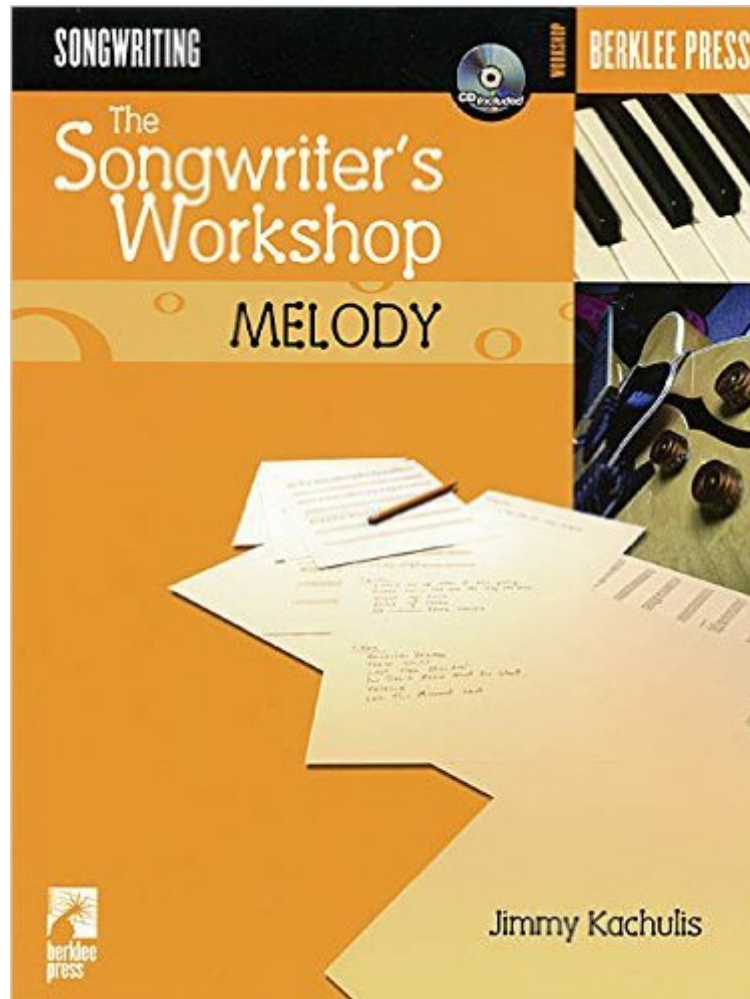


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# The Songwriter's Workshop: Melody (Berklee Press)



## Synopsis

(Berklee Press). Spark your imagination with hundreds of creative songwriting techniques! This hands-on guide provides lessons on how to write innovative songs, based on popular songwriting courses at Berklee College of Music. Whether you're a beginning songwriter who can't read a note of music, or an experienced professional looking for new ideas, this book will provide new insight into your craft; it teaches the fundamental techniques behind today's hit songs, together with easy-to-follow exercises so you can immediately apply these tools to your own art. This book comes with a CD so you can practice your songs with accompaniment, even if you can't play an instrument.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I returned this book almost immediately after purchase. 90% of the info that is in this book is in "the songwriter's workshop: harmony" book where it is given a better presentation along with useful info on harmony. If you want some basic rules on how to write a good melody, look up the melody section in "Music, the Brain and Ecstasy" (no its not about drugs or sex), which gives you about 10 useful, non-restrictive tips for writing a good melody. Things like "non-diatonic notes should resolve by going to neighboring tones rather than by a leap".

I've completed the first two chapters (of five) in this book and found that it is very useful. The examples of each technique are boring, bland, and not very creative, but I guess the author

purposely made them that way so that the reader could understand the concept in the first place. There are so many techniques in the book to use only for only melody writing that no reader should be short of ideas after reading the book. It's an extremely detailed look at melody and all the aspects of creating a good melody. Overall, it's a very useful book of tricks and techniques, but I think it would be better if the author gave better and more interesting examples of concepts. I don't think that the book alone will allow one to write good melodies anyway--I think anyone reading it should seek out melodies from his/her favorite songs (with notes on the treble clef and chord symbols) and analyze how they're put together and what techniques mentioned in the book are actually in that particular melody. A book is not meant to do this part (that's up to the reader), so I don't judge the book badly for this--a book can only do so much anyway.

I really liked this book, I thought the examples were good, and it was well put together. I especially liked the part about using or "resetting" other existing songs to help write your own material. However, when I ordered this on the Kindle, I was hoping that the CD tracks would somehow be included--they weren't, so I am returning and getting the paperback version. So order the paperback version, otherwise you will miss out on the CD tracks and examples, unless someone knows something I don't on how to get the tracks with the Kindle version.

This book, along with its companion by the same author, *Songwriter's Workshop: Harmony*, comprise a solid, straightforward course in writing songs along the lines of "classic rock and pop" from the 60's through the 80's, although the principles and techniques can be applied to virtually any genre of songwriting. While this is not a book about writing lyrics per se (see *Songwriting: Essential Guide to Lyric Form and Structure* by Pat Pattison), Kachulis' exercises are designed to provide tools for you to set your own words, use the provided fragments and phrases, and even "rewrite the hits" - take an existing song lyric you're familiar with and compose an entirely new melody and/or chords for it. The lessons are divided into several units that build upon one another and address a particular technical aspect of song melody: The first unit describes rhythmic placement of lyrics and the use of rhythmic devices to emphasize words and shape their expression. The following units introduce pitch and its relationship to the underlying harmony. Melodies are first derived from a single chord than over richer chord progressions and bass lines. Modal devices and the use of arpeggios to build and expand ideas is explored. Along with this focus on the "micro" elements, later units demonstrate the larger sections and ultimately complete song forms. The accompanying CD is well-produced and illustrates all of the exercises. As with the companion book on Harmony, the

vocabulary here is rock and guitar-oriented and you won't find many jazz/show tune techniques here nor Steely Dan-type changes (I'd recommend Jack Perricone's "Melody in Songwriting" which is a bit more along those lines and makes a great followup to this series.) But otherwise, there's little prior knowledge assumed (other than an interest in and listening experience to a wide range of songs) and much to be learned.

This book might require basic theory in order to understand what is going on in the book, but this book is amazing! it teaches you how the professionals write the hit songs. Some people say this book sucks or something because this book doesn't teach you the style. It teaches you the skills to DEVELOP verse pre-chorus and chorus. Follow the things they teach in the book, it is impossible to write bad songs. Also, this is the actual textbook for song writing classes in Berklee college of music. Students use this book as their academic textbooks.

Very clear explanation of scales and triads to apply during improvisation. I wish I had found this book years ago. It is a very practical approach which improved my playing and helped me find an improvisational framework.

I found the examples of melody writing in this book to be boring. I didn't expect the writer to write "hit" melodies, but I think he could have done a better job than the bland melodies written for the book. I did find some information helpful like the scales listed in the back of the book and adding emphasis to certain keywords in lyrics.

excellent purchase, combine it with harmony workshop and you'll have a great combination of exercises to develop your songwriting skills...cheers from Costa Rica...surf town :)

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