

# Connecticut Songsmith

Newsletter of the Connecticut  
Songwriters Association



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Combining Arts,  
Education, and  
Community Outreach

## 1979-2014 : 35 Years of Combining Arts, Education, and Community Outreach

### SONG DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP

The CSA meeting for June will be Tuesday, June 10 7:15pm, at the Glastonbury YMCA (Welles St. at Fox Run Mall) directions on pg 2

In the Fall, we will be having a top industry pro come to listen to your songs. Before then, it is good to think about what you might want to present, and get some feedback before it is heard by the pros.

At a song development workshop, you can present your song (live or on CD) and get extended, in-depth constructive feedback. CSA song critiques are considered among the best in the industry

Bring your works in progress or any song you wish to the June meeting and get in-depth constructive feedback. This can help you decide what to present at the September Pro-Workshop.

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

### GET INVOLVED !

Success comes from opportunity.  
Opportunity comes from involvement. Get involved

### CRITIQUE SESSIONS

Following regular CSA programs, 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 15 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, except for special workshops, are free to members, \$10 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.

### EVENT CALENDAR

(for complete listing see [www.ctsongs.com](http://www.ctsongs.com))

June 10 – CSA Meeting, Glastonbury  
July – Annual Performance/Picnic  
Sept 9 – CSA Meeting, Glastonbury  
Sept 13 – PRO Workshop with one of the top industry pros of all time! SAVE THIS DATE!  
October 14 – TBD  
October – Annual IMC Conference, Los Angeles  
November 11- CSA Meeting, Glastonbury  
Dec 06 – 18th Annual LUNCH Holiday Show to benefit local social services

### PLAN AHEAD!

#### CSA 2015 SONGWRITING RETREAT

**Don't Miss Out.**

Every CSA retreat has been an amazing weekend, again eliciting descriptions of "Life-Changing" and "Inspiring". If you missed out get on the list for April 10-12 2015

[WWW.CTSONGS.COM](http://WWW.CTSONGS.COM)

**GIVE YOUR SONGWRITING A JUMP-START AND GET ON THE FAST-TRACK!**

Guiding Artists Along the Path from Creation to Realization to Proliferation

# CSA RHYTHM AND NEWS

## Directions to Glastonbury YMCA (Welles St.) : From I-91 going north or south:

Take Exit 25 over the CT River onto Route 3 to Glastonbury. Bear right onto Route 2 towards Norwich. Take Exit 8 (Hebron Av.) off Route 2 and go right at the late onto Hebron Av. Go right at the next light which is New London Turnpike. Take first left (Welles St.) and a quick right into the Fox Run Mall. Go straight, park anywhere and look for CSA signs near People's Bank.

**From I-84 east or west:** Take Exit 55 onto Route 2 towards Glastonbury to Exit 8. See above. **From Norwich / New London area:** Take Route 2 to Exit 8 in Glastonbury and go right and a quick left onto Hebron Av. Go 2 lights to New London Tpke. See above

How to  
Get There!

## CSA MEMBER HAPPENINGS



CSA's Kay Pere and Vanessa Lewis were in attendance at the breakfast to benefit Safe Futures, an agency provided essential services for women in need of a safe haven.

These two writers have penned many poignant songs about the highs and lows of relationships.

Kay is a blog contributor to "The Purple Song Project" on Facebook, a resource started by Vanessa.

Coming in next issue: Photos from the West Coast

## COMING UP IN JULY

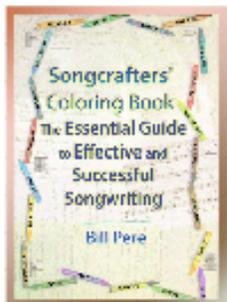
The Annual PICNIC/JAM/SONGSHARE  
hosted by CSA member John Pytel

See details in the July Newsletter.

# CSA SONGWRITING RETREAT

FAST-TRACK  
YOUR  
CAREER!

What others have said:  
"Life-Changing! "A Transformative Experience!"  
"You've given me a whole new way to approach songwriting"  
**REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN- LIMITED TO JUST 12 SLOTS**  
**Slots are going - Reserve your spot now!**  
**Take control of your creative process!**  
**Take your songwriting to a new level!**  
Get several years worth of CSA knowledge and experience in one weekend!  
You'll see songwriting in a whole new way and  
discover a level of creative control you never thought possible.



**April 10-12 2015, at Camp Wightman, North Stonington, CT**  
A time away from the distractions of everyday life, where all you have to think about is your music. A beautiful setting in the woods, with meals and lodging provided, and a group size limited to 12. You'll get personalized attention guaranteed to give you new ways to improve the effectiveness of your writing, and bring it to a new level.

**Artists from 12 states and 3000 miles have come to this retreat. It has been called "Transformative", "Life-Changing", and "Inspiring!"**  
**Folks have even come from Canada!**  
**REGISTER NOW! DON'T BE LEFT OUT!**

This program of Master Classes, performance and critique, is based on the concepts of Bill Pere's internationally acclaimed songwriting book, "Songcrafters' Coloring Book", and led by Bill and Kay. This content, presented nationally at major conference events, is not available anywhere else at this affordable cost. All the details about the program, the facilities, schedule and registration are online at:  
<http://www.ctsongs.com/Retreat/SongwritingRetreat.htm>

**See what others have said -- Check photos /reviews of the last retreat at the CSA website**

The program is limited to 12 participants. The earlier you register, the lower the cost, and it guarantees your spot. **The cost includes meals, lodging, and all workshops.**

*(Note: If you have to arrive late or leave early, we cannot make cost adjustments).*  
Register by: Member rate is for active **members of CSA, RISA, Songsalive, IndieGrrl, IMC**

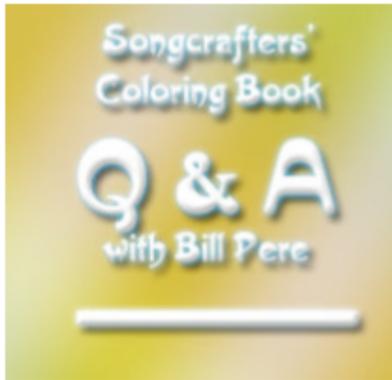
(Before Nov 1, 2014)	Member Rate = \$149	Non-member = \$169
(Nov 1 - Feb 28, 2015)	Member Rate = \$169	Non-member = \$189
(After Mar 1, 2015)	Member Rate = \$179	Non Member = \$199

**MEALS AND  
LODGING  
INCLUDED !**

- Two ways to Register, for your maximum convenience and security:
1. PAYPAL SECURE REGISTRATION ONLINE ([www.ctsongs.com](http://www.ctsongs.com))
  2. BY MAIL: Send check or Money Order payable to CSA, PO Box 511, Mystic CT 06355 (Include your e-mail address, phone number, street address, and member ID # (if a member of CSA, RISA, IndieGrrl, Songsalive, IMC))

**QUESTIONS ? Check the Website [www.ctsongs.com](http://www.ctsongs.com) for FAQ Info, photos, and reviews**  
If you don't find what you need, e-mail us at [retreat@ctsongwriting.com](mailto:retreat@ctsongwriting.com)

**NEXT YEAR -- APRIL 10-12, 2015 -- THE CSA SONGWRITING RETREAT --  
IF YOU THINK YOU'D LIKE TO BE PART OF THIS AMAZING EXPERIENCE, REGISTER NOW SO  
YOU'LL GET A GUARANTTED SPOT AND THE LOWEST RATE.**



*Q and A with Bill Pere*

## Real Questions that I Receive from Across the U.S. and Abroad.

**QUESTION:** What factors are involved in getting music transcribed into standard notation and why does it seem to cost so much to have someone do it ?

**ANSWER:** Among the many tasks related to getting a song from the writer's head out into the world so that it is accessible to others, is the process of transcription i.e., capturing the music in standard music notation.

Transcribing music is generally the most time consuming and labor intensive task in the music world. What things do you need to think about when you are looking for someone to transcribe your work and how do you know what constitutes a reasonable cost?

I've been doing transcription for clients for decades and one thing has become very clear -- the key for both the client and the service provider is for the client to do as much up front, pre-work as possible to facilitate what needs to be done by the service provider. Many clients simply provide a voice-only recording or a very rough recording and want the transcription done from that. However, a properly prepared submission for transcription can cost 60% less and be done faster and more accurately than having to try to transcribe notes off a less-than-perfect vocal-only recording.

Here are some considerations and options to consider:

A transcription project has two phases --- (a) the Pre-Work, and (b) the actual transcribing. The pre-work, if done properly, makes the transcription proceed much faster, more accurately, and at much lower cost.

The Pre-Work itself has 2 parts:

**PART 1 -- Information to provide to the service-provider:**

- A list of the songs to be transcribed, by title.
- Each song should be a stand-alone mp3 file, (preferable to a .wav file for economy of space, processing, and portability) with the name of the file reflecting the title of the song.
- Do not put multiple songs in one file (I recently had a client who gave me one file containing 26 separate songs!).
- Specify the final key that the song will be in for the intended singer(s), and the starting note and whether it is to be sung by soprano, alto, tenor, bass or kids, so that the notes will be in the proper octave.
- Provide a lyric sheet for each song, showing the verse/chorus/bridge sections, with intros/outros, if any.

If the song already has chords, it is very helpful to have a chord chart as well, as that serves as a check against the accuracy of the pitches.

-- Specification of the MM marking for each song (bpm).

-- Specification of the writing credits for each song (words and music) and how the page-one copyright notice should appear.

-- Specify the format in which you need the final sheet music (Finale file, PDF file, Midi file, hardcopy?)  
If you are going to do subsequent editing to make changes/corrections and add chords, you'll need an editable file format that is compatible with what you use. ( Finale files will also go into Sibelius and any Midi program). Once you have the files in an editable form. you can use your own software to transpose as needed, add accompaniment parts, adjust lyrics, etc.

## **PART 2 -- The submission file:**

The second part of the pre-work involves making it as easy as possible for the transcriber to get the notes from the recording to notation on the page. The more things the transcriber has to do to figure out what is accurate, the longer it takes and the more it will cost.

Typically with a rough unaccompanied vocal and no chord and key indications, some of the notes are not exactly on pitch and there is some ambiguity as to what is really intended (unless you have a really great pitch-perfect singer). Also, some of the words may not be clear. In the absence of a steady rhythm track (or at least a click track) some rhythmic cadences can become fuzzy. It should be made clear to what level you want rhythmic precision -- do you want every syncopation, note length, and variation of cadence notated, or do you want it laid out "straight" with the understanding that a vocalist may make interpretive adjustments -- or a combination?

When all those things are not specified, the extra work required by the service-provider significantly adds to the cost and usually prices a transcription out of most budgets.

If you are submitting a file for transcription, the best thing you can do to give you lowest cost and highest accuracy is for you to play the melody into a Midi file via keyboard, in time with a rhythm track (use bars/beats/ticks with quantizing rather than SMPTE). You can edit it and quantize to get it exactly right, and this then can be taken directly into Finale for final formatting and all the pitches will be accurate. It saves lots of work and cost by the service provider while insuring accuracy. Any software that can save a standard midi file (.smf or .mid) can work. Lots of clients use Band-in-a-Box to make their initial Midi files for subsequent transcription and production, which can then be done through Finale, Sibelius, Digital Performer, etc. The correct quantization is essential.

If you create a standard midi file, it can then be e-mailed along with your lyric sheet and instructions.

Alternatively, if you are not sure how to do Midi file input with proper quantization, but can play your melody on keyboard you can come to the studio where you want the transcription done, and play/it direct into their system. That way, you can do many songs for the cost of one studio session which would be the most cost effective and time effective way. That provides the best possible pre-work preparation so that the transcription will be done at the lowest additional cost.

Bottom line -- transcription is a time-consuming professional service, so the best thing you can do to lower your cost, speed the process, and insure accuracy, is to do as much of the above pre-work and file-prep yourself.

--- *Bill Pere*

## Good Stuff also Comes in Threes

A few years ago I was surfing the internet on a Friday afternoon when I discovered a contest asking amateurs to make TV commercials for a famous ketchup brand. The prize was several thousand dollars and your commercial would actually run on television. Instantly I had an idea for a romantic comedy in which ketchup brought two young lovers together. Romance was on my mind; I had recently started dating someone with whom I was very interested.

Then I read the rules, and swore, "Darn it; the deadline is three days from now!"

In order to make a commercial and enter the contest, I had to get a videographer, a video editor, an actor, an actress, and a place to shoot the video. Plus, I had to write a script that would squeeze into 30 seconds. Then we had to rehearse, shoot, edit, then upload it to a website on the internet.

The idea was too fun to waste. I could see it perfectly in my head. In a diner, a woman walks over to a table where a single guy is having his lunch. She asks to borrow his mustard and as she reaches for it, he grabs her hand and says in flirtatious way, "You didn't come here for mustard; you came for something else."

Responding in kind, the woman says, "And, what would that be?"

"The ketchup," he says impishly, then squirts some into the palm of her hand and starts dipping French Fries into it.

The woman is shocked and exclaims, "When you let go, you're going to get a face full of ketchup!"

The man smiles and offers her a fry. She then picks up the bottle and squeezes her phone number in ketchup across his arm. She then walking away she says, "Better not let that run!"

An announcer then assures the viewer that this ketchup never runs.

I could feel the creative juices flowing in me, and I was determined to make this commercial. I got on the phone, and was immediately able to kill two birds with one stone by calling my cousin Caroline. She used to be a wedding videographer and now owns a restaurant. She loved the idea and was in. She then recommended a video editor. I called Ivan, and he was in. It took the rest of that day and all of the next to find an actor and actress. In the end, Ivan knew an attractive couple that acted. I called Ed and Shana and they jumped on board. In between phone calls I wrote the script.

We all got together the next morning. We spent the first half of the day shooting, and the second half editing from all the takes. We were finished by dinner time with hours to spare before the midnight deadline.

I've encapsulated the events, but for three days I was bursting with creative energy and it felt fabulous. I recall that weekend as the beginning of a long run of creativity, success and joy. I was in thrall to romantic love, and the overflowing energy from it was driving me to create some exciting new speeches and seminars for my business, which in turn was bringing me increased prosperity.

"Love me and the world is mine," wrote lyricist David Reed in 1906. He is right because when we are in love and that love is returned, we have a foundation of comfort and confidence from which we can innovate and build. When Abraham Maslow developed his Hierarchy of Human Motivation, he placed love on the third tier or right in the middle. I know it would be hard to think about love when you're cold and hungry, nevertheless, I'm thinking maybe it should be first - right there on the bottom supporting everything else.

Psychologist and author Gay Hendricks says that when we expand in love we also expand in creativity and success - the three rise together. I've certainly experienced that, and for me, romantic love might just be the most important motivator of all. Bring it on!

NOTE: YouTube link for the above mentioned TV commercial:

[Heinz Gettin Lucky](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BDWeW0RZD3E) (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BDWeW0RZD3E>)

**SONG CRITIQUES** Members may bring a song or lyric on CD (or do it live) to the monthly meeting for critiquing by fellow members. Please bring 20 copies of typed lyric sheet. Out-of-State members may have their songs or lyrics critiqued by sending one submission with 20 typed copies of lyrics to: CSA, PO Box 511, Mystic CT 06355. Include an e-mail address or a double stamped return envelope. Please note that since critiquing is designed to give constructive feedback and suggestions for improvement, songs which are meant only to be shared for self expression (as opposed to critiqued for improvement) should not be submitted. These can be presented in songsharing opportunities.

**Questions about CSA Programs? Need To check your Membership status? Have a news item to submit? Want to volunteer for a project? Seeking a collaborator? Change of Address? It's easy to contact CSA.**

**General Info:** [www.ctsongs.com](http://www.ctsongs.com) E-mail: [info@ctsongs.com](mailto:info@ctsongs.com)

**Change of Address, Newsletter, Membership, Special Projects:** CSA membership PO Box 511 Mystic CT 06355 E-Mail: [info@ctsongwriters.com](mailto:info@ctsongwriters.com)

**CSA on the Web:** [www.ctsongs.com](http://www.ctsongs.com)

• **COLLABORATION OPPORTUNITIES AND NETWORKING :** CSA provides opportunities to meet collaborators and providers of various music services. Make sure you're listed on our web site.

• **SONG SCREENING :** CSA helps its members get well-crafted songs targeted to their best potential market. Songs may be screened at meetings or by mail. Selected songs are eligible for inclusion on CSA compilation albums which are often given to industry pros. Songs submitted for screening must have been presented at a prior critique session. (exceptions on a case-by-case basis)

• **PARTICIPATION IN CSA MARKETING OUTLETS AND DISTRIBUTION :** Recordings by CSA members may be made available to retail outlets, radio stations, or Internet Distribution channels.

**COMMUNITY OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES:** The **LUNCH** Program offers opportunities to be involved in the production and performance of benefit shows to address hunger and poverty . For details, contact [info@ctsongwriting.com](mailto:info@ctsongwriting.com)

## CSA REGISTRATION FORM FOR NEW MEMBERS

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

E\_MAIL (required for newsletter) \_\_\_\_\_

TODAY'S DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ BIRTH DATE \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ OCCUPATION: \_\_\_\_\_

CHECK WHERE APPROPRIATE \_\_ Songwriter \_\_ Lyricist

\_\_ Vocalist

\_\_ Composer \_\_ Musician \_\_ Patron Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership Categories

(outside the U.S., please add \$10 to all categories)  
**(All memberships include free electronic Newsletter Subscription. For a paper copy by mail, add \$10 per year)**

**1 year New Membership \$45**

**2 year New Membership \$80 (save \$10)**

**3 year New Membership \$109 (save \$26)**

**Full Time Student (under 19) \$40/yr**

**Senior Citizen (60+) \$40/yr**

**Lifetime \$400 one time total**

**e-Newsletter Subscription only (\$25/yr. 12 issues)**

Members receive a free 1 year subscription to the monthly newsletter *Connecticut Songsmith*, free or discounted admission to monthly meetings and critique sessions, participation in the Song Share Sessions, Song Screening Services, eligibility for inclusion on Compilation CDs, free classified ads , and discounts on goods and services.

Enclosed is my check or money order to CSA for \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to:

CSA Membership OR

PO Box 511

Mystic CT 06355

Go to:

[www.ctsongs.com](http://www.ctsongs.com) and

you may join online using

PayPal

**E-Mail: [info@ctsongs.com](mailto:info@ctsongs.com)**

**An investment in CSA is  
 an investment in yourself!**