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# Ranking America's 30 Greatest Living Songwriters

## Description

I was invited by The New York Times to create a ballot for their list of The 30 Greatest Living American Songwriters, published today. This list is significant because it showcases influential songwriters currently alive. The term "living" is important as many notable songwriters have passed away since the project began last year.

Sly Stone and Brian Wilson, both featured on my ballot, died shortly after I submitted my choices in June 2025. Other deceased songwriters include D'Angelo and Tom Lehrer, who appeared on different contributors' lists. These losses highlight the ever-changing nature of the music industry.

Some songwriters included personal connections on their ballots. For example, Aimee Mann mentioned her husband, while Jeff Tweedy listed himself as one of the best songwriters. This shows how personal taste shapes these lists.

Looking back, I realize I missed some of my favourite songwriters, like Gamble & Huff and Miranda Lambert. I now believe they deserve a place on any current list. When creating my ballot, I attempted to represent different styles and eras in music, but that is not always easy.

In conclusion, while I am happy with my list, I know I could improve it by including more contemporary songwriters and those with more varied styles.

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## Vocabulary List:

1. **ballot** //ˈbælət// (noun): a paper for choosing between people or options
2. **influential** //,ɪnfluˈɛnʃəl// (adjective): having a strong effect on other people or things
3. **deceased** //dɪˈsiːst// (adjective): no longer alive; someone who has died
4. **contributors** //kənˈtrɪbjətərz// (noun): people who give ideas, work, or writing
5. **contemporary** //kənˈtɛmpərəri// (adjective): modern or belonging to the present time
6. **represent** //,rɛprɪˈzɛnt// (verb): to show or stand for someone or something

## Comprehension Questions

### Multiple Choice



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1. Which publication invited the author to create a ballot?  
Option: The Washington Post  
Option: Rolling Stone  
Option: The New York Times  
Option: Billboard
  2. What is the significance of the list mentioned in the content?  
Option: It showcases deceased songwriters  
Option: It features influential songwriters currently alive  
Option: It highlights the best songs of all time  
Option: It profiles songs written by one artist
  3. Which songwriter died shortly after the author submitted their choices?  
Option: Aimee Mann  
Option: Sly Stone  
Option: Miranda Lambert  
Option: Jeff Tweedy
  4. Who is mentioned as having a personal connection on their ballot?  
Option: Brian Wilson  
Option: Aimee Mann  
Option: D'Angelo  
Option: Tom Lehrer
  5. What notable mistake does the author reflect on regarding their ballot?  
Option: Including too many songwriters  
Option: Missing some favorite songwriters  
Option: Not following the theme  
Option: Submitting the ballot late
  6. What aspect of songwriters did the author attempt to represent?  
Option: Only contemporary styles  
Option: Different styles and eras in music  
Option: Only popular songwriters  
Option: Only deceased songwriters

**True-False**



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7. The list features songwriters who have passed away.
  8. Jeff Tweedy included himself on his ballot.
  9. The author believes they could improve their ballot.
  10. D'Angelo is featured on the author's list of songwriters.
  11. The author submitted their choices in June 2025.
  12. Aimee Mann mentioned her sister on her ballot.

### Gap-Fill

13. The list of The 30 Greatest Living American Songwriters was published by \_\_\_\_\_ today.
14. Sly Stone and Brian Wilson died shortly after the author submitted their \_\_\_\_\_ in June 2025.
15. Some songwriters included \_\_\_\_\_ connections on their ballots.
16. The author reflects on the need to include more \_\_\_\_\_ songwriters.
17. Notable losses in the songwriting community highlight the ever-changing nature of the \_\_\_\_\_ industry.
18. The author aimed to represent different styles and \_\_\_\_\_ in music.

### Answer

**Multiple Choice:** 1. The New York Times 2. It features influential songwriters currently alive 3. Sly Stone 4. Aimee Mann 5. Missing some favorite songwriters 6. Different styles and eras in music  
**True-False:** 7. False 8. True 9. True 10. False 11. True 12. False  
**Gap-Fill:** 13. The New York Times 14. choices 15. personal 16. contemporary 17. music 18. eras



## Answer

### CATEGORY

1. Entertainment - LEVEL3

### POST TAG

1. B1
2. ESL learning
3. esl news
4. greatest living songwriters
5. Level 3
6. my ballot
7. The New York Times

### Tags

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