

The Song School

August 3-7, 2025 • Lyons, CO

Schedule and Course Descriptions

Sunday, August 3rd

9:30 Campground Line Up and Lottery at the Farm

Please review the campground load in procedures. All vehicles will meet at the Farm parking lot which is located at 19680 N St Vrain Dr, Lyons, CO 80540 to line up to enter the Planet Bluegrass campground in an orderly fashion.

3:00 - 5:00 Registration

Visit us at the Blue Heron Tent and pick up your Song School schedule, wristband, Song School laminate and other goodies.

5:30 - 6:00 New Student Meet and Greet - Wildflower Pavilion

First timer? Meet up with staff and Song School veterans, perhaps an instructor or two, ask that burning question and get some sage advice on how to make your week enjoyable.

Monday, August 4th

TO DO LIST:

- Mentoring and Reiki sign-up sheets will go out early today at 8am.

7:30 - 8:15 Qi Gong

Qi Gong is a 4,000 year old practice that cultivates energy and vitality. Practice gentle movements that strengthen the body, increase flexibility and relieve stress with Carli Zug. No experience necessary. (Trout Tent)

"Eighty percent of life is just showing up." – Woody Allen

8:00 - 9:15 Registration

Visit us at the Blue Heron Tent and pick up your Song School schedule, wristband, Song School laminate, reusable and other goodies. Help yourself to tea or coffee and fruit and muffins next door at the beverage area. Burritos and snacks are available for purchase at the Bloomberries Booth next to the bathhouse.

7:30 - 8:30 Yoga

Yogi Heather Hottovy will help celebrate the start of your day with a gentle yoga routine each morning. No prior experience necessary. Complimentary mats and blocks provided. (Meet by silo)

9:00 - 9:30 Orientation

Official welcoming: we'll cover logistics, put the program in perspective, introduce instructors, and get you prepared for the week. Please be there... (Wildflower Pavilion)

9:30 - 10:00 Opening Session: The Song School Community Gathering

"Walking thru the door is the only audition." During our opening session, Moira Smiley and Rebecca Folsom will lead us all in song and movement and have us resonating in time and in tune for the week ahead. (Wildflower Pavilion)

10:00 - 10:45 Group Songwriting Extravaganza

After our opening session, we'll immediately find our groups and facilitators around the Wildflower Pavilion and proceed to start a song! You'll be given prompts to include and the rest is all about having fun and making new friends. There'll be time to share a couple song starts and all are encouraged to finish their songs during the week.

11:00 - 1:00 Electives

- 1) **Directed Writing (Paul Reisler)** - Thirty years ago, a friend gave me the best advice I've ever heard regarding songwriting. He told me to get up every morning and write a song, complete it, and put it in a file folder and not look at it for 6 months. Not a good song or a long song necessarily, just a song. Two years and several hundred songs later, I realized that I had not only learned a lot about the craft of songwriting, but a great deal about how to generate ideas and images and carry them through, how to dance around writer's block and how to fool myself into approaching my writing in a fresh way each day. If you want to write songs on a regular basis, you need a reliable technique that you can use whenever you sit down to write. You'll be writing a song during this workshop and gathering the tools you'll need to write on a daily basis. This is a 4-day workshop and you should participate in all the sessions to get your song finished. (Wildflower Pavilion)

- 2) **Song Session (Steve Seskin and Bonnie Hayes)** - This session takes an in-depth look at participants' songs, finding teachable moments to benefit not only the writer but observers as well. We'll identify strengths in each song and look at what could be even better. This session is open to as many people as wish to attend. We'll probably get to 3 or 4 songs each morning, showing you tools to move the songs further ahead. We prefer that people play live so we can more easily suggest different approaches, especially when it comes to melody and phrasing. Bring several lyric sheets. (Mountain Lion Tent)
- 3) **Performance (Amy Speace)** - A four day comprehensive performance class. You can do all four or just jump into one of them. We will look at performance from the "inside out" (it'll make sense, I promise). You will learn the art of connecting to both the song and the audience in a profound way. This is an 'on your feet' class, so come prepared with a song you know by heart that you're willing to dig into. (Festival Main Stage)
- 4) **Fingerpicking Good: Build Skills, Elevate Your Sound (Justin Roth)** - If you've ever wanted to try fingerpicking - or felt stuck repeating the same pattern - this workshop is your launchpad. With accessible, musical approaches to building finger independence, clarity, and control, you'll go beyond the basics and learn how to craft more expressive, melodic guitar parts using the chords you already know. Whether you're starting from scratch or ready to refine your touch, this workshop will open the door to a deeper connection with your guitar and a fresh range of tones, textures, and motion in your playing. (Trout Tent)
- 5) **Build a Wholehearted Creative Life (Terri and Ellis Delaney)** - This workshop is designed to inspire, encourage, and provide you with insight into how you can create a balanced life that includes your musical aspirations but isn't limited by them. In this workshop, we will help you to identify what makes you feel alive and whole, as well as what your music gives to others. This workshop is for everyone, regardless of whether you make a living making music (or hope to) or you just live for the love of songs and songwriting! (Lizard Tent)
- 6) **Basic Guitar Skills (Arthur Lee Land)** - This workshop covers guitar basics that will help you deliver your songs with more variety and punch. Topics covered: various picking and right hand strumming/muting techniques, anti-spider finger technique to learn new chords faster making it easier to move between chord changes, and basic techniques for using capos for alternate chord forms and inversions. We will also touch on ideas to help embellish your songs by adding tasty guitar fills using basic hammer-on/pull-off techniques in common guitar keys. (Eagle Tent - backstage)

- 7) **Songs For the Collective Lift (Moiria Smiley)** - We will come up with simple, indelible songs that can call others in. We'll make new songs and refrains that deeply connect groups of us wherever we gather. We'll study lineages of powerful singing built to 'magic' contexts outside a mic, a stage and an audience. Moira's original songwriting and arranging are informed by percussive movement, expansive vocal techniques, and balancing personal, solo creation with communal, embodied creation with others. This is an opportunity to embody your stories and add the tools of song leadership to your songwriting. We'll study traditional forms and foster new musical discoveries! (Hummingbird Tent)
- 8) **Songs in Action: Writing for Theatre (Bandits On the Run)** - All three Bandits on the Run attended top conservatories for acting and come from extensive theatre backgrounds. Our experience in this field ranges from Broadway Shows, to improv comedy, to Bread & Puppet Theatre and beyond, and we believe that the world of live music and the world of live theatre have several magical interconnections. Lately we've been living in both these worlds, developing several folk-based musical theatre projects for the stage, and we're ready to share what we've learned with you. What makes a song a good musical theatre song? How is that different from a good singer-songwriter song? What are the things to take into account when writing for a character? How do you best employ themes and motifs in your musical theatre score? We'll talk about these questions and more, break down a few examples from our recent work, and answer your questions about the process of making a musical! (Spider Tent)
- 9) **Intro To Home Recording (Ryan Benyo)** - In this introductory recording workshop, LA-based producer/engineer Ryan Benyo will guide students through the various aspects of setting up and utilizing a home recording studio. Discussions will include recording software/hardware, microphones, home acoustics, speakers/headphones and MIDI keyboards. Basic recording techniques will also be demonstrated including acoustic mic techniques, digital recording/editing workflow, signal flow and troubleshooting. This workshop is perfect for beginning students with no prior recording experience or equipment set-up, as well as those who wish to better understand the tools they already have at their disposal. (Coyote Tent)

"You know, sometimes all you need is twenty seconds of insane courage. Just literally twenty seconds of just embarrassing bravery. And I promise you, something great will come out of it. "
— Benjamin Mee

- 10) Next Level Voice Class (Ron Browning)** - Join this fun and engaging class on how to find your best voice and performance. Discover your unique sound through conversation—after all, your singing voice is your speaking voice! Use simple tricks of casual conversation to make your singing have a more intimate and honest delivery. Learn the do's and don'ts of lyric interpretation. Learn about the projection power found in a baby's cry and learn how to use it in singing for a more soulful expression, or to have more vocal power. Add "cry mode" to your vocal techniques and walk away from all vocal faults and your fear of high notes. And, of course, this will allow you to walk away from vocal fatigue once and for all. Both vocal and performance techniques will be taken into consideration for the more advanced singers. Come with questions. Guitars and recorded tracks are welcome-or sing a cappella! (Bear Tent)
- 11) Mentoring Sessions** - These sessions are offered for participants to receive more personalized attention and help with specific questions. They can take the form of one-on-one or small group consultations depending on the desires of the instructor. Each day, sign ups and meeting locations for that day's participating instructors will be posted in the Blue Heron Tent at 9am (registration area). Check back for late additions. Most sessions will meet under 10 x 10 tents near the silo and riverfront. Because of the limited amount of mentoring sessions, you may sign up for only one session during the week unless space is available last minute.

1:00 - 2:00 Lunch Break

TO DO: Confirm open stage performance times posted in Blue Heron Tent.

2:00 - 4:00 Songwriting Groups: Session 1

The first of four daily songwriting and elective sessions. See all instructor descriptions below. Each instructor will meet at the following location:

MEETING PLACES

- o Phoebe Hunt - Coyote Tent
- o Sadie Gustafson-Zook - Trout Tent
- o Anna Tivel - Spider Tent
- o Ellis Delaney - Lizard Tent
- o Rebecca Folsom - Eagle Tent (backstage)
- o Daniel Rodriguez - Bear Tent
- o Steve Poltz - Mountain Lion Tent
- o Bonnie Hayes - Festival Main Stage
- o Paul Reisler - Wildflower Pavilion
- o Pat Pattison - Blue Heron Tent
- o Steve Seskin - Hummingbird Tent †

- **The Songwriter's Toolkit (Phoebe Hunt)** - Bring a song! In this class, we will have each participant play an original song of their choosing and rather than receiving direct feedback, we will dissect the song into the tools that are being used. As we go around the class, we will reveal the plethora of tools available to the songwriter through the examples revealed in class. Through this experiential process, participants often begin to see the pattern of tools they often use, as well as learn new tools that they can tuck away to use in future writing! Let's expand our toolkits together! Please note: We will have time to listen to approximately 15-20 songwriters in a single class session. We will do our best to accommodate all participants but cannot promise that everyone will have a chance to play time permitting. (Coyote Tent)
- **Having Fun: The Key to Writing Many Imperfect Songs (Sadie Gustafson-Zook)** - Let's practice putting our editors in a closet and getting our ideas out! We'll use a variety of hands-on activities to access our inner-children and their wonderful ideas! (Trout Tent)
- **Life is Lyrics (Anna Tivel)** - Let's write to notice magic in the mundane. This class will explore the imagery that brings a song to life and makes it feel resonant and relatable. We'll read, write, and talk about the ordinary details that can help illuminate shared human truths in writing. (Spider Tent)
- **Intentional Performance: Performing From the Inside Out (Ellis and Terri Delaney)** - Most performing workshops focus on techniques designed for you to be seen as a professional, being polished, and letting the songs shine. Those are incredibly important skills, but not what this workshop is about. Ellis invites you to also consider how audiences need to be "seen" and how magic happens when the performer tunes in to the beauty of the audience. Real connection happens naturally when a performer is both self-aware and tuned in to others. In this engaging workshop, you will practice a new model that focuses on valuing who you are AND valuing the people in your audience! Bring your instrument and come ready to perform (optional)! (Lizard Tent)
- **Vocal Freedom Workshop (Rebecca Folsom)** - In this class you will learn tools (some traditional and some very nontraditional) to open and expand your vocal range, resonance, and character, along with tools to open and expand your performance ease, depth and brilliance. You will be given key adjustments particularly focused to your voice/your body that with little effort make fundamental shifts to your overall Vocal and Performance Freedom. We will alternate diving into teaching moments for the whole class to practice the exercises, and having individual volunteers perform. Come ready to sing with the group and sing individually, if you choose to volunteer. We will embody the practices moving beyond mental understanding to the knowing "ah ha" of relaxing into your best voice and best performance ever. These shifts are lasting and you can take them with you for the rest of your life. Vocal Performance Freedom! (Eagle Tent - backstage)

- **The Art of Listening to Someone's Story (Daniel Rodriguez)** - In this session, we'll break off into pairs and listen to fifteen minutes of each other's life story, or some life defining moments and then write a song inspired by each other's stories. (Bear Tent)
- **Writing Songs is Easy! (Steve Poltz)** - Writing songs is easy. Have some fun. Shut off the negative voices in your head and let your freak flag fly. Keep creating as often as possible. (Mountain Lion Tent)
- **Stealing Fire: Learning From the Songs We Love (Bonnie Hayes)** - What do our favorite songs have to teach us? If we listen to them carefully and pay attention to our own responses, we can pull out a technique or trick, a spark that we can "steal" to inspire a new song of our own. We'll do a song or two that I am currently obsessed with, and then one or two of your favorite songs. Come with a song you wish you'd written! (Festival Main Stage)
- **Harmony and Chord Substitution (Paul Reisler)** - We'll work on understanding how chords work and how they help shade the emotion of the moment with a proper choice of chords, chord types and substitutions. You'll learn how they are constructed, and how to harmonize your melody in different ways using functional substitutions, secondary dominants, extended chords and much more. We'll do this by taking a song and harmonizing it in 8 different ways using different types of chord substitutions. This is a participatory workshop for students of all levels that will give you an understanding of harmony and an inspiration to use it in your music. (Wildflower Pavilion)
- **Verse Development (Pat Pattison)** - Solve "Second Verse Hell" quickly and easily by learning to what to look for in a title and how to develop the flow of ideas BEFORE you waste time writing a lyric that dead-ends in some dark alley. Learn how to advance your ideas so the song gains rather than loses interest as it moves forward. Find out how to create a chorus or refrain that can be repeated effectively without having to change the words each time. This seminar will save you time and channel your energies efficiently, allowing you to write more songs and better songs. (Blue Heron Tent)
- † **Songwriting Masterclass (Steve Seskin)** - This class is for students who were pre-selected ahead of time. All students are welcome to observe. (Hummingbird Tent)

4:15 - 5:30 Monday Electives

- 1) **Embellishing Your Song (Arthur Lee Land)** - Bring your songs to this interactive workshop and learn new ways to embellish your song by adding tasty guitar fills, substitute chord changes, various picking and strumming approaches, alternate chord forms and inversions, varied capo positions and more. (Eagle Tent - backstage)

- 2) **Write a Song That ACTUALLY Changes Your Life (Shanna in a Dress)** - Change your story, change your life. You've heard that before, right? How about "Change your SONG, change your life." Songs are spells - they are a secret weapon to instantly change your frequency, raise your vibration, and connect and impact others in the same way. Did you know there are certain WORDS that are energy-giving? Enough writing about the past. Give your Future Self the pen and let that version of you take the reins. We'll spend 20 minutes exploring some inspiring examples of real-life songs that came true, and then the rest of class SCRIPTING our new world! If you've tried to manifest before and could never stick with visualization or journaling or screaming affirmations into the mirror... this is your golden ticket to a future you're INVIGORATED by. What better earworm could you ask for? (Wildflower Pavilion)
- 3) **Social Media According to Poltz (Steve Poltz)** - Social Media is fun and habit forming. You be you and let your personality shine. It doesn't have to be a chore. (Mountain Lion Tent)
- 4) **Ask an Introvert (Anna Tivel)** - Performance and touring tips for quiet people. (Spider Tent)
- 5) **Capo Envy: Demystifying the Magic of Partial Capos (Justin Roth)** - Ever watched someone play with multiple or partial capos and thought, "What kind of sorcery is that?" You're not alone - and you might just have a case of capo envy. In this hands-on workshop, you'll learn how these clever tools can unlock lush, layered sounds - without complicating your chords or technique. In fact, partial capos can make playing easier, not harder. We'll break down the mechanics, show you how to use them with chords you already know in standard tuning, and help you instantly level up your sound. Capos provided for use in class (and available for purchase). Get ready to turn a simple trick into a sonic transformation. (Coyote Tent)

"I'm a firm believer that embracing the imperfections of making music is so much of what makes something groove. Getting rid of these imperfections runs the risk of removing a lot of the magic that makes this music really special, and diminishes music's ability to connect with us as human beings. We are all imperfect, after all."

— Jacob Collier

- 6) **Raise the Vibration: Infuse Your Songs with the Power of Mantra (Mai Bloomfield)** - What is a mantra and what does it have to do with songwriting? Often associated with mindfulness, meditation, or spiritual practice, a mantra (just like a song) is a vehicle that transports us into a state of being or awareness. Mantras can help set intention or deepen connection. In times of confusion or crisis, they can help generate a sense of peace and focus. In a nutshell, with its transformative nature, mantra can be a powerful tool to work with in songwriting. What would it sound like if you wrote a song inspired by a mantra? As songwriters, we have a unique opportunity to create mantras from our personal experience, and to put them into songs to elevate, connect, heal. In this class we'll explore and create mantras by drawing upon our own life experience (for there is great wisdom there!) We'll do some writing exercises, we'll break off for personal songwriting time, and we'll share (one of the best parts!) You will come away from the class with a new song seed infused with the power of mantra. You may be surprised what it opens up in your songwriting practice and in your life! (Lizard Tent)
- 7) **Essences (Amy Speace)** - Have you ever wondered what superpower or secret character you bring to the stage that no one else does? All performers have an essence that helps them own their presence on stage. Finding your essence goes beyond your songs and even your skill as a performer, singer, and player. It is something inherent in you that cannot be taken away. Come find it and learn how to use it to your benefit. (Hummingbird Tent)
- 8) **Money, Music and Making It Work (Sarah Clanton & Ryan Benyo)** - Think making money in music is a straight line? Think again - and that's a good thing! In this candid, fun, and inspiring session, career musicians Sarah Clanton and Ryan Benyo pull back the curtain on how they've pieced together sustainable, creative lives in music. From gigs to sync to sessions, producing, royalties, and beyond - we'll share what's worked, what hasn't, and the unexpected ways we've built careers on our own terms. You'll leave feeling fired up, more informed, and ready to take action. Bring your questions - this is real talk for real-deal musicpreneurs. (Festival Main Stage)
- 9) **Observational Writing (Daniel Rodriguez)** - Observing your senses. Being present. Engaging the here and now of the exterior and the interior. So you can bring your listener into the moment. (Bear Tent)

*"You'll never get bored when you try something new.
There's really no limit to what you can do." - Dr. Seuss*

- 10) Song School Check In and Reflect (Phoebe Hunt)** - Need a moment to check in? Within the process of exploring our songwriting, it is natural for participants to unlock parts of themselves that may feel uncomfortable, vulnerable or raw. Similarly, you may feel the highest highs alongside the lowest lows within your journey here at song school. This daily gathering offers a safe space to share about the visceral experience you are having. We offer a moment of refuge to process what might be coming up for you, honoring your unique journey here and allowing a moment to reflect and be witnessed through your process here at The Song School. (Trout Tent)
- 11) Mentoring and Reiki Sessions** - Mentoring sessions are offered for participants to receive more personalized attention and help with specific questions. They can take the form of one-on-one or small group consultations depending on the desires of the instructor. Each day, sign ups and meeting locations for that day's participating instructors will be posted in the Blue Heron Tent at 9am (registration area). Check back for late additions. Most sessions will meet under 10 x 10 tents near the silo and riverfront. Because of the limited amount of mentoring sessions, you may sign up for only one session during the week unless space is available last minute. (various locations)

5:40 - 6:00 All School Session: Live Performing Basics

A perfect (and fun!) mini-primer or reminder for the evening open stages, especially if you're new to performing live. Join Amy Speace for a quick review of the key items to enhance the flow and ease when performing live. This helps us keep things moving along each night. Also learn how to communicate with your sound person! (Wildflower Pavilion)

6:00 - 7:30 Song School Dinner (Wildflower Front Lawn) - This dinner is for Song School students and their registered guests. Your wristband is your meal ticket. Please remember to reuse, recycle and compost. Thanks!

7:30 Open Stage - Confirm your day and time posted in Blue Heron Tent. Sing and play for peers! (Wildflower Pavilion)

"Sometimes the most ordinary things could be made extraordinary, simply by doing them with the right people"
- Nicholas Sparks

Tuesday, August 5th

TIP OF THE DAY

If you have a Festival related question or problem, please let us know before class or during lunch break today so we can help you work out a solution before the Festival. Use the message board as needed.

TO DO LIST

- Mentoring session sign-ups. Sign-up sheets for Tuesday will be put out at 9am in the Blue Heron Tent. Check back at lunchtime for additions during the day.
- Your night to play the open stage? Confirm your time at Blue Heron Tent.
- Musical supplies will be available for sale after class today (4:15-5:15pm) in front of the bathhouse! Call ahead to HB Woodsongs for special requests at 303-449-0516.

7:30 - 8:30 Qi Gong

Qi Gong is a 4,000 year old practice that cultivates energy and vitality. Practice gentle movements that strengthen the body, increase flexibility and relieve stress with Carli Zug. No experience necessary. (Trout Tent)

8:00 - 9:00 Yoga

Yogi Heather Hottovy will help celebrate the start of your day with a gentle yoga routine. No prior experience necessary. Complimentary mats and blocks provided. (Meet by silo)

10:00 - 12:00 Electives

- 1) **Directed Writing (Paul Reisler)** - Thirty years ago, a friend gave me the best advice I've ever heard regarding songwriting. He told me to get up every morning and write a song, complete it, and put it in a file folder and not look at it for 6 months. Not a good song or a long song necessarily, just a song. Two years and several hundred songs later, I realized that I had not only learned a lot about the craft of songwriting, but a great deal about how to generate ideas and images and carry them through, how to dance around writer's block and how to fool myself into approaching my writing in a fresh way each day. If you want to write songs on a regular basis, you need a reliable technique that you can use whenever you sit down to write. You'll be writing a song during this workshop and gathering the tools you'll need to write on a daily basis. This is a 4-day workshop and you should participate in all the sessions to get your song finished. We will not take new people after the 2nd day. (Wildflower Pavilion)

"I want it all, and I would like it delivered"
– Bette Midler

- 2) **Songs For the Collective Lift (Moiria Smiley)** - We will come up with simple, indelible songs that can call others in. We'll make new songs and refrains that deeply connect groups of us wherever we gather. We'll study lineages of powerful singing built to 'magic' contexts outside a mic, a stage and an audience. Moira's original songwriting and arranging are informed by percussive movement, expansive vocal techniques, and balancing personal, solo creation with communal, embodied creation with others. This is an opportunity to embody your stories and add the tools of song leadership to your songwriting. We'll study traditional forms and foster new musical discoveries! (Mountain Lion Tent)
- 3) **Healing HeArt of Songwriting (Mai Bloomfield)** - Many of us are reckoning with big changes—a diagnosis, a loss, a triumph, a transition. As songwriters, how do we integrate our biggest life experiences into our creative work? It's not always easy. Sometimes in our writing, we avoid the topics that matter most, for fear we won't do them justice. Sometimes, we just don't know where or how to begin. We put it off, waiting for "the right time" or the right circumstances...which never seem to come. As a cancer survivor, Mai learned first-hand: *the greatest challenges can present the greatest insights*. This is good news for songwriters! After struggling to find her way with writing during the trauma of cancer, Mai developed a method that helps us access creative inspiration and healing by honoring our real-life experience. *Whether as salve or a spark, our life experiences can feed our artistic self*. This is a songwriting workshop, so you will leave with a new song—as well as tools you can use to access 'the big stuff' in small, simple ways that will empower you as an artist. *Through crisis comes opportunity. Through the heART comes art*. (Parlor)
- 4) **So You Want to Write a Musical (Steve Seskin)** - Steve has never met a songwriter who didn't at least think about it. In recent years with the success of *Waitress* by Sara Bareillies and *Hadestown* by Anais Mitchell not to mention *Hamilton* by Lin-Manuel Miranda there are a growing number of songwriters from all genres taking a look at putting their heart and soul into this art form. Steve is in the middle of writing a musical called "Things" with his friend Kate Schutt. It's a challenging task but one that he finds quite exhilarating. The big difference between writing one off songs and songs for a musical is how the songs go together, telling a story interspersed with dialogue. He will talk about some of the things to consider such as the arc of your story, how to tell if you have a great story, musical theater songwriting compared to other genres, and what kind of songs you will need to create tension and release in your narrative. He is now in year three of writing his first musical and it is close to being staged with two readings this year. It's amazing how many changes have been made along the way. We will look at examples of what has changed and why. (Hummingbird Tent)

- 5) **Performance (Amy Speace)** - A four day comprehensive performance class. You can do all four or just jump into one of them. We will look at performance from the “inside out” (it'll make sense, I promise). You will learn the art of connecting to both the song and the audience in a profound way. This is an 'on your feet' class, so come prepared with a song you know by heart that you're willing to dig into. (Festival Main Stage)
- 6) **That DIY Life: The Art of Doing It Yourself (Bandits On The Run)** - Long gone are the days when a fancy man with a big cigar comes up to you after your gig and says "hey kid, here's a suitcase full of money and a record contract, I'm gonna make you a star!" Or, did those days really ever exist? Who knows. We've got 10 years under our Bandit belts as a completely grassroots unsigned DIY indie band and we've got a treasure trove of info on how to book your own shows, plan tours, make meaningful connections and engage audiences and fans (both on and OFF(!!!) the internet) We've learned from years of experience how to grow and cultivate a vibrant artistic community that makes DIY feel a lot less lonely and daunting. Come to our class and let's talk about your artistic journeys thus far, and share ways to DIY, together! (Spider Tent)
- 7) **Next Level Voice Class (Ron Browning)** - Join this fun and engaging class on how to find your best voice and performance. Discover your unique sound through conversation—after all, your singing voice is your speaking voice! Use simple tricks of casual conversation to make your singing have a more intimate and honest delivery. Learn the do's and don'ts of lyric interpretation. Learn about the projection power found in a baby's cry and learn how to use it in singing for a more soulful expression, or to have more vocal power. Add “cry mode” to your vocal techniques and walk away from all vocal faults and your fear of high notes. And, of course, this will allow you to walk away from vocal fatigue once and for all. Both vocal and performance techniques will be taken into consideration for the more advanced singers. Come with questions. Guitars and recorded tracks are welcome-or sing a cappella! (Bear Tent)
- 8) **Music Production and Mixing Techniques (Ryan Benyo)** - Join LA-based producer/engineer Ryan Benyo for an interactive recording and music production workshop. Ryan takes you through his recording process, explaining each technique in detail along the way as he records a fully produced section of a song from scratch. A variety of techniques will be covered, ranging from various microphone selection and placement techniques for guitar, vocals and other instruments, to drum programming, sweetening and more. Best of all, emphasis will be placed on utilizing the tools students already have, and getting the most out of a cost-efficient home studio set-up. Those with no prior recording experience should take “Intro To Home Recording” prior to taking this workshop. (Coyote Tent)

- 9) **Singing Your Way Around the Fretboard (Arthur Lee Land)** - Using the seven notes of the major scale and student's own melodies from their songs, Arthur Lee Land will take you on an interactive melodic journey that will transform your relationship with your songs and the fretboard on your guitar. Using IMPROVISE FOR REAL's Tonal Map, their Melody Path concept and Arthur's "Art of Live Looping" to provide a backing track for students to explore the seven notes of the Major Scale inside the context of their own melodies through call and response singing exercises. Then applying these Melody Paths to a simple fingering on the fretboard giving students the ability to easily locate and figure out song melodies on the guitar neck. This class will rock your musical world! (Eagle Tent - backstage)
- 10) **Before You Record, Do THIS... (Justin Roth)** - Thinking about recording your songs? Hold up - there's a step that could save you time, money, and creative frustration: pre-production. In this session, we'll unpack everything you should consider before you hit the studio: arranging parts, choosing players, budgeting realistically, defining your goals, and deciding between DIY vs. pro studios. Whether it's your first time or your fifth, this workshop will help you approach recording like a pro, with a clear plan that gets the most out of your songs - and your resources. (Blue Heron Tent)
- 11) **Getting Stuff Done: Organizational Tools for Creatives (Terri and Ellis Delaney)** - Ellis (performing songwriter) and Terri (social worker), will teach you friendly tools for time management and organization that are designed for wandering creative-minded songwriter types who regularly feel overwhelmed and lost. Says Ellis, "Setting aside songwriting time has always been challenging for me amidst a busy touring schedule, being a mom and doing all those music business-y things on my to-do list. All of the traditional left-brained time management and organizing skills haven't worked for me. I have found that structure is freedom and we can't wait to show you these tools." (Lizard Tent).
- 12) **The Easiest Songwriting Class, Ever! (Rebecca Folsom)** - We often make songwriting much harder than it needs to be. Here we will focus on the magic and flow of the transmission of a song. We will refrain from interrupting a song in the pure stream as it is being handed to us, engage our abandon, and write FREELY. We will use a special and simple technique designed to open your songwriting flow so that you write a song (usually in its entirety) right here, right now. Come leap and enjoy the invigorating experience of uncensored creativity. (Trout Tent)
- 13) **Mentoring Sessions** – See sign-ups in Blue Heron Tent

12:00 - 1:30 Lunch Break

TO DO: Confirm open stage performance times posted in Blue Heron Tent.

1:30 - 4:00 Songwriting Groups: Session 2

Your daily dose of songwriting and more. See all instructor descriptions below. Each instructor will meet at the following location:

MEETING PLACES

- o Phoebe Hunt - Coyote Tent
- o Sadie Gustafson-Zook - Trout Tent
- o Anna Tivel - Spider Tent
- o Rebecca Folsom - Eagle Tent
- o Steve Poltz - Mountain Lion Tent
- o Bonnie Hayes - Festival Main Stage
- o Paul Reisler - Wildflower Pavilion
- o Daniel Rodriguez - Bear Tent
- o Pat Pattison - Blue Heron Tent
- o Steve Seskin - Hummingbird Tent †

- **Let's Co-Write! (Phoebe Hunt)** - Some say co-writing is a vehicle to greater songs... but first you have to get through the part where you actually collaborate with someone else... and make choices together that can feel very vulnerable. What if there was a way to make every co-write a success? Let's do it. In this class, we will go through an exercise that has proven to continually result in successful co-writes, helping move through hurdles that can block you, and deepening both the songwriting experience as well as the relationship between the two co-writers. You can expect to walk away with one or two successful co-writes and... perhaps even a new friend. (Coyote Tent)
- **Playing Along With Your Mental Jukebox: Creating Melodies That Stick (Sadie Gustafson-Zook)** - We'll take this opportunity to glean melodic lessons from our favorite songs. Then we'll mine these gems to create songs of our own! (Trout Tent)
- **Life is Lyrics (Anna Tivel)** - Let's write to notice magic in the mundane. This class will explore the imagery that brings a song to life and makes it feel resonant and relatable. We'll read, write, and talk about the ordinary details that can help illuminate shared human truths in writing. (Spider Tent)
- **Dynamic Songwriting Tools (Rebecca Folsom)** - Crack open your songwriting habits with these super-easy-to-learn and fun-to-apply tools from Berklee College of Music. We will play with how simple changes in vocal melodies and rhythms, and instrument melodies and rhythms can create a dynamic shift in your songs. If you want to make your song sections sound dramatically different from each other, and you want your songs to not only stand out from other songs you've written but to stand out in a crowd, you will love this class. (Eagle Tent - backstage)
- **Writing Songs is Easy (Steve Poltz)** - Writing songs is easy. Have some fun. Shut off the negative voices in your head and let your freak flag fly. Keep creating as often as possible. (Mountain Lion Tent)

- **Writing Emotional Melodies (Bonnie Hayes)** - Learn how to write melodies that will carry the emotion you want to evoke straight into your listeners' minds and hearts. It all comes down to writing intentionally—and knowing a few awesome tricks! We'll examine some key ideas in writing melodies and try to use the techniques with some in-class writing assignments. (Festival Main Stage)
- **Songwriting With Kids (Paul Reisler)** - I'm the founder and artistic director of Kid Pan Alley. We've now written over 2,700 songs with over 65,000 children using a group songwriting process I've developed. Kid Pan Alley Nashville features Amy Grant, Delbert McClinton, Suzy Bogguss, Raul Malo, Tommy Sims and others recording the songs we wrote with the children. Songwriting with kids is fun. It's part of how we give back some of what has been given to us and it sows the seeds for a new generation of songwriters. It's also great for our own songwriting chops because we have to work quickly using our intuition and wits. There's no time for the dreaded editor. Their minds work in the way we wish ours would when we write songs—non-linearly. And it may be the most likely way to make money with your songwriting. (Wildflower Pavilion)
- **Prompt Writing (Daniel Rodriguez)** - This session begins with a brief group discussion. Throughout the discussion we will look for gems of the conversation and find the prompts to write about. We'll learn good listening skills and use non premeditated prompts to write. (Bear Tent)
- **Prosody, the Most Important Concept in Songwriting (Pat Pattison)** - All the elements of your song should work together to support the song's central message and emotion. This class will show you tools and techniques to make your song stronger and more focused, using structure and phrasing to highlight important ideas, and deepen emotional impact -- techniques that have helped Pat's students, including John Mayer, Gillian Welch and Amy Allen win Grammys and write number one songs. (Blue Heron Tent)
- † **Songwriting Masterclass (Steve Seskin)** - This class is for students who were pre-selected ahead of time. All students are welcome to observe. (Hummingbird Tent)

4:15 Creative Gap

Just a few offerings for those who can't get enough:

- 1) **Guitar Skills Mentoring Session (Justin Roth & Arthur Lee Land)** - Feeling stuck with your songwriting or guitar playing? Need some fresh ears or new ideas? This collaborative mentoring session offers direct feedback and inspiration—whether you're in the hot seat or listening from the sidelines. Limited slots available for personalized feedback, but all are welcome to join the discussion and soak up tips, techniques, and new ways to approach your playing. A rare chance to workshop your material with two seasoned artists in a supportive group setting. (Mountain Lion Tent)

- 2) **Royalties for Songwriters Who'd Rather Be Writing (Sarah Clanton & Mark Gibson)** - Let's be honest - you didn't become a songwriter to deal with metadata and forms... but you *do* deserve to get paid for your music. In this live, hands-on workshop, Sarah Clanton (cellist, singer-songwriter and music business consultant) and singer-songwriter/attorney Mark Monroe Gibson will walk you through the real-time process of registering a song so you can collect your royalties with way less stress. Whether you're ready to register your own song on the spot (bring a laptop!) or just want to watch and learn, this session will help demystify the process and give you confidence to handle your music business like a pro - without killing your creative vibe. (Wildflower Pavilion)
- 3) **Song School Check In and Reflect (Phoebe Hunt)** - Need a moment to check in? Within the process of exploring our songwriting, it is natural for participants to unlock parts of themselves that may feel uncomfortable, vulnerable or raw. Similarly, you may feel the highest highs alongside the lowest lows within your journey here at song school. This daily gathering offers a safe space to share about the visceral experience you are having. We offer a moment of refuge to process what might be coming up for you, honoring your unique journey here and allowing a moment to reflect and be witnessed through your process here at song school. (Bear Tent)
- 4) **Be Like A River Meditation (Heather Hottovy)** - Tune in and cool down with a meditation practice at the river! No experience necessary. We'll learn and move through techniques designed to embody the flow and energy of the river and explore how water can help us tap into our flow wherever, whenever. (Trout Tent)
- 5) **Mentoring and Reiki Sessions** - See sign-ups in Blue Heron Tent

5:30 - 7:30 Dinner Break

Visit the Bloomberries Booth next to the bathhouse to purchase dinner, treats and snacks.

7:30 Open Stage

Confirm your day and time posted in the Blue Heron Tent. (Wildflower Pavilion)

"Who knows what you might learn from taking a chance on a conversation with a stranger? Everyone carries a piece of the puzzle. Nobody comes into your life by mere coincidence. Trust your instincts. Do the unexpected. Find the others."
— Timothy Leary

Wednesday, August 6th

TIP OF THE DAY

Pace yourself and enjoy!

TO DO LIST

- Mentoring session sign-ups. Wednesday sheets out at 9am in the Blue Heron Tent.
- Your night to play the open stage? Confirm your time at Blue Heron Tent.

7:30 - 8:30 Qi Gong

Practice gentle movements with Carli Zug that strengthen the body, increase flexibility and relieve stress. (Trout Tent)

8:00 - 9:00 Yoga

Heather Hottovy will help celebrate the start of your day with a gentle yoga routine. Complimentary mats and blocks provided. (Meet by silo)

10:00 - 12:00 Electives

- 1) **Directed Writing (Paul Reisler)** - This is a multi-day workshop that is progressive. Sorry, no new people after Tuesday. (Hummingbird Tent)
- 2) **Song Session (Bonnie Hayes & Pat Pattison)** - This session takes an in-depth look at participant's songs, finding teachable moments to benefit not only the writer but observers as well. We'll identify strengths in each song and look at what could be even better. This session is open to as many people as wish to attend. We'll probably get to 3 or 4 songs each morning, showing you tools to move the songs further ahead. We prefer that people play live so we can more easily suggest different approaches, especially when it comes to melody and phrasing. Bring several lyric sheets. (Mountain Lion Tent)
- 3) **Performance (Amy Speace)** - A four day comprehensive performance class. You can do all four or just jump into one of them. We will look at performance from the 'inside out' (it'll make sense, I promise). You will learn the art of connecting to both the song and the audience in a profound way. This is an 'on your feet' class, so come prepared with a song you know by heart that you're willing to dig into. (Wildflower Pavilion)

*"It is only with the heart that one can see rightly;
what is essential is invisible to the eye."
— Antoine de St. Exupery*

- 4) **Next Level Voice Class (Ron Browning)** - Join this fun and engaging class on how to find your best voice and performance. Discover your unique sound through conversation—after all, your singing voice is your speaking voice! Use simple tricks of casual conversation to make your singing have a more intimate and honest delivery. Learn the do's and don'ts of lyric interpretation. Learn about the projection power found in a baby's cry and learn how to use it in singing for a more soulful expression, or to have more vocal power. Add "cry mode" to your vocal techniques and walk away from all vocal faults and your fear of high notes. And, of course, this will allow you to walk away from vocal fatigue once and for all. Both vocal and performance techniques will be taken into consideration for the more advanced singers. Come with questions. Guitars and recorded tracks are welcome-or sing a cappella! (Bear Tent)
- 5) **Guitar Hack Toolbox: 10 Tricks To Instantly Enhance Your Songs (Justin Roth)** - Wish someone had shown you the shortcuts before you wrote your last 10 songs? This workshop is packed with ten simple, game-changing guitar "hacks" to bring freshness and depth to your playing - no music degree required. From repeatable shapes to easy theory tricks, you'll learn how to make basic songs sound more sophisticated and expressive, with tools you can use right away. Perfect for songwriters looking to elevate their arrangements without getting lost in the weeds. (Coyote Tent)
- 6) **Healing HeART of Songwriting (Mai Bloomfield)** - Many of us are reckoning with big changes—a diagnosis, a loss, a triumph, a transition. As songwriters, how do we integrate our biggest life experiences into our creative work? It's not always easy. Sometimes in our writing, we avoid the topics that matter most, for fear we won't do them justice. Sometimes, we just don't know where or how to begin. We put it off, waiting for "the right time" or the right circumstances...which never seem to come. As a cancer survivor, Mai learned first-hand: *the greatest challenges can present the greatest insights*. This is good news for songwriters! After struggling to find her way with writing during the trauma of cancer, Mai developed a method that helps us access creative inspiration and healing by honoring our real-life experience. *Whether as salve or a spark, our life experiences can feed our artistic self*. This is a songwriting workshop, so you will leave with a new song—as well as tools you can use to access 'the big stuff' in small, simple ways that will empower you as an artist. *Through crisis comes opportunity. Through the heART comes art*. (Trout Tent)

"We have to continually be jumping off cliffs and developing our wings on the way down."
— Kurt Vonnegut

- 7) **Songs For the Collective Lift (Moira Smiley)** - We will come up with simple, indelible songs that can call others in. We'll make new songs and refrains that deeply connect groups of us wherever we gather. We'll study lineages of powerful singing built to 'magic' contexts outside a mic, a stage and an audience. Moira's original songwriting and arranging are informed by percussive movement, expansive vocal techniques, and balancing personal, solo creation with communal, embodied creation with others. This is an opportunity to embody your stories and add the tools of song leadership to your songwriting. We'll study traditional forms and foster new musical discoveries! (Lizard Tent)
- 8) **Take a Lead Break on Your Own Song (Arthur Lee Land)** - Yo Songwriters! Wanna learn to play lead guitar in 2 hours? For real... you will be improvising lead guitar solos before you leave this class! Arthur will show you the way using "The Art of Live Looping" to provide a backing track for you to explore your new found soloing ideas & techniques based on handouts with simple pentatonic patterns spanning the entire neck. We will also be covering techniques to help you develop clarity in your phrasing such as Major and Minor Pentatonic Scale Substitution, Motif playing, Question & Answer, Melodic & Rhythmic Repetition, Target Notes and Color Tones. (Eagle Tent - backstage)
- 9) **10 Funny Song Secrets (Shanna in a Dress)** - Lighten up your set list! I can't tell you how many extraordinarily talented songwriters I've seen... that couldn't hold my attention. Because it was song after song of FEELINGS. I love them too, but they shine in CONTRAST to levity. We'll break down 3 or 4 different funny songs from pop culture and you'll leave with a checklist of 10 different Funny Song Secrets to bring into your show. You don't even have to be funny! Somehow Shanna in a Dress got a funny reputation and I'm no comedian - cause other people just don't know these elements. (Spider Tent)
- 10) **Recording Release Strategies (Jayme Stone & Ryan Benyo)** - Are you planning a new album or single release? Feeling overwhelmed by the endless details and worried you might be missing something crucial? Did you work too hard on your album to release it to crickets? If you're looking for clear direction on what steps to take before your new music hits the airwaves, look no further! This workshop will show you how a new release can help you reach more listeners, grow your audience, get better press and build career momentum. Topics include: choosing a distributor, creating an effective release schedule, doing social media efficiently, pitching to playlists, pre-save campaigns, waterfall releases, metadata, ISRC codes, registering your songs and more. Bring your questions and "get release ready." (Blue Heron Tent)

11) Mentoring Sessions

12:00 - 1:30 Lunch Break

Confirm open stage performance times posted in Blue Heron Tent.

1:30 - 4:00 Songwriting Groups: Session 3

Your daily dose of songwriting and more. See all instructor descriptions below. Each instructor will meet at the following location:

MEETING PLACES

- o Phoebe Hunt - Lizard Tent
- o Sadie Gustafson-Zook - Trout Tent
- o Anna Tivel - Spider Tent
- o Bonnie Hayes - Coyote Tent
- o Steve Poltz - Mountain Lion Tent
- o Bandits on the Run - Eagle Tent (backstage)
- o Paul Reisler - Wildflower Pavilion
- o Daniel Rodriguez - Bear Tent
- o Pat Pattison - Blue Heron Tent
- o Steve Seskin - Hummingbird Tent †

- **The Transformational Power Of Songwriting (Phoebe Hunt)** - Discovering your hero (and heroine's) journey. Based on the work of Joseph Campbell and Maureen Murdock, we will explore the template of the Hero's Journey (and Heroine's Journey) as vehicles to bring a song to life through pulling out the transformational moments of a story. This allows the song to live dimensionally, adding depth and purpose as it evolves, revealing new layers of meaning as it unfolds. This also allows the writer the opportunity to tap into the inner purpose beneath the song and peel back layers that may have previously been dormant. (Lizard Tent)
- **100 Things to Do When You're in a (Song)writing Rut (Sadie Gustafson-Zook)** - I have a long list of things to try, so pick your favorite and let's go! (Trout Tent)
- **Life is Lyrics (Anna Tivel)** - Let's write to notice magic in the mundane. This class will explore the imagery that brings a song to life and makes it feel resonant and relatable. We'll read, write, and talk about the ordinary details that can help illuminate shared human truths in writing. (Spider Tent)
- **Making Moods With Modes (Bonnie Hayes)** - Have you ever noticed that the word "mode" looks a lot like "mood"? Well, the modes of the major scale are amazing tools for creating a mood in a song or song section. Modes are commonly used for improvising in jazz tunes, and only by "expert" musicians, but modes can make your writing unique and even more emotionally resonant. In this class, we'll go over how to find modes on your instrument or vocally, connect them to emotional spaces, learn typical chord progressions, and write a song section or two using different modal spaces. If there's time, we'll look at a few other cool modes, such as the modes of the melodic and harmonic minors. (Coyote Tent)

- **Writing Songs is Easy! (Steve Poltz)** - Writing songs is easy. Have some fun. Shut off the negative voices in your head and let your freak flag fly. Keep creating as often as possible. (Mountain Lion Tent)
- **Singing Together: Harmonies and Vocal Arrangements (Bandits on the Run)** - There's an undeniable magic and ancient quality about singing together. We Bandits believe there's nothing more delicious than multiple voices joining to create a song together, and we've had years and years of practice to hone our particular method of harmony and vocal arrangements. We'll talk about intuitive voicings, how to tell a story and grow a song with harmonies, and how to work on vocals side-by-side with instrumentation. Come ready to explore, and to sing together! (Eagle Tent)
- **AI as Your Creative Partner (Paul Reisler & Ryan Benyo)** - Join Paul and Ryan for an eye-opening workshop that reframes how you think about AI in songwriting. This isn't about letting machines write your songs – it's about discovering how artificial intelligence can become a valuable creative collaborator. We focus on using AI to enhance your creative voice, not replace it. You'll Learn Song Modeling and Arrangement and discover how to create musical "blueprints" using AI after you've written your song. Just like architects build models before constructing houses, you'll learn to experiment with different styles and arrangements using your guitar/vocal demos as a foundation. Also using AI as a personal research assistant for historical context, cultural references, and thematic exploration that adds depth to your songwriting without sacrificing authenticity. It can be a powerful brainstorming collaborator that sparks unexpected ideas and helps you break through creative blocks. (Wildflower Pavilion)
- **Observational Writing (Daniel Rodriguez)** - Observing your senses. Being present. Engaging the here and now of the exterior and the interior. So you can bring your listener into the moment. (Bear Tent)
- **Phrasing: The Body Language of Your Song (Pat Pattison)** - This session will give you important keys to phrasing your lyrics for the most impact and support of meaning. Working with rhythms and placements, you'll learn how to make sure that the line, like body language, helps to really deliver the emotion you intend. This is a "can't miss" seminar - it's bound to take your writing to the next level. (Blue Heron Tent)
- † **Songwriting Masterclass (Steve Seskin)** - This class is for students who were pre-selected ahead of time. All students are welcome to observe. (Hummingbird Tent)
- **Mentoring and Reiki Sessions**

4:15 - 5:30 Electives

- 1) **Plug In: Acoustic Instrument Amplification (Eben and Michael Grace)** - So you have your guitar and your song and you're ready to hit the stage. You've spent countless hours honing your act and conjuring up beautiful sounds on your instrument, and now you need to plug in. Along with all the other skills you work to master as a performing acoustic artist, plugging in an acoustic instrument is an essential skill which can really help you sound your best. In this class we'll be investigating the various ways to get your instrument plugged in and sounding great, including: Acoustic instrument pickups / selecting the best one for your instrument and style, using various types of Preamps and DI boxes, using EQ to dial in the best sound for your instrument and pickup combination, adding and using effects—reverb, compression, delay etc. We will have a number of our preamps to try (FELiX, ALiX and BiX) with a high quality PA system. Participants are asked to bring their instruments so we can do hands-on experiments with everybody's particular setups. (Wildflower Pavilion)
- 2) **The Independent Female Singer Songwriter (Halley Neal)** - In this class, I'll touch on the myriad ways that being a woman in the music industry can sometimes feel overwhelming and difficult and lead to feelings of powerlessness. Women often must work harder to feel seen and heard and be taken seriously. Through my years of studying music and touring as a singer-songwriter, I've gathered insights and stories along the way. In almost every case, women in different professions, from different backgrounds and from all over the country say the same thing - they must work harder than their male equivalents. In this open-discussion style class, I'll touch on my own experience as a female solo singer-songwriter. I'll share my insights on making the most of touring by myself vs. with a band, interacting with people as a woman in a professional setting, and most importantly, I'll offer ways that we as women can feel empowered by ourselves. My goal is for students to leave this class with tools to make working in a professional music setting easier, calmer and freer - by finding fellow women to be in their corner and embracing the strength of their womanhood. (Coyote Tent)
- 3) **Editing is Delicious (Anna Tivel)** - Just like eating your favorite food. Come savor the process with Anna. (Spider Tent)
- 4) **Speed Songwriting Through Jingles (Steve Poltz)** - Let's write ads for products that may or may not exist. Open up our minds and perhaps end up with a song. (Mountain Lion Tent)
- 5) **Intermediate Guitar: Jazz Chords... aka: Using Extensions and 7th Chords to Spice Up Your Folk Song (Sadie Gustafson-Zook)** - It can be easy to get into root position guitar ruts, or to feel like exploring the neck is too daunting, but it doesn't have to be! In this workshop we'll work on movable closed-voicing shapes that add extra beautiful notes to the mix, and sound great in any genre! (Trout Tent)

- 6) **Pink Pony Club: Chappell Roan's Masterful Songwriting (Pamala Machala)** - Let's explore the melodic stylings of Grammy-winning pop sensation Chappell Roan! Are her songs as stuck in your head as they are in mine? If so, come learn why! We'll analyze several of Chappell's biggest hits, talk about some signature moves that make her songs so anthemic and catchy, and how you can use the same techniques in your songs. (Eagle Tent - Backstage)
- 7) **Vocal Clarity: A Party in Your Mouth (Clare MacLeod)** - How do you convey meaning? Should you open your mouth more - but what about ventriloquism? Spit out your words - um, ew? Sounds like you're working harder than you have to... Are you supposed to get those pesky consonants out of the way so we can hear your sound - but the consonants are what make the meaning of those sounds, as well as being percussive and help you to float and groove... This class will help you improve resonance, projection, and give you options for more expressive singing and speaking. You wrote the words - now remove any barriers to an audience receiving your intent. (Lizard Tent)
- 8) **Streaming Tech Essentials for Social Media (Ryan Benyo, Justin Roth & Arthur Lee Land)** - This is a hands-on workshop designed for students eager to diversify their income and expand their reach through livestreaming, teaching online, and building a strong presence on social media. This session will introduce the key technical tools needed to stream high-quality audio and video content, including microphones, interfaces, mobile setups, and essential accessories. Whether you're performing a live set, teaching guitar lessons, collaborating with friends across the globe, or remixing a trending video - this workshop breaks down the gear and platforms that make it all possible. We'll explore how to go live or post content effectively on platforms like YouTube, Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, and Twitch. You'll learn to adapt your setup for different environments, from your home studio to a coffee shop gig or a fully mobile "on-the-go" rig. We'll also look at collaboration formats - from raw analog performances to polished, grid-synced duets and viral-style video productions. Whether your goal is to teach, perform, collaborate, or connect with fans, this workshop will equip you with the essentials to get started and succeed. (Parlor)

"Why not go out on a limb? That's where the fruit is."
— Will Rogers

- 9) **Experimenting With Altered Tunings and Multiple Capos (Bill Nash)** - This workshop is about expanding musical possibilities on the guitar – have you ever felt limited by having to play in standard tuning all the time (i.e. hard chord fingerings, etc), or confused by other people using altered tunings and multiple capos and making it sound so good. This workshop will introduce you to the magical world of multiple three-string capos with altered tunings! The focus of the workshop is to begin to open up your musical thought processes to the experimentation Bill has developed through necessity. He will show you his process for using altered tunings and capo schemes to produce very colorful guitar sounds that used to be only possible with three and four finger chords, but now with just one and two fingers! Presented by Bill Nash. (Blue Heron Tent)
- 10) **Song School Check In and Reflect (Phoebe Hunt)** - Need a moment to check in? Within the process of exploring our songwriting, it is natural for participants to unlock parts of themselves that may feel uncomfortable, vulnerable or raw. Similarly, you may feel the highest highs alongside the lowest lows within your journey here at song school. This daily gathering offers a safe space to share about the visceral experience you are having. We offer a moment of refuge to process what might be coming up for you, honoring your unique journey here and allowing a moment to reflect and be witnessed through your process here at song school. (Trees by Yurt behind the Wildflower Pavilion)

11) Mentoring and Reiki Sessions

5:30 - 7:30 Dinner Break - Visit the Bloomberries Booth next to the bathhouse to purchase dinner, treats and snacks.

7:30 Open Stage - Confirm your day and time posted in Blue Heron Tent. (Wildflower Pavilion)

*"Creativity is God's gift to us.
Using our creativity is our gift back to God."
– Julia Cameron*

Thursday, August 7th**TIP OF THE DAY**

Pick up your Festival wristbands. (Festival Box Office opens from noon - 9pm)

TO DO LIST

- Your night to play the open stage? Confirm your time at Blue Heron Tent.
- Mentoring session sign-ups out at 9am in Blue heron Tent.
- All vehicles without on-site Folks Festival Vehicle Passes must be off property by 1:30pm. Please move to the Farm between 8:00am to 1:30pm.

7:30 - 8:30 Qi Gong

Practice gentle movements with Carli Zug that strengthen the body, increase flexibility and relieve stress. (Trout Tent)

8:00 - 9:00 Yoga

Heather Hottovy will help celebrate the start of your day with gentle yoga. (Meet near silo)

9:30 - 12:00 Songwriting Groups: Session 4

The final songwriting session and more. See all instructor descriptions below. Each instructor will meet at the following location:

MEETING PLACES

- o Phoebe Hunt - Bear Tent
- o Sadie Gustafson-Zook - Trout Tent
- o Ellis Delaney, Terri Delaney - Lizard Tent
- o Anna Tivel - Spider Tent
- o Daniel Rodriguez - Eagle Tent (backstage)
- o Rebecca Folsom - Wildflower Pavilion
- o Bonnie Hayes - Coyote Tent
- o Steve Poltz - Mountain Lion Tent
- o Pat Pattison - Blue Heron Tent
- o Steve Seskin - Hummingbird Tent †

"No one can realize how substantial the air is, until he feels its supporting power beneath him. It inspires confidence at once."

– Otto Lilienthal

- **Songwriter's Toolkit (Phoebe Hunt)** - Bring a song! In this class, we will have each participant play an original song of their choosing and rather than receiving direct feedback, we will dissect the song into the tools that are being used. As we go around the class, we will reveal the plethora of tools available to the songwriter through the examples revealed in class. Through this experiential process, participants often begin to see the pattern of tools they often use, as well as learn new tools that they can tuck away to use in future writing! Let's expand our toolkits together! Please note: We will have time to listen to approximately 15-20 songwriters in a single class session. We will do our best to accommodate all participants but cannot promise that everyone will have a chance to play time permitting. (Bear Tent)
- **Let Your Lyrics Come to You (Sadie Gustafson-Zook)** - What would happen if you stopped harping on the perfect metaphor and just said what you mean? Through conversation and written exercises we'll practice writing direct and distilled phrases that say just what we're trying to say. (Trout Tent)
- **Undefended Songwriting (Ellis and Terri Delaney)** - Are you interested in writing with an undefended heart? In this workshop, Ellis (performing songwriter) and Terri (somatic therapist) will help you work with your body & nervous system to be less defensive and more open-hearted as you write. It is nearly impossible to create when your nervous system believes there is a threat. The truth is that good writing is vulnerable writing, and if you have a history of not being seen, just trying to write will create a defensive body response. We will explore bottom-up practices (vs. top-down) that will help you grow your capacity to stay engaged and be intimate with creativity instead of spacing out, avoiding, fighting or running away. Come prepared to write and move your body! (Lizard Tent)
- **Life is Lyrics (Anna Tivel)** - Let's write to notice magic in the mundane. This class will explore the imagery that brings a song to life and makes it feel resonant and relatable. We'll read, write, and talk about the ordinary details that can help illuminate shared human truths in writing. (Spider Tent)
- **Prompt Writing (Daniel Rodriguez)** - This class will begin with a brief group discussion. Throughout the discussion we will look for gems of the conversation and find the prompts to write about. We'll learn good listening skills and use non premeditated prompts to write. (Eagle Tent -Backstage)

*"And the day came when the risk to remain tight in a bud
was more painful than the risk it took to blossom."
- Anaïs Nin*

- **Zen Mind, Beginner Mind: Performing, Painting, Music & Poetry (Rebecca Folsom)** - This is one unique and surprisingly freeing workshop! We will actively mix three different creative mediums; playing music, painting with acrylics, and writing prose. Participants will rotate and take turns with each media. Experience the freedom and delight of bypassing your inner rational critic as you surprise and entice your inner muse into ecstatic expression! No experience necessary. Come ready to paint, to write and to play. All art supplies will be provided, just bring your voice and/or instrument and writing journal. (Wildflower Pavilion)
- **Writing Hit Songs (Bonnie Hayes)** - Most songwriters don't care at all about writing hit songs. But most do want to write songs that make listeners dance, or sing along, or cry - or all three. Even if we don't really like them when we hear them on the radio, hit songs, which are listened to and loved by millions of people, hold secrets that can be unlocked and applied to personal writing. Learning techniques used by hit songwriter can help us make the tweaks to our songs that make them just a little more effective. In this class, we'll look at the characteristics of hit songs past and present. We'll also answer the question of why the chorus is the heart of a hit, celebrate the wonderful invention of the post-chorus, review some processes that songwriters use to make their songs accessible and yet unique, and discuss how to balance your own authentic voice and story with the more technical approach used by hit writers. (Coyote Tent)
- **Writing Songs is Easy! (Steve Poltz)** - Writing songs is easy. Have some fun. Shut off the negative voices in your head and let your freak flag fly. Keep creating as often as possible. (Mountain Lion Tent)
- **The Songwriters Guide to Metaphor (Pat Pattison)** - Metaphor opens a portal beyond what's in front of you; it opens your vision, allowing you to see the world as something more. This class will help you develop the most creative part of your voice: your ability to see one thing as though it were another, your ability to create metaphor. Aristotle called it "the only truly creative human act." We'll work interactively from prompts, learning to discover, extend and reverse metaphor. You'll be writing, reading aloud, and listening. It'll expand and deepen your perspectives, give you a remarkable set of new tools, and it may even change the way you look at the world. (Blue Heron Tent)
- † **Songwriting Masterclass (Steve Seskin)** - This class is for students who were pre-selected ahead of time. All students are welcome to observe. (Hummingbird Tent)
- **Mentoring Sessions**

"Music is life itself." - Louis Armstrong

12:00 - 1:30 Lunch Break - please read!

All Song Schoolers without On-site Folks Festival Vehicle Passes must move their vehicles out of the Song School Parking Lot and onsite campground by the end of lunch break at 1:30pm to the designated Song School parking area at the Planet Bluegrass Farm. Simply turn right at exit and proceed 1/3 mile past Apple Valley Road to Farm entrance on the left. It's just a short walk back over the bridge and under the highway to the festival grounds. Thanks in advance! Your camp site must be broken down Friday morning by 9am. Vehicles may be driven into the onsite campground to pack out camping items Friday morning.

1:30 - 3:00 Electives

- 1) **Directed Writing Songsharing (Paul Reisler)** - In this final session, participants will perform and record their songs written from the morning songwriting sessions. (Mountain Lion Tent)
- 2) **The Art of Live Looping (Arthur Lee Land)** - Through dynamic performance, demonstration and audience participation, multi-instrumentalist Arthur Lee Land teaches the fundamentals of live-looping. The elements of musicianship, technology, sound engineer, arranger and entertainer all come together in this 21st century art-form. Learn how to combine traditional instruments and emerging technologies to create an entire one-man band and how you can use live-looping to enhance your performances. Live-looping is also a great tool for writing songs and practicing your instrument. Students will participate in improvised song creation and build their own loops. (Parlor)
- 3) **Songs For the Collective Lift (Moirá Smiley)** - We will come up with simple, indelible songs that can call others in. We'll make new songs and refrains that deeply connect groups of us wherever we gather. We'll study lineages of powerful singing built to 'magic' contexts outside a mic, a stage and an audience. Moira's original songwriting and arranging are informed by percussive movement, expansive vocal techniques, and balancing personal, solo creation with communal, embodied creation with others. This is an opportunity to embody your stories and add the tools of song leadership to your songwriting. We'll study traditional forms and foster new musical discoveries! (Lizard Tent)

"Music can change the world."
- Ludwig van Beethoven

- 4) **360° Creative Freedom (Rebecca Folsom)** - Have you ever had the suspicion that in life and in your creative ventures maybe you don't have to work so hard? Maybe there is an easier way? Have you had the experience when something you're creating—a song, a show, an experience, a connection—comes together quickly and effortlessly? Do you know some people who make manifesting their vision look easy? Have you had enough of working hard? Are you ready for easy? On almost all boats there are small parts called Trim Tabs. These pieces, though small, create great impact in the movement of the vessel. Here's what is said about Trim Tabs. Large and small boats benefit, they get the boat out of the hole and on the plane quickly. They improve speed, safety and overall performance. They improve fuel consumption and lessen stress. They provide cost savings and make for a more enjoyable ride. Sound good? Come and I'll teach you how to access your Trim Tab moves for all your creative ventures. (Spider Tent)
- 5) **Right Hand Picking and Melody Playing with “Wildwood Flower” (Sadie Gustafson-Zook)** - We'll use the Carter Family classic “Wildwood Flower” to jump into playing a simple left-hand melodies on the guitar and practicing varying our right-hand picking technique using a pick! (Coyote Tent)
- 6) **Your Voice: A Guided Tour (Clare McLeod)** - Your sound is the result of a dynamic process in which several parts of your body interact. In this session, you'll develop your understanding of the structures that make up the quality of your voice and strengthen both your consistency and versatility. Operating from a thorough understanding of how the voice works, Clare will help you deepen your connection to your instrument, your material and your audience. (Bear Tent)
- 7) **Performance (Amy Speace)** - A four day comprehensive performance class. You can do all four or just jump into one of them. We will look at performance from the 'inside out' (it'll make sense, I promise). You will learn the art of connecting to both the song and the audience in a profound way. This is an “on your feet” class, so come prepared with a song you know by heart that you're willing to dig into. (Wildflower Pavilion)
- 8) **How To Book Yourself *Without an Agent* (Jayme Stone)** - Compose Your Career co-founder Jayme Stone will share everything you need to know about successfully booking your own shows and tours. You'll learn how to frame your music in a compelling story and develop the assets (bio, photos, videos, online presence) to position your work for better gigs and press coverage. We'll also cover how to: • Craft a pitch • Build a database of music presenters • Systematize your pitches and follow-ups • Negotiate fees • Book and route sustainable tours (Trout Tent)

“In the midst of chaos, there is also opportunity.” – Sun Tzu

- 9) **Showpersonship: How to Put on a Good Show (Bandits on the Run)** - How many times have you stumbled upon a song or album and fallen in love, listened to it over and over, and finally gotten the chance to see the artist live, only to find that something got lost in translation? Crafting a beautiful song requires a set of skills, but presenting that song live in person requires a whole other set of skills. To make sure that your song has the best possible life, you need both of these skill sets, and this class focuses on the performance aspect of musicianship. How do you set yourself up to be the best vessel for your song's message? How do you show up in all your glorious uniqueness so that folks can *hear* the song while really *seeing* you? How do you put on a memorable show? Come to this class and let's find out! (Eagle Tent - Backstage)

10) Mentoring and Reiki Sessions

3:15 - 4:30 Electives

- 1) **Directed Writing Songsharing Continued (Paul Reisler)** - In this final session, participants will perform and record material gleaned from the morning songwriting sessions. (Mountain Lion Tent)
- 2) **The Music of Poetry (Pat Pattison)** - This session will look at poetry through the lens of musical composition, revealing fundamental compositional links between the two art forms. We will look at poetic counterpointing and syncopation, demonstrating the uses of tension/resolution and basic harmonic functions in poetry. (Blue Heron Tent)
- 3) **Infinite Melodies (Daniel Rodriguez)** - Break out of your melodic tendencies and explore the infinite possibilities of melodic choices. (Bear Tent)
- 4) **Ask an Agent Anything (Chandler Holt)** - What does an agent do? Do I need one? What makes an agent interested in working with me? Here's your chance to bring questions and receive some frank advice from booking agent Chandler Holt with Crossover Touring. (Coyote Tent)
- 5) **Fill Your Cup: Toning Workshop (Rebecca Folsom)** - This workshop will have a leaning towards vocal toning, releasing and relaxation. The voice is the barometer of the soul, and the instrument is you. Training your whole being to be awake, at ease, and working in synchronicity you gain access to your own authentic, balanced, and passionate voice. We will practice a unique blend of traditional and nontraditional vocal technique, martial arts, yogic posture, and Toltec and Taoist exercises. Together we will embody agile, grounded vocal resonance, and culminate toning and harmonizing together. (Trout Tent)

- 6) **Bonnie Hayes' Misadventures in the Music Business (Bonnie Hayes)** - "A candid conversation about my various deals, how I got them, how I got out of them (an ongoing adventure that shows no sign of reaching a conclusion) and how to preserve ownership in a world where the whole idea is to deprive you of it." (Wildflower Pavilion)
- 7) **Developing a Sustainable Career: A Real-World Discussion for Working Artists (Megan Burt, Mai Bloomfield, Ryan Benyo)** - What does a sustainable music career *actually* look like? This panel-style discussion will explore how to build a creative life that's financially, emotionally, and artistically viable over time. We'll cover how to live affordably, take imperfect action, and balance authenticity with online perception. You'll learn real strategies for diversifying income—through touring, teaching, producing, licensing, merch, and more. We'll get into the nuts and bolts: bookkeeping, taxes, royalties, negotiating rates, tracking expenses, and building your support team. Plus, we'll explore burnout, self-worth, redefining success, and staying in love with your craft. Whether you're in it for income, impact, or inspiration - this class will help you find your own version of sustainability. (Eagle Tent - backstage)
- 8) **Taylor Guitar Roadshow (Eric Sakimoto)** - The Taylor Guitar Road Show is a guitar lover's dream: a fun, lively gathering that brings enthusiasts together with Taylor experts straight from the company's factory in El Cajon, California. We will be partnering with Haggerty's Music from Rapid City, SD and will be bringing 40+ guitars for everyone to play and hear. At this Road Show, Eric will share insights on the company's guitar making process, including an informative demonstration on how body shape and wood affect tone. After the demonstration, players are invited to take part in the show's popular "Petting Zoo" segment, during which players have an opportunity to test-drive a variety of different models, including rare and one-off Taylors and custom beauties, new Gold Label Collection, as well as the popular standard models across the Taylor line. Admission is free. (Parlor)
- 9) **Mentoring and Reiki Sessions**

4:45 - 5:15 Song School Closing

Our final all school session brings us all back together for a community sing with Moira Smiley and friends in the Wildflower Pavilion and the river.

6:00 - 7:30 Song School Dinner and Mercantile

The dinners are open to all Song School participants and their registered guests. Bring your dinner ticket! Head Chefs: Markus and Tommy. **Please reuse and compost everything!** (Backstage) Instructors and students will have books, CDs and things for sale backstage during the dinner.

7:30 Open Stage

Confirm your day and time posted in Blue Heron Tent. (Wildflower Pavilion)

More things you need to know about...

The Song School Instructor Bios: Bios can be found at:
<https://bluegrass.com/song-school/classes/instructors>

Songwriting Sessions: These daily sessions are a chance to dive into a variety of approaches to the songwriting craft. We also offer other longer elective topics during this time. Some instructors repeat their lesson plan while others will focus on specific topics each day. We encourage students to self-monitor class sizes and keep in mind that if a class you want to take is large one day, it's very likely to be smaller the next.

Electives: Your journey through The Song School schedule is entirely up to you! Each day, a variety of elective classes are offered. The elective Directed Writing, requires you to be in attendance for the initial sessions in order to participate later in the week. Refer to your **class listing** for a quick overview and to the course descriptions for specific details. No advance sign-up needed! Just a little patience and courage to find your own path.

Mentoring Sessions: These sessions are offered as a chance to receive more personalized attention and help with specific questions. They can take the form of one-on-one or small group consultations. Each day, sign up sheets and meeting locations will be posted in the Blue Heron Tent at 9am (Registration area). Check back for late additions. Most sessions will meet under 10 x 10 tents near the silo and riverfront. Because of the limited amount of mentoring sessions, students may sign up for one session during the week unless space is available last minute.

Reiki Sessions: Reiki is an ancient Japanese healing technique that uses gentle touch to restore harmony and a healthy flow of energy helping to ease stress, promote feelings of peace, increase awareness, foster growth mindset, expand creativity, provide clarity, and contribute to your overall well-being. Judith Wade receives insights as she does Reiki and shares those at the end of a session. During Reiki sessions, sound healing can be incorporated. Bring an object if you'd like it infused with Reiki. Animal communication sessions are available as an alternative to Reiki. Sessions will be available each afternoon in the backstage campground.

Open Stage: The evening open stages are offered as an opportunity to perform an original song for your peers in the Wildflower Pavilion. Due to our amplified sound curfews, we have a limited number of spots available. Students who wish to perform must sign up in advance. Students are randomly selected until all available performance slots are filled. The performance list for all four nights will be posted Monday during the lunch break in the Blue Heron Tent.

Message Board: The message board is located in the Blue Heron Tent (registration tent). If you have messages for other participants, need to communicate about festival or camping passes or have tickets to sell, this is the place to post your message for others to see.

Wi-Fi Hot Spots: We have wi-fi coverage available near the Wildflower Pavilion and in much of the front campground. Wifi password will be posted on the message board.

Guests: We ask that your guests please do not disturb classes and not hang out in classroom areas while classes are in session. Wi-fi is available in the front campground and there is also free wi-fi access at Moxi Coffee Shop a short walk away in Lyons.

Instructor materials and recordings available during the Thursday dinner: Many instructors will have books and recorded products available to purchase during the Song School. You may find the instructor during the week or wait until Thursday evening during dinnertime to purchase instructor materials. Students may also sell their CDs during the dinner as space allows.

Composting and Recycling: Planet Bluegrass continues to use best practices to minimize the landfill waste our schools and festivals produce. Please do your part by correctly using our color-coded waste stations in the campground and classroom areas and dispose of your campground compost in the Song School grounds or large compost dumpster on the road behind the bathhouse. *Remember, all food, beer & water cups and plates used at the Song School dinners are compostable or recyclable.* Thanks in advance for your help.

Onsite Food Options: We are excited to once again welcome food vendor, Bloomberries, on the grounds during the Song School for breakfast and lunch every day and **dinners on Tuesday and Wednesday**. A full menu is available at their booth. It's their 21st year providing delicious food and snacks for students, staff and instructors at The Song School!

"When you go out into the woods and you look at trees, you see all these different trees. And some of them are bent, and some of them are straight, and some of them are evergreens, and some of them are whatever. And you look at the tree and you allow it. You see why it is the way it is. You sort of understand that it didn't get enough light, and so it turned out that way. And you don't get all emotional about it. You just allow it. You appreciate the tree. The minute you get near humans, you lose all that. And you are constantly saying, 'you're too this, or I'm too this.' That judging mind comes in. And so I practice turning people into trees. Which means appreciating them just the way they are."

– Ram Dass