORT ZONE with Robert Wilson

Deadlines Work

As I sit here writing this column against the deadline, I'm reminded of my days as a young advertising copywriter when I occasionally needed a deadline as motivation to finish a boring project. The deadline did more than motivate me to finish -- more often than not, it was what finally stimulated enough creative thinking to move me forward -- in other words, it motivated me to think outside of the box.

"Thinking outside of the box." Boy, has that phrase become overused. People are so often telling us that we need to think outside of the box that it has fallen into the realm of cliché. Never-the-less it is still true. Sometimes, however, we need to be put into a box first before we can think outside of it. A deadline is just such a box.

I used to believe that the more freedom I had, the more creative I could be. But it doesn't necessarily work that way. Ingenuity needs to be motivated by something, and if the desire to achieve isn't there, then an uncomfortable boundary may work.

Have you ever watched a man or a woman with one leg running a marathon or competing in downhill snow skiing? I have, and every time I'm deeply impressed because I have both of my legs and I can't do either one. I used to wonder why they were able to do so much more than me when I was the one born with the greater advantage. Now I can see that the difference is that they were challenged by a boundary and I wasn't. Some of them might even argue that they were the ones born with the greater advantage. Being unable to walk made them uncomfortable, and conquering their disability became a powerful motivating factor. They had to get out of that box!

Think of creativity as a prisoner trying to bust out of jail. When your resources and opportunities are limited you must become innovative. A good illustration of this is the World War II movie *The Great Escape*. It is an amazing tale of ingenuity. Men with little to work with escape from a German POW camp. In addition to digging three tunnels without shovels, they made hand drawn traveling documents and identification papers that looked authentic enough to pass for ones made on a printing press. Now that was a box to get out of!

I have enjoyed working for myself most of my adult life. People frequently tell me they wish they could be self-employed like I am. They say things like, "If I could just get one client then I could quit my job." My response is always the same, "Until you quit your job, you are never going to find that first client. There is nothing like the deadline of a rent or mortgage payment staring you down at the end of the month to motivate you to get out and look for clients."

Everyone works under some kind of deadline. They force us to prioritize our responsibilities; they limit procrastination; and they help us achieve our work related goals. But, we often lack them in our private lives. We are not given deadlines to accomplish our most important personal goals and without those boundaries procrastination can creep in and destroy our best intentions. The trick is to impose a deadline on yourself. But it has to have some teeth to work.

Here's how to do it: Write down your goal. Then set a reasonable date in which you can achieve it. Next, go to your bank or attorney and set up an escrow account. Now add the teeth -- put into the account an amount of money that will hurt to lose: \$1,000... \$10,000... \$100,000... you decide! Set it up so that if you haven't achieved your goal by the deadline then the funds go to a favorite charity... or make it even more motivating: let the funds go to your worst enemy!

Not ready to try that? Then try the buddy system. Pair up with a friend and each of you take responsibility to follow up on the other one. You can get together once a week and check on each other's progress. If goals aren't being met, then nag each other into the UnComfort Zone!

Robert Evans Wilson, Jr. is a motivational speaker and humorist. He works with companies that want to be more competitive and with people who want to think like innovators. For more information on Robert's programs please visit www.jumpstartyourmeeting.com.

SONGCRAFTERS COLORING BOOK

The Metric System...For Songwriters

by Bill Pere

One of the most important and often overlooked aspects of lyric crafting is metrics. Metrics deals with the patterns and alignments of syllables and accents in a lyric, and their overall alignment with the musical rhythm (also called prosody). It is this latter element which differentiates song lyrics from poetry. Poetry does not have to contend with aligning accents to an independently moving rhythmic entity, and in that respect, a song lyricist is working under a more complex set of constraints than a poet.

There are three distinct elements to consider when shaping the meter of a lyric, and this fact is sometimes simplified by writers and publishers by reducing metrics to an exercise of counting syllables, believing that if the number of syllables of equivalent lines in all the verses matches, then the meter is correct. This is quite untrue, and we will now examine in detail the reasons why.

What is a lyric? It is the expression of a well-focused idea or concept using clear but colorful language. The key word here is language. Language is the medium through which most communication occurs. If the music were totally removed from a lyric and it were simply read, the meaning should still be clear to the listener. This is the prime consideration in crafting any lyric for any songwriter who has something they wish to share with others.

Once you've carefully chosen your words to effectively express your idea, then you must turn your attention to the meter, which will either enhance or diminish the impact of your words. Language, when normally spoken, has a distinct pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables, called *arses* and *theses*, the combination of which is called a *cadence*. For example, in English, multisyllabic words have accents falling mostly on the first syllable, but there is a lot of variation. Some other languages, like Italian, the second syllable is most consistently accented, and in French, it is always the final syllable. Each language has a natural rhythm inherent to it. The process of fitting words to music (prosody) introduces a new rhythmic element. If the music's rhythm forces the natural rhythm of the language to deviate from its normal spoken cadence, then an awkward, unnatural feeling is created and the meaning gets lost as the listener must work extra hard to compensate for the unexpected sounds. Fitting language to music and retaining a natural cadence involves blending three things:

1] The **Syllable Accent**, or where the accent occurs in a given word. For example, in the word 'happily' the accent is on the first syllable, thus the word has an rhythmic pattern of LOUD-soft-soft (this pattern is called a 'dactyl'). An accent forced to fall on the wrong syllable of a word is called a wrenched accent, and usually stands out negatively in a lyric (unless you want to be humorous). A wrenched accent may be sufficient cause for a publisher to pass on what might otherwise be a good song, until the offending line is rewritten.

2] The **Rhetorical Accent**, or which words in a sentence are accented. For example, in the sentence "He didn't drink his beer today", if you just read it in a normal fashion, you would probably tend to put a stress on the words "didn't" and "beer". Now try reading the sentence several times with the stresses on different words:

- a. HE didn't drink his beer today.
- b. He DIDN'T drink his beer today.
- c. He didn't DRINK his beer today.
- d. He didn't drink HIS beer today.
- e. He didn't drink his BEER today.
- f. He didn't drink his beer TODAY.

Notice that though it is the same sentence, the meaning is different each time as the accent shifts, and it greatly affects what you expect to hear as a followup sentence. In example (a) above, it is implied that the important aspect of the sentence is the idea that somebody did in fact drink some specific beer, but it wasn't 'him'. Example (c) suggests that he did do something with his beer today, other than drink it. Example (d) tells us that he probably did drink beer today, but it was somebody else's, not his. Thus you can see how immensely important the rhetorical accent is in a lyric. Having the accent fall on the wrong word can totally alter your meaning.

3] The **Musical Accent**, or which of the musical beats are emphasized. Musical rhythm is an essential element of a song, and is the dominant factor in pulling the listener's sense of forward motion along through time. Note that this does not mean only the rhythm of the drums. The melody to which the lyrics are being sung has an inherent rhythm, which, because it is carrying the lyric, is as important as the percussive rhythm. Every song has a basic pulse or 'time base', which is usually a quarter note, and which serves as the basic unit for counting 'beats'. Each pulse may be divided into two or three sub-units, which in turn may be divided into quicker groups of two or three. It is these subdivisions that give the song its 'feel' and it is the loudness of some subdivisions relative to others that determines the musical accents. If all accents fall on the first subdivisions of each pulse, then you have a regular, steady rhythm. If they fall on a second (or third) subdivision, then you have syncopation.

To preserve the meaning and effectiveness of your lyric, you must be absolutely sure that the syllable accent AND the rhetorical accent AND the musical accent are ALL aligned on the same beats in the song, and it must be consistent from verse to verse. This is one of the primary skills of a song crafter.

Now where does syllable counting fit in? As stated above, a common error about metrics is the belief that equal numbers of syllables in equivalent lines means perfect meter. This may be true in certain poetry forms, but the problem with this in song lyrics is that it does not in any way insure that the three types of accents will be properly lined up. Let's look at some examples. Consider these two lines as if they were the first line of verse#1 and the first line of verse#2:

Verse 1) Sitting on a rotten stump...
 Verse 2) Umbrellas fall and make a thump...

If you just read them, they seem to flow naturally, with no misplaced accents. However, in counting syllables, we find that the first line has 7 syllables, and the second line has 8. Now suppose we adjust the second line to have 7 syllables, as the first line does. We could have:

Verse 1) Sitting on a rotten stump...
 Verse 2) Umbrellas fall and go thump...

Now both lines have the same number of syllables, but something sounds wrong with the flow of the words. The only way to really understand what's happening is to take a look at the alignment of accents. First, let's forget about any music, and look at the syllable and rhetorical accents for this second version. Normal speech would give us:

SIT ting ON a ROT ten STUMP
 um BREL las FALL and GO THUMP

From this, it is clear that the problem is caused by the fact that there are SIX non-matching accents. Thus, even though the syllable counts match up, the meter is way off, and it is a poor lyric. Musically, since these are equivalent lines, one being the first line of verse#1, and the other being the first line of verse#2, it would mean either that these two lines would have to be sung to the same music, which would make one of them have three wrenched accents or they would have to be sung to rhythmically different music, which is not done on equivalent lines of verses. Clearly, this is a hopeless situation.

Why then does the original example, with 7 syllables in the first line and 8 in the second line work? Let's look at the alignment of the syllable, rhetorical, and musical accents:

4 + 1 + 2 + 3 + 4

 SIT ting ON a ROT ten STUMP
 um BREL las FALL and MAKE a THUMP

The reason that the different syllable counts work properly is that the extra syllable in the second line is shifted to occur one subdivision before the down beat. This is called an 'anacrusis'. Shifting syllables to occur before the down beat is one common technique for bringing accents into alignment when the syllable count does not match. Here, all the natural language accents match up with the 'beats', i.e., the first division of each group of two. If any of the accented words or syllables fell on one of the second subdivisions, (the '+' sign), this would create a syncopation. Putting a musical accent on a normally unaccented pulse is a very effective musical tool, provided it does not cause conflict with the lyrical meter.

While anacrusis is extremely common in song lyrics, there is a potential drawback. On a lead sheet, where the lyrics are aligned with the music, one can 'see' an anacrusis, but on a lyric sheet, the anacrusis is not readily visible, and it becomes easy for the reader of the lyric sheet to begin reading the line with the wrong accents, creating the impression that the lyric is awkward. This becomes particularly important if you are submitting a lyric sheet to a lyric competition or for a lyric analysis. One way to remove this problem is to actually align the downbeats when you type a lyric sheet so that any anacrusis is offset to the left. This helps clarify the metrical structure of your lyrics, but if you have too many anacruses, then the lyric sheet might start to look messy. You'll have to find a point of balance.

There is yet another variation of the 'lyric sheet' problem. Let's look at some lines from the international hit "Who Will Answer?" (Sunbury Music, Inc, ASCAP) written by Sheila Davis, author of "The Craft of Lyric Writing".

Syllables

(VERSE A)

From the canyons of the mind (7)
We wander on and stumble blindly (9)
Through the often tangled maze (7)
Of Starless nights and sunless days... (8)

(VERSE B)

Side by side two people stand (7)
Together vowing hand in hand (8)
That love's embedded in their hearts (8)
But soon an empty feeling starts...(8)

As you can see, the syllable counts for lines 2 and 3 do not match between the two verses. Does this mean we have a poorly crafted lyric and we should throw out this hit song? Of course not. If you line the words up according to accents, everything matches perfectly; syllable, rhetorical, and musical. When written as just lyrics, without musical measures, there is no way to see that the 'ly' of the word 'blindly' is really the first syllable of the third line, and not the last syllable of the second line (in fact, there is a two-syllable rhyme, i.e., 'mind we' with 'blindly'). In writing just a lyric sheet, you can't very well start a line with "-ly". You can help this situation by spacing out the lyrics a bit to help align the rhymes and matching accents wherever possible, as shown in the above example. Again, you must balance it with the overall appearance of the lyric sheet. Note that in just reading the lyrics from "Who Will Answer?", they tend to flow well, unlike the situation we discussed when an anacrusis is read with a wrong accent. There is a clear difference of which you should be aware. There are two general types of lyrics, *end-stopped*, (*Enjambéd*) and *non end-stopped* (*non-enjambéd*).

End-stopped lyrics use the technique of enjambment which means that each individual line has a meaning complete unto itself, and can stand alone as a thought, i.e., they are 'stopped' at the end. Non-end-stopped lyrics carry a single thought through more than one line (they are not 'stopped' at the end) and thus an individual line does not stand alone as a meaningful unit. Because in normal speech, we tend to pause between one complete thought and another, while we do not pause in the middle of a thought, end-stopped lyrics usually have a few musical beats between the end of one line and the start of the next, and it is here that anacruses will be inserted. Non-end-stopped lyrics, as are used in the verses of "Who Will Answer?" tend to have less open space between lines and thus the connection of a line with the previous line becomes a focal point in determining accent alignment and syllabication. While it is certainly possible to have a few beats of rests between the lines of a non end-stopped lyric, it essential that they don't cause the continued thought to become disjointed. Being mindful of the distinction between lyric lines that do and do not use enjambment can help you better analyze your own lyrics, those of other writers, and to design lyric sheets that will cause the least amount of confusion for the reader.

Of course, the best solution is to try to see if you can design the lyric to have matching syllable counts as well as matching accents, but that is an extremely difficult task if the lyric has any degree of complexity to it and if words of more than two syllables appear frequently. Words of three or more syllables will have accent patterns which tend to force the rest of the line to work around them. There is nothing wrong with this and in fact, effective use of longer words makes very colorful lyrics, but it means you have to work harder to make them fit. (For an excellent example of finely crafted lyrics using multisyllables and complex accents patterns, listen to "Ironbound" by Suzanne Vega).

Continuing with our 'umbrella' example, there are two approaches to adjusting the syllable count: remove a syllable from the second line, or add a syllable to the first line. This could give us:

1 + 2 + 3 + 4
SIT ting ON a ROT ten STUMP
SOME um BREL las FALL and THUMP

or

+ 1 + 2 + 3 + 4
while SIT ting ON a ROT ten STUMP
um BREL las FALL and MAKE a THUMP

These are now perfect in syllable count and accent alignment, but do they subtly alter what you want to say, or are they still true to your intended meaning? That is for you decide on a case-by-case basis, remembering that the effective expression of your meaning is the primary consideration, followed closely by accent alignment as the next consideration. Syllable count is at best, third on the priority list.

An examination of many classic hit songs shows endless examples of corresponding lines in verses with differing numbers of syllables. Some examples would be "The Gambler", "The Rose", "Summertime", "You Light Up My Life", and many more. However, in all cases where the syllables don't match, the accents are in fact perfectly aligned. One must always be careful in citing examples from hit songs. All rules have exceptions, and it is important to make sure that you are not citing exceptions to the rule, instead of the rule itself. For example, there are hit songs which have wrenched accents. Two famous examples are "You Are the Sunshine of My Life" by Stevie Wonder, i.e.,

(verse1) Though I've LOVED you f or a MIL-lion YEARS
(verse2) Be cause you CAME to MY res- CUE

And a couplet from 'Sounds of Silence', by Paul Simon. i.e.,

Be CAUSE a VIS- ion soft-LY creep-ING
LEFT its SEEDS while i WAS sleep-ING

This does not mean it's okay to use wrenched accents. A new writer who is trying to land a first contract or establish a track record cannot afford to take the liberties that an established writer like Stevie Wonder or Paul Simon can, without increasing the risk of rejection. And even in the two examples cited here, there is a significant difference. In the "Sounds of Silence", the wrenched accents are there because of a musical syncopation, and the two lines have matching wrenched accents, thus it was clearly a conscious decision on the part of the writer, and not a matter of lazy lyric writing. In the Stevie Wonder example, there is no musical or lyrical reason for putting the accent in the wrong place on the word 'rescue'. The line could have been reworked.

There is yet another significant consideration in the area of lyrical metrics, and this is "White Space", or the empty space between words. That topic is addressed in a separate Songcrafters"; Coloring Book article.

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Bill Pere is an internationally published writer of songcrafting articles, and author of "Songcrafters' Coloring Book: The Essential Guide to Effective and Successful Songwriting". He is named by Music Connection Magazine as on of the Top 50 Innovators, Groundbreakers, and Guiding Lights of the Music Industry, and is the 2003 IMC Indie Artist of the Year. Bill has released 15 CD's, teaches national songwriting workshops and is Director of the Connecticut Songwriting Academy. Bill is an Official Connecticut State Troubadour, and is the Founder and Executive Director of the LUNCH Ensemble (www.lunchensemble.com). Twice named Connecticut Songwriter of the Year, Bill is MBTI qualified, a member of CMEA and MENC, and helps develop young talent in songwriting, performing, and learning about the music business. Visit www.billpere.com for more songwriting articles.

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MUSIC THEORY WORKSHOP BONUS

The Circle of 5ths, Scales, & Intervals

(from Songcrafters Coloring Book, by Bill Pare)

