

Excerpts from the **2018 Region 13 Arrangers WorkShop at HCNW** session **"The Art of Writing Tags"** by Paul Olguin

Stand-alone tags are a great way to share your love of Barbershop with Barbershop Friends and also for outreach to the general public as part of a community singing program to encourage new and old friends to become Barbershop Friends.

Are you thinking about entering a tag in the <u>First Ever Region 13 Arrangers WorkShop at HCNW Tag</u> <u>Writing Contest</u>? Here's your 1st set of Tips from Paul Olguin to help you on your way:

- (1) Tags are symmetrical they are an even number of measures usually divisible by 4. Lots of good tags are just 4 measures long!
- (2) A tag usually conveys a universal message of love, fellowship, wonder or other emotion.
- (3) A tag is fun to sing for the singer and often contains a "tiddlie" that features a particular part.

Here's an example of a 4-measure tag that shares a parent's thoughts of a son or daughter away from home in service to our country that ends with a Tenor tiddlie, arranged for women's voices:

Where Are You Tonight?

Words and Music by Janice Wheeler

Arranged by Janice Wheeler



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Are you "hearing" a tag of your own? Your Barbershop Friends would love to sing it with you!



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Stand-alone tags provide an opportunity for singers to practice listening and vocal skills important to producing the characteristic Barbershop Sound.

Are you thinking about entering a tag in the <u>First Ever Region 13 Arrangers WorkShop at HCNW Tag</u> <u>Writing Contest</u>? Here's a 2nd set of Tips from Paul Olguin to help you on your way:

- (1) Tags can be composed of classic Barbershop chords and familiar progressions singers recognize from songs they've sung.
- (2) A tag lyric can be carefully chosen to provide an opportunity to work on matched resonance from vowel to vowel through the turn of a diphthong, or tackle managing those pesky consonants.
- (3) A tag is fun to sing for the singer and often contains a "tiddlie" that features a particular part.

Here's an example of a tag that includes some classic Barbershop chord progressions and a lyric with several target vowels and lots of "r's" to manage that ends with a Bari tiddlie, for women's voices:

We Long to Ring Some Good Old Barbershop Chords

Words & Music by Paul Olguin

Arranged by Paul Olguin



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Most tags have a melody that serves as inspiration. The melody is often sung by the Lead part, but not always. Tag melodies can start with four-part chords, a part solo, a unison or harmonized pickup, etc.

Are you thinking about entering a tag in the <u>First Ever Region 13 Arrangers WorkShop at HCNW Tag</u>
<u>Writing Contest</u>? Contest details are at <u>www.harmonycollege.org</u>. Here's the 3rd set of Tips from Paul:

- (1) Tags entered in the Tag Writing Contest can be built around your own original melody or one from a public domain song (generally, songs first published before 1923 are now in the public domain). You can find lists of public domain songs at www.pdinfo.com.
- (2) A tag can include a "hanger" in any part, sometimes with a "hand-off" to a different part.
- (3) A tag is fun to sing for the singer and often includes a special embellishment or "tiddlie" that features a particular part.

Here's an example of a tag based on a public domain song that starts with a unison pickup followed by a Lead hanger that is handed off to the Tenor, ending with a Bass slide, arranged for women's voices:

SWEET ADELINE TAG

Arranged by Janice Wheeler



Inspired by the 1903 song, "You're The Flower Of My Heart Sweet Adeline"
Music by Harry Armstrong Words by Richard H. Gerard
"Sweet Adeline Tag" © Copyright 2009 by Janice Wheeler, Prineville, OR.

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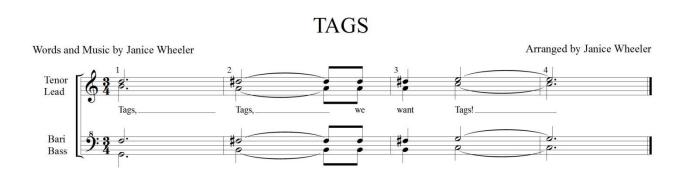
Are you "hearing" a tag of your own? Go ahead – write it down or record it – full mix and each of the 4 parts -- and enter it -- Your Barbershop Friends would love to sing it with you!



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Are you thinking about entering a tag in the <u>First Ever Region 13 Arrangers WorkShop at HCNW Tag Writing</u> **Contest?** Contest details are at <u>www.harmonycollege.org</u>. Here's a 4th set of Tips from Paul:

- (1) One of the most important factors in tag singing is to choose a tag that is written so it requires a reasonably short learning process and falls within a comfortable singing range for all parts -- so singers can be successful.
- (2) Success, of course, is always satisfying, so a tag that can be quickly learned and is fun to sing is always in demand! Here's an example of an easy-to-learn 4-measure tag and how it could be extended to 8 measures:



Write Down That Tag!

