

Pittsburgh Songwriters Circle: 2020 Collection

Since 2005 members of Pittsburgh Songwriters Circle have produced a unique body of work – an annual compilation album series that includes hundreds of original songs by regional songwriters. In March 2019 the group launched its fifteenth CD project in as many years.

Two separate fees are associated with the project. A \$100 duping-participation fee is paid to the project manager. A recording fee paid to the producer reflects a special group rate for members of Pittsburgh Songwriters Circle who are participating in the album project: \$30 per hour for each of the first three hours, \$40 per hour for additional time. Details below.

Recording project partners include:

- Mike Hickman of Electric Eye Recorders, located on Polish Hill, returns to produce and master the album.
- Kansas multi-media company Nuvidia returns having pressed and printed every group project since 2006.
- Pittsburgh Songwriters Circle is sponsored by Calliope: The Pittsburgh Folk Music Society, which again has invited the group to perform its CD release event at the Roots Cellar stage at Pittsburgh Center for the Arts, Shadyside. Date pending.

Find information about Pittsburgh Songwriters Circle and all of its associates at the following websites:

Pittsburgh Songwriters Circle, pittsburghsongwriterscircle.org; Electric Eye Recorders, electric-eye-recorders.com; Calliope: The Pittsburgh Folk Music Society, calliopehouse.org; Nuvidia, nuvidia.com; CDBaby, cdbaby.com; Colo IP Networks, coloip.com; Hambone's, hambonespgh.com; Mr. Small's Funhouse, mrsmalls.com.

Project overview

The annual album project is a feature of Pittsburgh Songwriters Circle, an artist support group that offers its members a monthly meeting to exchange ideas and promote camaraderie, song critiquing and discussion; a monthly featured performance at an open stage, free and paid gigs, etc.

The album series:

- 1) Provides songwriters with a safe, inexpensive, nurturing and educational recording experience with a veteran producer in a professional recording studio.
- 2) Provides incentive to write songs by creating an outlet for them.
- 3) Helps to foster community among participating songwriters.
- 4) Makes entry into the recording process less daunting by eliminating such heavy decisions as selection of a producer and studio, mastering, selection of a manufacturing company, replication or duplication options, graphic design and text, shipping, booking a venue, staging a CD release event, media relations and promotion. Freed of those responsibilities, participating songwriters need only to make artistic decisions about their songs, pay the project's fees and meet its deadlines.
- 5) Builds participants' studio skills and confidence, and encourages further recording. When members are ready to pursue their own album projects, assistance is available on recording process details, contact numbers, collective advice, etc.
- 6) Provides a promotional tool for Pittsburgh Songwriters Circle and project participants.

Publishing rights, project fees

- Participating songwriters retain all rights to their songs. The Pittsburgh Songwriters Circle CD is a work for hire. No mechanical or publishing royalties are due or paid. One thousand units are manufactured and divided equally among participants minus cutouts for promotional use and the sale of "group albums" (see below *). Participating artists can do whatever they want with the CDs they receive.

- **DUPING-PARTICIPATION FEE:** A one-time duping/participation fee of \$100 is paid to project manager John Hayes. Only John may receive this payment, which serves as confirmation of intent to participate. The duping fee must be paid before access to the group recording rate is provided. Duping fees are held in dedicated accounts until used for duping, printing, shipping and various group expenses. Preferred payment is through personal check or money order for \$100 made out to John Hayes, 101 Daggette Dr., Buena Vista, PA 15018. The duping-participation fee is fully refundable until the participant's first recording session.

- **RECORDING FEE:** Electric Eye Recorders offers a special Pittsburgh Songwriters Circle group rate of \$30 for each of the first three hours, \$40 per hour for additional time. There is a project minimum of two studio hours. Recording fees are paid directly to producer Mike Hickman. Only Mike may receive this payment. The fee for a participant's first recording session must be paid at the start of the session, and payment per session is preferred unless other arrangements have been made. Payment can be made through PayPal, Google Pay or cash as well as checks or money orders made out to James Hickman.

. Checks or money orders should be made out to Mike Hickman. Recording fees must be paid before the Shipping-Uploading deadline (Sept. 27), unless an alternate payment arrangement has been made with Mike. This protects Mike and Electric Eye from late payment, nonpayment and potential misuse of the special rate.

- As is the custom at Electric Eye, clients pay only for studio time used. There is no additional fee for performance services provided by the producer. Setup time for drum sets, etc., is considered billable session time. Mastering is done after the client approves the final mix and billing is at the special group hourly rate.

- Studio accompanists other than Mike may be used at the participant's request. Their payment, if any, is a private matter between the participant and the session player.

- **WHERE THE MONEY GOES:** Mike Hickman of Electric Eye Recorders is paid an hourly studio fee for hours used in producing and mastering. Nuvidia is paid for replication, printing, assembly and shipping. CDBaby.com is paid by the group for Internet promotion. Colo IP Networks is paid for website servicing. Group funds may be used to pay for expenses incurred by the group with the co-approval of the group manager and treasurer.

- No fees are paid for monthly meeting space or open stage featuring performances by Songwriters Circle members.

- Pittsburgh Songwriters Circle is a volunteer organization. No member is paid for services rendered to the group or group activities. No member retains booking fees for arranging paid or

unpaid gigs for the group or its members. Group members may be paid for special services including sound equipment rental, etc., with the approval of the group manager and treasurer.

- The duping-participation fee paid to the project manager is deposited in full to a dedicated credit union account, then transferred to a dedicated bank account managed by the group treasurer. There is no commingling of group money and outside money. Album project management and graphic design, booking, raffle coordination and other work is done by group members on a volunteer basis. No one from the Songwriters Circle or Calliope profits from this album project.

- Records of all money receipts, transfers and expenditures are available to any member on request to group treasurer Tom Beckman (beckman12@verizon.net).

CD release event

All album participants are invited to perform at a CD release event hosted by Calliope at Pittsburgh Center for the Arts (PCA). Calliope pays a hall rental fee to PCA and gets event admission fees. PCA gets beverage revenues. A food vendor, if available, gets food revenues. Pittsburgh Songwriters Circle gets proceeds from a raffle of donated prizes and sale of group CDs*. Those revenues are used for misc. group expenses and, whenever possible, paid forward to the next year's recording project.

Project schedule and deadlines

It is important for participants to observe deadlines, set to insure advancement of the project.

- **March 5 LAUNCH:** The project is discussed at the March Songwriters Circle meeting. Project rules, fees, schedule and other details are available to group members via hard copy, email links and a post on the Songwriters Circle website (pittsburghsongwriterscircle.org).

- **May 31 DUPING-PARTICIPATION FEE DEADLINE:** Payment of the \$100 fee serves as confirmation of participation and provides access to the producer's group recording rate. The fee is used for the manufacture of the CDs, shipping and misc. group expenses.

- **June 7 SESSION SCHEDULING DEADLINE:** By this date, participants must have contacted Mike and scheduled an initial recording session. The session can occur earlier or later, but must be on Mike's books by this date. To schedule sessions call Electric Eye at 512-785-2132. The session scheduling deadline advances the project and prevents a log jam of new sessions near the recording deadline.

- **Jul. 12 FIRST SESSION DEADLINE:** The participant's initial recording session must be completed by this date. The deadline advances the project and prevents a log jam of new sessions near the recording deadline.

- **Aug. 23 CREDITS TEXT DEADLINE:** In order to insure the accuracy and timeliness of printed credits, the information is documented in two ways. Mike keeps a running log of all project performances, and songwriters are asked to submit their credits to John at jhayes@post-gazette.com. Text format is: song title, songwriter name(s), all studio performers and instruments and professional affiliations, if any. Please confirm name spellings before submitting. The credits text deadline accommodates the graphic design deadline.

- **Aug. 30 RECORDING DEADLINE:** All recording must be finished. The recording deadline advances the project and accommodates the mastering deadline.
- **Sept. 20 MASTERING-GRAPHIC DESIGN DEADLINE:** CD mastering and graphic design are completed.
- **Sept. 27 SHIPPING-UPLOADING:** CD master and graphics are uploaded. Duping fee is sent to Nuvidia.
- **Oct. 31 DELIVERY:** By this date, CDs are to be shipped to John. Distribution to participants begins.
- **RELEASE EVENT:** Performance is held at Pittsburgh Center for the Arts. Date pending.
- **Dec. 31 CD PICKUP DEADLINE:** Project participants must take receipt of their CDs by the end of 2019, or make special arrangements with John to receive their CDs later. Failure to accept CDs by the end of the year could result in forfeit of the CDs with no refund of duping fee or recording fees. In such case, the participant's CDs would become the property of Pittsburgh Songwriters Circle and considered a group album*. This protects John from being used to warehouse CDs for an extended period of time.

Project rules

- This project is a showcase of songs written by members of Pittsburgh Songwriters Circle. Participating songwriters (or one member of a co-writing team) must be a member of the group. Membership is defined as having attended a meeting of Pittsburgh Songwriters Circle and inclusion on the group's mailing list. All members are eligible to participate in the project and receive the special recording session rate. All members who pay the project's fees and meet its deadlines will be included on the album. Failure to meet a deadline or payment deadline without special arrangements may result in expulsion from the album project without refund and group rate privileges may be rescinded. Electric Eye's regular rates would then apply.
- Each participant may place one song on the album. One song may be recorded at the special rate. The special recording rate is available only for songs that are placed on the Songwriters Circle album. If a song recorded at the special group recording rate is withdrawn by the participant or excluded from the project for any reason, the special rate will no longer apply, Electric Eye will be due the studio's full recording rate for those sessions and the duping fee will not be returned.
- Songs must arrive at the studio in a state of full or near completion. As producer, Mike is available to help with song structure, melody, lyrics and editing, arrangement, instrumentation, studio craft, performance, mix, etc., and in that capacity is not given a songwriting credit. He is a songwriter, however, and at the member's request he can participate in the writing of the song, which would entitle Mike to a co-writing credit. Members are encouraged to workshop songs intended for the album project at a Songwriters Circle meeting.
- All vocal and instrumental tracks are recorded at Electric Eye. Pre-programmed beats and prerecorded music are not permitted. All mixing and mastering is done at Electric Eye. No recording of any kind is done outside of Electric Eye. This helps to maintain the character of the project as a songwriter-driven,

studio-recorded album. It insures artistic continuity, enhances the project's educational mission and provides financial incentive for Electric Eye's continuing participation. It is routine for Mike or session performers to perform on some tracks, with the participant's consent. Session players may charge a fee for their services, with the participant's consent.

- One cancellation of a scheduled recording session is acceptable. Seventy-two hour notice must be given for additional cancellations or the participant will be charged a \$40 fee payable to Mike Hickman.

- In the weeks prior to the recording deadline, Electric Eye may not have time to accommodate sessions for unfinished projects. Songs that are not finished by the recording deadline will not be included on the album, the special group recording rate will no longer apply and the duping-participation fee will not be refunded.

- Many participants present the annual CD as a gift to friends and families. Content is determined by the artist, but please keep the lyrics generally family friendly. A fair guideline is Federal Communications Commission broadcast standards.

Replication and packaging

A compact disc can hold about 70 minutes of signal. If the master exceeds the signal capacity of one disc, Songwriters Circle may purchase a suitable configuration and packaging. For the 2020 project Nuvidia will charge Pittsburgh Songwriters Circle the following rates.

1,000 Replicated CDs (1-disc) - Media, Offset/Screen Disc Printing, 4-panel 4/4 Insert, 4/0 Tray Card, Standard Jewel Case with Black Tray, Assembly, Over Wrap at \$1.15 each (plus \$20 for UPC Barcode) Additional cost for FedEx Ground Shipping.

1,000 Replicated CDs (2-disc set) - Media, Offset/Screen Disc Printing, 4-panel 4/4 Insert, 4/4 Tray Card, Double Jewel Case with Black swing arm tray, Assembly, Over Wrap @ \$1.74 each (plus \$20 for UPC Barcode) Additional cost for FedEx Ground Shipping.

1,000 Replicated CDs (2-disc set) - Media, Offset/Screen Disc Printing, 6-panel 4/4 Insert, 4/4 Tray Card, Double Jewel Case with Black swing arm tray, Assembly, Over Wrap @ \$1.86 each (plus \$20 for UPC Barcode) Additional cost for FedEx Ground Shipping.

*** Group albums**

One thousand CDs are purchased. Those designated "group albums" -- owned by the group and not by individual participants -- are cutout from the total to be used by the group for promotional purposes, or sold or raffled to benefit Pittsburgh Songwriters Circle. Full physical compact discs -- not individual digital downloads -- are sold through CDBaby. Revenues from the sale or raffle of group albums are used for group-related expenses or applied to the following year's Songwriters Circle album project.

Contacts

Project coordinator, group manager: John Hayes (work) 412-263-1991, jhayes@post-gazette.com, (cell) 412-335-1446, johnhayes.johnhayes@gmail.com. 101 Daggette Dr., Buena Vista, PA 15018.

Electric Eye Recorders: Mike Hickman, 512-785-2132, studio@fallguys.net. 3347 Melwood Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15219 (Polish Hill).

Group treasurer: Tom Beckman (beckman12@verizon.net).