

## FFWPU USA: Sunhwa Reiner's Original Song Project: Expressing God Through Music

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*Photos courtesy of Sunhwa Reiner*

"I felt this workshop experience was a 'co-creatorship,' which I think is truly the deepest expression of God's heart," said Sunhwa Reiner, FFWPU's national HJ Arts and Culture director, during a recent FFWPU USA leaders' meeting. Earlier this year, Reiner set out to bring a personal inspiration to life. In mid August, the "Original Song Project" emerged - her envisioned songwriting workshop for young adults within the Unificationist community and beyond.



The weeklong workshop, which ran from Aug. 14 through 21 at the Manhattan Family Church, served as a unique opportunity for participants from across the U.S. to grow personally and creatively through writing songs together. For eight of the 12 participants, this workshop was the first time they attempted songwriting.

"We had a whole range of people who came," said Reiner, "but the amazing thing was that we were all coming together under the same mission and shared understanding and goal to be able to write these songs and share that with each other."

Drawing on her own experiences as a songwriter, Reiner said it's a powerful and transformative art form

that she wanted to extend to more people. "This is why I initially conceived of the workshop," she said. "Our goal was to experience God through songwriting and share that with others - and also have everyone complete a song by the end of the workshop."



The participants, who were supported by crowdfunding from their local church communities, received professional guidance and songwriting education sessions from accomplished musicians, including HJ Youth Orchestra Director David Eaton; Pastor Joe Young; artists Yoshiha Tsuchida, Laurence Baer, and Joshua Cotter, as well as AudioLynx, a duo comprised of Manny Moyongo and Sean Garrison.

"It was a really vibrant and robust workshop, especially having so many talented people involved," said Reiner. Participants also got an exclusive tour of the Manhattan Center with Dr. Markus Karr, Hiroshi Suzuki, and Roy Clark, who shared about Hyo Jin Moon's vision and love for music, as well as the history of the city's renowned performance venue.

"The Manhattan Center was so generous, and we are so grateful for that," said Reiner. "We got to record with them, which was an incredible experience to be in an amazing professional studio working with the engineers there and recording our own original songs."



"One of the songs we recorded included all of the participants, which was a huge highlight for us," she said. "I'm a planner, but so much of this workshop I couldn't have planned. There were so many spontaneous, God-led activities and moments that happened because everybody was connected in this mission, so God was showing up in so many ways."

An impromptu songwriting session in Central Park and karaoke in Koreatown enhanced the group's dynamic as they drew inspiration from one another. "Our most favorite night together was probably our 'internal concert' contest, where everyone shared their song with each other, debuting it for the first time to see who would record at the Manhattan Center," said Reiner. "The participants said they felt the atmosphere shift, feeling the presence and support of God as they shared their songs together in a very vulnerable way."



"All the songs were so diverse, with such a range of things that our songwriters wrote about," she continued. "It was completely up to the participant to exercise their thoughts and feelings ... and it was amazing to see everyone's creativity and how their personality flows through in this art [form]."



The workshop concluded with a concert at 43rd Street showcasing all the songs from the participants. More than 80 people attended the performance in person while another hundred joined the livestream, which has amassed more than 530 views. "Everyone was helping with each other's songs - we were part of the arrangements and part of each band that performed," said Reiner. "I believe the concert that resulted was a reflection of God and our own unique aspects of Him within each of us. This was an incredible testament to not only the power of music, but creating art and these songs that came from our heart."

Reiner is eager to continue sharing songwriting with others and looks forward to the future possibilities of the Original Song Project. "I'm excited to see the ripple effects of this workshop," she said, "and I'm encouraging all the participants to share their song with their community and continue to write more songs. We know the power of art is important, but to tap into that and manifest it in our communities can perhaps empower us even more to build the harmonized culture we aim to create."

You can support future songwriting workshops [here](#), and watch the full Original Song Project concert [here](#). For more information, please contact Sunhwa Reiner at [music@unification.org](mailto:music@unification.org).



## Support the Original Song Project 2022



Sunhwa Reiner is organizing this fundraiser.

We are excited to announce the launch of the Original Song Project. It is a week-long immersion program targeting young adult Unificationist musicians ages 18-40 interested in songwriting, located in the heart of Manhattan. Our mission is to create an artistic, constructive, and supportive space for young adults, to inspire the writing and sharing of original songs. At the conclusion of the workshop, the goal is to have every participant compose at least one full original song, presented at an open concert for family and friends.

In order to make this workshop accessible to young adults and keep the costs down to a minimum, while creating a rich experience in New York City, we need to raise funds! Any support is greatly appreciated and will go directly towards creating an experience that empowers young songwriters, and the creation of songs.

We want to provide scholarships for those who need to travel to New York City or cannot cover the full workshop fee (\$550 per person for 1 week in New York City). Your donations will go towards financial help to those who are passionate about songwriting but need support.

Your donations will go to covering the costs of:

- participant scholarships
- lodging
- food
- travel expenses
- concert fees (staff, hall rental, A/V equipment)
- New York City experiences, such as music concerts and touring
- recording fees at Manhattan Center Studios
- core staff costs
- seminars with professional songwriters
- any additional funds will go to future workshops

Thank you SO much for your support of the arts. No matter how small your donation is, we are so grateful. All our donors and sponsors will be receiving:

- an invite to our original song concert
- a full report after the workshop is over
- samples and recordings of the original songs we create during this workshop

Thank you!

For any further questions, or to make a donation through check, Venmo, Paypal, or other means, please contact the team through GoFundMe or through our email, theoriginalsongproject AT gmail DOT com. You can also contact the program director Sunhwa Reiner directly.

### GoFundMe Giving Guarantee

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