

How to Produce a Singing Call from a Song You Like



Special thanks to

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Outline

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- Possibilities and requirements
- Example:
The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down
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- Information on Gramophone
- Information on Shindig
- Summary
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Features of a Singing Call

- Tempo: 126 bpm (122 to 130)
- “*Global*” 4/4 rhythm (“*internal*” rhythm may be different)
- 7 sequences of 16 bars of 4 beats
- Structure:
 - (Intro) 1) Opener
 - 2) Figure 1
 - 3) Figure 2
 - 4) Middle Break
 - 5) Figure 3
 - 6) Figure 4
 - 7) Closer (Tag)

Possibilities and Requirements

Produce the music yourself

- Requirements:
 - Ability to play all instruments
 - Possibility to record and mix down the music
 - Design of the Singing Call
 - License to use the song
- Additional "For Sale" requirements:
 - Possibility to record the vocals
 - Possibility to mix down music and vocals
 - Decision on music formats: vinyl, CD, mp3
 - Distribution of Singing Call, e.g. via DOSADO.COM and/or yourself
- Examples:
 - New Beat (Lindergaard, Nielsen, Trottmann & Wyatt)
 - Toddy Tunes (Thorsten Dudziak, Germany)
 - BVR Records (Bodo von Reth, Germany)

Possibilities and Requirements

Use Karaoke versions

- Requirements:
 - Access to a Karaoke or instrumental version
 - Computer and appropriate software
 - Ability to use a wave editor
 - Design of the Singing Call
 - Ability to create the Singing Call by “cut and paste”
- Example:
 - Leif Ekblad (LeMa Music Production, Sweden)
- Limitations:
 - License status unclear
 - Impossible to change the rhythm
 - In general impossible to create “high quality” music

Possibilities and Requirements

Make an agreement with a SD label

- Requirements:
 - Choose a song you like
 - Criteria:
 - “Appropriate” for square dancing (rhythm & tempo can be changed!)
 - Not published as singing call in a version you like
 - (Well-known song)
 - Design the Singing Call
 - Produce a “prototype” & find the correct key for YOUR voice
 - Pay costs for music production
 - (Record the vocal)
- Examples:
 - STING Productions (Paul Bristow, UK)
 - Gramophone Productions (Joe Kromer, Germany)
 - Shindig Productions (Geoff Ward, South Africa)

Music for Callers



<http://www.musicforcallers.com/>



Currently best information source for SD music

Example:

The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down

Choice of the song

- Original versions:
 - **The Band (1969)**
 - **Tanya Tucker (1993)**
 - **Juliane Werding (1975, Germany #1)**
 - **Joan Baez (1971, US #3, UK #6)**
 - Other cover versions: Bob Dylan, Johnny Cash etc.
- Criteria:
 - “Appropriate” for square dancing ✓
 - Not yet published as singing call ✓
 - Well-known song ✓
(No. 245 of the RS 500 Greatest Songs of All Time)

Example:

The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down

Design of the Singing Call

Count the bars & chose appropriate parts for 16 bar frame

┌┌┌┌

Opener / Figure:

┌ Virgil ┌ Caine is my name and I ┌ served on the Danville ┌ train 1 – 4

┌ 'Til Stoneman's ┌ cavalry came and ┌ tore up the tracks a ┌ gain 5 – 8

┌ In the winter of ┌ '65, we were ┌ hungry, just ┌ barely alive 9 – 12

┌ By May the tenth, ┌ Richmond had fell → 2 bars only!

It was a ┌ time I re ┌ member oh so ┌ well ┌ 13 – 16

Break / Closer:

The ┌ Night They ┌ Drove Old Dixie ┌ Down

& all the ┌ bells were ringing [used twice in Singing Call!] 1 – 4, 5 – 8

The ┌ Night They ┌ Drove Old Dixie ┌ Down

& the ┌ people were singin', they went 9 – 12

┌ La La-la ┌ La La-la ┌ La-la La-la ┌ La La-la La-ala 13 – 16

...

Example:

The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down

Design of the Singing Call

OPENER [[[[CL

[Virgil [Caine is my name and I [served on the Danville [train

AL, RAT, AL & Weave

[In the winter of ['65, we were [hungry just [barely alive

It was a [time I re [member, oh, so [well [

FIGURES . . . **Swing Corner & Prom**

But they should [never have [taken the very [best [

BREAK / CLOSER S [FGS

The [Night They [Drove Old Dixie [Down & all the [bells were ringin'

The [Night They [Drove Old Dixie [Down **AL & Weave**

The [Night They [Drove Old Dixie [Down

And the [people were singin', they went

[La Lala [La Lala [Lala La-(la [La Lala La-ala)

TAG S [FGS [[[[

[Na Nana [Na Nana [Nana Na Na [Na-a

Example:

The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down

Produce a “prototype”

- Possibilities (no high quality required!)
 - Record the Singing Call with a guitar or any other instrument
 - Use a Karaoke version
 - Create a MIDI file
 - Record an a-capella version
- Example:
 - **Prototype version with guitar and blues harp**
 - Key E
- **Recording of the final Singing Call (Video)**
 - Sting & Snow Session in Nashville 11/2006
 - Producer: Paul Bristow & Kevin McManus

Example:

The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down

Record the vocal

- Possibilities
 - Use a professional studio
 - Record the vocal yourself
(PC and studio microphone required)
- Example:
 - Vocal recorded in Cologne 02/2007 (Tonstudio BE)
 - Instrumental, vocal, harmony version
- **The Night They Drove Old Dixie Down (SC)**
 - Released on SNOW 07/2007 (SNW-2006)
 - Reached position No. 4 on Hanhurst Bestseller Index



Information on STING

- What You Need or Have to Do:
 - Member of the Sting Productions Ambassador Club
 - Buy 5 Ambassador Club Memberships (\$ 750) – CAN BE SOLD!
 - Good idea
 - Design of the Singing Call
 - Prototype and appropriate key
 - Record the vocal (at local studio or at home)
- What You Will Get:
 - Special Guest Caller on STING Productions
 - Singing Call of your choice
 - Music of the Ambassador Club (year over year)
- Contact Paul Bristow (Paul@stingproductions.co.uk)
 - Feel free to ask Paul!

Information on Gramophone



- Music production:
 - No studio band
 - Music produced with keyboard & “samples”
- Time Tested Way:
 - Pay costs for music production (≈ 700 €)
 - Distributed via DOSADO.COM and GP
- New Way:
 - No vocal version
 - Only CD and mp3
 - Limited numbers or exclusive for one caller only
 - Distribution via GP-shop only
- Contact Joe Kromer (Joe@gramophoneproductions.de)

Information on Shindig



- Music production:
 - No studio band
 - No real instruments
 - Use of midi files
 - Midi files come from recognized dealers
 - Programmed with “samples”
- 3 options:
 - Guest Caller on Shindig
 - Song production exclusively for you
 - Start your own label

Information on Shindig



- Option 1: Guest Caller on Shindig
 - Costs: \$ 0 - 50 (depending on programming effort)
 - Record vocal (at local studio)
 - Get \$ 50 if the song sells 30 copies or more
- Option 2: Exclusive song production
 - Costs: \$ 100 - 200 (depending on programming effort)
 - Song becomes property of the caller
- Option 3: Start your own label
 - Similar to option 2, but now you need licenses!
 - 10% discount for 5 or more songs
- Contact Geoff Ward (GeoffWard@webafrica.org.za)

Summary

To produce a Singing Call from a song you like you need:

- Choice of an "appropriate" song you like
- Design of the Singing Call
- Production of a "prototype"
- Own production, Karaoke or agreement with SD label

Higher music quality (studio band) is (much) more expensive than music from keyboard, midi files & samples.

But: Sometimes very high music quality is unnecessary!

**If you like to support high quality square dance music,
please consider to be a member of the
Sting Productions AMBASSADOR Club**

Internet Sites

- <http://www.rbsd.de/music.html>
- <http://www.stingproductions.co.uk/>
- <http://www.gramophoneproductions.de/>
- <http://www.shindigproductions.co.za/>
- <http://www.new-beat.net/>
- <http://www.toddys-tunes.de/>
- <http://www.musicforcallers.com/>
- <http://www.harryfox.com/>