



April 4, 2017

SONGWRITERS ON WRITING HIT SONGS AND MAKING MONEY

NEWSLETTER

An Entertainment Industry Organization

5 Tips for Songwriting Success in the New Year

By: Jason Blume via www.bmi.com

The President's Corner

Greetings All!

Songs and Songwriters...They are the very essence of our business. Whether it be a streaming company, record label or music publishing company, all thrive from THE SONG! Songs contain the magic that can change a mood from sad to joyous. They can transport you from one plain of existence to another and can communicate sentiments not easily expressed with the simple spoken word. Technology has allowed for easy access and consumption of intellectual property (SONGS) but how do songwriters make money in addition to these innovations?

This month's panel focuses on songs, songwriters and the ways in which songwriters maintain their craft!

Tonight's moderators Mara Schwartz-Kuge and David Quan have put together a group of outstanding songwriters that have penned many of the songs contained on that playlist on our phone, that CD on your shelf or the "pieces of vinyl" you recently purchased!

The CCC would like to thank Ale Alberti, Mike City, Vincent Berry II, and JHart for taking the time this evening to share their stories, their songs and most of the all...the MAGIC OF Their Songs!

James R. Leach
President, California Copyright Conference

Turning the page on a new year is exciting! We get 365 new opportunities to accomplish goals and live our dreams. But success is rarely realized by dreaming unless it is accompanied by action. So ... here are some tips to help you attain all that you hope for in the coming year.

Set Realistic Goals

"If you don't know where you are going, you might wind up someplace else." —Yogi Berra

Having a goal infuses your life with purpose, richness and meaning. It gives you something to reach for, something to aspire to. By identifying our short-term and long-term goals, we can focus on the actions and steps that can bring us closer to achieving what we hope for. Without a clearly defined objective we are shooting arrows in the dark, and the chances of hitting a bull's-eye will be pretty slim.

Of course, not every goal can be reached. If my goal is to have a #1 song on the charts by next week, I will need to write the song, record a demo, place it with an artist, have them record it, and have it climb to the top of the charts—all in

the next seven days. That's not going to happen. If my objective is to secure a #1, my best course of action is to plot out a course and focus on the individual, measurable steps that I can take.

Back when I was putting on my uniform of a jacket and tie and driving an hour each way in bumper-to-bumper freeway traffic to feed paper into a shredder eight hours a day, I would search my soul, looking for the one next thing I could do to bring me closer to earning a living from my songs. I knew I'd been born to create music—not to create mountains of shredded paper. During my breaks I would seek intuition to show me the route to the top of the Billboard charts. I always received answers. Some of those answers were:

- Study the lyrics of my favorite current hit songs and analyze the techniques the writers used
- Enroll in a music business class or conference where I will be able to network with other songwriters, music publishers and industry professionals
- Get professional feedback on my latest song
- Rewrite a chorus melody five times, exploring various rhythms, different notes, and alternate chords
- Record a new demo
- Seek a collaborator
- Learn to play three new chords on the guitar and incorporate at least one of them into a new song

None of these actions in and of themselves produced instant success. But combined, they all kept me moving forward and ultimately contributed to my achieving my goals.

Carve Out the Time

I not only needed to isolate specific actions to take, I needed to stipulate the times when I would take those steps. I am far more likely to follow through with my commitment if I state, "I will spend two hours this Thursday evening (7 p.m. till 9 p.m.) learning how to use a drum machine," than if I make a vague promise such as, "I'm going to learn how to use a drum machine."

We can't make more time. Doing so is something that even the most creative among us has never been able to master. So it is up to us to decide how we allocate our most precious resource. We can choose whether to spend our minutes surfing the Internet, zoning out in front of the TV, playing solitaire, or taking one of the steps we have isolated that might propel us further along the road to our goals.

We all have responsibilities and obligations that compete with our "creative" time. But those who are successful find ways to juggle creative pursuits with their other commitments. When I was working temp jobs it worked well for me to wake up one hour early each morning and devote that time to writing songs—before a long, exhausting day could dull the spark of my creativity. I wrote my first book, *6 Steps to Songwriting Success* (Billboard Books) while I was signed to a music publishing company as a staff-writer, by writing from 6 a.m. till 9 a.m. Monday through Friday for eighteen months, before heading to Music Row to write songs. I could not write a book in a day, a week, or even a month. But I could write one or two pages a day, and at the end of eighteen months, those pages added up to a finished book.

Prior to landing that staff-writing deal, in addition to writing in the morning, I found it helped if I separated myself from the role I took on during the work day by taking a twenty-minute nap and a quick shower when I got back home, changing out of my business clothes, and lighting a candle. I felt refreshed and was better able to access my creative self.

Another strategy was to schedule a writing appointment, a time to pitch songs, or some other task to further my career, and write that in my calendar. Doing this helped me to live up to that commitment just as I would if I had scheduled any other appointment. Not everyone can be creative in the morning, nor is it feasible for everyone to carve out time in the evening. For some people the key might be to allocate part of each weekend as their time to be creative. If success is a priority, each of us must use a bit of our creativity to delineate some time designated for the pursuit of our goals.

We get to write the pages of our life stories with the words and actions we choose. If you feel you need permission to pursue a life that allows you to express your creativity to its fullest and enjoy the rewards of doing so, I hereby grant you permission to follow your dreams and create all the success you hope for—and more!

Eat Your Frogs

It has been said, “If you have to eat a frog, do it first thing in the morning. If you have to eat two of them, eat the biggest one first.”

Regardless of how passionate we feel about our work there are likely some aspects of it we’d rather not do. Some tasks become “frogs” because we fear them or feel inadequate to accomplish them. Others are simply things we dislike doing. For example, I’ve heard countless songwriters say, “I love writing songs, but the thought of attending music industry events or pitching my songs to publishers ties my stomach in knots. I wish I could just get paid to write songs and have someone else take care of the business.” But the music business is a business, and those who succeed in it tend to be those who excel at both the music and the business.

It can be helpful to create a “to do” list and accomplish the tasks you’d rather not do first. Getting rid of those frogs provides a sense of accomplishment, frees up creative energy, and brings us closer to our goals.

Develop Persistence and a Tough Skin

Western Union chose not to purchase Alexander Graham Bell’s patent for the telephone, declaring that it was little more than a toy. Fifteen publishers passed on an unknown J.K. Rowling’s story about a boy wizard, and The Beatles were famously rejected by Epic Records with the statement, “Guitar groups are on their way out.”

Rejection and disappointment pave the road to success. There are countless stories of superstar recording artists who faced repeated rejections, songs that took years before finding chart success, and GRAMMY-winning songwriters who were turned down by numerous music publishers.

Those who are given the double-edged gift of creativity need to have the tender, open heart of an artist—surrounded by the armor of an armadillo. Rejection is to be expected—it is part of the package. Creative people tend to be sensitive, and rejection hurts. Remind yourself that it is not you that is being rejected—it is one particular song or batch of recordings.

Remember: the fact that you might not be where you hope to be today does not preclude you from achieving all you hope for—and more—at some point in the future.

The key is to dust yourself off, give yourself a little time to lick your wounds then channel those painful emotions into positive actions. For example, instead of allowing rejection to crush you, decide “I’ll show them how amazing my music can be. I’ll keep working at this until my songs are undeniable!”

Stay Positive

If we don't believe our goals are attainable, we won't take the steps that can bring us closer to them. So remind yourself that every person who is now enjoying success began with nothing more than a dream—and the willingness to do whatever it took to achieve their goals. While success can't be guaranteed, it is possible.

Complaining about the state of the music business, the current hits, and the roadblocks you face won't bring you closer to your goals, but it will make you someone to whom successful, positive people are unlikely to be drawn. Cultivate gratitude for the amazing gift of creativity you've been given and honor it by doing everything in your power to hone your skills and maximize the chances of your dreams coming true.

Remember: each new year delivers breakthrough successes to a new crop of recording artists, songwriters, and music business professionals. Trust that you are on a journey that can deliver you to success, take the steps that will maximize your chances of attaining your goals, and be sure to enjoy the ride.

Jason Blume is the author of 6 Steps to Songwriting Success, This Business of Songwriting, and Inside Songwriting (Billboard Books). His songs are on three Grammy-nominated albums and have sold more than 50,000,000 copies. One of only a few writers to ever have singles on the pop, country, and R&B charts, all at the same time—his songs have been recorded by artists including Britney Spears, the Backstreet Boys, the Gipsy Kings, Jesse McCartney, and country stars including Collin Raye (6 cuts), the Oak Ridge Boys, Steve Azar, and John Berry (“Change My Mind,” a top 5 single that earned a BMI “Million-Air” Award for garnering more than one million airplays). Jason’s song “Can’t Take Back the Bullet” is on Hey Violet’s recent EP that debuted in the top-10 in twenty-two countries and reached #1 throughout Scandinavia and Asia. He’s had three recent top-10 singles and a “Gold” record in Europe by Dutch star, BYentl, including a #1 on the Dutch R&B iTunes chart, and most recently ventured into the world of EDM with the international release of “Higher Than Heaven” by Xavi & Gi (featuring Adara).

Jason’s songs have been included in films and TV shows including “Scrubs,” “Friday Night Lights,” “Assassination Games,” “Black or White,” Disney’s “Kim Possible” “Dangerous Minds,” “Kickin’ It Old Skool,” “The Guiding Light,” “The Miss America Pageant,” and many more. Jason is in his twentieth year of teaching the BMI Nashville Songwriters workshops. A regular contributor to BMI’s MusicWorld magazine, he presented a master class at the Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts (founded by Sir Paul McCartney), served as a consultant on the state of the music business for CNN International, and teaches songwriting throughout the U.S., Australia, New Zealand, Norway, Ireland, the U.K., Canada, Bermuda, and Jamaica. After twelve years as a staff-writer for Zomba Music, Blume now runs Moondream Music Group. For additional information about Jason’s online interactive critiques and webinars, latest books, instructional audio recordings, and workshops, visit www.jasonblume.com.

PANELIST BIOS

Mara Schwartz Kuge

Mara Schwartz Kuge is President and Founder of Superior Music Corporation, a full-service music publishing, and synch consulting company. Superior provides international collection, administration, synch pitching and licensing, creative and other services with an emphasis on artist relations. Kuge has 13 years of experience in music publishing, including heading the Film and TV Music departments at Bug Music (now BMG) and 10th Street Entertainment. She has placed hundreds of songs in various media and has signed major artists to publishing deals including Siobhan Fahey (Bananarama), the National, Grizzly Bear, M. Ward, of Montreal, Sleater-Kinney, Ursula 1000 and Mocean Worker.

David Quan

David Quan is the Senior Director of Publishing at Angry Mob Music where his duties including Business Affairs, Licensing, and Administration. He has over 25 years of Music Publishing and Music Licensing experience and has worked for such notable companies as BMG, Universal Music, PeerMusic, Leiber & Stoller, Music & Media, Sony Pictures and NBCUniversal. David holds a Bachelors of Science Degree in Marketing from the California State University, Los Angeles, and a Masters Degree in Business Administration with a concentration in Corporate Finance from the University of Southern California.

Ale Alberti

Born in Nashville, TN to Mexican-Cuban parents, Ale Alberti learned to love music at an early age. Growing up in a musical home, she was exposed to all kinds of music, both in Spanish and English. The family moved to Miami, FL. where she connected with her Latin-American roots and started developing as a Singer-Songwriter. By the time she was 16 she recorded her first solo album, which was nominated to a Latin Grammy for "Best New Artist." Using her success as a platform, she branched out into writing songs for other artists. By the time she was 20 yrs old she ventured to Mexico City, the music hub of Latin America. Her time there proved to be a sign of things to come. She rapidly took the industry by storm and started placing with major label artists such as Malu, Ha*Ash, Flans, Pandora, Carlos Rivera, Chenoa, Urband5; among others. Having set up a strong presence in Latin America, Ale decided to move to Los Angeles and expand her catalogue into the English market. She's currently working with major publishers and producers on worldwide projects in markets such as the US, Korea, Japan, and Latin America.

Mike City

As a producer, singer and songwriter, "Mike City" is the exception to the rule. Starting his professional career as a producer with the number one hit ("I Wish" by Carl Thomas) was anything but a fluke, as his feel good approach to music-making would be the catalyst to giving an array of artists their own voices, and styles while helping others reinvent themselves.

Born Michael Flowers, the Philly native's gift of music was passed down through a long line of talented singers including his mother and grandmother who were singers, as well as his father who sang with the Highway QC's and his brother who played with the legendary gospel group, "The Mighty Clouds of Joy". The one time barber nurtured his penchant for music at Central University in North Carolina where he obtained his bachelor's degree in liberal arts with a concentration on music voice. In the early 90's he began singing and rapping as a part of a group known as Choyce, but it was the blind faith and initiative of sending in a demo of his work to an A&R that garnered his first solo deal with Intersound records. "City", who got his name from a college buddy, made it his business to stay as visible as

possible by attending every music conference and networking at every turn, quickly gaining the respect of music makers with his unassuming humility and enormous talent.

An early believer in his innate musical ability and star power was then Uptown records head Heavy D. “Before even hearing any of my music, Heavy D told me I was going to be a star,” recalls the seasoned producer. However, it wasn’t until coming to the attention of Sean “P- Diddy” Combs that things began to change for City. “When my childhood friend Tuffy, who was in the group Channel Live, took me to Daddy’s house Diddy had already had his stable full with his Hitmen (producers) so when he walked in and didn’t know who I was he kicked me out in a round about way.” he laughingly remembers. As fate would have it, a week later when Diddy listened to the track for “I Wish” he was immediately hooked and a week later, Mike City was in the biggest recording studio at The Hit Factory, and the buzz was ignited. Birthing a new feeling in R&B music and crafting signature sounds for new talent including Carl Thomas, Jimmy Cozier and Sunshine Anderson immediately elevated “City” to the upper echelon of music makers virtually overnight. Engrossed in emotion when he writes a song, City’s ability for instrumentation is like a harmonious love affair between the music and the lyrics allowing the right talent to breath their own voice into the life of the music making it timeless and relevant. Whether its Pop, Gospel, Hip-Hop or R&B it’s all about the emotion behind the music for the transformative music maker who has created feel good hits for artists including: Babyface, Usher, Dave Hollister, Gerald Levert, Brandy, Rihanna, Yolanda Adams, Mary Mary, Nappy Roots, Kelly Price, Jamie Foxx and more.

Vincent Berry, II

2017 Grammy award winning producer Vincent Le’Carl Berry II was raised on the Eastside of Detroit, MI. Music is in Berry’s DNA; as being the son of a Pastor and growing up in the church, he participated in the church’s choir. He also comes from a long line of musical family history. Berry is truly a pure singer, songwriter, composer, and producer in every sense of the word. Berry simply has a passion for everything musical. Because of this he isn’t limited to just one genre, nor are his musical creations.

Berry is currently known as one of the industry’s elite up and coming stars. Most recently he secured a highly sought after and coveted Grammy for producing/writing on Beyoncé’s multi-award winning album, “Lemonade”. More specifically for, “Sandcastles” which won in the category of,

“Best Urban Contemporary Album of 2017”. Lemonade has instantly become a pop culture phenomenon. The album and film have provoked an intense worldwide discussion about race, feminism, social media and the music industry. It’s safe to say that Beyoncé and this album, along with the short film, have left its mark on the world; and Berry has the distinct honor to be able to say that he was a part of it.

Berry also co-wrote the single for Nico & Vinz titled “Our Love”, which is currently in radio rotation. He has also achieved a Billboard #1 album, when he co-produced and wrote the single “Kill the Dragon”, on Kierra Sheard’s album “Graceland”. This album also included compositions from notable songwriters Harmony Samuels, and songwriting legend Diane Warren. A month later, Berry wrote the single “Don’t

Say Goodbye” on the album “Promise to Love” by KEM, which was also a Billboard #1 album. Berry has gone on to place songs with phenomenal artist’s such as Britney Spears, Young Jeezy, Monica, Jeremih, Chrisette Michelle, Ashanti and Gospel Icons, James Fortune and Karen Clark Sheard, just to name a few. He has also had the privilege to work with juggernauts like Kanye West and Justin Bieber.

Singing, composing, and songwriting aren’t the only things Berry does. Along with producer and partner Timothy “Bosky” Bullock, they have founded the fully functioning multi-media company PressPlay, Inc. PressPlay Inc was founded on integrity and passion for producing, distributing, developing, and promoting its assets throughout the world. PressPlay Inc. has sold over 5 million records and counting.

Berry has created a unique style which has been influenced by the likes of, Charlie Pride, Barrett Strong, Rodney Jerkins, Holland-Dozier-Holland, Rascal Flatts, Sam Cook, Craig Wiseman, Smokey Robinson, Chris Tomlin, Michael Jackson and many more. Because of the style he has forged, he has great works in progress with the industries top artists such as, Trey Songz, John Legend and Mary J. Blige. So be sure to keep a watchful eye on this shooting star because he’s only just begun!

JHart

British born singer-songwriter James "JHart" Abrahart is one of the most sought after top-liners in the music industry. Raised in London and Atlanta, his ability to transcend genres in his songwriting truly reflects his diverse background. Recognized for his work with artists like Justin Bieber, Jason Derulo, Trey Songz, Fifth Harmony and Charlie Puth, JHart shows no sign of slowing down. He placed songs on the Furious 7 soundtrack, which reached #1 on Billboard's Top 200 chart and co-wrote singles for Rita Ora, Fleur East, Martin Garrix and Usher. In 2016, JHart co-wrote Justin Bieber's single "Company" and Keith Urban's single "Wasted Time". Platinum sales and chart-topping albums continue to demonstrate JHart’s talent as a songwriter.

Franny Graham

An alum of Berklee College of Music, Franny Graham, started his career as an engineer at Record Plant recording Studio in Hollywood. After ten years of working with artists like Michael Jackson, Kanye West, Madonna and Bruno Mars, he decided to switch his focus to A&R and management. In 2012 joined Electric Feel Management where he helped guide clients to hits such as "Work From Home" by Fifth Harmony, "Let Me Love You" by DJ Snake and "Needed Me" by Rihanna. Now a member of the team at APG, Franny oversees an accomplished roster of songwriters like Thomas Troelsen, Breyan Isaac, Cook Classics and J Mike.

A&RWORLDWIDE'S **MUSEXPO** 2017 UNITED NATIONS OF MUSIC

MUSEXPO "The United Nations of Music" returns to the **W Hotel Hollywood, CA**

(April 30th-3rdMay, 2017)

With a special focus on India, a unique approach to synchronization with a "Meet The Film Producer & Creatives" forum, digital/streaming,

block-chain, VR, global A&R, publishing, marketing, monetizing new global music platforms and markets and more!

Meet leaders of the global music business including **Pepsi**, Republic Records, BBC Radio, Spotify, FOX, EA Games, Ford Motor Co., Red Bull Records, WMG, Sony, Universal, Live Nation, Lava Records, Radio X (UK), Times Music India, peermusic, Peter Law Group, Music Week, KBK Germany, KornFerry, Atlantic, Disney Music Group, BMG, Only Much Louder, Canvas Talent, Eurosonic, Variety and 100's of others.

California Copyright Conference members are eligible for a **special preferred discount** on registration by visiting the "Industry News" section at www.theccc.org

For any questions, reach out to tyler@anrworldwide.com.

Special Thanks to Catharine Wood at Planetwood Studios for her contributions to the April 2017 panel!!

SAVE THE DATE: Tuesday, May 9th

Join us at the Sportsmen's Lodge Event Center
12833 Ventura Blvd., Studio City, CA 91604

6:15 PM Check-In | 6:30 PM Cocktails

7:00 PM Dinner

Please visit our website, theccc.org, for more information soon!

