CREATION

CRAFTING

PRODUCTION (Realization)

BUSINESS (Proliferation)

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?"

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

- 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"

The 5 Pillars of a Song

MUSIC

(Interaction of the five musical parameters)

MELODY	HARMONY	RHYTHM	DYNAMICS	TIMBRE
• Distance Between Successive Notes • Range ? • For voice or Instrument? • Tonal Center?	• Chord Progression • Surprises or Expected? • Out-of-Chord notes or Out-of-Scale roots? • Key Change?	• Duple/Tuple • Articulation • Syncopation • 1 -3 -2 -4 • Tempo	• Loud/Soft • Accents • Crescendo • Dynamic Range?	• Coloration (What Instrument is playing?) • EQ Setting • Acoustic or Digital Sound ? • Later Considerations for Production

STRUCTURE

Song Form and Format

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 !

---------- L Y R I C S ----------

SEMANTICS

The Meaning and Clarity of the Words

- 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?

PROSODICS

Alignment of Word Accents with Music Accents

- 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"

PHONETICS

Shaping the Physical Sound of the Words Independent of their Meaning

- 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

- Does the arrangement serve the vocal and lyrics, or is the voice just another instrument ?
- Are Dynmaics 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 PERFORMANCE

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

- 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 ?

S O N G !

PITCH IT | PERFORM IT | PROMOTE IT

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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