

Songwriting workshop with Andy Fite

“This One Wrote Itself: Rhyme, Form, the Music of Natural Speech, and the Art of Letting the Song Decide.”

Andy Fite is a singing jazz guitarist who, as a young man, learned hundreds of old songs and, without originally intending to, wound up writing hundreds of his own.

In this lecture/demonstration, Andy will talk a little about what he thinks the songwriter’s art is all about – what it’s good for, and what, as an ideal, we might want our songs to be.

These talks tend to develop spontaneously, but going in, Andy plans to focus especially on lyric writing, specifically the uses of rhyme: when to rhyme and when not to, for example. He’ll discuss and demonstrate some different types of rhyme: not just hard and soft, but also mosaic rhyme, and virtual rhyme.

He will also discuss the complex art of matching words to melody: how in the structure of a melody we can replicate the stress patterns in spoken language. When we write with a strict focus on making the melody agree with the melody already built into natural speech (or at least not letting it disagree), not only do the words get much, much easier for a listener to understand, but we also wind up finding melodies we otherwise probably couldn’t have.

To strike a healthy balance between these kinds of disciplines and the phenomenon of spontaneous self-expression turns out to be a way to the most magical feeling a songwriter can experience: the feeling that “this one just wrote itself.”