

# SongWritersNotes

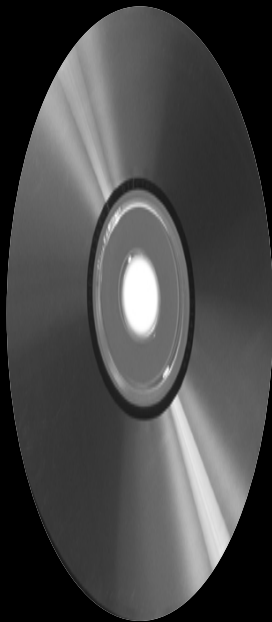
The Newsletter for San Diego Songwriters

Volume 13 • July/August 1999

Published by  
**The San Diego  
Songwriters Guild**

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*Monday, August 16, 1999*

## *Peter Bunetta Amanda McBroom*

*Artist Pitch and Discussion*

Very special guests for our August pitch, indeed! Producer par excellence, **Peter Bunetta** knows how to put together all the pieces necessary to make HITS, having produced the **Smokey Robinson "One Heartbeat"** album, **Patti LaBelle's** Grammy-winning "**New Attitude**" and many others like... **Robbie Dupree's** Top 10 singles "**Steal Away**" & "**Hot Rod Hearts**", **Matthew Wilder's** Top 10 Single "**Ain't Nothin' Gonna Break My Stride**", **Michael Bolton's "Soul Provider"** and "**Love Cuts Deep**", the **Pointer Sisters, The Temptations, Jonny Mathis, Kenny G, Peabo Bryson, Judy Collins**, and many more. SDSG is proud to offer its members this chance to meet and greet one of America's premier producers.

Joining Peter will be **Amanda McBroom**, who is best described as a "one-woman whirlwind of the arts." In the last few years she has acted on television and the stage, written many songs for recording artists, television and film, recorded six albums, started her own recording label, appeared live in concert internationally and written, produced and starred in her own musical. Her song writing successes include the number one hit "**The Rose**," recorded by **Bette Midler**, as well as songs recorded by **Manhattan Transfer, Anne Murray, Barry Manilow, Judy Collins, Barbara Cook** and **Stephanie Mills**. Amanda also wrote lyrics for many of the songs in the experimental TV series "**Cop Rock**," and TV themes for programs including "**The Young and the Restless**." She was nominated for an Emmy for her song featured on "**As the World Turns**" and wrote songs for the video releases of "**Land Before Time**" and "**Hercules and Xena**."

Peter and Amanda will discuss the music business and answer questions. Peter will also do a pitch: he is mainly looking for new, young bands with at least a limited budget. This is an unbelievable opportunity for a young band to get produced by one of the best! Come to the Doubletree with your best work in hand, on cued cassette or CD. Registration starts at 6:30 pm. Please see "The Pitch Session" on page 7 for details and fees. - **Ellen Silverstein**

*July 19 Seminar  
John Dawes  
See Page 3*

# From the President's Desk . . .

• Is analog warm or fuzzy? • Is digital precise or is it sterile? • If you have the choice, what should you record on? I recorded my first CD in 1995 on 8 track analog tape. I got to work with that medium and find out what it was like. At the time, the engineer I was working with said he preferred analog because it was "warmer" than digital. Within three years, however, he had switched over to Pro-Tools. Now my second CD is nearly completed, and I have had quite an education in working within the digital world. In my opinion, for whatever that's worth, there is no comparison. Digital is better.



With analog tape you have to keep doing one take after another until you get the perfect take. Sometimes you have to settle for one that is only "good enough." Sure, a good engineer can punch you in so that you don't have to do the whole guitar solo or vocal again. He may even be able to splice together two or three takes to get a good one, but digital makes it all easier. With Pro-Tools, splicing together two or three takes is like editing a document on a word processor.

There are a lot of other shortcuts offered by the digital medium. The engineer can permanently edit the volume of your voice or instrument to be soft during some passages and louder than others so that he doesn't have to feed it through a compressor or keep his hand on the volume knob during mix down. If you buzz strings on a chord he can take the same chord from another part of the progression and replace it. With analog tape every time you dub from one tape player to another you add noise and reduce fidelity. In the digital world you can bounce back and forth repeatedly and never lose fidelity or add noise. And if you go off key during a vocal take (God forbid) the engineer can probably fix it.

Some people may argue that this is somehow deceptive, that these tools might make an artist sound better than he or she does in real life. My answer is that almost all albums are bigger than life anyway. In the analog days artists routinely doubled vocal parts, harmonies, etc. On the simplest analog recording the average band or artist sounds much better than in real life. Digital just takes it a little farther.

You get the picture. One important reality though, is that digital will not make a great player out of a mediocre player and it will not make a great song out of a bad one. It simply makes the whole process easier, gives you more options, and makes you sound better. In my opinion the higher cost of most digital studios is justified...you save money in the long run because you have to do fewer takes.

As far as digital not sounding as warm as analog, well, I can't hear the difference. Can you?

-Tony Taravella



## What's Going On?

Plenty! Here's the run down...

**LIVE SHOWCASES AT THE COFFEE BEAN & TEA LEAF**, 3865 5th Avenue, Hillcrest, from 7 to 10 pm every Friday in July.

**IN-HOUSE CRITIQUE SESSION AT TWIGG'S GREEN ROOM-**

Corner of Park and Madison in Hillcrest, on Tuesday, July 27, 7 pm until ? Also on Tuesday, Aug. 31, 7pm until ?

**LIVE SHOWCASE AT LESTAT'S COFFEE HOUSE**, 3343 Adams Avenue, in Hillcrest, on Tuesday, Sept. 14, from 8 to 11 pm.

**NEXT SDSG BOARD MEETING: MONDAY, JULY 12** at the Doubletree Lounge. 6:30 pm.

**OPEN MIC MONTHLY AT SEASIDE HALL PRODUCED BY KRISTOPHER STONE** Last Friday of each month, 7:00 PM  
1010 Second St., Encinitas, CA (S-E corner of "I" street, big parking lot) 760-436-5431

**THE ARTIST AND SONGWRITER'S NETWORKING GROUP** meets the second Tuesday of every month. The next meeting is Tuesday, July 13 at 7 p.m. in Carmel Valley. The cost is \$10.00 The focus of the group is critiquing songs, problem solving, making new contacts, and supporting each other. Call Ellen Silverstein, Never Off Key Music to RSVP and get directions. (858)259-8831

**FORUM SHOWCASE AT THE DOUBLETREE CLUB MAX, EVERY MONDAY.** We've been hanging out after SDSG meetings. You should have seen Marcus Barone go! If you have questions or suggestions, please feel free to call Judy Ames at (619) 222-6991

**THE 1999 UNISONG INTERNATIONAL SONG CONTEST IS UNDER WAY.** Created by songwriters...for songwriters. \$50,000 in Cash and Prizes! The contest is open to songwriters of all ages throughout the world and is again offering a Grand Prize that is not awarded by any other songwriting competition. The Grand Prize Winner will participate in the latest Music Bridges songwriting collaboration event to take place in Australia. At the Unisong website you can read the journal kept by Ruth Merry, 1998 Unisong Grand Prize Winner, while she participated in the "Music Bridges...Over Troubled Waters" project in Havana. Other prizes include \$2000 USD to each of the 11 category winners, a track on Film Music magazine's Film & Television Music Compilation CD program (\$1550 value), Pignose Legendary Amplifiers, songwriter magazine subscriptions, TAXI memberships and much more! Entry deadline is October 15, 1999. Enter before August 1st to take advantage of our early bird entry fees. Get your entry form and full details regarding the competition on the Web at: <http://www.unisong.com> To receive a brochure by mail, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to: Unisong ISC, 7095 Hollywood Blvd., #1015, Hollywood, CA 90028 or call our 24 hour voicemail at: (213) 673-4067. Contact: Rebecca Page at [rebecca@neonflame.com](mailto:rebecca@neonflame.com)

The **NORTHERN CALIFORNIA SONGWRITERS ASSOCIATION'S NINETEENTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE**, slated for Saturday and Sunday, September 11 & 12, 1999, promises to be the best yet. Call Ian Crombie at NCSA for details about Markus Barone's scene scoring contest.

For info call (650) 654-3966, FAX: (650) 654-2156 or email [info@ncsasong.org](mailto:info@ncsasong.org) The NCSA's web site is at [www.ncsasong.org](http://www.ncsasong.org)

Additional details on page 5 of this issue of Songwriters Notes.

### MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:

The Guild wants to promote those of you who have had successes through our pitch sessions, related events, or whatever. Email [HCMarkus@aol.com](mailto:HCMarkus@aol.com) or call the SDSG Hotline and leave a message to share *your* success story.

# Politics of the Pitch Session

by Ellen Silverstein and Mark Hattersley

The San Diego Songwriters Guild strives to make established music-industry professionals available to interested SDSG members on a regular basis. In order to successfully do this, the guild must take into consideration those who help us meet our goals and objectives: the professionals who give of their time and expertise, and the volunteers without whom the guild would cease to exist.

The guild is a non-profit organization. It is run entirely by a small but dedicated group of volunteers who provide an amazing number of opportunities for artists and songwriters to grow through educational seminars, critiques, pitch sessions, performing and networking opportunities, song contests and more. Since board members are not paid for the inordinate amount of work the job entails, we provide perks as a way to thank SDSG board members for all that they do. One of these privileges is the right to pitch according to each board member's preference- whether it be first, last, or somewhere in-between. This is a small reward considering the hours of work these volunteers contribute to the guild.

Pitch session guests are looking for that proverbial needle in the haystack: a truly great song or artist. Experience tells them that the odds of finding their future hit or star at a pitch session are not high. SDSG entices music-industry professionals to visit San Diego by offering them free mini-vacations in exchange for a few hours of their time. We treat guests to a great meal, good conversation and a nice hotel room. By allowing them a chance to relax and enjoy a break from their hectic schedules, the guild ensures its guests a pleasant stay. It is important that guests tell their industry friends what great experiences they had in San Diego. This way, we are assured of being able offer our membership top-quality meetings and opportunities in the future.

It is vital to the reputation of SDSG that members maintain professional, respectful attitudes when speaking with guests. Music is not an objective science. We are dealing with matters of taste and opinion. Frank comments by guests should not be taken as personal attacks but rather as food for thought and personal growth. Meetings are not the place for confrontation or aggression.

Former SDSG president Mark (aka HC Markus) Hattersley runs the sound system at guild events. In general, songs are played in the order in which they are submitted, with members' tapes played before those of non-members. But what if the guest's first impression is: "bad songs, bad demos, why am I here?" It could set an unfortunate psychological tone for the entire evening. Mark strives to strategically place well-produced songs periodically throughout pitch sessions to keep guests in a positive frame of mind. Mark weighs the needs of the SDSG membership - both as individuals and as a whole - with the needs of guests, never shifting the placement of any one song by more than a few slots forward or backward.

Experienced pitch session attendees know that much can be learned by listening to guests' comments about others' music. They take advantage of the opportunity to gain new perspectives on what makes a hit song. Successful writers will attend pitch sessions as observers when guests are not pursuing the type of song the writer creates, and aspiring writers are encouraged to do the same. There is so much to learn in this business, and each session is packed with information.

It is always easier to sit on the sidelines and tear something down than to get involved and make it better. Please understand that there are many forces at work and the guild is constantly striving to maintain the delicate balance between service and survival. We can always use more help, and those who wish to share in the benefits of volunteering are invited to join the SDSG board. Work with us to ensure that the high quality events we have been able to provide for years continue. Together, we can build bridges which reach deep within the music industry and which will benefit us all. - Ellen and Mark

## SDSG News Makers

**Alice & Albert**  
"Electric Wood" will be playing at LeStat's Coffeehouse on July 3rd and July 24th, from 8-11 pm. 99% Originals, and 1% covers you probably never heard before! Electric Wood is also providing music about once a month at The Church of Religious Unity in Alpine, and The Church of Religious Science in Fallbrook. Now working on their 2nd CD in their home studio, Electric Wood just entered the NAPA Valley Music & Wine Festival Emerging Songwriters Contest. They were selected as finalists in the 1990 contest.

If you haven't yet heard "The Right Place at the Right Time," you will soon. Now getting some serious airplay on local radio and TV stations, the song is a high-energy ode to San Diego's hometown champion Tony Gwynn. Vivian Davis did the great lead vocal on this Mark "HC Markus" Hattersley composition. Mark produced the track, performing backing vocals, piano, percussion, etc. Chris Boarman contributed guitar stylings to this Studio 69 recording.

**Taco Truffles' Internet Expert Returns Monday, July 19, 1999**

## John Dawes *The Web for Musicians*

John Dawes is back with another great seminar on a topic which should be at the top of every independent artist and record label's list... Don't miss it! Admission is free to SDSG members, \$20.00 for non-members. The seminar starts at 7:00 PM at the Doubletree Hotel. Call the SDSG Hotline for more.

Check out John's site at [www.tacotruffles.com](http://www.tacotruffles.com)

# GET YOUR SONG ON OUR NEW CD!

We are pleased to announce that SDSG is currently looking for all types of music for the first **San Diego Songwriter's Guild Compilation CD**. We want Rock, Country, Rap & Hip-Hop, Metal, R&B, Folk, Punk, Ska, Jazz ...whatever!

This will be a Promo/Charity project which will feature the music of the Guild's best artists, writers and performers. If you think that this is you, don't miss this great opportunity. There will be press releases, newspaper articles, media coverage, and local announcements. In addition to our website, the CD will be available at local stores, so get your music out there.

**The proceeds from this CD will provide funding for the children's music program at a local hospital. Good music, for a good cause. Send us your best stuff and "show the world" what you've got!**

**PLEASE** follow the observe the following guidelines for submissions:

1. Limit submissions to 2 selections.
2. Since this will be a commercially released CD, send only material that is representative of your best and most professional work.
3. Enclose a typed or clearly printed lyric sheet.
4. Positive, uplifting lyrics are great. Spiritual lyrics are O.K., but out of respect to people of all beliefs please do not mention religious or denomination-dependent subjects or symbols. Also, please do not mention health-related topics such as "sickness", "illness" or things like "get well soon".
5. No profanity, sexually explicit or suggestive lyrics will be accepted.
6. Initially, submissions on cassette, CD or DAT or O.K. but since this will be professionally mastered, ALL SUBMISSIONS CHOSEN FOR FINAL RELEASE MUST BE ON A DAT OR CD. If you are not able to furnish a DAT or CD, contact Joseph Carmel. The Guild may be able to assist you.
7. This is an excellent networking opportunity. Use the Guild's Membership Directory or Member Ads to hook up with a musician, lyricist or writing partner.

**OPEN TO SDSG MEMBERS ONLY!**

Send your submissions to: **San Diego Songwriter's Guild CD c/o Joseph Carmel**

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**MRS. KELLER IS LOOKING** for coffee house performers for Tuesday nights in a coffeehouse in Hillcrest. She pays \$40 for 2 hours, her contact # is 949-363-8393. All types of music are accepted, tapes may be required for pre-screening. The performing space isn't large so if it's a band, 3 people or fewer are suggested.

Mail your ad of 40 words or less to San Diego Songwriter's Guild, 3368 Governor Drive, Suite F-326, San Diego, CA. Be sure to indicate your phone number so that we can contact you if there are problems. Contact Dave English at 619/623-2777x313 or denglish@mail.cspp.edu for deadlines and details. Or, you can email your ad directly to HCMarkus@aol.com **SDSG members only.**

## **Northern Cal Songwriters Conference Set for September**



Imagine yourself at a hilltop college campus teeming with hundreds of fellow songwriters, waiting for your scheduled song screening session with a publisher interested in your style of music. You look up, and there goes the A & R rep you've been trying to place a call to for the past six months...

NCSA's Nineteenth Annual Conference, slated for Saturday and Sunday, September 11 & 12, 1999, promises to be the best yet. Over 1500 songs will be critiqued by some of the industries leading Producers, A & R Reps and Publishers in 40 song screening sessions; approximately 20 seminars will be presented on a full spectrum of songwriting topics, from the moment of inspiration to the nitty gritty of the business end, by top songwriters, producers, and music industry executives. Saturday evening is topped off with a Sunset Concert featuring the winners of NCSA's Open Mic Playoffs plus guest songwriters playing their hits!

Recent SDSG guest Marcus Barone will be hosting a scene-scoring contest, using a scene from the classic movie "The Birds." Call Ian Crombie at NCSA if you'd like to learn more about this or other aspects of the nineteenth annual event.

**For info call (650) 654-3966, or  
email [info@ncsasong.org](mailto:info@ncsasong.org)  
The NCSA's web site is at  
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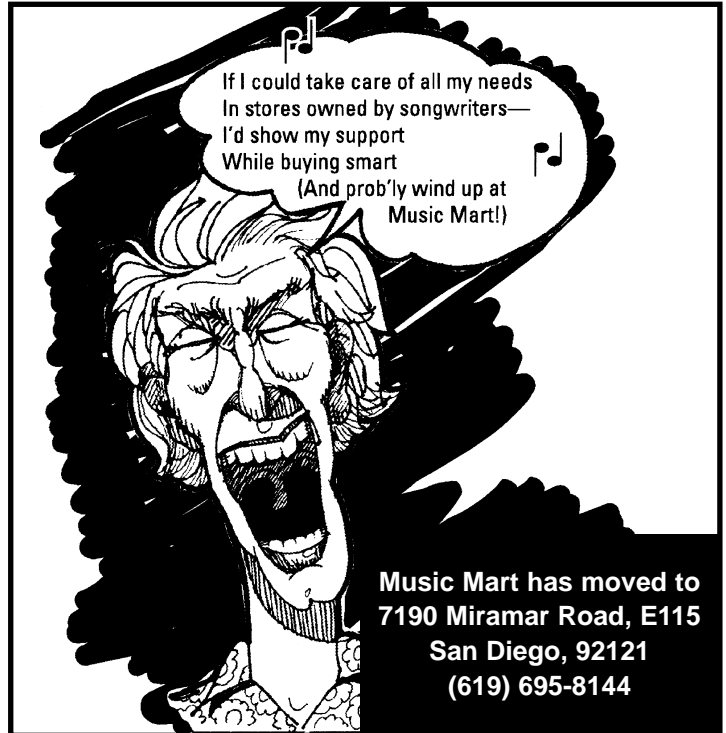
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## " THE PITCH SESSION "

**PRODUCERS, PUBLISHERS, A&R REPRESENTATIVES, MANAGERS and ARTISTS** may screen for a specific recording project. They use these events to find songs, singers, musicians, etc. Our guests may critique your song and give you valuable feedback on how you could improve upon it if time permits. The guest may "pick-up" your song which means they would like to hear it again for further consideration.

### Submission Rules

- Guild Members' songs will be listened to before those of Non-Members.
- Tapes will be referred to by song title. Writers may or may not remain anonymous during the Pitch Session depending on our guest for that event.
- We reserve the right to limit the number of tapes submitted by an individual, team, artist or band to any event. The submission limit is typically 1 or 2 songs per individual, team, artist or band.
- Tapes will not be accepted for the Pitch Session after the start of the event.
- The Pitch Session is limited to 70 tapes. Once event is filled, sign up is closed, even if the event has not started. SDSG reserves the right to limit the number of submissions further.
- Due to time limits, we cannot guarantee that your song will be heard in the Pitch Session.

### Fees

- For the submission fee of \$10 per song, you may enter your song(s) for the Pitch Session.
- Non-members are charged a \$20 door fee in addition to tape submission fees. The door fee must be paid by non-members wishing to pitch songs.
- You may join The San Diego Songwriters Guild on the night of an event for a \$45 yearly membership fee. No door fee is charged to SDSG members.

### Tips

- Bring a neatly typed lyric sheet and cassette cued to the beginning of your song.
- Be sure to include your name and phone number on both your lyric sheet and your tape because they may get separated.
- Number your tapes, #1 being your first choice, #2 your second, so that we may play them according to your priorities.
- When you check in your tape, sign in all writers' names, song titles and phone numbers, so that others who hear your song can contact you.

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(760) **740-0800**

125 E. Grand Av.

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR!**

**JOHN DAWES**

**Musicians' Web Seminar  
Monday July 19, 6:45 pm**

**SDSG Live at Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf  
Every Friday in July 7:00 pm**

**In-house critique session at Twigg's  
Tuesday July 27 & August 31 7:00 pm**

**Live showcases at LeStat's Coffee House  
Tuesday September 14 8:00 pm**

**SDSG Board Meeting, Doubletree Lounge  
Monday July 12 6:30 pm**



**FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL  
THE GUILD HOT-LINE AT 619-225-2131**

**Peter  
BUNETTA**

*and*

**Amanda  
McBROOM**

**PITCH  
SESSION**

*Monday August 16*

*Doubletree Hotel  
7450 Hazard Center Drive  
Near 163 and Friars Road*

*Registration starts at 6:30 pm*

**SongWritersNotes**

**The San Diego Songwriters Guild**  
3368 Governor Drive, Suite F-326  
San Diego, CA 92122

*Address Correction Requested*

Please check your membership expiration date below

**First Class Mail**