

SongwritersNotes

29 Years Supporting San Diego Songwriters

Volume XXV • December 2011

The San Diego Songwriters Guild

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SDSG Holiday Party Saturday, December 17

Outgoing SDSG President Sandi Gugliotti has pulled out all the stops, so come join us for some Holiday Cheer at the Ballroom within the Sorrento Valley Country Inns & Suites on the 17th, **from 4pm to 8pm**. Admission is **free!** Sandi has lined up a great group of performers to regale us in song. We'll also have time for an open jam, so bring your instrument and enthusiasm. We'll be providing food and treats, and there will be a cash bar for drinks. We do hope to see (and hear) you there!

Country Inns & Suites 5975 Lusk Boulevard, San Diego 92121 (858) 558-1818

Pitch Session with Durango Songwriters Expo's

Jim Attebery

SDSG opens our 30th year with a chance to meet and have your songs heard and critiqued by **Jim Attebery**, the co-founder and President of **The Durango Songwriter's Expo**, for 16 years, one of America's premier singer-songwriter events.

Not only will we be starting the year off with a hot pitch session, but also a great opportunity to meet the 2012 President of the San Diego Songwriters Guild, **Tim Mudd!** We are looking forward to offering many opportunities our members in the upcoming year, so please join us as we connect with one another and welcome our new President.



The Expo is held twice a year, once in Santa Barbara Wine Country, (this year's event is March 1-4) and again in October in Boulder, Colorado. With over 40 music industry pros and hit songwriters present and registration limited to 200 attendees, the Expo is an unparalleled networking opportunity and one of the few songwriters' events where participants get their music heard extensively by established industry vets. For more info about Durango, visit them at www.durango-songwriters-expo.com

Jim is a songwriter, producer, and studio owner who has worked with a variety of bands and artists and has written music for film and tv for many years. He will be joined on the dais by SDSG's Diane Waters, and offer critiques on submissions. Pitch attendees will, we're sure, find the meeting enjoyable and informative. Additionally, Jim will be giving away a couple of free entry's to the Durango "Write With a Hit Songwriter Contest" at the end of the pitch session.

We are excited to bring the flavor of Durango to San Diego on January 16 Pitch and look forward to seeing you at the Country Inns and Suites, 5975 Lusk Boulevard, San Diego

Monday, January 16, 2012 Registration Opens at 6:00 PM

SDSG Memberships available at SDSongwriters.org or at the door.

Admission is free to SDSG Members, \$10 for non-members.

Pitch fee is \$5 per song, two song maximum per writer or writing team.



From the Songwriters's Desk

I've been hanging around these parts for something like 17 years, having joined SDSG just prior to its Third Annual Song Contest. With the conclusion of our 20th Contest, I reflected back on some of the changes we've witnessed within and around the Guild over this period. The Internet has changed everything in our world, and nothing has been more profoundly effected than the music business. And these changes don't stop at the marketing and distribution of music; they extend to the very core of our methods of creation and performance.



Despite it all, the basic mission of SDSG is still vibrant and pertinent today. In addition to the eternal search for the Next Big Song, the one thing that hasn't changed in this business is the importance of personal relationships. And there are few places one will encounter the opportunities to build the kind of relationships afforded by SDSG Pitch Sessions. Don't miss out on these great chances to hear and be heard.

As we welcome Tim Mudd as SDSG's incoming President for 2012, simultaneously retaining outgoing President Sandi Gugliotti as an advisor specializing in SDSG Events (not to mention the other great SDSG Staffers who continue to serve the Guild), I am excited by the prospects SDSG offers its members. Please take a minute and read Tim's Letter on Page 3. Our new President brings a tremendous skill set to SDSG, and he is a heck of a nice guy to boot! I anticipate great things are in store for this organization in the coming months and years.

I'd like to thank Sandi for her work as SDSG's President in 2010-2011. As she notes in her Letter on Page 5, she and her family have been battling some big-time challenges for some time now. I have been consistently amazed at the level of dedication she exhibited throughout her tenure as President. Sandi, I am so glad you will continue to assist SDSG as we move forward. Your service has been, and will continue to be, greatly appreciated.

Happy New Year... may yours be joyful and prosperous! See you December 17 for the Holiday Party, and then on January 16, 2012 with Jim Attebery.

Mark Charles Hattersley

Around Town with SDSG

SDSG will be strengthening our ties within the San Diego songwriting community in the months ahead. Look for columns from **San Diego Songwriters Meetup's Cliff Keller**, and stop by <http://www.meetup.com/SDSongwriters> for more info on this great group, which meets every other Wednesday.



SDSG Member **Stacy Kim** is releasing her debut CD "**Dream**" and is hosting a CD Release Party on **Thursday, December 8**, 6pm - 9pm at San Pasqual Winery Tasting Room located in the Village of La Mesa at 8364 La Mesa Blvd. The party is featuring a Limited Live Acoustic Performance at 7PM, Complimentary Appetizers, Cash Bar for Wine, and Signed CD's. All Ages Welcome... Congratulations Stacy!!

Cathryn Beeks advises us about upcoming Listen Local events, like **Dec. 15th** Arts,Crafts,Music at Winstons and a **Dec. 22nd** Holiday party and holiday songs at Winstons... all info can be found at listenlocalsd.com

A Letter from Incoming SDSG President Tim Mudd

Dear Songwriters:

I've been feeling a little bit like Robert California recently. For those of you who don't watch NBC's Thursday night sitcom *The Office*, allow me to elaborate:

Earlier this year, when Steve Carell departed the series that made him a star, an in-house committee was formed to find a suitable replacement for his role as Michael Scott, Dunder Mifflin's Scranton, PA Branch Manager. The interview process produced a few famous cameos. But, the candidate who impressed, and terrified, the hiring committee the most was Robert California played brilliantly by James Spader.

On his first day Robert California walked into the reception area of his new office and took a steady look at the workers before him. Without saying a word, he promptly turned around, got in his car and drove to Tallahassee, FL where he talked the CEO of Dunder Mifflin's parent company out of her job; a position he then assumed and continues to fill to this day.

While my previous experience should not be discounted; I only joined SDSG in July of 2011. I entered the November Song Contest. One conversation led to another. Just under a month later I'm sitting here writing my inaugural entry as incoming President for the monthly newsletter. How very "Robert California" of me.

I would hope, however, that my similarities with James Spader's characterization of a mind-game playing mentor with a creepy tendency of staring into the souls of others end there. I am humbled by the honor of assuming Presidential duties for SDSG and excited to work closely with the existing team, and board members, to grow the Guild's relevance within the community.

Ultimately, the achievement of this mandate will have little to do with me. The success of any group is gained from the sum of its parts. In this case that means you. If you didn't feel this way, you wouldn't pay your membership dues every year, nor would you participate in any of our fantastic events. You're part of this organization for a reason. I want to make sure you get the most for your money, time, and energy.

My first and ongoing order of business will be to listen to you. I'm not just talking about your music. What do you like about the Guild? What do you feel could be improved upon? And, most importantly, do you have ideas to help us grow? If you want to roll-up your sleeves and get more involved I, indeed all of us on the board, would welcome it. Send an email or come and chat at one of our many events. Our ears are always open. Naturally, we're songwriters.

Let's resolve to start the new year with two-way open-communication that will create a year of success for us all. I wish you and yours the happiest and safest Holiday season and look forward to getting to know all of you in 2012.

Warmest regards,

Tim

Tim Mudd is a singer, guitarist and songwriter from the south-east of England. Having moved to southern California in his early twenties, he spent the following decade honing his craft between his formative band and solo ventures that found him touring through North America and Europe. During this time he also solidified his reputation as a seasoned open mic host, competition judge and in 2010 was Arbitron rated #1 at night as an on-air personality for KyXy 96.5FM.

Most recently, the majority of Tim's creative output has laid with the Americana group For Strangers & Wardens, which he co-founded with Wisconsin native Cody Williams.

Besides his musical work, Tim is also an accomplished writer, designer, voice-over artist and journalist of his local music community. Every now and again, he also enjoys taking the odd photograph.



TIPS for "It's Who You Know and Who Knows You" NETWORKING

By Tracey & Vance Marino

"I REALLY WANT TO KNOW YOU"

Written & Performed by Gary Wright

Having a great song is not enough. Networking and meeting people are among the keys to success in the music business. These are basic, common-sense pointers -- introduced by a famous song title. These tips don't lie!

Starting out several years ago, we didn't know anyone. And it really held us back. We were what you'd call "wallflowers" – shy and intimidated when we'd meet people because we had no credits. It was frustrating. So, we asked ourselves, "How do we get over this? How do we meet people? And how do we really get to know them?" It seemed impossible. But we eventually figured it out, and we'd like to share some of our "secrets" about how we did it.

- Talk to the person next to you. This seems obvious, but when going to a music-industry event it's a good idea to talk to the person sitting next to you. We missed a lot of opportunities because we just wanted to maul the people on the panels. Eventually, we opened up to people sitting next to us and many have become good friends. Several have referred us for jobs -- and we've referred them for jobs over the years. And several told us about songwriting and composing organizations that have led to success. The best way to start the conversation? Say, for example, "Hi, my name is Suzie Songwriter. Have you been to this event before?" And ask for a business card so you can listen to that person's music. It's that easy.
- Get to know representatives from your PRO (Performing Rights Organization). We've been introduced to publishers and music libraries because we got to know reps from our PRO, which in our case is BMI. You don't have to meet the rep in person. Calling and sending emails can

work just as well. They DO like it when you ask them for advice! One of our friends emailed his PRO rep several times in the past month to meet for coffee, his treat. When they were finally able to arrange a date this past week, the PRO rep treated our friend to a terrific meal and they had a long, informative two-hour conversation.

- Send follow-up emails or notes. After we meet people, we send a sincere email (or even a handwritten thank you note) saying, for example, "It was a pleasure meeting you and thank you for taking the time to talk on the panel." Or, "Hi Gary, We enjoyed talking to you and listening to your music on your website. We especially enjoyed your song 'I Really Want To Know You'." We almost always get a response from that person. Over time, if you keep in touch, you will probably see this person again at another event -- and it's likely to be the beginning of a beautiful friendship.

This is one of the biggest keys to our success. People are flattered when we take the time to get to know them better.

Enjoy the journey!

Tracey & Vance Marino are a film/TV composing and songwriting team who have had their music placed in TV shows such as "Oprah Winfrey," "Dr. Oz," and "Nate Berkus." Their song "Carnival Lights" was placed in the Disney/Touchstone Pictures film "The Last Song," starring Miley Cyrus. Other placements include: "Access Hollywood," "Bad Girls Club," "CMT Cribs," "Man v. Food," Jillian Michaels "Fitness Ultimatum 2011" DVD, among many others. For upcoming music industry events in the San Diego and Los Angeles areas, visit their events page at www.SongMakerPro.com/events.



A letter from SDSG President Sandi Gugliotti

With the year coming to an end, I want to take a moment to really thank our members and supporters for everything that you have participated in with the Guild in 2011. Our close knit music community is one of the best in the nation, and the talent of our Songwriters and Performers makes San Diego my favorite place to live.

During 2011, I have been through the ringer, so to speak, with several medical surgeries and emergencies with my daughter, Carly, who is two years of age. As I look on toward 2012, I am realizing that these challenges are far from over. More surgeries are on the calendar, and there is a new obstacle in Carly's recovery: Doctors "suspect" that she might be Autistic and will require therapy four days a week, in addition to everything else.

With that being said, I have decided to resign as your President, and hand the reigns over to someone who can and will guide the Guild forward. I would like to introduce, Tim Mudd (See this Video- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YBCJUj2mbAY> for Tim at work,)

Tim has an extensive background in Music, and we will be doing a full article on him when he starts in January. He will also be present for you to meet him in person, on January 16 during the scheduled Pitch Session with our Guest Jim Attebery. Most importantly, Tim has the technical expertise to increase the Guild's presence in Social Media and on the web. He also has great management and communication skills.

I will continue to be part of the Guild's team by staying on as an advisor, and assisting with event planning. SO... I have a great event planned for all of us coming up in less than two weeks; we rented the ballroom at the Country Inn on Lusk Blvd. for SDSG's Third Annual Holiday Party. Saturday- December 17th- from 4pm to 8pm. Admission is Free!

Here are the Acoustic Performers we've lined up:

*2011 Winner of the Performing Songwriter's Contest- **The Reverend Stickman***

*Second Place Winner of the 2011 Song Contest- **Sara Petite***

Celia St. Croix

Vanity Affair

Chelsea Flor

Annie Rettic- SDSG's Treasurer

Eddie Jason Coven

and Maynard Evans

We will also have a time for an open jam, so bring a guitar. We will provide some food and treats and there will be a cash bar for drinks. Please come out and finish out the year with us, with some good jams and good times.

Thank you all for allowing me to serve you, it has been my pleasure. Peace Out All!

Sandi

DEFAULTING TO THE NEAREST CLICHÉ

by Harriet Schock

Computer language is replete with analogies. For instance, I think metaphors are like icons which can be dragged across the screen containing loads of information under them. And I think when we give in to using clichés, it's like we're using a default setting in our creative psyches.

Cliches can be musical or lyrical. They can be patterns created by our predecessors or patterns we have set, ourselves. I had a student recently who had written the phrase "tenderly kiss" and I asked him why he needed the "tenderly." He said he'd heard it in about 30 songs and thought it should be in his. Eventually he saw that as the reason why it should not be in his. But like the old pair of shoes that's ruining our feet, clichés are so comfortable. They slide on so easily. But they generally look worn-out.

Leaving the play, Julius Caesar, I overheard an audience member complain that Shakespeare was riddled with clichés. I had to laugh. I suppose it never occurred to this person that the lines became famous after he wrote them. We could all hope for that. But for the most part, the clichés in songwriting are just things we default to when we're lazy or temporarily forgetful. It takes constant vigilance to avoid them.

What's so bad about clichés? The world is full of them, right? In my opinion, the danger of clichés is that they allow the listener to escape. As long as you're communicating with impact, the listener will be there, interested. But have you ever said a word over and over and over and suddenly it has no meaning? As a child, did you ever say "January, January, January, January..." until you started laughing because it sounded so odd? It no longer communicated "January." I often marvel that 80-year-old Roman Catholic Priests can have said the same service every week for over half a century and still understand what the words mean. Overuse robs individual words and word groups of their meaning. So what do we do to avoid them?

One way around clichés is to be as specific as possible. The pictures you pull out to tell your story with are the real tools of your lyric writing. And the more specific those pictures are, the more unique to your experience, the less likely they are to be clichés. No one else has had the exact experience you have, so if you describe it in detail, it will be uniquely yours. These details can be visual, aural, tactile and olfactory; I just use the word "picture" to cover all the senses.

So far we've been talking about lyric clichés, and those which were created by our predecessors, but what about musical ones and ones we create, ourselves? Often we create our own musical clichés by defaulting to comfortable chord changes and melodic patterns. It's good to have a recognizable style, but not to the point that all your songs

sound alike. One way to get away from this type of cliché is to write away from the instrument you write on. Your ear may not go to those patterns your hands are slaves to. So if you write as long as you can away from the instrument, you can sometimes break through those musical default clichés. Another way to avoid them is by playing in a key that's unfamiliar. Sometimes you'll hit a chord, not knowing what you're playing and it'll be great. It's like the old joke: What does a jazzer do when he plays a wrong note? He plays it again. Carlos Olmeda wrote a song called "Dear Ana" which I love. There's one particular chord I wait for with great anticipation. One night I asked him how he got that chord and he admitted it was a mistake that he loved when he heard it so he kept it. It's so unsuspected. It's thrilling when it happens that way.

A few years ago, it seemed like once Bobby Brown had used that unexpected diminished chord in "My Prerogative," everyone was using it. It's delightful to find something original, musically, because the pull to default to the nearest cliché in chord progressions is as strong as gravity. Melody also falls victim to it as people color within the lines by avoiding those non-chordal tones which can create such nice tension and interest.

Stephen King talks about writing to one imaginary reader. The next time you write a song, maybe you could write it for an imaginary listener. And when you do, and you feel like defaulting to the nearest cliché, ask yourself if your imaginary listener would still be listening. If not, then try one of the solutions I've mentioned above. Or make up one of your own! And if it works, let me know what it is.

Harriet Schock wrote the words and music to the Grammy-nominated #1 hit for Helen Reddy, "Ain't No Way To Treat A Lady" plus many songs for other artists, TV shows and films. She co-wrote the theme for "Jakers! The Adventures of Piggley Winks," currently showing in 30 countries. She and her band were featured in Henry Jaglom's film "Irene In Time" performing 4 of Harriet's songs. She also scored two other Jaglom films and will star in the upcoming movie "Just 45 Minutes from Broadway," currently in post-production. Harriet is in the process of writing the songs for "Last of the Bad Girls," a musical with book by Diane Ladd. Karen Black wrote the play, "Missouri Waltz," around five of Harriet's songs, which ran for 6 weeks at the Blank Theatre in Hollywood as well as in Macon, Georgia. Harriet teaches songwriting privately, in classes and online. In 2007, L.A. Women In Music honored Harriet a Career Achievement and Industry Contribution award. For her performance schedule, list of credits and samples of her work or information on book or (Becoming Remarkable, for Songwriters and Those Who Love Songs), her songwriting classes and consultation, go to www.harrietschock.com.

Winners!

2011 SDSG Song Contest

Grand Prize Winner **Lindsey White "Ring Around the Roses"**
Full-Day Recording Session with Signature Sound
Consultation with Kevin Thomas Music
\$300 from SDSG

Second Prize Winner **Sara Petite "Ashes"**
Three Hour Production Session with Club Bohemia Productions
\$50 from SDSG

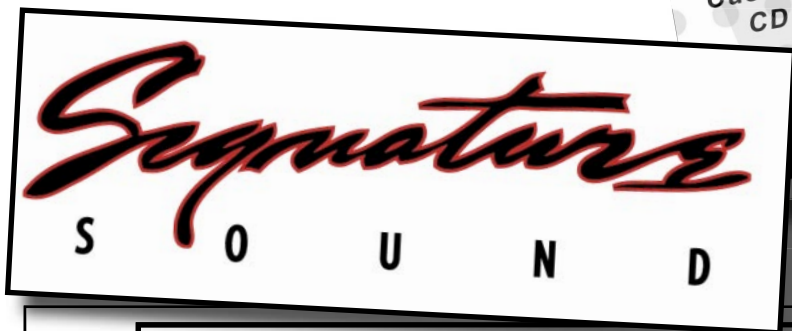
Third Prize Winner **Veronica May & Lindsey White "Oh My"**
CD Cover/Logo from Beach City Graphics
Acoustic Guitar Accessories Bundle from Guitar Trader

Runners up:

Miff Laracy "The One the Road Leads To"
 Tim Mudd "Trouble On The Vine"
 Rick Harchol "I Believe in Love"
 Brian Darnell "Gone"
 Brian Darnell "Lookin' Like Rain"
 Kendrick Dial "Eryka Hill"
 Dennis J Whitener "Leave A Memory"
 Jim Arnegard "Empty Cup"
 Kathy Keogh "Shake It Til it Hurts"
 David Cavanaugh "Coins"

The 2011 SDSG Song Contest, our 20th annual such event, was held on November 7, and was another great success. Thanks to our judges **Josquin des Pres Gregory Page, Diane Waters, and Kevin Thomas**, as well as our sponsors, and, of course, the contestants whose submissions were of a very high caliber. What an interesting, original, and well-written collection of music we heard!

Special Thanks go to our SDSG Support Team who pulled yeoman's duty as our sign in and tabulation crew; they kept things cool at what could have been major stress points. **John Pape**, SDSG's Webmaster, entered all the data generated by our panel of judges; 2010-2011 SDSG President **Sandi Gugliotti** and Treasurer **Annie Rettic** rolled through the sign-in table storm in style, doing a wonderful job making sure every entry was accounted for.



SDSG Sponsors

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 619 823 3917

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MusicPower.com
 7120 Clairemont Mesa Blvd (858) 565-8814

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San Diego Songwriters Guild

Holiday Party
December 17, 2011

Durango Songwriters Pitch
January 16, 2012

2011 Contest Winners

Tips from Pro Writers
Vance & Tracey Marino
Harriet Schock

2012 President
Tim Mudd

SDSongwriters.org

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SongWritersNotes

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Address Correction Requested

SDSG Holiday Party
December 17 @ 4pm