

## Project Report: Songwriting Camps in New York, October 2024

We conducted songwriting camps and a networking trip in Manhattan and Brooklyn, New York, from October 7th to 16th, 2024, managed by Furu Music.



### Furu Music

[Furu Music](#) is a Bergen-based music company with extensive experience in organizing songwriting camps. Our aim is to establish ourselves as a key hub for creative collaboration in Bergen and Norway in the years to come. We emphasize community building and strive to create regular networking trips and songwriting camps between New York and Bergen. Our next trip is already planned for early March 2025.

We are laying the groundwork for international collaboration and future value creation. During this trip, we worked closely with our mentor Stein Bjelland (NYU, Music Norway) and other key individuals to establish a network connecting Bergen, Stavanger, and New York. The trip included artists, songwriters, and producers affiliated with HiHat Management and Mantik Music Group. Our schedule was packed with songwriting sessions, coffee meetings, and a drink mixer event.



## Our Journey

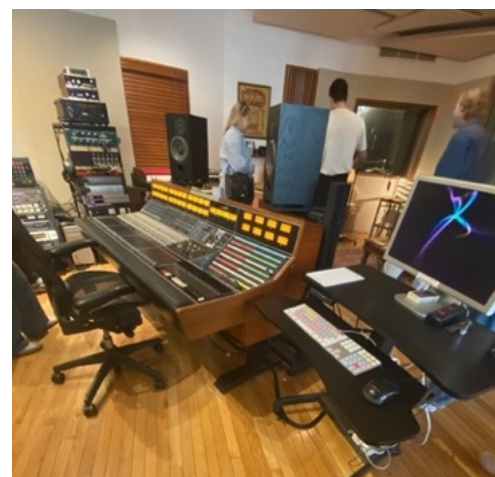
We were seven travelers on this journey – songwriters, artists, producers, and musicians – heading to New York with the goal of expanding our network and building long-term relationships. In total, we worked with eight local artists and songwriters, primarily connected to the Clive Davis Institute and Yale, as well as the Grammy-winning producer and sound mixer Chris Sclafani.

Our sessions spanned six days, during which we collectively completed 16 songwriting sessions.



**On October 8<sup>th</sup>** we visited the exciting community-oriented [Kensaltown East Studios](#), which expressed interest in collaborating on future projects for upcoming visits. This studio complex focuses on clients who wish to work over an extended period, enabling them to become part of the physical and creative environment formed on-site. The studio offers opportunities for sessions, camps, drink mixers, and other events in the future.

Later that day, our group met with Mike Bell, co-organizer of the international showcase event [The New Colossus Festival](#) alongside Steven Matrick. Mike is also an advisor to the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and works to strengthen collaboration between Norway and New York. We discussed how Norwegian bands can succeed in the U.S., opportunities for Norwegian artists at the festival, and hosting American artists for camps and events in Norway.



**October 9<sup>th</sup>**, we had coffee with Greg Vegas, Senior Director of Client Relations at [FUGA](#). In addition, he runs the indie label [International Rescue Artist Development](#) and the label [Declared Goods](#), which also has a dedicated indie-focused segment on the multi-genre radio station [East Village Radio](#). With experience as an artist manager, musician, and tour manager, Greg shared insights about A&R, artist development, release and tour strategies, market trends, and pitching Norwegian artists for his radio program.

In the evening, we attended the local music event at [Brooklyn Music Kitchen](#) to immerse ourselves in the local music community and identify potential collaborators. We connected with several individuals from the Clive Davis Institute and Yale alumni network, facilitated by songwriting professor Mike Errico.





**October 10<sup>th</sup>–11<sup>th</sup>** we hosted our first songwriting camp using studio spaces rented from [Pirate Studios](#) in Gowanus, Brooklyn. As mentioned, we invited American students and divided into two studio rooms. Each session lasted approximately three hours, with groups reshuffled after the first round. Over two days, this led to the creation of six songs involving two producers and six songwriters.



**On the evening of October 11<sup>th</sup>,** we hosted a Drink Mixer in Greenpoint, northern Brooklyn, where we met several artists we collaborated with later in the trip. This event was promoted by Mike Errico, who spread the word about our initiative. Kaizers Orchestra, in town for a U.S. tour, also attended.





**October 12<sup>th</sup>**, we had two full studio days with [Chris Sclafani](#) in the heart of Midtown Manhattan, writing songs for each of our four artists. We established a strong relationship with Chris and his manager, [Liz Abramsohn](#). Some members of our group remain in regular contact with them, and we plan to collaborate further in the future. Liz Abramsohn is Studio and Project Manager at [Sterling Sound](#), a renowned mastering studio where Chris Gehringer works. Gehringer has mastered records for artists such as Alessia Cara, Tori Kelly, and several Norwegian artists. We are in talks with Liz to arrange a meeting with Gehringer at Sterling Sound for our next trip.

**On October 13<sup>th</sup>** two of us visited a gospel church in the heart of Brooklyn on the recommendation of bassist Jerry Barnes, whom we met during a studio session with Chris Sclafani. This cultural and musical experience was particularly enriching for soul artist Carmen Forbes, and we established contact with the church band's guitarist, William Barnes, Jerry's father. Meanwhile, some of our producers held external sessions parallel to the studio time with Chris Sclafani.

**By October 14<sup>th</sup>**, half the team had returned to Norway, while the remaining members continued arranging sessions through the 15<sup>th</sup>. They collaborated with artists including Malik English, StillHarley, Greer, and Ava Franks.



*Fv: Daniel, Chris, Carmen, Tara Martine, Kristian, Sakarias, Sitraka*





## Have We Achieved Our Goals?

The primary goal was to initiate the development of long-term relationships with U.S.-based artists, producers, songwriters, managers, and other industry professionals. These relationships will serve as a foundation for inviting them to Norway in the future. We feel that this goal was achieved beyond expectations, and the connections we established provide a strong basis for creating a vibrant collaboration network between Bergen, Stavanger, and New York. Additionally, we produced a significant amount of music with American creators and began showcasing the talent and quality of Norwegian songwriters and producers.

The trip also served as an opportunity for Norwegian creators to further develop their skills, challenge themselves in the New York music scene, and foster future collaboration opportunities. Following this successful trip, Furu Music plans to facilitate more international songwriting camps in the coming years, both abroad and in Vestland and Rogaland counties in Norway.





## Norwegian Participants

### Artists from Norway

*Fv.: Carmen Forbes, Tara Nova, Kristian Lerø og Sacarias*



### Team

| <i>Name</i>             | <i>Role</i>              |
|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Daniel Alsvik           | Project Manager/Producer |
| Tara Martine Andreassen | Artist/Songwriter        |
| Carmen Forbes           | Artist/Songwriter        |
| Sakarias Lundstad       | Artist/Songwriter        |
| Kristian Leine Lerø     | Artist/Producer          |
| Sitraka Adriana         | Producer                 |
| Haakon Eggebø           | Producer                 |

Artists, songwriters, producers, and musicians we bonded with and worked with:

Jerry Barnes, William Barnes, Chris Sclafani, Kaizers Orchestra, Myles Cameron, Ava Franks,  
Daniel Fernandez, Malik English, Phillip Nikolov, Elizabeth Castano, Derek Castano,  
Benchwarmer (Nick Catrambone), Greer



## Session results

| No. | Song title                | Date  | Artist        | Contributors  |
|-----|---------------------------|-------|---------------|---|
| 1   | <i>Careful</i>            | 14.10 | Malik English | Haakon Eggebø, Elizabeth and Derek Castano                              |
| 2   | <i>Back in my Life</i>    | 14.10 | Stillharley   | Philip Nikolov, Sitraka Adriana   |
| 3   | <i>(uten tittel)</i>      | 15.10 | Greer         | Haakon Eggebø, Sitraka Adriana, Carmen Forbes                           |
| 4   | <i>(uten tittel)</i>      | 15.10 | Ava Franks    | Haakon Eggebø, Carmen Forbes  |
| 5   | <i>Real Love</i>          | 12.10 | Ava Franks    | Sitraka Adriana   |
| 6   | <i>Million Reasons</i>    | 13.10 | Ava Franks    | Haakon Eggebø   |
| 7   | <i>Wide Awake</i>         | 12.10 | Tara Nova     | Chris Sclafani, Sitraka Adriana, Sakarias Lundstad                      |
| 8   | <i>T-Shirt</i>            | 12.10 | Carmen Forbes | Chris Sclafani, Kristian Leine Lerø, Haakon Eggebø, Daniel Alsvik       |
| 9   | <i>Issues</i>             | 13.10 | Sacarias      | Chris Sclafani, Tara Martine Andreassen                                 |
| 10  | <i>Dark Mode</i>          | 13.10 | Kristian Lerø | Chris Sclafani, Carmen Forbes, Sitraka Adriana, Tara Martine Andreassen |
| 11  | <i>405</i>                | 10.10 | Tara Nova     | Tara Martine Andreassen, Sitraka Adriana, Sakarias Lundstad             |
| 12  | <i>Drops of Joy</i>       | 10.10 | Sacarias      | Sitraka Adriana, Daniel Alsvik  |
| 13  | <i>Peter Pan</i>          | 10.10 | Carmen Forbes | Haakon Eggebø, Daniel Alsvik, Kristian Leine Lerø                       |
| 14  | <i>(uten tittel)</i>      | 10.10 | Kristian Lerø | Haakon Eggebø, Tara Martine Andreassen, Carmen Forbes                   |
| 15  | <i>AutoPilot</i>          | 11.10 | Kristian Lerø | Sitraka Adriana, Sakarias Lundstad, Tara Martine Andreassen             |
| 16  | <i>The Preparing Kind</i> | 11.10 | Carmen Forbes | Haakon Eggebø, Elizabeth Castano, Daniel Alsvik                         |

[SoundCloud link](#)





## Partners

### Norwegian Partners

**Stein Bjelland:** A mentor for Furu Music and this project, Stein teaches at the Clive Davis Institute (NYU) and has been a key networking contact for the trip. He is the co-founder of Elefant in Stavanger and serves as chair/member on several boards, including Music Norway.

**HiHat Management:** A Bergen-based management company representing Kristian Lerø.

**Mantik Music Group:** A music publishing and management company based in Copenhagen, Helsinki, and Stavanger, representing all Stavanger-based participants on this trip.

**Other Contacts** helping with network establishment: Robert Reid Gillies (artist/songwriter), Espen Eidem (producer), and Mads Ramsvatn (manager).

### New York Partners

**Chris Sclafani:** A Grammy-winning producer, engineer, and mixer with over 70 platinum certifications. He and his network participated in the camp on October 12–13.

**Mike Errico:** Songwriting professor at the Clive Davis Institute, instrumental in connecting us with eager students for collaborations.

**Phillip Nikolov (StillHarley):** Bulgarian-American artist and songwriter with an established network in New York. He participated in sessions and is a natural coordinator for future New York-based projects.

*Thank you to everyone helping us establish this project concept, and being a part of its growth. We'll continue to add new partners for our future renditions and involve larger parts of our evolving network.*

## Resources and links

[SoundCloud link](#)

[Kensaltown Studios](#)

[Sterling Sound](#)

[Liz Abramsohn](#)

[Chris Sclafani](#)

[Chris Geringer](#)

[Furu Music](#)