

# Connecticut

Newsletter of the Connecticut  
Songwriters Association

# Songsmith



Nov-Dec 2015  
Vol. XXXVI  
Number 11  
Issue # 416

Combining Arts,  
Education, and  
Community Outreach

1979-2015 : 36 Years of Combining Arts, Education, and Community Outreach

## - HOW TO PLAY WHAT YOU HEAR - Rhythm Techniques – Part 2

=====  
**CSA RHYTHM WORKSHOP: The CSA  
November meeting will be held Tuesday, Nov  
10 in Mystic at the Mystic Morgan House**

After last month's Rhythm Workshop, we looked at how to identify different rhythms that you hear in a song – but that leaves one important question – How do you translate what you hear into a playable rhythm on guitar or keyboard?

How do you actually PLAY 6/8 so that it doesn't sound like 3/4? How do you play 7/4 or 9/8 or swing rhythms at any tempo and still maintain expressive control? How do you deal with syncopated rhythms and add dynamic and timbre variations that add 'zing' to your song?

Most people can hear and understand rhythms – but actually playing them expressively, integrating dynamics and timbre, often poses a challenge.

**Bring your guitar and be prepared to work on some techniques that will give you new tools to bring to your songwriting and performance and move you forward. (There is a piano in the room for keyboard players)**

This program is \$5 for members, \$10 for non-members.

COME AND LEARN!

=====  
**REGISTER NOW FOR THE CSA  
SONGWRITING RETREAT**

## 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.

### CSA CALENDAR

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

November 10 CSA meeting To be announced  
Dec 05 – 19th Annual LUNCH Holiday Show  
Stonington Community Center  
March 18-19, 2016 : SS Cape May Songwriter  
Conference  
April 8-10, 2016 – CSA Songwriting Retreat

### PLAN AHEAD FOR 2016!

**Every CSA retreat has been an amazing weekend, again eliciting descriptions of "Life-Changing", "Transformative" and "Inspiring".**

**April 8-10 2016**

**REGISTER NOW AT [WWW.CTSONGS.COM](http://WWW.CTSONGS.COM)**

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

**RATES GO UP SOON!**

Guiding Artists Along the Path from Creation to Realization to Proliferation

## CSA RHYTHM AND NEWS

**CSA Nov 10 Meeting: Mystic Morgan House, 121 High St, Mystic -- Directions** I-95 going North, Exit 89, turn right on to Allyn St. I-95 going South, Exit 89, turn left onto Allyn St. Go to the intersection of Rt 1 (2nd light), turn Left, heading toward downtown Mystic. You'll quickly come to a 5-way intersection. On your left is Union Baptist Church. Take a left and enter the church parking lot. The Morgan House is the large white house on your right. Enter from the wooden walkway near the playground around back.

How to  
Get There!

## REGISTER NOW:

**COME JOIN US NEXT YEAR FOR THE CSA SONGWRITING RETREAT  
APRIL 8-10, 2016. SIGN UP EARLY FOR THE LOWEST RATE AND TO MAKE SURE YOU DON'T MISS  
OUT ON THIS EXPERIENCE. GIVE YOUR CREATIVITY AND YOUR CAREER A JUMP-START  
See all the photos and reviews from the past 6 years at [www.ctsongs.com](http://www.ctsongs.com)**

## GET A NICE 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, computers and electronics, 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](mailto:bill@billpere.com). THANKS !

**Post your Happenings at the CSA Facebook Page!  
Participate in the Community!**

<http://smile.amazon.com/ch/06-1530307>



Support Local United Network To Combat Hunger by  
shopping at AmazonSmile.

[smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com)

When you shop at AmazonSmile, Amazon will donate to Local  
United Network To Combat Hunger. Support us every time you...

# 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**

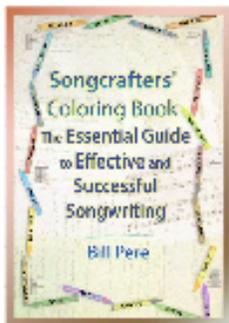
**Slots are going - Reserve your spot now!**

**Take control of your creative process!**

**Take your songwriting to a new level!**

Get several years worth of industry 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 08-10 2016, 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 as far as CA, FL, and Canada have come to this retreat, calling it "Transformative", "Life-Changing", and "Inspiring!"

Great food as well!

**REGISTER NOW! DON'T BE LEFT OUT!**

This program of Master Classes, performance and critique, is based on the concepts of Grammy-winner Bill Pere's internationally acclaimed songwriting book, "Songcrafters' Coloring Book", and is 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. Registration is non-refundable except as stated on the website: [www.ctsongs.com](http://www.ctsongs.com) )*

Member rate is for active members of CSA, RISA, Songsalive, Folk Alliance, IMC

|                        |                     |                    |
|------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| (Before Nov 1,2015)    | Member Rate = \$189 | Non-member = \$199 |
| (Nov 1 - Feb 28, 2016) | Member Rate = \$199 | Non-member = \$209 |
| (After Mar 1,2016)     | Member Rate = \$199 | Non Member = \$219 |

**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 applicable))

**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)

**COMING IN DECEMBER:** COME SUPPORT CSA COMMUNITY OUTREACH THROUGH MUSIC. SEE WHY ALMOST 100 CSA ARTIST HAVE PARTICIPATED IN THESE BENEFIT EVENTS. SEE WHAT IS INVOLVED IN DOING A SUCCESSFUL BENEFIT EVENT.



LOCAL  
UNITED  
NETWORK to  
COMBAT  
HUNGER

*"Using the power of popular music to produce positive social action"*

## TICKETS

Advance (until Dec 01) :  
\$10 adults \$8 kids (under 12)

At the Door :  
\$12 adults \$10 kids (under 12)

Online at:  
[www.lunchensemble.com](http://www.lunchensemble.com)

Phone: 860-572-9285

FUN FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY

## 19th Annual LUNCH Holiday Show



The 2015 LUNCH Holiday Show

## The Hung-Up Games: StockingDay!

Catch Fire with us on

**Saturday, Dec 5, 2015 7:00pm**

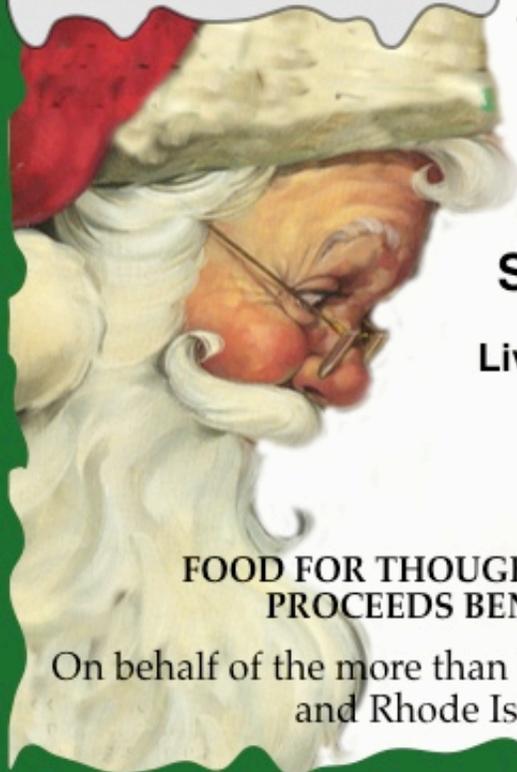
**Live Pre-show and Trivia Contest at 6:15**

**Stonington Community Center**

**28 Cutler St, Stonington CT**

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT -- YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE  
PROCEEDS BENEFIT LOCAL SOCIAL SERVICES**

On behalf of the more than 100,000 hungry children in Connecticut and Rhode Island, Thanks for Caring.



# How Signing A Major Record Deal Nearly Destroyed My Music Career

Wednesday, September 9, 2015 by Ari Herstand, Digital Music News <http://www.digitalmusicnews.com>

The following comes from Terra Naomi, who was the #1 most subscribed musician on YouTube in 2006 (Puff Daddy was #2). She started the music revolution on YouTube and paved the way for every other musician who followed.

\*\*

In June of 2006 I became the first musician to build a worldwide following on YouTube. I posted videos every couple of days and called it my "Virtual Summer Tour." I played my own original songs and some covers. I talked into the camera and answered questions submitted by my nascent online audience. At first a few hundred people watched my videos, then it grew to about 1,000, mostly fans from Myspace and the email list I'd built playing little clubs and venues around the US.

And then one day the video for my song "Say It's Possible" landed on the front page of YouTube. Emails flooded in from all corners of the globe. I spent 12+ hours a day responding to messages from people whose connection with the song inspired them to connect with the person who created it.

I saw an opportunity and quickly recorded an acoustic EP called "Virtually." I enlisted the help of a friend and together we shipped 5,000 CDs in one month. No manager, no label, no marketing, no touring. It was revolutionary.

The music industry took notice of the attention I was getting and quickly jumped in with various offers, each one better than the last. I was deeply in debt and barely getting by as an independent artist, and I was also very much attached to the old paradigm – I valued the support of a major label as much as I needed the acceptance and approval of the industry that had ignored me for what felt like so long.

In January 2007 I signed with **Universal Music Publishing** and **Universal Island Records**, out of the London offices. I'd become friendly with the guys at YouTube, and they asked if I could hold out on signing for a bit; told me they were developing ways to monetize the platform, and **predicted I would eventually make even more money with YouTube while retaining the creative control** I'd be forced to give up at a major label. Their newly crowned independent artist poster child, the bright light of hope for a changing, artist-friendly business model, was threatening to cross over to the dark side. The only people in my life who saw my selling out as a plus were my parents and my creditors...and the managers I'd signed with when everything started happening, and the attorneys who made 5% of the massive advances I would receive from any of the labels who were courting me.

Smart people who saw the future of music, and saw me as a leader and an innovator, rallied against it, but

to no avail. The pull of big money was too strong, given the debt I was in, and the instability I'd lived with for years. I was tired of struggling. And besides – look what I'd created on my own – imagine what I'd be able to do with the seemingly unlimited resources and expertise of a major label!

**And that's where I was wrong. It was a fatal mistake that nearly killed not only my career, but even worse, the passion and love I had for music.**

I arrived at Island Records for my first meeting with my new team, excitement overriding the sluggishness of jetlag. I was stepping into my ideal situation – everything I'd ever hoped for as an artist. I was signed by the president of the label to one of the last old-school record deals in a rapidly changing world of 360 deals (where the label takes a % of all revenue, vs. their % being limited to album sales). My team at the label was welcoming and enthusiastic. I was the shiny new toy, a bridge between the flailing old-school music industry and the new world of digital sales. I represented a business model where artists would take all the risk, build everything on their own, and hand it over to the record label once it became profitable. What company wouldn't be excited about that?

I remember the moment I walked into my Marketing Manager's office. He was a somewhat gruff but stylish English guy in his late 30s. He emphatically slammed his hands onto his desk, nearly shouting with excitement, "So! Tell us about this YouTube!"

It was 2007, I knew about YouTube, all my friends knew about YouTube, I'd launched my career on YouTube, and the people now in charge of my career knew nothing about YouTube?!

In that moment I knew I was doomed.

I thought perhaps I could still reverse the mistake I'd made. I played "Say It's Possible" at Live Earth, in front of an audience of 80,000 people at Wembley Stadium. I hoped my performance would be strong enough to reach the people who loved "Say It's Possible" the first time around, on YouTube, and I hoped my fans would see this performance as a major win for all of us, but by this time the audience I'd built online was starting to see me as a sell-out. Their indie poster child had tossed them aside for a shot at the major leagues.

**"The audience I'd built online was starting to see me as a sell-out. Their indie poster child had tossed them aside for a shot at the major leagues." – Terra Naomi**

Contributing further to their feelings of betrayal was the **mandate that came from my team at the label**. They needed me to be "**less accessible**" and more **untouchable**. All these kids on YouTube saw me as an equal, as "one of them" – did I want to be a YouTube star, or did I want to be a rock star? They threw down

the gauntlet, and there was no question in my mind. I wanted to be a rock star.

I handed over my mailing list and social media logins to the record label. I trusted this team of professionals to grow it into something much bigger than I could ever hope to create on my own. I backed off, disappeared, focused on writing songs and hanging out with the “right” people rather than connecting with my fans and the community I’d grown to love and depend on, prior to signing my deals. I figured I’d play by their rules for a little while, build my career into something even bigger, and reunite with my community once the label was satisfied with my rock star status.

Unfortunately, it doesn’t work like that. Life moves so quickly, especially online, and I emerged from my major label experience broken and defeated. I’d lost my deal with Island Records when the president who signed me left the label, and by the time I moved back to LA and tried to reengage my online following, I found that my people had pretty much moved on. There were new, more exciting YouTube musicians to connect with. People were collaborating, forming alliances, new stars were born, new communities had formed, and I was seen as the one who started it all and then jumped ship for something “better.”

I felt ashamed and embarrassed by the mistakes I’d made, especially since I could see my missteps but did not have the strength to stop the train I was on and get back on the right track. I did not trust myself. I thought the trepidation I felt was fear about making the jump to the major leagues, and I trusted the advice of the people I’d put in place to manage and advise me.

The producer I worked with told me we only had one shot, and I needed to make the album he wanted to make – with its “radio-ready” production – and once I had a few hits, I could make any album I wanted. So I made the album he wanted to make, and things didn’t happen the way he said they would. Instead of the big commercial radio success that would give me the freedom to seamlessly transition into the music I truly wanted to make, I had a **big commercial flop** (I think we sold something like **25,000 albums**), an album I didn’t like, and I’d wasted what could have been the biggest opportunity of my life. The exposure I built independently on YouTube was more than the record label ever did for me, and I couldn’t believe I’d been so willing to hand it over for a longshot gamble on mainstream stardom.

My biggest takeaway from this time was a lesson in authenticity. It’s tempting to listen to people who want to change us, even just a little bit, and steer us in a direction that isn’t authentic. It’s easy to doubt ourselves, especially when we’re just starting out. We think people with more experience know better than we do about what’s best for us, and it’s simply not the case. We fall for the hard sell, the glitz and glamour, but for every massive major label success, there are dozens of disappointments and disastrous failures.

**Two years after I left my label, the former president, the man who signed me, ended up sitting next to my manager on a transatlantic flight. When my manager mentioned my name, my ex-champion’s response was: “We sure screwed that one up, didn’t we...”**

I was “that one” – one of many botched attempts. I walked into my label offices one morning in April 2007, full of hope and excitement, and in the end, I was nothing more than a tax write-off.

The weekend I moved to London, in April 2007, was the very same weekend I accepted the first YouTube Award for Best Music Video. I did 40+ press interviews, including all the biggest morning shows, radio shows, and newspapers in the United States. **If I could do it over again, I would have postponed my relocation to London, jumped in my car immediately, and played shows in every city and town across the US, capitalizing on the exposure I'd received from the YouTube Awards.** I would have continued to build the audience I had created on my own, with nothing more than a camera and a tripod. I could have lived more than comfortably on the **5,000 CDs I was selling each month** (I'm in shock thinking about those numbers today!!), and I might have been able to grow my little business into an empire. At the very least, I could have taken my career to the next level on my own, giving myself enough space and time to gain the confidence I needed to stand my ground when people tried to change me.

I have nothing bad to say about major labels in general, and I know my experience is one of many and not the only experience to be had. I'm not one of those bitter label-bashing artists. Major labels can provide incredible resources; they paid my bills for a while and gave me some pretty phenomenal experiences and memories.

## **The most important thing to remember is that no one will ever care about your career as much as you do.**

People say whatever they think you need to hear, the kind of stuff we artists crave on such a deep level. It might even be heartfelt and honest at the time, but you must remember that you are nothing more than a bottom line to most executives. I know there are exceptions, but there weren't in my experience. Once you take the money, you are no longer an artist. You are a product, and a business will only spend so much time and money on any product, even one they claim to believe in a whole lot. Once the business feels the product is not going to be profitable, it will not continue to promote the product. Seen a McDonald's Arch Deluxe lately? Yeah, I didn't think so. McDonalds spent \$100 million promoting that epic flop of a burger before shutting it down. Best believe a record label won't have any qualms about dropping (or even worse, shelving and not dropping!) an artist they signed for \$250,000.

The most important thing is to stay true to who you are, no matter which path you choose. It's such a cliché, but I cannot stress it enough. These days, the fact that most artists will never sign a major label deal is actually a good thing. We have countless resources to help get our music out to the world. Grow your business on your own. Find your audience. Put in the work to become the very best version of yourself, and create the music that moves you. Because if it moves you, chances are it will move someone else. **We no longer need millions of fans to create a meaningful career in music**, as long as we're smart about the steps we take, honest with ourselves about the artists we truly are, and unafraid to commit to being those artists, 100% of the time.

Terra Naomi lives in Los Angeles and spends her time performing, coaching other artists, and writing songs, books, TV shows, and musicals. Follow her on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

**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)

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 Go to: [www.ctsongs.com](http://www.ctsongs.com) and  
 PO Box 511 you may join online using  
 Mystic CT 06355 PayPal

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

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

*An Educational, Non-Profit Organization Dedicated to Improving the Art and Craft of Original Music since 1979*

**JOIN CSA ONLINE OF BY MAIL:** [www.ctsongs.com/csajoin.htm](http://www.ctsongs.com/csajoin.htm)