

THE CONCEPT

THE FOCUS: "What do I want to say?"

THE VEHICLE: "How do I want to say it?"

THE TARGET: "To Whom do I want to say it?"

- Do I Want to Express or Communicate?
 - How Important is it that I be Understood ?
 - Do I want to present my message:
 - Attitudinally
 - Situationally
 - Story
 - Do I want the listener to:
 - Feel
 - Think
 - Act
- "Setting the Bar for Yourself"

What kind of music will best support this message and best resonate with this target audience?

The 5 Pillars of a Song

MUSIC
(Interaction of the five musical parameters)

STRUCTURE
Song Form and Format

LYRICS

SEMANTICS
The Meaning and Clarity of the Words

PROSODICS
Alignment of Word Accents with Music Accents

PHONETICS
Shaping the Physical Sound of the Words Independent of their Meaning

- | MELODY | HARMONY | RHYTHM | DYNAMICS | TIMBRE |
|---|---|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distance Between Successive Notes • Range ? • For voice or Instrument? • Tonal Center? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chord Progression • Surprises or Expected? • Out-of-Chord notes or Out-of-Scale roots? • Key Change? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Duple/Tuple • Articulation • Syncopation • 1 -3 -2 -4 • Tempo | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loud/Soft • Accents • Crescendo • Dynamic Range? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coloration (What Instrument is playing?) • EQ Setting • Acoustic or Digital Sound ? • Later Considerations for Production |

MacroStructure (Verse/Chorus/Bridge)
 ABABAB
 ABABCB
 ABABCAB
 AACA
 AAA
 Can have another "A" or a "B" at start
 Variation, Tag, Climb, Outro, Interlude
 • Distinct musical identity for each section.
 • Verse-to-chorus: "and that's why I say..."

MicroStructure (Verse-to-Verse Consistency)
 • Rhyme Scheme
 • Cross-Verse Rhyme
 • Melodic Consistency
 • Song Map

Song Format (Presentation Structure)
 • List (image/Statement/Fact/Vignette)
 • Story
 • Flow of Time
 • DO NOT MIX !

- Over-arching metaphor (Conceit)
- Balance of Concrete vs Abstract references
- Semantic Field Consistency
- Tone Constancy
- No mixed metaphors
- Are all references supported by context ?
- Cinematic Clarity (Key of "W")
 - WHO is singing to whom?
 - WHAT is the situation & motivation ?
 - WHEN is this occurring (Does it matter ?)
 - WHERE is this occurring (Does it matter?)
 - WHY is the singer saying these things?
 - HOW is it being resolved?
- Correct verb tenses and grammar
- Point of View (I/You vs He/She)
- Use of Irony ?
- Are you asking the listener to read your mind ? (Hint: They can't!)
- Mood Consistency - (happy, sad, angry, humorous, etc)
- True to human nature? Logical?
- Does every line deliver NEW information?
- Why should a total stranger care?

- Linking lyric cadence and music accents
- Repetitive metrical feet?
- Syllable Accents Correct?
- Rhetorical Accents Correct?
- Principle of Contrastive Stress
- White Space / Enjambment issues
- Duple/Tuple lyrical flow
- Follow conversational flow
- Prosody Song Map
- Alignment with musical accents
- No wrenched accents
- Anacruses ?
- Verse-to-verse consistency in number of accents per line
- Melodic inflection points used properly
- Strong beat/weak beat phrasing
- Do not confuse Prosody (linking of music and lyric accents) with Marriage which is the matching of musical "feel" to lyrical "mood"

- Perfect Rhyme
- Consistent Rhyme Scheme (simple[, complex, cross-verse)
- Fresh interesting rhyme
- Assonance (used to augment, not substitute for rhyme)
- Alliteration (used in multi combos?)
- Para-Rhyme (multi combos?)
- Lexical Repetition ?
- Verse-to-verse ping-point consistency
- Phonetic song map - is it active or empty?
- Every unneeded syllable removed ?

PRODUCTION --- ARRANGEMENT --- RECORDING --- PERFORMANCE

MUSIC ARRANGEMENT

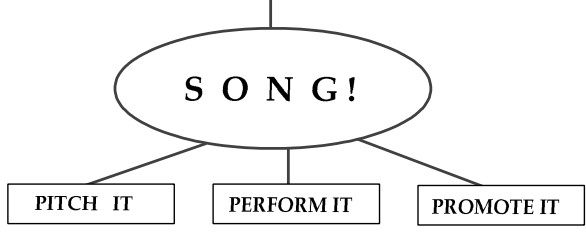
VOCAL PERFORMANCE (Delivery of the interaction of all Semantic, Prosodic, and Phonetic Parameters)

- Does the arrangement serve the vocal and lyrics, or is the voice just another instrument ?
- Are Dynamics used effectively
- Do the timbral choices allow each instrument and vocal to have their own sonic space ?
- Intro no more than 9-14 seconds

PROSODY
 • Music & Lyric accents aligned ?
 • Written properly and performed properly?

MARRIAGE
 Do the music and lyrics work together in terms of mood , feel, style ?
 (Note: This is often confused with "prosody" -- it is not. Prosody is accent alignment.)

- Vocal Delivery: Elision, Cognates, Enunciation, Glottal Stops, Vowel Formants, Oronyms
- Is the Voice serving the song, or Song serving the Voice?
- Are vocal decorations (melisma) appropriate or distracting?
- Comfortable key for highest/lowest notes ?
- Space for breaths?
- Is the goal to have a great production& recording that happens to have words, or to have great words that are served by the production and recording?
- Backing & Harmony vocals ?



For more, see "Songcrafters" Coloring Book: The Essential Guide to Effective and Successful Songwriting by Bill Pere

ANATOMY OF A SONG

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CREATION
CRAFTING
PRODUCTION (Realization)
BUSINESS (Proliferation)