



A production of the Tucson Kitchen Musicians Association

## Stefan George Memorial SONGWRITING COMPETITION

### Songwriting Competition Important Facts

Hello Fellow Songwriters! I sincerely encourage you to enter our Songwriting Competition. It is a great opportunity to advance your songwriting knowledge, hone your skills and be recognized for your work. Here is a quick breakdown of the important information you will need to enter.

The competition is an acoustic instrument music event. It is open to the public. All ages and folk music styles are welcome to apply EXCEPT:

- Paid performers at this year's Annual Tucson Folk Festival
- Artists that are under contract with a major record label
- First-place winners from previous Tucson Folk Festival Songwriting Competitions

All applications will be reviewed by a group of music professionals, resulting in the selection of a group of 10 finalists and 3 alternates. The finalists will then move on to the Live Performance part of the competition, where the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> place positions will be awarded prizes and recognized at the Tucson Folk Festival.

Only original songs are eligible for this competition. If you have a co-writer(s) whom will not be performing with you; they must provide TKMA a letter giving their permission for you to perform without them and accept on their behalf, any prizes awarded to your co-written songs in this competition.

Songs must be appropriate and suitable for a family-style folk festival.

You must be able to provide an mp3 or wav recording of two original songs (phone or home recordings are accepted). Professional recording opportunities are also available at discount prices. Let us know if you would like to take advantage of this opportunity and we will put you in contact with participating studios. Please take-a-look at the “Sound Recording Rules” below for a more detailed explanation of the recording and submission rules.

You must also be willing to perform your songs in a live performance setting. You will perform your songs at the Tucson Folk Festival before a live audience and a panel of music performance judges. The first-place winner will also perform a 25-minute set on the Plaza Stage; the same day as the competition.

If you are chosen as a finalist - you may perform solo or with a maximum of two accompanists on stage with you. Your accompanist(s) may not be paid entertainers of the Tucson Folk Festival.

Judging decisions are final. If, for any reason, a finalist is unable to attend the Live Performance portion of the competition, the judges will replace the finalist with an alternate pick. The Judges alternate pick must then be approved by the TKMA/Tucson Folk Festival performer coordinator.

## **Live Performance Musical Instrument Allowances**

All “hand-carry sized” acoustic musical instruments are allowed in the competition. In addition to hand-carry sized instruments, electric basses, electronic pianos, pre-assembled pedal boards, pedal steel guitars small harmonica amps, percussion instruments of all kinds, including small drum kits are also allowed.

## **Live Performance Musical Instrument Restrictions**

Large drum kits, drum machines, backing tracks, vocal harmonizers, and multiple guitar pedal set-ups.

## **Live Performance Instrument Exceptions**

Exceptions may be granted on an individual basis if you have a question about an instrument not listed above. Please email Ismael Barajas at:

ismaelbarajasmusic@gmail.com.

## **Live Performance Setup Guidelines**

There is very limited setup time during the live performance portion of the competition; 2 minutes is the standard time allotted to each performer for setup.

## **Is Your Music “Folk Music”?**

We define folk music as music played on hand-held and hand-carry sized acoustic instruments, e.g., guitars, vihuelas, banjos, mandolins, jarana, gitaron, brass instruments, standup bass, fiddles, flutes, accordions, bongos, djembes, congas, the list goes on ... If your instrument is found in Old or New World music styles which include, European Ballads, American folk & blues, indie folk, bluegrass, cajun, new-rass, waila, chicken scratch, Mexican folk music e.g. mariachi, Veracruzano, corridos & boleros, South American folk, Celtic folk, flamenco, Native American flute, or cowboy ballads, you are a folk musician by our definition. If your original music was influenced by any of these styles – your original music is welcome to apply, as well.

## **General Information**

The 35th Annual Tucson Folk Festival will take place on:

**Friday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>, Saturday, April 4<sup>th</sup> & Sunday, April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

The Songwriting Competition will be held **Saturday, April 4<sup>th</sup>** at the Wildflower Stage, location and time to be announced.

Live Performance information will be provided in detail to all finalists well in advance of their performance.

A professional sound system with sound engineer and covered stage is provided. The stage will have D.I. Boxes, Vocal and instrument Mics, and Monitors.

We do not provide instrument stands, or other special performance equipment.

We are happy to discuss individual needs and will do our best to help you whenever possible.

## Application Information

All applications must be submitted online, using the form provided. There is a \$25.00 non-refundable application fee for all submissions.

[APPLY HERE](#) (hotlink)

**NOTE:** After providing and confirming your email address, you will gain access to the Application Form. At the top you will see three red “X”s indicating (1) Incomplete Contact Information, (2) Unpaid Application Fee and (3) Incomplete Demo Uploads. As these 3 steps are completed, the red “X”s will change to green “✓” s. A red X indicates what is Not Complete. When you see 3 green “✓” s, we have your complete application.

## Important Dates

- **November 1, 2019** Application Acceptance Opens
- **December 15, 2019** Application Acceptance Closes
- **December 22, 2019** Songwriting Contest Finalists Announced
- **January 5, 2020** Deadline for Finalist Commitment Participate
- **April 4, 2020** Songwriting Competition Finals

- Live Performances on the Wildflower Stage
- Winner on the Jacome Plaza Stage

## **Prizes**

### **First Place:**

\$100 Cash

25-minute set on Plaza Stage –Saturday evening, April 4

### **Second Place:**

\$50 Cash

### **Third Place:**

TKMA T-Shirt and Cap

## **Songwriting Demos and Recordings**

Uploaded recordings must be in mp3 type format. CDs and tapes are not accepted. Please upload 2 original songs. These songs must not be from a previous release from any major label. In addition, you can also provide a link to a YouTube video (do not upload video files).

Finalists will be allowed to perform the songs submitted on the uploaded demos or may perform any new or different original song for the Live Performance part of the competition, but in either case, all TKMA rules and guidelines apply.

A Finalist's Live Performance time will be limited to 10 minutes on stage. This is done to help maximize the greatest number of finalists for this event. This is generally enough time for a quick instrument setup and the performance of two songs with short introductions. No sound check is possible. This procedure will be addressed

and coordinated closely with each individual Finalist to ensure they have enough time to present their music.

## **Judges**

The selection of Judges may include: fellow musicians, persons involved in the music industry, festival headliners, past contest winners, local poets, music scholars, writers and recording engineers.

## **Submitted Songs are Judged on:**

Originality & Authenticity  
Melody, Harmony, and Rhythmic Quality  
Artists Emotional Commitment

Please note: The recording quality is not a part of the judging.

## **Your Live Performance is Judged on:**

All listed in the category above; and,  
Stage Presence, Confidence, Talent,  
Grace under Pressure, Preparedness, Audience Connection.

## **CD Sales**

Songwriting Competition Finalists may sell their CDs on consignment through the TKMA Kitchen Store and are typically priced at \$15, but you can price yours as you wish

TKMA commission on CDs is \$2 per CD (any price)

TKMA commission on download cards is \$1 per \$5 card and \$2 per \$10 or higher card

Further details on consignment will be sent after selection notification.

**Songwriting Contestants may also sell CD's at the TKMA table near their stage after their set, provided the contestant or a designee is at the table. TKMA Table Volunteers will NOT handle money for your CD's **other than at the Kitchen Store in Jacome Plaza**.**

## **Festival Performances**

If you would like to be a Festival Performer, separate and apart from the Songwriting Competition, please start with the Performer Information Fact Sheet found here: Application Information. 3 song demos in mp3 format are required and can be the same or different from your Songwriting Competition demos.

Early Performer Applications are free until December 1, 2019, after which there is a separate non-refundable application fee of \$25.00 for late applicants. Performer application acceptance closes December 15, 2019.

**You are not required to be a TKMA Member to apply for the Songwriting Competition or to be a Festival Performer, but we encourage you to become a Member – it is a great way to keep our festival “one of the oldest FREE folk music festivals in the country!” To become a Member: [CLICK HERE](#)**

**Questions?** Contact Ismael Barajas, Songwriting Competition Coordinator.

- Email [ismaelbarajasmusic@gmail.com](mailto:ismaelbarajasmusic@gmail.com)

**Ballad Tree:**

- A tradition here and at other festivals, the Ballad Tree offers musicians an informal setting to present songs in a round robin format (song circle). It could be a tune you just wrote or a song you learned from your grandfather 40 years ago. This year, the Ballad Tree will be open both Saturday and Sunday between 1 and 4 p.m.
- The Ballad Tree welcomes beginners and master players – we encourage all acoustic instrument players, singers, poets, storytellers and listeners to stop by and share in our Song Circle. No signups are required, just come on over with your instruments. All attendees are welcome.

## Workshops:

- Sharing your knowledge with others makes the festival even more rewarding. If you have a topic you would like to teach in a 60-90 minute workshop, enter your topic in the field under **Other Opportunities** and we will contact you.
  - Acceptance as a Songwriting Contestant or Festival Performer is not required. All attendees are welcome.

## Volunteer Activities:

- If you are interested in volunteering at the Festival (in addition to performing) or participating in any of our pre-festival activities, [CONTACT US HERE](#) or send email to: [volunteers@tucsonfolkfest.org](mailto:volunteers@tucsonfolkfest.org)
- Volunteer jobs include: working in the TKMA Kitchen Store, Beer Garden, Water/Soda and Raffle Booths, Volunteer Tent, Kid/s Zone and/or acting as Emcee, Stage Manager/Asst. Manager and/or general roustabout! Volunteer opportunities will be posted on our website after January 2020!
- Pre-festival volunteer opportunities include helping with fundraisers, publicity, selling program ads, soliciting sponsorships and vendors and lining up raffle prizes.

*The Tucson Kitchen Musicians Association (TKMA) is an all-volunteer operated 501(c)(3) non-profit organization; established in 1986. Our mission is to further public awareness and interest in acoustic music and other folk arts by promoting and producing the annual Tucson Folk Festival; one of the oldest FREE folk music festivals in the country! URL [www.tucsonfolkfest.org](http://www.tucsonfolkfest.org) and Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/TucsonFolkFest>*