

# SONGWRITING TUITION IN CLERKENWELL (LONDON, EC 1)

## MONICA MAX WEST

AWARD-WINNING SINGER-SONGWRITER

[WWW.MONICAMAXWEST.COM](http://WWW.MONICAMAXWEST.COM)

WINNER LSC SEARCH FOR THE SONG  
SONGDOOR COMPETITION HONOURABLE MENTION  
UK SONGWRITING CONTEST SEMI-FINALIST  
SONG OF THE YEAR RUNNER-UP  
UNISONG 12TH ANNUAL CONTEST FINALIST



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- Would you like to learn how to write your own songs?
- Or do you need some feedback to improve your existing songs?
- Are you experiencing 'writer's block' in songwriting?
- Do you struggle with constructing words for your music, or music for your words?

With my background in literature, music and psychotherapy, I can support you to write unique songs with your own signature style. I possess a unique combination of training, skills and experience in the areas of 1) lyric writing 2) music composition and 3) helping people to access and express their personal truths.

- B.A. (Hons) from Yale University in the Expressive Arts (English and Music)
- M.A. (Dist) from Kingston University in Music Composition
- Further Post-Graduate Study in Music Composition at the Royal Academy Of Music
- M.A. (Dist) Psychotherapy and Counselling, Regents SPC/City

"What is unique about Max West is not only does she have a vast wealth of knowledge and experience in classical music, pop/modern music and songwriting technique, her training as a psychotherapist supports pupils to go beyond their barriers, in a powerful way."

- *ET, songwriting pupil*

As a composer, lyricist, singer and multi-instrumentalist (piano, guitar and flute), I have many years of experience writing in a wide variety of musical styles: in bands, for multi-media events, as a solo artist and for film and television. I possess:

- Musical expertise to help you to consider different styles, chord progressions, melodies, harmonies and rhythms in your songs.
- Lyrical expertise to help you to construct powerful, heartfelt words to express your ideas, memories and feelings in plain English or in highly sophisticated poetic prose.
- Psychological expertise to support you to find and express your personal truth through song, as well as aiding you to move through any songwriting or performance blocks you may have.

### What To Expect

Songwriting coaching includes: support; encouragement; guidance; exploration of songwriting techniques; and feedback on the following songwriting components (please note: this list is not exhaustive):

- how to write a song: ways to start with words or music; components of a song; fitting lyrics to music and music to lyrics;
- lyrics: lyrical themes & progression; lyrical styles including imagery/poetics; choosing a narrative voice; meter & rhythm; rhyming; construction of lyrical 'hooks', especially in choruses; song title;
- music: tempo; style/feel; key; harmonic progression; melody and melodic progression; use of harmonies; song sections; song structure; intros, bridges and outros;

## Royalties

From time to time, I may offer suggestions or new ideas for you to consider; this will not affect writer credits (royalties), which will remain with you. To distinguish the 'coach' role from that of a co-writer/songwriting collaborator, this element of coaching will be held to a minimum.

If you feel completely 'stuck' regarding some part of a song, we may agree that I will contribute ideas for significant part of a song (such as a writing new section, or a substantial part of a chorus or verse); if this is the case, a separate Songwriting Collaboration Agreement will be drawn up and signed, which will detail the split of writers' credits for the specific song.

## Two Possible Ways To Schedule Lessons

- Ad Hoc: One option is to schedule lessons in a flexible way. These lessons can be scheduled at an interval and duration that suits you (for example, fortnightly for an hour and a half). Most of these lessons are offered during the day, during the week. If you choose this option, any lesson that is cancelled with less than 24 hours notice (or missed without cancellation) must be paid for in full.
- Weekly: I offer a number of fixed lesson times each week; students who come at these times commit to attending every week at the same day/time. This consistency is very positive for building momentum and discipline in songwriting, as well as building the relationship between us. There are over 10 evening slots available each week (Mondays, Tuesdays and Fridays), and some early morning (pre-work) appointments. Each of these lessons lasts 50 minutes. If you choose this option, because I will then keep the same hour of my time each week reserved for your lesson, all lessons (except any I cannot offer, but including any you cancel/miss/are on holiday) must be paid for in full. In addition, I am unable to offer alternative times/days if you cannot or do not attend your lesson for any reason.

## Beginnings and Endings

When we meet for the first time, we can think together about your songwriting experience, knowledge and goals. We can assess what your learning goals are, and how we will work together. We can also discuss how you would like to schedule lessons (see options above).

If at any point in our work together, you are considering bringing our arrangement to a close, please give me as much notice as possible. I require a minimum of one week's notice for any ending of our songwriting tuition arrangement.

## Charges and Payment

My songwriting tuition fees are based on income and vary between £50-85. For those making less than £45K per annum, the charge for a 50 minute lesson is £50. There are further increments for fees for every £15K per year, up to £135K.

For those dependent on a family income, fees will be negotiated on an individual basis. All lessons billed through a third party will be billed at a minimum of £80. If at any time your income bracket changes, please let me know and we can adjust your fee accordingly. I will give at least two months' notice for any increase in fees, and normally raise my fees by £2-3 each January.

## Practical Issues

I work from a residential block, located just behind the Sadler's Wells Theatre on a small cul-de-sac called Myddelton Passage. The Nautilus Building is in the southwest corner of the street, at the far right hand end of a long brick wall. My studio is easily accessible via any bus that goes along Pentonville Road or Rosebery Avenue (or to the Angel), and is also close to the London Underground (Angel, Kings Cross). A map is available by entering the postcode EC1R 1XW into <http://maps.google.co.uk>. Please note: all vehicles will need to enter Myddelton Square from Amwell Street or Pentonville Road (as Chadwell Street/Arlington Way is blocked to cars).

When you arrive, please ring the buzzer at the gate (press '6' and 'call'), follow the path to the left, and then ring again at the front door to the building. My studio is located on the lower ground floor, accessible by stairs (two floors down) or lift (please press 'B' for basement).

Because I do not have a waiting area, I would ask for you to be on time for your lesson; I will be unable to answer the door until five minutes before your lesson, and the buzzer will be switched off until this time. So that I know you have arrived, please do ring both bells even if the gate or front door to the building is open for any reason.

For those with allergies, it is also important to mention that I sometimes have a small dog staying with me.