

# Songwriter

Magazine

**SPECIAL REPORT**

# HOW TO SELL YOUR SONGS

### Recognizing Song Sharks

An in depth view of the crooks who want to rip you off — How they do it, and what you can do to protect yourself.



### Starting Your Own Publishing Company



The setup, organizational form, paperwork and legal complexities.



### Jimmy Webb — An Interview

A rare, face-to-face encounter with the brilliant writer of such hits as, "By The Time I Get To Phoenix," "Up, Up And Away," "Didn't We," "MacArthur Park," and others.

### How To Approach A Publisher

Learn how to maximize your contact with publishers and minimize negative responses — Read about publisher's preferences and what they expect of a songwriter.



### ASCAP, BMI, or SESAC?

A behind-the-scene look at the performance rights societies in the U.S. — How they operate, their good and bad points and how it all relates to you.



### Neil Sedaka — An Interview

Neil details his beginnings, his "brand new" career, how he works with his lyricists, and how he goes about composing his melodies.



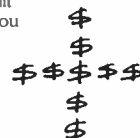
### Mann & Weil — An Interview



The songs of this dynamic husband-wife writing team have sold over 90,000,000 records. They reveal the pros and cons of writing collaborations.

### How Much You Earn With A Top-10 Record?

A detailed account of writer's earnings from a big hit song — How much you can expect and the sources of income.



### Smokey Robinson — An Interview

A frank dialogue with one of the early pioneers of contemporary black music — his attitudes and advice to you.



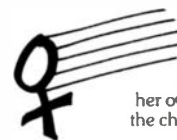
## If you write songs

... here are 16 good reasons why you should subscribe to



Mail coupon for complimentary copy and trial subscription

### The Powerful Impact Of The Woman Songwriter



An enlightening statement of the emergence of the female songwriter on her own terms — Breaking the chains and the old role.

### What Kind Of Broadway Musical Should You Write?

There are many ways to tell a full story in song complete with colorful, human characters, dramatic incident, humor and insight.



### Let's Go To The Movies

A look at composing a song for a movie soundtrack, scoring a film, and the major mistakes of songwriters writing for motion pictures.



### Songwriter Contracts

Royalties, conditions and safeguards. Terms you should ask for and what the norm is.



### Belly Up To The Bar

Copyright infringement and the songwriter. When are you potentially liable?



### Breaking Into The Country Market

An inside discussion of the country music market including the three themes most often used in country song hits.



### What Is A Copyright?

The top music attorneys tell you how to protect your creative ideas and what rights you really "own."

### Songwriter Magazine

P. O. Box 3510, Hollywood, CA 90028

Please send me my complimentary current issue of Songwriter Magazine. If I'm not entirely satisfied, I may keep my sample copy and owe nothing or, if I pay in advance, receive a full refund. I'll simply let you know within two weeks of receiving my complimentary issue. However, unless I cancel, please enroll me as a subscriber as indicated

- ☐ 1 year (11 add'l issues) at \$12 ☐ Payment enclosed  
☐ 2 years (23 add'l issues) at \$22 (So send me the Free Directory)  
☐ 3 years (35 add'l issues) at \$30 ☐ Bill me later **007**

Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

subscriptions outside USA add \$2 per year (Allow up to six weeks for delivery of FIRST ISSUE)

Whether you've been a staff writer for many years or have not yet had your first song published ... whether you write Pop, Easy Listening, R&B, or Country ... whether you compose music alone or strictly write lyrics ... you should be into **Songwriter Magazine**.

SONGWRITER is the monthly magazine that's the link between your hopes and doubts. A magazine that interviews the top songwriters, that explores the art and craft of songwriting, and explains the business behind it. A magazine that teaches, informs, inspires, and entertains you.

To find out what you've been missing just mail the coupon. We'll send you the current issue to read **free** and enter your name as a trial subscriber. However, if you're not thoroughly delighted with the first issue, that's that. Either write "please cancel" on our invoice, or if you've paid in advance, we'll refund your money in full. You keep the first issue **FREE** with our compliments. And, if you enclose payment now, we'll send you our 1977 Music Directory **Free!**



# EIGHT EASY STEPS TO SELLING YOUR SONGS!



Len Latimer  
Publisher/Editor

Paul Baratta  
Managing Editor

The purpose of this Special Report is to give you, the songwriter, a comprehensive view of the steps required to sell your songs. We have enlisted the services of publishers, producers and legal opinions from people who are dealing on a professional level everyday with writers such as yourselves. They have compiled their views about issues of vital concern to songwriters which appear in the articles that follow in this Special Report.

The eight steps outlined here as a guide to selling your songs reflect the collective experience of the staff at *Songwriter*, as well as a composite opinion of most of the music industry figures with whom we've come into contact in our years in the business.

At the outset, we would like to outline the *normal* routing of a song from the time it is created, till the point it is recorded. That chain is from the songwriter to the publisher, the publisher to a producer, and from the producer to an artist. We say *normal* routing because it's possible to skip a step along the way, but most songs are recorded through the above described chain.

It is possible for a songwriter to bypass a publisher and try to make contact directly with a producer, or even the artist, but the chances of doing so are very limited without benefit of a personal relationship with those people. Great demands are made on their time and they must use "filters." Working backwards, an artist selects a producer who is expected to screen hundreds of songs to come up with a possible twenty or thirty which fit the character of the artist, and the concept of the album. The producer and artist then sit together and select the best ten or eleven from those thirty songs which will then be recorded.

The producer, to maximize his time, generally deals exclusively with publishers, (or established writers with whom he has direct contact), in soliciting material. In that way, he feels the songs that will be submitted to him will be screened by publishers who have weeded out the material which doesn't represent the standards of the artist he's producing.

It follows, then, that the songwriters' primary relationship is with a publisher, which is why, you will note, this Special Report speaks of the songwriter-publisher relationship so frequently, and is also the reason why we have solicited the opinions of publishers. It's important to the placing of your material that you understand the thinking that goes on behind a publisher's door and how best to deal with it. And, even more importantly, to gain knowledge sufficient to protect your best interests, when the occasion arises for you to enter into a partnership with a publisher.

A final word about publishers before we move on . . . they have a very bad image among songwriters, by and large, and are frequently approached as if they were the adversary. The fact is, there are good and there are bad publishers. In the words of Norm Weiser, President of Chappell Music, "There are some publishers in this business who are everything the writers say they are, in a negative sense. But, there are some really fine, professional publishers, whose doors are open to new writers, who actively work the songs in their catalogues and who nurture the talents of the songwriters with whom they become involved." Before entering into any long-term agreement with a music publisher, it would be to your everlasting advantage to diplomatically take the time to investigate the terms being offered you, and whether your partner in publishing falls into the "good" or "bad" category.

And now, on to *Eight Easy Steps To Selling Your Songs*.

## 1. The Basic Song Idea

We won't try to tell you how to write a song because a formula doesn't exist. If a formula did exist, only the rich could afford it and we'd still be in the same place. Writing songs is an artistic expression of a person's individuality . . . it is *your* talent and *your* creativity that bring them to life.

We will neither get into recommenda-

tions as to art versus commerciality . . . the choice is yours. However, we feel it is possible to achieve both art and commerciality as a host of popular songwriters today have proved. Paul Simon, Stevie Wonder, Carly Simon, Jimmy Webb and many others, consistently come up with artful songs which are commercially appealing. And, of course, the legendary Beatles. When Lennon and McCartney wanted to speak of a girl who had hid her pain, but showed a surface happiness to visitors, they spoke of *Eleanor Rigby* who displayed a bright face which she kept "in a jar by the door." That not only is artful, but fresh and unique.

Always let uniqueness and a fresh approach be your guide. Then, tune in to what's happening. If you want your songs to have a broad commercial appeal you must listen to the radio, study the charts, analyze hit songs, tear apart lyrics to see what makes them work and be aware of the market. Being commercial starts with your basic song idea and the fresh approach to that idea that you bring. Being able to do this requires talent and talent requires exercise. In other words, write, write and re-write.

The charts in *Songwriter Magazine* indicate those artists who record other songwriter's songs. Tune into those artists and try to cast the songs you write for the performers who record outside material.

## 2. The Demo

The demo (demonstration) of your song can make or break it. Most publishers prefer a simple piano and voice, or guitar and voice demo. The most important element in your demo is the *feel* . . . not elaborate production. Work hard to get the right tempo, the correct lyrical reading and, for sure, make the lyrics audible. Don't let them be drowned by the instruments. Remember, you're submitting a demo on a song . . . not showcasing the musicians.

Along these lines, another common mistake are long, involved instrumental breaks . . . keep the breaks to a minimum.

Many songwriters use home tape recorders to make their demos which is fine. Should you decide to use a small studio, be aware that 2-track, or 4-track time ranges from \$15 an hour to \$40 an hour just for the studio with an engineer. Try to keep your costs down, by all means. You may decide to change the lyrics or the melody which can make a first demo become obsolete very fast.

Always make one master demo with the very best technical quality you can afford and keep your master from which to make tape copies . . . and keep it in a safe place. You'd be surprised how many songwriters accidentally send out their master, never to find it again!

continued on next page

## 8 Easy Steps

... continued



### 3. Lead Sheet or Lyric Sheet

A lead sheet, (melody line, chord changes and lyrics), costs from \$10 to \$20 from a professional copyist. Working straight from your demo, a good copyist can make an accurate leadsheet.

However, a lyric sheet, (a typed, or clearly handwritten 8½ x 11 sheet of lyrics alone), can be prepared by yourself at no cost. And, almost all publishers would just as soon have a lyric sheet as a lead sheet. So, save your money . . . we highly recommend the lyric sheet approach. If the publisher decides to publish your song, he will pay for the lead sheet.

Once you have the "master" copy of either the lead or lyric sheet, use it to make xerox copies which is what the majority of publishers use themselves.

### 4. Copyright

To copyright your song in unpublished form costs \$6 for the copyright in addition to the cost of a leadsheet which the Copyright Office in Washington requires (\$10 per song starting in January, 1978).

We recommend *not* copyrighting your song. Securing a copyright doesn't validate your originality. Without copyright, there is a degree of risk which is virtually eliminated if you're dealing with reputable publishers. If you're not sure of who you're doing business with, then a form of protection would be advisable. Without going through the expense of registering your song in Washington, you can protect your song by sending it to SRS, 6381 Hollywood Blvd., Suite 503, Hollywood, Ca. 90028. For a small fee, they will register your song in demo form without lead sheets and act as a witness in court, if need be.

A good rule is, if you can't sleep at night, copyright. But, remember, you will have to reassign it legally to a publisher if you do sell it because the publisher has to re-copyright it. Your unpublished copyright creates more paperwork and doubles the fees. Let the publishers pay for copyrighting.

### 5. Presentation Package

The presentation package you submit to a publisher should consist of the following:

- 1) the demo
- 2) the lead sheet or lyric sheet
- 3) a stamped, self-addressed envelope and,
- 4) a cover letter

The demo is normally reel-to-reel, ¼ inch width tape, 7½ IPS speed and ¼ track stereo or mono. On reel-to-reel, it is best that it be a minimum 5" reel size.

More and more, publishers are beginning to accept cassettes. Just be sure to check with the publisher to verify he has facilities to listen to a cassette before sending him one. In either case, (reel-to-reel, or cassette), label the tape box with the song titles and your name, address and phone number. Don't assume it won't be separated from the rest of the package.

We have already discussed lead or lyric sheet and the stamped, self-addressed envelope for return of your material is self-explanatory. The last element, the cover letter, should introduce you and give some background information. Make it concise and, of course, ask that the reader listen to your songs. If you get to see the publisher in person, the letter is, of course, not needed.

Above all, professionalism is all-important. Your presentation package represents you and its appearance and execution can go a long way toward the songs being given a receptive hearing. A sloppy, careless presentation could convey the impression that the songs are equally sloppy and careless even before they receive a hearing. Try to make a professional impression.

In terms of the demo, keep the number of songs to a maximum of four. Less is even better if you feel you have two or three songs which are strong enough to make the listener want to hear more. If you have more than four tunes on your demo, they probably won't get heard.

### 6. How to Find a Publisher

We feel the best source to locate an active, reputable publisher is through *Songwriter Magazine's* "WHO'S WHO" section and also our Music Directory which contains the names and addresses of the top publishers in the United States and Canada in addition to record companies and independent producers. *Billboard* publishes the *Record Buyer's Guide* which lists many publishers, but there are so many listed that it is difficult to discern if some of the more obscure companies don't fall into the "bad" publisher category.

Study *Songwriter Magazine's* charts. They show the publishers who are publishing the hits and then you can look up their address.

And, lastly, if you live in a music

center, get out and about . . . circulate . . . hang out where publishers are likely to be. Try to perform your songs in clubs or at one of the Songwriter Showcases. You never know who you may run into. If you don't live in a city such as New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Nashville, etc., you can submit your tapes to the showcases in N.Y. and L.A. at the addresses below:

Alternative Chorus Songwriters  
Showcase  
943 N. Palm Ave.,  
Los Angeles, Ca. 90069  
(213) 655-7780

New York Songwriters Showcase  
P.O. Box 785  
Radio City Station  
New York, N.Y. 10019

### 7. How to Approach a Publisher

The key person in a music publisher's office is the Professional Manager. This is the guy, or gal who listens to, and signs songs. The best approach is to simply call the publishing company, ask the secretary the name of one of the Professional Managers, ask to speak to him and request an appointment. If he's out, or busy, keep calling till he speaks to you, without making your persistence unpleasant. Keep it cordial.

If he can't see you, or you live out of town, ask permission to send him your songs. Don't be annoyed if you're asked to drop off your demo instead of seeing you personally if you live in town. It's common and doesn't hurt your chances. But, yes, it's better if you can see him in person . . . your physical presence demands more attention.

Try to interact with the publisher. Ask for his comments and critique. Build a relationship . . . a permanent contact you can approach again. And by all means, don't get upset and argue if he "passes" (rejects) your songs. He's only human and could be wrong. Keep in mind he's not rejecting you as a writer . . . just those particular songs. If you're difficult to turn down, he probably won't see you next time, much less make suggestions on improvements. Again, professionalism is the key . . . make yourself easy and business-like to deal with.

### 8. Making a Deal

If a publisher likes your songs, he'll ask to sign them so you'll have decisions to make. Is this the company you want to publish your songs, what ideas does he have to exploit them, are the terms being offered fair, etc.?

Most likely you wouldn't have approached him in the first place if you didn't want him to publish your material. However, that opinion might



have changed during the course of your meeting with him.

If you're dealing with a reputable publisher, he'll prepare a publishing contract. There are two basic types:

- 1) to publish one song
- 2) to sign you as staff writer

The one song approach is most common. The publisher simply wants one or more songs and the contract may call for no advance or you may get a one-time \$50 or \$100 advance as an exclusive option for a specified period of time so that the publisher can work your song to see if he can get it recorded.

The staff writer deal constitutes the publisher buying all your songs over the course of the next year with options on ensuing years, and calls for a weekly advance against royalties to the writer of from \$50 to \$250 per week.

Should you consult an attorney? On the staff writer deal, absolutely yes. But on the one song contract, we don't recommend it. The legal costs are simply too high unless you get free advice from the Volunteer Lawyers Association (see *Songwriter* July '77 issue). Be familiar with the normal terms, deal with a reputable company and you should be alright.

The normal contract terms for both the one song and staff writer deals are:

- 1) 50% of all mechanicals
- 2) 3 to 5 cents for piano copies
- 3) 10% of resale for folios, prorated by the number of songs in the folio.
- 4) half of normal royalties for foreign sales and
- 5) performance fees paid directly to you by ASCAP or BMI

See Helen King's article in this Special Report for other possible contract terms. But be sharp . . . don't ask for so much that you blow the deal.

## Summary

The steps to selling your song are easy. If you follow them as outlined here you will appear professional before your material is judged. The elusive part is writing the hit songs and the hard part is sustained persistence. If you want a career as a songwriter and believe you have the talent, adopt a motto of "never give up." Make yourself approach publishers every week and not the same one or two publishers always. We often hear songwriters speak of how active they are, only to find out that their activity is confined to trying to see only one or two people. Songwriting is a business as well as an art. And, as a business, you have to sell your wares and selling means persistence.

Keep on keeping on and good luck! ♪



# PUTTING YOUR SONGS IN SHAPE

by Hal Yoergler

While I would never presume to tell you how to write a hit song, I would, however, like very much to motivate you into being absolutely certain you have thoroughly examined your "baby" before exposing it to the teeth of the giant "pass" machine of the industry.

I think the key word to success in songwriting is not "commercial" but rather "professional." You either are or aren't seeking to be a professional songwriter. That is; create income and recognition based on your works. Accomplishing that goal requires a professional attitude.

If you and I wanted to manufacture and sell refrigerators, we wouldn't just make them and hope they could be sold. No, first we would conduct market research to determine what America wants in a refrigerator. Then we make it knowing we're giving our market what it wants and is not only willing, but even anxious to buy.

In our business, once we realize that our marketplace refuses to be arbitrarily whipped around by our personal artistic whims, but, rather, possesses very well defined taste limitations, then we are beginning to understand our purpose—that is to Entertain.

The person on the other side of the desk thinks: "What can I publish that I can, in turn, get recorded? What does my market want?" Remember, he acts essentially as a broker between you and the producer or artist. If you can second-guess those circumstances before entering the arena, your odds of success are immensely increased. Hence this brief comment on song construction.

Whereby the screenwriter is afforded something like 90 minutes of audio and visual in which to tell his story, the songwriter has something like three minutes of audio alone in which to tell his. This means he has to be more effective, more intense and infinitely more economic than his film counterpart. One of my college speech professors once said: "Tell them what you're going to tell them—tell them—then tell them what you've told them." To me that concept defines a "hook." If that hook is lyrically and melodically attractive, you then have a marketable commodity.

More often than not the chorus of a song will contain the title line as well as being the strongest melodic section. The question is: where to put it? At the risk of seeming over scientific, my experience has been that you should get to it somewhere between 50 to 70 seconds into the tune, including your BRIEF introduction. If not, you are demanding too much

of your audience. You see, *you* know what's coming, but *they* don't and you must keep their interest climbing. If a quarterback throws a 65 yard pass on the second play of the game, you know you're in for a fun afternoon of football and you're immediately glad you came. That's show biz. If he does it again in the second quarter, you're hooked on the quarterback.

A writer once said to me: "What do you mean 'reconstruct' my song, man, I wrote this tune in Aspen—in the spring-time!" The masterbative logic behind this kind of attitude has always amazed me. You must always maintain the ability to see your song as objectively as possible. "You had to be there" kinds of tunes are of no interest to the world of professional music. "I'm going to take you there" tunes are where it's at. Remember—Entertain!

Now, once you have your song together don't step on it. Display it as simply and tastily as possible—don't produce it. Leave that to the professionals in that field. Besides, you may have to rewrite certain sections and you would have gone to a lot of trouble for nothing. Simply be certain the accompanying instrument is in tune, the vocalist is competent and the sound is clean. In other words, allow the tune to sell itself—don't get in the way. If you're dealing with an incompetent publisher he wouldn't recognize a hit anyway and if you're dealing with a competent publisher you are reducing the possibility of negative factors. I must remind you that you are facing people who are essentially paid to pass. While you shouldn't spend a great deal of time contemplating the immense volume of competition, you can only understand your position if you are aware of its presence. And, incidentally, the guy behind the desk only *observes* the market—he *isn't* the market. The people ultimately decide what is "popular" and what isn't. We merely analyze which "refrigerator" they want today and make educated guesses on what they'll want tomorrow.

Innovation is the soul of our art form but it must be earned. You earn the right to innovate. First you must woo your prey into trusting your validity and then, after having reached out to please them, you begin to teach them what pleases you. The classic example is, of course, the steady but gradual musical development of McCartney and Lennon.

The word "creation" means the bringing forth of something new and  
continued on page 14



**JACK KELLER** –  
United Artists Music



**BUDDY KILLEN** –  
Tree Publishing



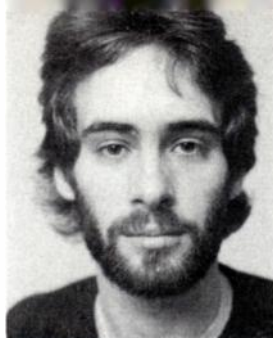
**KIP DUBBS** –  
Beechwood Music



**LIONEL CONWAY** –  
Island Music



**LANCE FREED** –  
Irving/Almo  
/Rondor Music



**CRAIG ARISTEI** –  
Warner Bros. Music



**GARY LEMEL** –  
First Artists



**IRWIN SCHUSTER** –  
Screen Gems/EMI

## WHAT'S COMMERCIAL?

### Nine Publishers Give Their Views

#### Interviews by Allan McDougall

Editor's Note: No Special Report on *How To Sell Your Songs* would be complete without a study of the term "commercial," a term which writers hear often. "Sorry, it's not commercial enough" or "Can you give me a commercial ballad?" We took a survey of nine top publishers throughout the country to find out their opinions of commerciality in songs. Their views, although varying should give you some guidelines to commerciality.

lyrics become important later. The hook can be a turn-around line, not necessarily the chorus. Consider Steve Young's *Seven Bridges Road* or Benard Ighner's *Everything Must Change*, songs that don't really have a hook, but have something that just works. And *The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face*, not a big hook anywhere, but there is a big release in it. To me that's a great song. It has all the elements. You just sense something in a great song—melodically it's there, it's fresh, it's new, it's memorable, the lyric line reflects it, and people are going to record it. *We've Only Just Begun* has no real hook; the only release is the bridge—"Sharing horizons," etc. It just turns around, it all works. You can't say, "Well, give me four lines of chorus, then come back into your verse, and give me the chorus again, then two lines of bridge, and out." That doesn't necessarily make a song. It could make it commercial, but it won't make it great."

**Lance Freed:** Vice President, Irving/Almo/Rondor Music where he's been for 4½ years. Before that he was administrative assistant to A&M Records Chairman Jerry Moss, and previously Director of College Promotion at A&M. Publishing involvements with Peter Frampton, Pablo Cruise, Supertramp, David Soul's last two singles, and the new singles by Dave Mason, Conway Twitty and Loretta Lynn, George Benson, Merrilee Rush and Barry Manilow.

"The most important thing I consider regarding commerciality in a song is not whether it's commercially viable as a hit, but whether or not it's a great song. What makes it great to me is a dynamic in the melody that is memorable, that's the first thing I hear. Coupled with a lyric that reflects that melody. The

**Craig Aristei:** General Manager of Warner Brothers Music where he's been for 6½ years. Youngest General Manager in the history of music publishing (he's 25) and responsible for 80 million records sold on songs he's placed, which include Pointer Sisters (*Yes We Can*

*Can*), Paul Anka and 5th Dimension (*Flashback*), David Cassidy (*Daydreamer* an English No. 1 for 4 weeks), Art Garfunkel (*All I Know, I Shall Sing*). Plus he's had songs on the R&B charts every week for 6½ years. Worked briefly for E.H. Morris Music, and before that managed songwriters and groups.


"Speaking from a company taste point-of-view, whether I say yes to a song or not is determined by if I can generate income for the company and the writer. Immediately, not something that I think someday someone can record. There are lots of songs that people come in and play for me that are really nice and well-written, with great lyrical content and great melody lines, but are just not easily recordable. And rather than take one song, we'd prefer to get involved with the writer and over a period of time develop that writer. As far as commerciality, anything that is saleable is commercial. It's a matter of determining the market. Going after that market and placing the tune in that market, whether it's the jazz field or R&B/Pop or Top 40 or whatever. There are certain producers that have certain tastes, and it's a matter of knowing all the producers, knowing all their tastes, and being able to present them with material that will fit their standards."

**Lionel Conway:** President of the Island Music Group of Companies (World Wide). Englishman Conway has been with Island since '69, and in Los Angeles since early '75. Before that, at Dick James Music. Published Ian Sutherland's *Sailing* (Rod Stewart's record sold 4½ million,) Dave Mason's *Feeling Alright* (recorded by over 100 artists), Cat Stevens; Traffic, Jimmy Cliff, Ian Hunter, Russ Ballard, Peter Wingfield.


"A song is won, or lost, in the opening 16 bars. The public has so many radio stations to choose from, that when they hear a record that doesn't gain their interest immediately, they will select another station. Therefore, a real punchy opening, establishing listener interest immediately, is the key. Some of the most successful songs in the past two years started with the chorus and title—*I Write The Songs*, *If You Leave Me Now*, *I'm Not In Love*, *Don't Give Up On Me Baby*. Once you have your hook, and I define hook as a sing-along, easily-remembered, melodic chorus, you're almost there. Verses should melodically flow and tell an adult story of whatever subject you choose, but try and tell it differently. A perfect example of this is *Angie Baby*, which I consider one of the best contemporary songs written in the past five years. Whatever musical transition we go through, a good commercial ballad always comes through, defying all others. When the Beatles were at the top, a ballad—*Release Me*—came through and




kept the Beatles from the No. 1 spot for 6 weeks. And it still happens today. With all the rock up there, Eric Carmen's *All By Myself* came straight through. What I'm suggesting is that, whatever trend we're in, good commercial ballads will always succeed."

 **Jack Keller:** Professional Manager at United Artists Music for 2½ years, before which he was West Coast Manager for April/Blackwood for 2 years. Current songs include *Rocky*, *Cinderella*, *Weekend In New England*, *Living Thing*.


"Anything commercial is something that people want to buy. People want to buy different things at different times, so it's all timing. A song like *Weekend In New England*, I always loved it but I felt it was a winter song and should come out around September or October. Which it did and it was a big success. It's all timing and it's all instinct and feeling."

 **Kip Dubbs:** Professional Manager at Beechwood Music for 8 years. Producer and arranger. Taught music at Los Angeles city schools. Has a B.A. (Music). Former pro trumpeter. Songs include *Cherish*, *Snowbird*, *There's A Kind Of Hush*, *Got To Be There*, *Put Your Hand In The Hand*, and Queen's catalogue.


"Commercial music has always been based on a feel. I find that there's a basic formula and ingredients which are involved. The only difference is the recipe. The most important thing is the melody—that's what really makes a song. Where does it lead, how does it ride and fall? Because psychologically that's what affects the listener. Equally important is the essence of the lyric. We need more positive lyrics in the business. I have turned down a lot of songs because I couldn't morally feel right about the lyrics. If I take a song, the lyrical content must be something I could take home and read or play to my children, and at the same time carry on a conversation about Jesus. Another important ingredient is the rhythm which is feel in the first place, and of course, the chord progressions. I try to listen to a song through arrangers' and producers' ears and say, "Now, can this really go into production?"

 **Gary LeMel:** Director of Music Operations for First Artists (Motion Pictures and Television), Vice President First Artists Records. Music Supervisor on the Sidney Poitier movie, "Let's Do It Again" (with a No. 1 single by the Staple Singers); "A Star Is Born" with Streisand and Kristofferson's big singles and the largest-selling soundtrack album of all time (over 4 million sold so far). Previously with Aaron Schroeder Music (Barry White, Randy Newman, Tony Macauley, John Stewart). Former VeeJay artist with a hit single, *On Broadway*.

"I would say that the lyric is probably the most important thing. And will the lyric be empathetic, can many people empathize with the lyric, enough to make it a hit record? And of course the melody has to be strong and the hook chorus has to be strong, and it has to open up. Writers who try not to be "corny" shy away from writing the big hook, and to me the big hook is the most commercial part, other than the lyric. The hook is melodically the most important part of the song. There have been times when I've related so strongly to a lyric, that the melody is just sort of there. Like a Harry Chapin kind of melody that's nice and a complement—but away from the lyric it really means nothing. The lyric is so strong, it's a story-song like *Taxi*, where you would get excited because the content is so heavy. But normally, it's that mass audience lyric and a big hook chorus. And it doesn't matter if it's ballad or up-tempo. If it's a big ballad, and it's got those elements, that's great as far as I'm concerned. Many artists are broken on ballads. *Mandy* would be my idea of the perfect commercial song."


 **Irwin Schuster:** Vice President, Director of Professional Activities at Screen Gems/EMI Music, New York, where he's been 9 years. Before that, with Bobby Darin's T.M. Music, and Hill & Range Songs. Former lyric writer. Current publishing involvements include Fleetwood Mac, Bread, Boston, Carole King and Cat Stevens.

"Obviously, the hook is what's commercial. That's something that everybody says, and it's a fact. A lyrical and melodic hook. Most commercial songs are verse, chorus songs. And those four lines which are the melodic and lyrical hook and which have the title in it are the part everybody remembers. If you ask somebody to sing you the song, the chances are they'll sing, "Like A Rhinestone Cowboy," they wouldn't sing you two lines from the verse. So, to me, that is the part that is the most important. If you have a good solid hook, although the writing of the rest of the song is not ever easy, the hook is what counts. That's the thing that grabs the producer, that grabs the artist, and it's the thing that eventually grabs the buying public. Just those four lines or whatever it is. I think the other thing I can tell you, is to say something in as beautiful a way as you can, but as simply as you can, so that everybody understands what you are talking about."

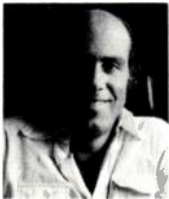
 **Buddy Killen:** President of Tree International Publishing in Nashville, with whom he's worked since 1953, when he started pitching songs in between playing on recording dates and on Grand Ole Opry. Publishing involvements over the years

include Roger Miller, Bill Anderson, Dolly Parton, Curley Putnam, Willie Nelson, Hank Cochran, Conway Twitty and Bobby Braddock. Writes hit songs (*Forever*, *Sugar Lips*), produces hit records (Joe Tex's *Ain't Gonna Bump No More* which he co-wrote is his most recent world-wide smash).

"Well of course, it's appeal. I look for uniqueness when I listen to songs. When I say unique, that doesn't mean some crazy kind of thing that comes in from left field somewhere, it's just a combination of words that gives you the proper sound, the phonetic sounds that appeal to you. And a little different approach in a melody that's very pleasing to you. It's more of a feeling than anything else. I search for something that when I hear it, it gets inside me and I *feel* something when I hear it. When I'm recording, I always look for singles. I will never go in and say, "This will make a good album cut," I look for an album full of singles. I find that the harder I work towards those singles, the better my album is going to be. Some albums are concept albums, and you're not really going to singles, but especially in Country albums, you've almost got to go for strictly 10 singles, rather than say, "Okay, I'm going to cut an album." I'm not saying you can't use old songs, because even they could come off as singles. They do, all the time. I look for really terrific material, try to make it sound a little unusual, and try to be as creative as possible with the background music."

 **Jon Devirian:** Managing Director of Creative Services of Intersong U.S.A., part of the Chappell Music family with whom he's worked for 6 years. Before Chappell's, he was with the William Morris Agency, in the record and concert booking departments.

"A commercial song, to me, is one that I remember after it has left the turntable. A song that is memorable and leaves you with a feeling that you knew what happened in the song. One that made sense to you and moved you emotionally up or down or sideways, both lyrically and melodically. They go hand-in-hand. A lyric and a melody can stand separately if they are strong, but it's usually a combination of both that I've gone with. I think it's all down to the piece of material. After it's played, over, and done—if you remember it, it's a commercial song. If you have listened to it all the way through. I think a lot of professional music people don't listen to the entire song, in fact many times they listen to less than half. After you've heard enough songs and enough writers, it stands out very early in a song which ones are obviously not there yet. And the ones that you want to consider more, you might listen to them a couple of times through the whole song." 7



Roger Gordon is presently General Professional Manager of Screen Gems/Columbia Music. Among many other songwriters, Screen Gems publishes Carole King, David Gates (Bread), Barry Mann and Cynthia Weil.



# THE MUSIC PUBLISHER

by Roger Gordon

One of the most common questions asked of just about anyone in a non-business social situation is, "What do you do?" Well, after I say that I'm a music publisher, I'm given a polite nod of understanding followed by a few seconds of confusion—and again asked—"Yea, but what do you do?"

Assuming that anyone reading this special report has some general idea of what a music publisher does, I'll be very brief. In a sentence, a music publisher of today's vintage involves himself (or herself) in just about every aspect of the music business.

Besides "plugging songs," today's publisher acts as: A&R man, producer, negotiator, personal manager, song editor, psychiatrist and punching bag.

With the emergence of the singer/songwriter, we involve ourselves in careers and motivating careers along with individual songs. We act, many times, as an extension to the A&R departments or record companies in finding and developing new talent, securing recording contracts and participating in the merchandising and development of a recording artist. The main criteria, being, not the voice, the image or on-stage talent—but the song. That is the bottom line for a music publisher. Any further excitement must stem from that basic ingredient: the lyrics and the melody.

Many songs come across my desk each week. Sometimes, usually by referral, I will audition songs live, but most of the time I will review a tape that has been submitted without the presence of the writer. Occasionally, a writer is put-off by not being able to play material live, but they must understand that if I made

appointments with every writer that called, I wouldn't have the time to show songs and get them recorded; which I assume is their reason for being there in the first place. In fact, many times my concentration is much more acute when the writer is not present.

Personal likes or dislikes are totally divorced when I listen to a particular tune. That song stands on its own, whether sent to me from Three Forks, South Dakota, or presented by an already-established songwriter. Personalities never influence a decision—it is purely a "gut level" reaction to a song.

Sometimes, if not the rule, a song at first presented might need alterations. The publisher is probably the first professional person to hear the song—the first person to objectively value it. Many times there are some flaws which need correcting that I will point out to the writer. It is then up to the writer to accept or reject my ideas. In most cases, if I do suggest ways to alter the song, I feel they are ways to make a good song better. If I didn't like the song in the first place, I wouldn't waste my time with it.

I often wonder how songwriters, fairly innocent and new at their craft, absorb rejection. After writers have been around for a while they realize that rejection or negative criticism is a major commodity in their development of better material.

The relationship between a writer and a publisher is one that tests the emotional stamina of both parties. Sometimes a relationship develops between the two that makes the exchange of ideas and concepts very natural, and yet other times, it would seem that both people

begin to compete and challenge each other.

Many writers feel that when a song is presented, it is finished. Period! Either you like it or you don't—that's it—no changes! Although I can respect that writer's feelings and the fact that I am only one opinion among many to be sought out, at least be open to suggestions. The suggestions are not a personal attack, but the way to possibly have that song become more meaningful.

The first thing to consider is what direction the song should take and to project that direction on a demonstration record (demo) that could best sell that song. Sometimes, a guitar or piano/voice demo by the writer is the best way to present a song. Depending on the song, whether the writer is a good singer or not, he can inject a personal emotion into the song that a rhythm track will detract from—or an outside singer won't be able to grasp. Other songs call for a three or four piece demo, to give the producer or A&R man the feeling that a simple demo cannot satisfy.

Every step after that is a combination of hard work, belief, dedication and some luck. It's hard to put a timetable on how long it will take to induce someone else to like what you like, but the feeling that you like the song you are showing means that you'll show it again and again until somebody agrees.

Now that the song has been put into shape, and a demo recorded, the next step is to get it recorded. Presenting a song to a producer is very easy. You first put the demo on this round thing that goes around, hand the producer a lead sheet and then just sit there while he listens to the song. Sounds simple doesn't it? A publisher is only as good as his material. What makes some better than others is the ability to realize a good song in its beginning stages, communicate with the creator of that song and develop mutual respect for each other; commit yourself to the success of that song or project until all avenues are exhausted and, most important—contacts. The more people you can expose to a particular song, the better your chances are of having it recorded. That's the bottom line and the reason for publishing companies in the first place.

Many writers that are new at the game have an unrealistic idea of the amount of time it takes to get a song recorded. Very rarely does it occur before a little frustration sets in to keep us all honest. Sometimes a song can get cut within a couple months, but that is the exception rather than the rule. Most contracts have a time limitation clause. If a publisher does not fulfill his commitment within a specified period, the writer has the right to request that the copyright be returned or be paid in



advance. Normally, the clause requires the publisher to guarantee a released recording. This, in my opinion, is very unfair, because if the publisher secures a recording within, let's say, a year and a half—the record company could sit on it for another year before the record is finished and finally released. This often happens, especially with larger record companies with big artist rosters and long-range schedules. Personally, I think two years to secure a recording is a fair time limit.

The concept of a “staff writer” is usually very interesting to reasonably unestablished writers without adequate means of supporting themselves. It gives them a chance to continually write, without having to worry about maintaining a job that detracts from their creative endeavors.

Staff jobs are attractive, but difficult to come by. From a personal standpoint, it takes a while working with a particular writer to determine whether a steady relationship is possible. Assuming I respond positively to the quality and consistency of the material it then becomes a question of whether the songwriter responds to me. He has to like the way I handle him and his material as much as I have to like the material in the first place. To determine this, there

must be a test period of getting to know each other and to work on a song to song basis.

When a deal is made without this test period, it usually means that the writer is represented by an attorney or manager. When a writer has this representation it, in most cases, means that he has some sort of a track record. If he doesn't have a record deal, he needs the publisher's assistance in securing one for him. If he does have a record deal, the deal becomes a little more elaborate than, let's say, a \$100.00 a week staff writing job.

Many established writer-oriented recording acts—whether they be groups or individuals, have changed their attitudes toward publishing. In the past few years the idea of the act holding on to their publishing income prevailed. Now, however, artists are turning to major publishers for assistance. Depending on the circumstance, these deals usually involve a certain percentage for the administration of the catalog with a large increase in percentage for records secured by the publisher. Artists now feel that 100% of the publisher income on their own product is sometimes far less than taking a lesser percentage of the total activity a publisher assists in creating.

Some people say that today's publishing business is being run by accountants and attorneys, rather than creative music/song oriented people.

Let me reply to that briefly. Most publishing deals that outside people become aware of are deals that are written up in the major music trade magazines (i.e. *Cash Box*, *Billboard*, *Record World*, etc.). No one can expect a front page story on the fact that an un-named songwriter signed an exclusive pact with Screen Gems-EMI Music for \$100 per week. But on the other hand, when a deal involves the purchase of a catalog, or the signing of a major situation, for hundreds of thousands of dollars, it becomes very difficult not to rely heavily on accountants to investigate earnings, and for attorneys to negotiate counter offers. The one thing to remember is that it was, initially, a creative decision that started these investigations and negotiations in the first place.

Every day hundreds of new people take their shot—venture to try their hand in the music business. Every time a songwriter picks up a pencil, or a singer picks up a guitar . . . there's that dream of success. The music industry, last year, grossed an excess of 2.5 billion dollars, and you know something? It all started with a song. □

## Placing your songs is tough business!

Let Tunesmith help you . . . Subscribe today!

It takes a great deal of talent to create a good and saleable song. But then your job is only half done and problems arise. What do you do with it? Who do you sell it to? Who's a good publisher? What about independent producers? What kind of songs do they want and, more importantly, will they listen?

These questions become obstacles which the songwriter must overcome if he is to become successful. **Tunesmith** helps you solve these problems. **Tunesmith** is a monthly newsletter that brings you honest, accurate, up-to-date leads of legitimate producers, artists, and publishers needing good songs. Besides giving you important contacts and their hard to find addresses, we also give you background information on the person, the kind of songs they need, tips on submitting your songs, and a monthly analysis of the trends and styles being set on the nation's top charts.

**Tunesmith** is the result of many hours interviewing, probing, and investigating, to search out those people throughout the country who are currently in need of material and will listen. We cover the gamut from Pop, R&B, Country to Easy Listening. Whether you're looking for a publisher, producer, or simply want to get recordings, **Tunesmith** is for you. If you're really serious about songwriting, our confidential report is a must (besides, it's tax deductible).

We guarantee satisfaction! If after your first issue you do not feel **Tunesmith** will help your songwriting career, notify us promptly and we'll refund your money in full!

Cut at perforation, fill out below, and mail to:



P. O. Box 3839  
Hollywood, Ca 90028

007

Payment must accompany order . . . make checks or money orders payable to **Tunesmith**

- ☐ Please send me a sample copy of **Tunesmith**. Enclosed is \$1.
- ☐ Enter my subscription for 6 months (6 issues). Enclosed is \$15.
- ☐ Enter my subscription for 1 year (12 issues). Enclosed is \$25.
- ☐ Enter my subscription for 2 years (24 issues). Enclosed is \$40.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

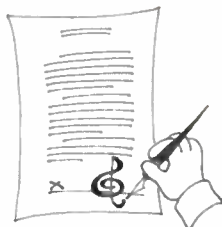
Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

# SONGWRITER CONTRACTS

by Helen King



**Editor's Note:** Helen King, who for many years has been working in the interests of unsung songwriters, started *Songbank*, a song protection service, and is presently devoting full time to the SRS

Membership Organization, the SRS Music Industry Workshop, SRS Forums, and SRS Information Service.

SRS has been exploring the realities of "Popular Songwriter Contracts" in an industry where the publisher's role is whatever the publisher chooses to make it. He can warehouse songs until the writer finds his place in the sun and the publisher can share in the rewards, or he can take songs selectively, work them conscientiously and genuinely earn the proceeds. Either course is taken at the publisher's discretion; the contract rarely spells out the publisher's obligations to the writer other than to pay royalties if and when a song is published. Hence, the writer must recognize a basic principle: The best contract in the world with the wrong publisher, one who is not equipped and willing to do a job for you, can be a dangerous instrument.

The "Recommendations" here are a composite of the work of five top entertainment lawyers in the Los Angeles area. Yet they are only "recommendations" and are all negotiable, depending upon the bargaining strength of the writer, his track record and his self-assurance.

10  
**1.**

**Reversion for Non-Publication**—In the event no commercial recording is released within a year—no more than two years—the copyright should be reassigned to the writer.

**2.**

**Renewal**—Copyright should revert to the writer after the first copyright period.

**3.**

**Changes in Title, Words, Music**—No changes should be made without approval of the writer.

**4.**

**Addition of Lyrics**—On occasion, when a promising instrumental is assigned to a publisher, co-writers have been added, thus reducing the royalties to the composer.

**5.**

**Publisher's Collection Fees**—It is customary for publishers to deduct a portion of the commissions paid to the Harry Fox office from writers' royalties. The percentage paid the Harry Fox office varies between 3½ and 5 per cent. The amount deducted from writers' royalties should not exceed 2½%.

**6.**

**Demo Costs**—On occasion publishers will charge the cost of making demos against writers' royalties. The publisher should absorb the costs, or the amount charged to the writer should not exceed 50%. Also, demos may not be used as commercial recordings.

**7.**

**50% to Writer on Unspecified Uses**—Where a contract does not specify the percentage of royalties to be paid the writer for a particular use, the writer should receive 50% of the publisher's receipts for that use (i.e. synchronization licenses, foreign licenses, etc.).

**8.**

**Division of Writer Royalties**—The writers' share of royalties is not necessarily divided equally. Percentages can be

predicated on the value of each writer's contribution.

**9.**

**No Cross Collateralization**—A royalty advance to a writer may be charged only against the proceeds of that particular song; it should not be deducted from any other songs assigned to the publisher, or from monies due the writer for services other than writer royalties.

**10.**

**Withholding of Royalties if Felt in Jeopardy**—On occasion a publisher will withhold writers' royalties when a claim has been filed against him. Royalties should be paid the writer within a month after receipt by the publisher.

**11.**

**Fair Division in Case of Recovery in a Law Suit**—Writer should receive 50% of any monies recovered by the publisher in a law suit.

**12.**

**Timely Payment of Royalties**—Writers' royalties should be paid within thirty days—no more than sixty days—after receipt by the publisher. Statements should show computation in reasonable detail and writer should have the right to question the amount of royalties received and, if deemed necessary, audit the records of the publisher within no less than one year—preferably two years—after receipt of statement.

**13.**

**Royalty Payments**—If royalties are not paid fairly and/or on time, the copyright should revert to the writer.

**14.**

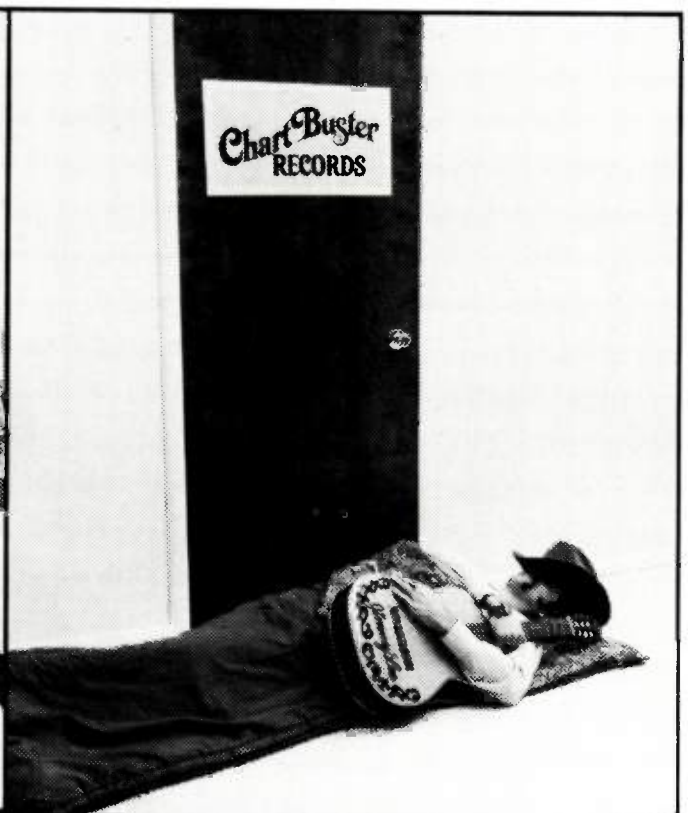
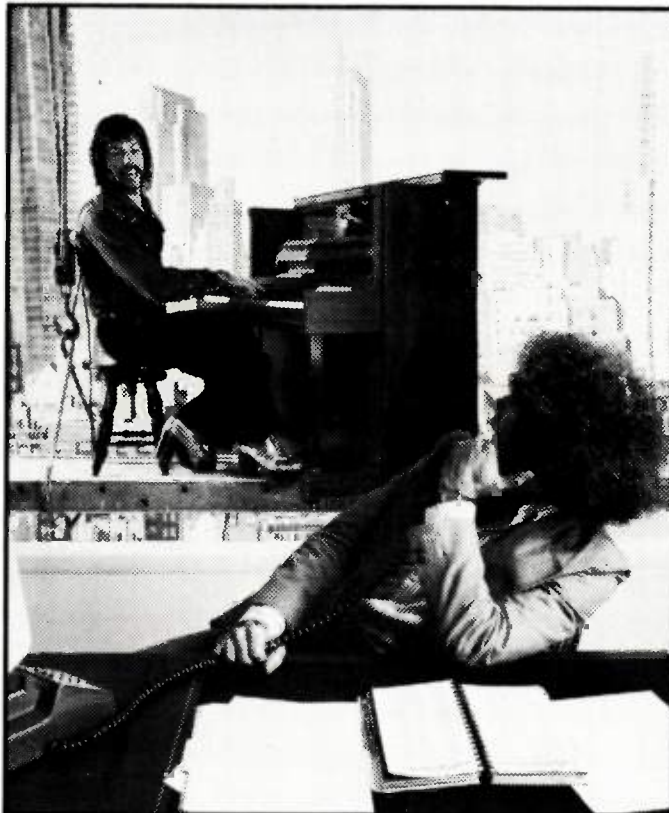
**Publisher's Right to Assign Copyrights**—A writer assigns his compositions to a publisher because of his trust in that publisher. Therefore an assignment of that copyright should not be made without the written consent of the writer.

**15.**

**Royalties Should be Computer on Gross Sums Received by Publisher**—In many contracts royalties are computed on "net" sums received by Publisher. If the word "net" is retained it should be defined. ●



# Four ways to get someone in the music business to listen to your song.



## The Alternative is the 1978 American Song Festival®

Instead of going to ridiculous lengths to get a music business heavy to hear your song, enter it in the 5th Annual American Song Festival songwriting competition. We'll guarantee your song will be heard. At least twice. And by the "right" people. Because the right people serve as our judges. They're producers, music executives, artists and publishers.

All you need is a song. You don't have to write music, because all entries are submitted on tapes. And there are categories for all kinds of music.

If you want to be in the music business and not just read about it, this could be the break you've been looking for.

Over the past four years, more than \$400,000 in cash prizes have been awarded. But even more important, there's a chance to advance your career with recording and publishing contracts. That's what happened to many of our past entrants. This year it could happen to you.

Yes, I am interested in finding out more about the 1978 American Song Festival. Please send me complete information and an Official Entry Form.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: The American Song Festival  
5900 Wilshire Blvd. West Pavilion  
Los Angeles, CA 90036

Phone (213) 937-7370

A presentation of Sterling Recreation Organization © 1977 American Song Festival, Inc.



L

# DEALING WITH A MUSIC PUBLISHER



by Allan McDougall

To give you an insight as to how publishers operate with regard to unknown writers, we questioned four prominent publishers. We asked them about their procedures on five subjects all new writers need to know about, from how publishers like to hear new songs to what kind of advance (against royalties) to expect.

JEFF BENJAMIN (West Coast Professional Manager, Sunbury/Dunbar Music), DALE TEDESCO (Director of Creative Services, MCA Music), RICK SHOEMAKER (General Professional Manager, ABC Music) and KIM ESPY (Hollywood Division Manager, T.B. Harms/Vogue Music) are top men in their field. Their answers are as varied as they are informative.

This feature is not intended to be a solicitation for material from these particular publishers.

**Q** Do you prefer to hear new songs live or on demos? If demos, what kind?

Benjamin: Demos. Piano/voice or simple rhythm section. Full arrangements are not necessary and sometimes seem to mask the true nature of the tune.

Tedesco: Definitely demos. If I like the song, then I'll call the writer into the office. I prefer piano/voice or guitar/voice demos.

Shoemaker: Demos. Voice and one instrument, preferably piano.

Espy: On reel-to-reel tape, occasionally cassettes, with a lyric sheet which can be handwritten as long as its legible. I prefer simple arrangements on demos—vocal and one or two instruments rather than a full band.

**Q** How do writers get heard by you?

Benjamin: I go to clubs, I get tip-offs. I keep a very distinct "open-door" policy with writers that I talk to and am interested in. And I spend as much time

as possible with the staff at BMI and ASCAP because they see most new writers first, and I find I get a lot of good referrals from them.

Tedesco: A variety of ways. I listen to all the tapes that get to my desk, and I go to showcases and clubs to check out new talent.

Shoemaker: Either I happen upon them at one of the hot night spots here in Hollywood, or they call and we set up an appointment after I talk to them on the phone.

Espy: Either through the mail or by coming by the office and dropping off a tape.

**Q** If I'm a singer/songwriter with potential as an artist, should I approach you or go directly to a record company?

Benjamin: That depends on your contacts. It seems to me that often a publisher can be a real good bridge between an unknown talent and a record company. Because publishers have more of an open policy towards unknowns than a record company does. And a publisher, being familiar with the people at the record company from servicing tunes, has easier access. Often times, record companies are looking for packages, and they like to see who else is involved with the artist—a publisher or a manager or an attorney or a whole bunch of people.

Tedesco: It depends on the material, and if it's coverable by other artists. If the artist is a great songwriter as well as being an artist himself, he should contact us.

Shoemaker: I think you'd get a better response if you approach me, because I spend a good portion of my time listening to material off the street. At least you know you'll get to talk to me or somebody here. You'll get a shot, a personal appointment, whereas most record companies say, "Send a tape." Plus this particular group of publishing companies also has a production company.

Espy: My opinion right now is that record companies are not developing acts, but production companies and publishers are. We have a side production company going, and I've placed two acts out of here that are songwriter/performers. You're better off going to a production company or a publisher with a production company and let them do it.

**Q** What kind of advance can I get if I make a deal with you on a one song basis, and how about staff-writer salaries?

Benjamin: It obviously depends upon the tune, and upon whether or not the writer wants to make a reversion deal. What I usually do is, if there is a one-year reversion—which is one year from the time of picking up the song to having the song recorded—then I don't give an advance. Although I will give an advance once the song is released, if the writer needs it. If there is no reversion, then the advance could be anywhere from \$75, \$100 on up. Staff-writer salaries for an unknown, new writer are like \$100 or \$125 a week, and that escalates depending on how much success the writer had prior to signing with me, and it de-escalates depending on if the writer wants to keep part of the publishing. Tedesco: If we take the song on a six-month basis, there will be no money up front, and we'll absorb all the costs. And if at the end of the six months period we don't get a recording, we will give the writer back the song. On a one-year basis, we'll give \$100 advance and run the hell out of the song. If there is no result at the end of the year, we'll give it back. We don't believe in staff writers. We'd rather take in a few strong songs, and shoot with these best shots, than to have a writer's whole catalog.

Shoemaker: Let's just say anywhere from \$1 to heaven only knows! With staff-writer salaries, I would say the lowest would be \$75 a week. It depends

continued on page 14



**How I Write Songs (Why You Can)** by Tom T. Hall. Over 10 years of Tom T. Hall's commercial success go into this practical and non-technical guide to songwriting and the music industry. Also included are definitions of music business terms and expressions, examples of songwriter contracts and analyses of Tom's own biggest hits. 158 pages. \$7.95

**This Business Of Music:** Revised and enlarged. Edited by Shemel & Krasilovsky. The most practical and comprehensive guide to the music industry for publishers and songwriters alike. Details publishing business from contracts to foreign publishing and contains most used contract forms. 544pp., 180pp. of appendices. \$15.00

**The Songwriters' Success Manual** by Lee Pincus. Author is music publisher whose songs include Lennon/McCartney's "She Loves You" and "I Saw Her Standing There". In the manual's 28 chapters the author's experience is used to help any writer trying to break into the business. "... very helpful to the beginning songwriter ... is well worth the \$6.95 ... Realistic and practical" — ASCAP Today. \$6.95

**More About This Business of Music:** Revised and enlarged. Edited by Shemel & Krasilovsky. Invaluable source covering serious music, background music and transcriptions, tape and cartridges, production and sale, live performances. 204 pages. \$10.95

**Bringing It To Nashville** by Michael Kosser. A songwriter's point of view of how it feels to make the move to Music City and the problems and pitfalls that can come after arrival. Inside look at the behind-the-scenes Nashville music business. "There is no perfect book on how to make it big as a songwriter but Mike Kosser comes close to telling it like it really is" — Curly Putman (Green, Green Grass of Home). 99 pages. \$3.95

**How To Write A Song And Sell It** by Tommy Boyce. A how-to book for the beginner or the up-and-coming songwriter. Reveals professional songwriting tips and charts a course of instruction to follow. Tells how he wrote six of his biggest hits and includes the music and lyrics for study. 160 pages. \$7.50

**The Music/Record Career Handbook** by Joseph Csida. An encyclopedic guide to beginning and developing more than 30 different careers in the creative, commentary, business and educational areas of the music and record industry. "Csida's credentials are impeccable and impressive — former music editor of Billboard ... he covers virtually all aspects of song and music writing, royalties, publishing, etc." — Downbeat. 376 pages. \$14.95

**Songwriters' Rhyming Dictionary** by Jane Shaw Whitfield. Edited by Frances Stillman. Thousands of rhymes. A handy time-saving reference guide for lyric writers. 283 pages. \$4.00



## The Books You Should Read Are On Songwriter's Bookshelf



Payment must accompany order . . . make checks or money orders payable to

**Songwriter**

P.O. Box 3510, Hollywood, California 90028.

Rush me the following books.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> How I Write Songs (Why You Can) . . . \$ 7.95 | <input type="checkbox"/> Bringing It To Nashville . . . \$ 3.95          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> This Business of Music . . . \$15.00          | <input type="checkbox"/> How To Write A Hit Song And Sell It . . \$ 7.50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Songwriter Success Manual . . . \$ 6.95       | <input type="checkbox"/> The Music/Record Career Handbook \$14.95        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More About This Business of Music .. \$10.95  | <input type="checkbox"/> Songwriters' Rhyming Dictionary .... \$         |

Add 75¢ handling and postage for each book ordered. California residents add 6% sales tax.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Make Check  
or Money Order  
Payable to:

**Songwriter**  
Magazine

P.O. Box 3510  
Hollywood, Ca.  
90028

☐ Yes, send me \_\_\_\_\_ Songwriter T-Shirt (s) at \$6.95 each.  
☐ Small ☐ Medium ☐ Large ☐ X-Large

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

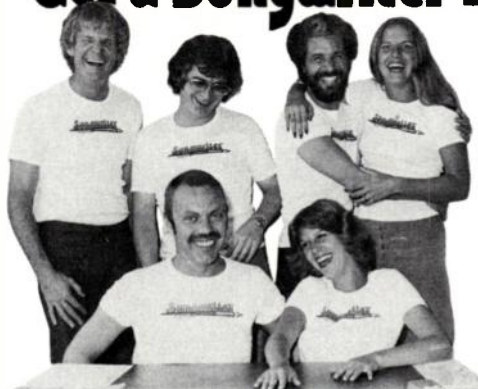
City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Allow from 3 to 6 weeks delivery. California Residents add 6%

Beautiful, Trim, French-Cut.

## Get a Songwriter T-Shirt!



White with  
Red-Orange  
Songwriter  
Magazine  
Logo

50/50  
Polyester  
Cotton,  
Non-Shrink

Only \$6.95

## Dealing With a Music Publisher

from page 12

on how consistent the writer is, and how excited the entire staff is about the material.

**Espy:** From zero to \$250. But even with zero, there are things that go with it. Things that really help, such as: a dynamite demo would be done; good lead sheets; the song would be copy-written properly; and it would be promoted properly. And possibly when there's a zero advance, a piece of the publishing would go to the writer. It's a flexible kind of thing. Staff writers can get anywhere from \$100 a week to \$300 a week, depending on what we feel they're capable of earning.

**Q** If you publish my song, how long before there is some action?

**Benjamin:** It depends. It took the publishers five years to get *Mandy* recorded by Barry Manilow. On the other hand, I had a song recorded by Olivia Newton-John the week I picked it up, when I was at Island Music. Generally speaking, if you don't get a song recorded by somebody in a year, the chances aren't great. I would say that *Mandy* is an exception to the rule. It's all a matter of timing, and who's recording when.

**Tedesco:** There is some variety; it could be three days, to a year, or never.

**Shoemaker:** We showcase the material immediately. There was one case just recently where a guy came in and played a song, and we "agreed to agree." I got an idea which we pursued immediately and we got the guy a record the next day—and he hadn't even signed a contract! By the time he came and signed the contract, we had a record for him. The publisher's job is done when the record company says, "We're going to cut the song," whether they release it next week or next year. *Right Time Of The Night* was cut two weeks after I showed it to

Arista, but the record didn't come out for a year.

**Espy:** It could be anywhere from thirty minutes to thirty years. If you had someone in mind to do the song, and you knew they were looking, and that's why you took the song, you might just walk downstairs or upstairs and get it recorded. Otherwise, I've had a situation where I've taken in a song and worked it for years, and I still haven't gotten a record on it. And I still believe in the song. There are songs I've taken in and showed a lot but I don't believe in anymore. Those, I always give back to the writer, and I'm lucky that my company lets me do that. A lot of companies won't, and I can understand that, but we don't want to build up our files. We've got 36,000 copyrights. I would say as a general rule, it's got to take at least eighteen months to find out if something's going to happen. If nothing's happened by then, I think it's time for the writer and the publisher to sit down and say, "Maybe we ought to part company." —A.McD.



**Editor's Note:** Allan McDougall is, or has been, a record producer (Hoyt Axton's *"When The Morning Comes,"* "Boney Fingers"); music publisher (three songs on Jackson 5 album); publicist (Kinks, Hollies, Who, Donovan); journalist (*Rolling Stone*, *Melody Maker*, *Penthouse*); professional Scotsman (Glasgow) amateur soccer player (Rod Stewart's Coke Allstars).

## Shape Up Your Songs

from page 5

heretofore non-existent. So create. But create for tomorrow, not for a year from now and not for yesterday. Don't write another *Tie A Yellow Ribbon*. Study as best you can what's happening on your local radio today, add one ounce of innovation, stir until completely clear and serve tastefully to a hungry publisher.

If you allow yourself the privilege, you can and will become your own best critic and save yourself pounds of heartache and frustration. The secret ingredient in the above recipe is: "stir until completely clear." Once you are honestly confident that you have done all possible, then you can accept rewrite direction enthusiastically, or rejection with a grin knowing that your time will come. For example, with the exception of 20th Century, almost every major label in Los Angeles passed on Peter McCann who wrote *Right Time Of The Night* and *Do You Wanna Make Love*. The rest is history. Never expect someone else to believe you're right until you know you are.

I once met a young screenwriter at a cocktail party and to the question: "How's it going?" she responded: "Fantastic; I just placed a script with Universal and I'm in my first rewrite!"—First rewrite!??? How can I get that concept across to my writers? How can I get that across to you?

Yes, some do believe that *White Christmas* was written in twenty minutes. Perhaps it was. And then perhaps Rome actually was built in a day. ♪

**Editor's Note:** The author is one of the most knowledgeable publishers in Los Angeles. He recently exited his post as Vice President of ABC Music to pursue his interests as an independent producer. Peter McCann, who wrote *Right Time Of The Night*, the big hit which brought Jennifer Warnes into current public focus, was brought along at ABC Music by Hal. Peter's hit, *Do You Wanna Make Love* was produced by Hal and is further evidence of the strong talents this producer/publisher possesses.



Beautiful, Hand Copied Lead Sheets . . . Only ~~\$78<sup>00</sup>~~

Use for showing or copyrighting your songs!

**\$13<sup>00</sup>**

Our copyists make beautiful, precise, handcopied lead sheets for many of the major music publishers. And they can do the same for you. Simply send us a simple demo of your song (reel to reel, or cassette), with voice and either piano or guitar, and we'll do the rest. If you have a chord sheet, that would be helpful, but isn't essential.

Specify names of writers, title of song, copyright notation, if any, (i.e. © 1975 by John Doe), and any other information you want on the lead sheet. That's all we need to send you a master copy of your song. You can make your own copies from the master, or we'll make copies for you for 30 cents apiece. Include check or money order for \$13 per song payable to Music House.

**MUSIC  
HOUSE**

Post Office Box 4577  
No. Hollywood, Ca. 91607

# "AMERICA, THE BEAUTIFUL"

SAMUEL A. WARD



# Want To Catch Up On Back Issues Of Songwriter?



**They're Available. Below Is A Brief  
Description Of Issues You Might Have  
Missed And A Coupon From Which You  
Can Order Your Back Copies.**

Oct/75—Jim Weatherly,  
Breaking Into the  
Country Market, Snuff  
Garrett.

Nov/75—Barry Manilow,  
Jim Foglesong,  
Memories of a  
Songplugger.

Dec/75—Alan O'Day,  
Alternative Chorus,  
Songwriter's Showcase,  
Copyright Revision Bill.

Jan/76—Gordon Light-  
foot, Publisher Rap,  
Steve Cropper.

Feb/76—Hoyt Axton,  
Dick Clark, AGAC.

Mar/76—Jimmy Webb,  
Karen Hodge, How to  
get a good mix.

Apr/76—Sammy Cahn,  
Buddy Killen, How to  
present your songs.

May/76—David Gates,  
Improving use of  
Melodic Range, Helen  
King, Founder of SRS.

June/76—Smokey Robin-  
son, How to use the  
Most Common Song  
Forms, Steve Barri.

July/76—Loggins &  
Messina, Movie Lyrics  
and Music, The New  
York Songwriter's  
Showcase.

Aug/76—Barry Mann &  
Cynthia Weil, Auto-  
biography of a Copy-  
right, Song Festivals.

Sept/76—Paul Anka,  
Banking and the Music  
Business, What you  
earn with a Top Ten  
Record.

Oct/76—Jerry Foster &  
Bill Rice, Children's  
Music, Barbara Ringer,  
Register of Copyrights.

Nov/76—Neil Sedaka,  
How to Make your Own  
Record, History of Tin  
Pan Alley.

Dec/76—Melissa  
Manchester, Packaging  
& Selling Your Master,  
Tom Catalano.

Jan/77—Bobby Golds-  
boro, Harry Warren, The  
Harry Fox Agency.

Feb/77—Ashford &  
Simpson, Atlanta's  
Music Center, Is  
Collaboration An Art—  
Part I.

Mar/77—Henry Mancini,  
Academy Award  
Winners, Collaboration  
—Part II.

Apr/77—Lambert &  
Potter, Gospel Music,  
Songwriters Hall of  
Fame.

May/77—Carole Bayer  
Sager, How to Copyright  
Your Song, Hit Record  
Computer.

Mail coupon today to



P.O. Box 3510, Hollywood, Ca. 90028

**Send request for back  
issues along with \$1.50  
per issue to Songwriter  
Magazine P.O. Box 3510,  
Hollywood, Ca. 90028.**

- |                                 |                                  |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Oct/75 | <input type="checkbox"/> May/76  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Nov/75 | <input type="checkbox"/> June/76 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dec/75 | <input type="checkbox"/> July/76 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Jan/76 | <input type="checkbox"/> Aug/76  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feb/76 | <input type="checkbox"/> Sept/76 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mar/76 | <input type="checkbox"/> Oct/76  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Apr/76 | <input type="checkbox"/> Nov/76  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dec/76 | <input type="checkbox"/> Jan/77  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feb/77 | <input type="checkbox"/> Mar/77  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Apr/77 | <input type="checkbox"/> May/77  |

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

P. O. Box 3510, Hollywood, Ca. 90028



**BULK RATE  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID**  
Los Angeles, Calif.  
Permit No. 26306