

April 2010

www.islandsongwriters.org



Next Workshops

Monday, April 5th and
Monday, May 3rd at
Five Towns College.

Borders Open Mic

The next shows are
Friday, April 2nd and
Friday, May 7th
hosted by
Vincent Crici.

Writer's Choice

Find out what song won
on Page 2.

ISS "Rocks" the Hard-Luck Cafe

Details on page 2.

Songwriting in the Movies

~ Once ~

A wonderful story of
friendship and musical
collaboration, this film
follows a quirky Dublin
singer/songwriter and a
young girl he meets as
she's out walking her
vacuum cleaner.
This 2008 Oscar Winner
is available on DVD.

April Fools!

*Any intelligent fool can
make things bigger and
more complex... It takes
a touch of genius – and a
lot of courage to move in
the opposite direction.*

- Albert Einstein

Nothing But The Truth?

Who cares if it didn't really happen that way

BY SID CHERRY

"Write what you know". This piece of advice has probably been given to writers more often than any other. It can be a great way to get ideas and create with a sense of knowledge and authority. But, what if what you know isn't all that interesting?

The truth shall set you free.

Or it can shackle you like a prisoner on an Alabama road-gang. Too often writers have defended dull writing by saying "that's exactly how it happened". Yeah, well it's boring. Find a more interesting way to tell the same story or change what happened.

Is reality really real?

Television is crowded with reality shows. The reality is that most of those shows are cast like any other show. While they are usually not scripted, it is common knowledge that creators often manipulate friendships and romances and initiate fights and reconciliations to spark interest. The shows are then edited to leave out dead space. If they can do this and call it reality, surely songwriters can do it and call it a song.

Truth is stranger than fiction.

Sometimes. And sometimes it needs a little help. Many great songs and other works have been "based on" a true story but altered quite a lot. Often two or more different stories or characters are blended together to create a new piece. Usually elements are added that "could have happened" but probably didn't.

That's soooo romantic.

Let's face it, not all relationships are fireworks and shooting stars. While great songs have been written about the good old, put-down-the-toilet-seat kind of love, this world is in desperate need of heart-pounding romance. If your significant other has a name that just doesn't work in a song, use a pet name ("Honey", "Babe") or make up a new name. Then, till the end of time, you'll have people trying to guess the identity of your "Maria".

Leave history to the history books.

Does anyone really know what George Washington said when he stubbed his toe getting into his boat? Does any writer truly remember exactly what happened as they learned to ride a bicycle, sat in the principal's office or kissed their grade-school crush? Use what you remember to get going and then use your imagination to fill in the blanks.

Extraordinary, ordinary things.

Simple, little things can be amazing. Not everyone has the vision to see that. This is where a writer comes in. The writer creates the framework on which all the details are hung and the prism through which those details are seen. If you can write a wonderful song about staring at a gum wrapper, you've done what writers are supposed to do.

This is why you make the big bucks.

Listeners put on your songs because they want to hear your take on life and love, as long as you make your take more interesting than what's going on in their everyday lives. Keep doing that, and they will keep listening to you and buying your music.

ISS

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We're on the Web!

See us at

www.islandsongwriters.org

Resources

TaylorGuitars.com

Interesting and informative website loaded with how-to videos with tips on playing, maintenance and repair of acoustic and electric guitars.

Submit your helpful resources to:
sidcherry@optonline.net

Writer's Choice: "Suitcase" by Sid Cherry

Who Played What

Here is a list of the performers and songs from the March workshop:

Hank Stone - *Apprentice cook*
Andrew Kirshner - *Thinking of you*
Al V'nac - *(I don't want to say) Goodbye to you*
Mark Hussey - *You don't have to get down*
Marguerite Cassell - *Vichyssoise*
Bob Schryver - *Trouble*
Dave Anthony - *Lucky Man*
Frank Gambino - *They love each other so*
Sid Cherry - *Suitcase*
Estelle Henrich - *They all live in harmony*
Susan Choen - *(name this song)*
Mike Svezia - *Crazy baby*
Ken Krumenacker - *Lifetime warranty*
Vin Gangi - *Travelin' ladies man*
Phil Scully - *Yeah I'm country*
Mike Bersten - *Till there was you*

ISS "Rocks" the Hard Luck Café

by Walter Sargent (from ISS Website)

On March 20th, ISS Members Ken Krumenacker, Suzanne Ernst, Sid Cherry, Susan Cohen, Estelle Hendrich, and Hank Stone appeared at the Hard Luck Café's ISS Night. The event was very well attended and very well received. With a little help from Denis Romas, Mike Christian and Walt Sargent, they presented songs written or co-written by eleven ISS members that evening.

"I Wish I'd Written That Song."

"I Know Love Is All I Need" by Rodney Crowell

By Pedro Pereira

I remember hearing the songs in Rodney Crowell's "The Houston Kid" (2001) as if it just happened yesterday. "Telephone Road" (Track 1) drew me in, but it's the last track, "I Know Love Is All I Need," that sticks to my mind the most. Over the years I have worked up a simple version of it and played it live with my violinist friend Andrew White. The lyrics are so pure and genuine, and they are set atop a simple, gorgeous melody. The guitar playing is tasty and tasteful, and the vocal is just right – showing just enough emotion without crossing into the maudlin or melodramatic. Yeah, I wish I'd written that.

-Send in your "I Wish I'd Written That Song" to: sidcherry@optonline.net

Monthly Workshop

Test your songs in front of a crowd by playing them for fellow musicians who will provide constructive feedback with the goal of helping you improve as a songwriter. The ISS workshop takes place the first Monday of every month, except holidays, at Five Towns College, off Burrs Lane in Dix Hills. The workshop starts at 8:00 p.m., with performer sign-up beginning at 7:30 p.m. Bring a guitar if you wish to perform your song live, or you may bring a recording on CD or tape. A piano is available for those who write their songs at the keys. Be sure to bring 20-25 copies of your lyric sheets so the other workshop attendees can follow along while listening to your song. It is much easier to provide constructive criticism when people can read the lyrics. The ISS workshop is at the center of the organization's mission to help songwriters perfect their craft. Many performers on Long Island got their start at ISS.

General Information

For general information about ISS or how to join the organization, visit our web site, www.islandsongwriters.org. To submit items for publication in the newsletter, contact Sid Cherry at sidcherry@optonline.net.