

Connecticut Songsmith

Newsletter of the Connecticut
Songwriters Association



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Combining Arts,
Education, and
Community Outreach

1979-2018 : 39 Years of Combining Arts, Education, and Community Outreach

WELCOME TO A NEW YEAR !

We hope you all had a great holiday season. Now it's time to focus new energy on moving forward in the year ahead. We have great year planned.

THE CSA MEETING for January will be Wednesday, January 17, 7:15pm, at the Mystic Morgan House, 121 High St, Mystic.

We will have an in-depth song development/critique session to help you get your songs ready for things to come. (In March, we will be presenting some of the best CSA songs to industry pros at the annual Singer-Songwriter Conference in NJ).

Bring a song on CD, mp3, or do it live, with multiple copies of types lyric sheets, and get valuable constructive feedback. CSA critique sessions are a great way to help make your songs be the best they can be.

We'll also start the meeting with a brief overview of the current trends and events in the music industry.

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

Bring a friend!

CSA SONGWRITER SHOWCASE/OPEN MIC

Jan23, Feb 20, Mar 20 -- Monthly CSA Songwriter Showcase 7pm-9pm at Groton Congregational Church, 162 Monument St in Groton. Here is a great opportunity to present your songs to an appreciative listening audience. Get new fans and followers! If you want a performing slot for the months ahead, , email us NOW info@ctsongs.com.

Even if you're not performing on a particular night, come and hear some great music, support your fellow artists, so that they will come and support you when it is your turn. Music, Food and Fellowship is always a winning combination. IN ADDITION, proceeds from this series benefit local meal programs.

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

Jan 17 – CSA Meeting
Jan23 – Oipen Mic
Feb 14 – CSA Meeting
Feb 20 – Open Mic
March 23-24 2018 – SS Cape May Conference
Mar 20 – Open Mic
Apr 6-8 2018 – CSA Songwriting Retreat !

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REGISTRATION IS OPEN FOR THE 2018 CSA SONGWRITING RETREAT JUMP-START YOUR SONGWRITING and FAST_TRACK YOUR CAREER!

Every CSA retreat has been an amazing weekend, again eliciting descriptions of "Life-Changing", "Transformative" and "Inspiring". April 6-8 2018
REGISTER AT WWW.CTSONGS.COM

LIMITED TO 12 SLOTS!

CSA SONGWRITING RETREAT

One of the Best Valuers in the Industry!

RATES GO UP SOON - SIGN UP NOW!

SLOTS ARE GOING - DON'T MISS OUT!

Guiding Artists Along the Path from Creation to Realization to Proliferation

CSA RHYTHM AND NEWS

<p>--- CSA Songwriter Showcase/Open Mic: Groton Congregational Church, 162 Monument ST, Groton, Plenty of free on-street parking.</p> <p>--CSA MEETING January 17 – Mystic Morgan House, 121 High St, Mystic CT. Free parking in church parking lot.</p>	
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THE 2018 CSA SONGWRITING RETREAT, APRIL 6-8 , WILL BE AN AMAZING WEEKEND OF MASTER CLASSES, IN THE BEAUTIFUL LAKESIDE SETTING OF CAMP WIGHTMAN REGISTRATION IS OPEN AND SLOTS ARE FILLING. SIGN UP NOW TO MAKE SURE YOU DON'T MISS OUT ON THIS EXPERIENCE. GIVE YOUR CREATIVITY AND YOUR CAREER A JUMP-START. It's limited to 12 people, and the slots fill quickly. See all the photos and reviews from the past years at www.ctsongs.com

<p>GET A NICE TAX DEDUCTION FOR YOUR OLD STUFF !</p>
<p>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. THANKS !</p>

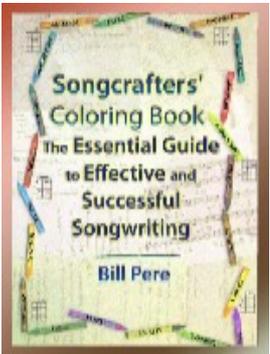
MONTHLY! CSA SONGWRITER SHOWCASE! A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO HONE YOUR PERFORMING TECHNIQUE AND SHARE YOUR SONGS. CSA presents a monthly Songwriter Showcase and Open Mic series . The showcase features original music in a great venue with an attentive listening audience. The event is hosted at Groton Congregational Church, 162 Monument St, in Groton, where CSA member Shawn Fisher is the Pastor. Sound system provided. Light snacks available. Plenty of free on-street parking. The donations at the door will help support community outreach programs in Southeastern CT. We are now booking acts for the Spring and Fall. If you would like to perform, contact us NOW at info@ctsongs.com.

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN– The 2018 CSA Songwriting Retreat will be held April 6-8. This amazing weekend of Master Classes has been called “Life –Changing”, “Transformative” , and “the Best Value in the Industry”. Limited to 12 slots, it fills quickly. This is a great chance to Jump-start your songwriting and Fast-Track your career. Don't miss out!. Info & Details at www.ctsongs.com

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 6-8 2018, 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)

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

(Before Nov 1,2017)	Member Rate = \$159	Non-member = \$169
(Nov 1 – Nov 31 2017)	Member Rate = \$169	Non-member = \$179
(Dec 1 – Dec 31 2017)	Member Rate = \$179	Non-member = \$189
(After Jan 01,2017)	Member Rate = \$189	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)
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 for FAQ Info, photos, and reviews
If you don't find what you need, e-mail us at retreat@ctsongwriting.com

CSA COMMUNITY OUTREACH

THE 21 st Annual LUNCH HOLIDAY SHOW was another great success, raising almost \$4,000 for local social service programs. Over the years, many CSA members have participated in LUNCH productions, lending their time and talent to use the power of popular music to produce positive social action.



SUPPORT COMMUNITY OUTREACH THROUGH MUSIC

GROTON SONGWRITER SHOWCASE & OPEN MIC

MONTHLY MUSIC WITH MEANING AT GROTON CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

162 MONUMENT STREET, GROTON CT

A FEATURED ACT AND OPEN MIC EACH MONTH TO BENEFIT LOCAL FOOD PROGRAMS



TUESDAY, Jan 23, 7pm-9pm

Music with Meaning

Engaging Contemporary Acoustic Folk and Indie Singer-Songwriter styles.

Come and enjoy the company of good people, good music, and good finger-food, for a good cause

Suggested Donation: \$5.

With appearances by other talented artists from CT/MA/RI

Hosted by National Award-Winning Artists Bill Pere and Kay Pere



The Groton Songwriter Showcase is presented by the Connecticut Songwriters Association and Groton Congregational Church



We are open to all who have a song in their heart. If you would like to share a song at an open mic session, please contact us in advance at info@ctsongs.com

GROTON SONGWRITER SHOWCASE & OPEN MIC

MONTHLY MUSIC WITH MEANING AT GROTON CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

162 MONUMENT STREET, GROTON CT

A FEATURED ACT AND OPEN MIC EACH MONTH TO BENEFIT LOCAL FOOD PROGRAMS



TUESDAY, Feb 20, 7pm-9pm

Music with Meaning

with

The Podunk Throwbacks

**Engaging Contemporary Acoustic Folk
Folk-Rock, and Bluegrass.**

Come and enjoy the company of good people,
good music, and good finger-food, for a good cause

Suggested Donation: \$5.

With appearances by other talented artists from CT/MA/RI

Hosted by **National Award-Winning Artists Bill Pere and Kay Pere**



The Groton Songwriter Showcase is presented by
the Connecticut Songwriters Association and
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CALLING ALL WRITERS

ANNOUNCING THE NEXT CSA COMPILATIONS

Get your songs in by October 31, to insure eligibility !

(after 10/31, contact us for status)

CSA Compilation CDs have received radio airplay and are displayed at national conferences, and any digital downloads pay artist royalties. 21 Compilations Released so far!

ALL CATEGORIES (you may submit to any of these categories) :

- | | | |
|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Songs of social relevance | <input type="checkbox"/> Country songs | <input type="checkbox"/> Children's Songs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spiritual/Inspirational | <input type="checkbox"/> Holiday songs | <input type="checkbox"/> Novelty/Humorous Song |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Country Songs | <input type="checkbox"/> Unusual Love Songs | <input type="checkbox"/> Story Songs |
| <input type="checkbox"/> PatrioticAmericana | <input type="checkbox"/> Collaborative Songs | <input type="checkbox"/> Instrumentals |

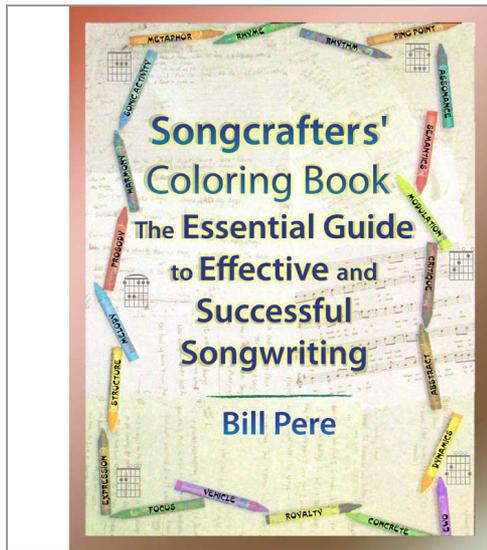
GUIDELINES

- At least one writer must be a current CSA member
- All songs must be professionally produced, up to 'radio-ready' standards.
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; Available space on the CD
- 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 submission fee (\$18) payable to CSA,
If you want your complementary copy to be mailed to you, please include \$3 for postage. (there are no additional costs, whether a song is accepted for inclusion or not)
Send your recording, lyric sheet, release form, and submission fee 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



The concepts discussed in this article are a part of the comprehensive analysis of songwriting presented in the complete book "Songcrafters' Coloring Book: The Essential Guide to Effective and Successful Songwriting", by Bill Pere. For additional information or to order a copy, visit <http://www.songcrafterscoloringbook.com>

The Geometry of Songwriting : The 4 Dimensions of a Song and the Importance of Time.

by Bill Pere

"Time management" is a phrase you hear used all

the time as a core principle for good business practice. It is also as core principle for maximizing the impact of your songs, but with an entirely different meaning.

Music, by its very nature, moves in 4 dimensions: Melodies move up and down in pitch. The phrases move forward, building tension toward release and resolution. They move closer to and farther away from the ear as the dynamics grow loud and soft. They move through time with rhythm. It is usually easy to incorporate all four dimensions into the music of a song, because they are inherent components of music itself.

But when it comes to the lyrics, you're starting out with a dimensionless idea, an abstract concept that you have to fill with image, meaning, motion, and emotion. It's a much more difficult task to think in 4-dimensional words, and thus, songs are often stuck in a one or two dimensions, when there are really four that you can use to create a memorable experience for your listeners.

Steven Pinker, one of my favorite authors on the relationship between words and meaning, in his book *"The Stuff of Thought: Language as a Window Into Human Nature"*, discusses the importance of our perception of 3-dimensional space (height, width, depth) and its influence on how we use and perceive verbs.

A brief review from one of everyone's favorite topics in school, Geometry: Space is typically represented in 3 dimensions: horizontal/width (x-axis); vertical/height (Y-axis); and proximity/depth (z-axis). We can see, think, and move along each of these, with lots of words and metaphors to help us along the way. These find their way into songs, but are often focused on just a single dimension, because the more dimensions that are encompassed by the lyrics, the harder it is to write clearly and effectively and to fit the necessary words into the song. It is also more difficult to actually write about *moving* along a dimension than it is to just refer to it while standing still. Consider:

*"I'm standing here alone, I see the mountain there in the distance
I want to get back home, want to be there in an instant
It's so far, so far, so far away
But I know I'll get back someday*

This *refers* to distance (z-axis) and height (y-axis), but there is no *motion*. The singer (and the listener!) are rooted in one place. This is not particularly exciting (or moving) for the listener. Consider this re-write:

*Moving closer to the mountain, I begin to make the climb
Getting closer to my home now, been gone too long a time
Though far and high, from dusk till dawn,
I'm getting closer, pressing on.*

Now we're getting someplace. The listener is being brought along by the singer on a journey. It's better, but still missing something. Let's look at some examples of x-y-z- hit songs:

The 1973 classic "Stuck in the Middle With You" is an example of an X-axis song (horizontal, left/right space), written by Gerry Rafferty & Joe Egan of the band Stealers Wheel):

*"Clowns to the left of me, jokers to the right,
Here I am, stuck in the middle with you."*

The many songs written about driving along a road, walking a path, or riding on a train are x-axis songs.

The y-axis is the vertical one that orients us to us up and down. Everyone was lifted up in 1967 by the 5th Dimensions' top ten hit "Up Up and Away" by songwriting great Jimmy Webb. The title/hook is in and of itself, a trip along the Y-axis. The Wicked Witch of the West takes us all into the air with "Defying Gravity" from the musical "Wicked" by Stephen Schwartz. Johnny Cash took us "down,down, down" as he "fell" into a Ring of Fire". The Byrds took us (metaphorically) "Eight Miles High" while the Drifters took us (literally) "Under the Boardwalk".

For a ride along both the X-axis and the Y-axis, look at Diana Ross' biggest hit as a solo artist "Upside Down", written by Bernard Edwards and Nile Rodgers:

*"Upside down Boy, you turn me
Inside out and round and round"*

Looking at the entire lyric, it's actually a very ordinary song from the craft perspective, but was made into a #1 hit in 1980 by the star power of the artist and the intricate production. Not exceptional songwriting, but it does make use of our 3-dimensional thinking:

Steppenwolf's "Magic Carpet Ride" is a Z-axis hit song (near/far perspective) written by band members Rushton Moreve & John Kay

*"Any place it goes is right
Goes far, flies near, To the stars, away from here"*

Another z-axis example is the folk standard "Five Hundred Miles". Songs about moving nearer to or farther from something are usually z-axis songs.

Writer Dorothea Joyce metaphorically takes us in several directions with her 1971 hit (recorded ironically by the 5th Dimension) "Love Lines, Angles, and Rhymes":

*Love leads the lines of love in circles and angles
Love runs deep like a tunnel with a pendulum beat
That touches the heart in many directions
Moving the mind in silent reflections
Of the lines that touch the corners and fibers
Of the feeling that keeps running inside you*

The technique of providing x-y-z motion for the listener is clearly important, but when it comes to writing a *truly great song*, it is quite secondary to what comes next: the fourth dimension, **time**.

When it comes to *time*, we don't often think about it with the same sense of motion and perspective, because we don't see it directly like height, width and depth, and we don't feel the motion kinesthetically. Movement through time is implied and inferred by changes in distance, age, appearance, circumstance, etc. Thus, it is more difficult to get all the necessary information into the compact form of a lyric line. Yet it means so much to the listener to have that fourth dimension in a song, that we need to try.

Writing *about* time is not the same as writing about motion *through* time. There are clearly many songs *about* time: "Time Is on My Side", "Time in a Bottle", "Six O' Clock", "No Time Left For You", "Nine to Five", "Beat the Clock", "Can't Find the Time to Tell You", and so many more; But these songs do not use time as a dimension in which the listener *moves*. They are *about* time, not moving *through* time. It's the equivalent of writing a song *about* up and down, without actually *moving* the listener up and down.

A key point here is that an x,y, or z-axis song when conveying motion, *may* imply time as well. If the axis has a specific and fixed reference point (a home, a person, an event, a location) that you are getting closer to or farther from, there is distance involved and it takes time to traverse distance (remember your basic concepts of that Physics class you daydreamed your way through).

Edwin Starr's 1969 hit "Twenty-Five Miles" has the singer *moving* closer and closer to his destination (z-axis) but we clearly experience time passing as well. The 1994 Rascal Flatts hit "The Broken Road" (Hummon/Boyd/Hanna) has the singer moving along the road of life toward a person, and thus we experience time.

It is possible to have *no* x-y-z motion but still move through time. Movement through time can be in the form of changes in age and circumstance, neither of which need to involve x-y-z motion. A tree growing, ivy covering a wall, a graduation, or a gravestone all convey lots of time-related information.

So what it all comes down to is this: As discussed in Chapter 9 of [Songcrafters' Coloring Book](#), there are two basic song formats: [list songs and story songs](#).

If you recall the [Listener Response Matrix](#) from Chapter 5 Songcrafters' Coloring Book, the most difficult song presentation to write effectively is the story-song. However, it is the format that has the widest appeal, the greatest impact, and the best chance of having a long life. The reason that a story-song is more difficult to write is that it *must* have a clear flow of time. It can be forward, flashback, fast, slow, etc, but *time must move*. Given from the above discussion that time is the most difficult dimension to effectively include in a song, it becomes clear why most songs are not story-songs and thus may not carry the full impact of really great songwriting.

Consider which experience you would prefer to have: Someone talking to you for four minutes, telling you of months or years worth of experiences, or someone talking to you for four minutes telling you about how they feel in one single moment that you know nothing about. Which is the greater bang for the buck (the "buck" being the four minutes of your life that you have invested in listening). In the first case you get more than four minutes worth of someone's life experience to add to your own. Whether or not it is interesting or relevant is a different matter altogether – that is up to the storyteller (songwriter) to *make it* interesting and relevant to you. In the second case, you spent four minutes hearing someone talk about one second that never moved. While it is possible for that moment to merit being expanded 240 times beyond reality (four minutes is 240 seconds), most songwriters have neither the moment nor the craftsmanship to make it worth your while as a listener (and as a paying customer).

The lower left section of the Listener-Response Matrix (attitudinal songs that only seek to evoke a transient feeling) may go something like:

*I saw you there, my heart stopped.
My world is frozen and I'm thinking of you.
I'm hot, you would love me and I would make it worth your time
I'm better than she is, you know it's true,
Give me a look give me a sign
And I'll be there and you'll be mine
Oh I'm burnin' Oh I'm yearnin'
I'm turnin' into being into you...*

This type of lyric is very common, but it leaves the listener with so many unanswered questions – who are these people, where are they, what's the attraction, what's the backstory, what is going to happen, where are they in a year from now, why is this relevant to *me*? This may be fun for a singer to sing, perhaps fun to see in live performance with lots of emoting in tight stage outfits, but it is unlikely for this to have a long life as a classic song that hundreds of other artists would want to record. It is not worth a listener giving up 240 times as much of themselves as it gives back. With a some additional effort on the part of the songwriter to answer all of the above questions, this could instead be told as an actual story where the listener is led through the experience over a period of time, and thus is more likely to find points of relevance to relate to. (See [Songcrafters Coloring Book Chapter 16](#))

A story-song is essentially a short movie. It uses all the cinematic and storytelling techniques of great directors and authors – characters, backstory, scene changes, camera angles, close-ups, establishing shots, tension, climax, and a treatment of time.

One of the great songwriting examples of taking a short amount of time, perhaps a minute or two, and turning it into a five-minute song that is worth the expansion, is Harry Chapin's "30,000 Pounds of Bananas". Based on news accounts of the actual event, it takes the last minute of life of a truck driver as he hurtles out of control down a hill with no brakes and a load of bananas. The song lives on more than four decades later.

In your own writing, when you think you are "done", ask yourself how (or "if") you have treated the flow of time in your song. Most importantly, make sure you clearly see the difference between actually moving through time as opposed to just talking about time.

Consider this exceptional lyric from master songwriter Randy Edelman :

Thirty Years Old (Mom)

*My head leaves the pillow, I know I must move on
I've lived all my life here, but the time's almost gone
I don't want to leave her, she's begged me to stay
But I'm thirty years old Mom today*

*I put on my jacket, she hears that I'm awake
She calls from the kitchen, as I smell the cake
She lights all the candles and makes sure I pray
But I'm thirty years old Mom today*

*I've been reading books, but now I want to see the world at first hand
I've been taking looks around, now I'm gonna show where I stand*

*I've been too locked up to give my heart half a chance
See, your baby has grown, it's time he left home...*

*She wanted to have me close by her side
But the years have stacked up now, God knows, I've tried
She wanted to know I was down the hallway,
But your baby's grown up Mom today*

*I didn't look back as I closed the old porch door
I wanted no tears from that face I adore
But there's dreams I've been dreaming, and songs I must play
And I'm thirty years old Mom today.*

This song clearly has motion through time BUT, when I ask folks at my workshops "What is the span of time that this song encompasses?", most people quickly answer 'thirty years' or 'a lifetime'. The song *refers* to thirty years, but the actual amount of time that the listener moves through is really just an hour, plus or minus. It runs from the time the singer wakes up, gets dressed, has some cake, and then finally leaves the house. That is the time *span* of the song. It moves in a forward direction at an even pace, marked by event mileposts (waking, dressing, eating, leaving). The mastery of the craft here is that in the 3 minutes of the song, we have spent an hour with the singer, and in that hour, we have shared his whole life – his past, his present, and his hopes for the future. This is what makes great storytelling and thus great songwriting.

Songs do not have to be complex to handle time effectively. Here is a simple lyric from the Hollies 1966 #5 hit "Bus Stop" (G. Gouldman):

*Bus stop, wet day, she's there, I say "Please share my umbrella"
Bus stop, bus go, she stays, love grows Under my umbrella
All that summer we enjoyed it, wind and rain and shine
That umbrella, we employed it, by August she was mine.*

Here in four lines, we travel through about three months of time, at two different rates. Lines 1 and 2 recount a brief initial interaction that leads to a budding romance. Lines 3 and 4 take us through months to the end of summer where the romance has blossomed into love. An amazing amount of information conveyed in four simple lines. That is the craft of storytelling and the challenge of great songwriting.

Here is another great example:

Longer (Dan Fogelberg)

*Longer than there've been fishes in the ocean
Higher than any bird ever flew
Longer than there've been stars up in the heavens
I've been in love with you.*

*Stronger than any mountain cathedral
Truer than any tree ever grew
Deeper than any forest primeval
I am in love with you.*

*I'll bring fire in the winters
You'll send showers in the springs
We'll fly through the falls and summers
With love on our wings.*

*Through the years as the fire starts to mellow
Burning lines in the book of our lives
Though the binding cracks and the pages start to yellow
I'll be in love with you.*

At first glance it seems like a simple love song in list format. But let's look closer at how a master storyteller subtly takes you through the better part of a lifetime:

*Longer than there've been fishes in the ocean Higher than any bird ever flew
Longer than there've been stars up in the heavens I've been in love with you*

The use of the Present Perfect verb tense here says that "For an ongoing time in the past I have been in love with you".

*Stronger than any mountain cathedral Truer than any tree ever grew
Deeper than any forest primeval I am in love with you.*

The verb tense changes to present-tense "I am in love. with you", meaning right now, i.e. as we arrive from the past into this moment, I still love you.

*I'll bring fire in the winters You'll send showers in the springs
We'll fly through the falls and summers With love on our wings.*

Now we move forward beyond this moment with verbs in future tense. As we travel through the years ahead (presented by the four seasons) we will continue to be in love with each other.

*Through the years as the fire starts to mellow burning lines in the book of our lives
Though the binding cracks and the pages start to yellow I'll be in love with you.*

This now bring us to the twilight of life after having spent years together that have written a life story. There is pluperfect verb use, and we still look forward with future tense saying "I will continue to be in love with you".

Overall, this takes us through a lifetime of love, with subtle change of tense and metaphorical signposts, always making clear where we are. The first verse reaches backwards, the second verse is present, and the bridge and third verse move along a future path. A great handling of time that makes an ordinary love song become something extraordinary.

In such a competitive music world, it is a losing proposition to just write a love song. It has to be an exceptional love song to get any traction.

Finally, let's look at a great example of moving through time with no other x-y-z motion at all.

Old Stone (by Kay Pere)

*Old gray stone
How long have you been balanced
While the lichens grow
In symbiotic decadence
In your mossy robe,
Do you still recall the span
Of callused hands
That pulled you from the ground*

*Old Stone, silence unbroken
Speak to me with wisdom unspoken*

*Old stone wall
How long have you been standing
While the wild ferns grow
And violets nod their deference
To the things you know
Lessons learned
While seasons turned
Three-hundred times around.*

*Old Stone, Silence unbroken
Speak to me*

*Old stone house
How long have you been watching
While the crops won't grow
And autumn snow descends
A shallow well soon frozen
Hard as quartz
Heavy hearts
Pray comfort can be found*

Old Stone, Silence unbroken

Here, we have a story-song about a lifeless inanimate object. Yet, the storytelling from this New England writer is masterful, with a sweeping journey through more than 300 years, conveying the arrival of settlers to a virgin land who

started tilling soil and farming, then building stone walls to define farm boundaries, and houses that withstand bitter New England winters. The only motion is through time, using age, and the change of an object's environment and location as signposts. This could easily be rendered as video watching a patch of land evolve over the centuries (if there were cameras that long ago...) condensed into a four-minute presentation. All the visual elements are there.

When the handling of time is done with great attention to detail, a song needs little else to connect with listeners and have impact.

To summarize:

To maximize the impact of your songs, and thus their artistic and commercial potential, a most effective technique is to provide motion for the listener through time, in a clear way that conveys lots of information about who, what, where, when, what, how. It's a challenge that can seem daunting, which is why many writers turn away from the task. If you are one of the few who work to see it through, you will have a great advantage by having a better end-product in a very competitive market.

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Bill Pere, is named one of the "Top 50 Innovators, Groundbreakers and Guiding Lights of the Music Industry" by Music Connection Magazine. With more than 30 years in the music business, as a recording artist, award winning songwriter, performer, and educator Bill is well known for his superbly crafted lyrics, with lasting impact. Bill has songs on more than 26 CD's including a Grammy, and has received many awards for his philanthropy through music. He is President of the Connecticut Songwriters Association, an Official Connecticut State Troubadour, and is the Founder and Executive Director of the LUNCH Ensemble. Twice named Connecticut Songwriter of the Year, Bill is a qualified MBTI practitioner, trained by the Association for Psychological Type. As Director of the Connecticut Songwriting Academy, he helps develop young talent in songwriting, performing, and learning about the music business. Bill's song analyses and critiques are among the best in the industry. Bill has a graduate degree in Molecular Biology, an ARC Science teaching certification, and he has received two awards for Outstanding contribution to Music Education. The New York Times calls Bill "the link between science and music. For workshops, consultation, performances, or other songwriter services, contact Bill via his web sites, at <http://www.billpere.com>, <http://www.ctsongwriting.com>, and <http://www.lunchensemble.com>".

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