# Self-taught songwriter lands two songs in UK Songwriting Contest final and wins 'Best Song' at Cannes

**Tuesday 3 March, 2026**

**Self-taught songwriter and AI leader Matthew Blakemore has landed two songs in the final of the UK Songwriting Contest — one of the world's longest-running international songwriting competitions — and won Best Song at the Cannes World Film Festival, all in the same year.**

Blakemore's tracks *Paper Cuts* (Adult Contemporary) and *Absence of Care* (Singer-Songwriter) both reached the final of the 2025 UK Songwriting Contest (UKSC), now in its 24th year with entries from almost 100 countries. Finalists represent the top 1–2% of all entries. Two songs in the final from the same writer is a rare achievement. A third song, *Why Say Sorry?*, won the Best Song award at the Cannes World Film Festival.

Three songs. Three competitions. Two finals and a win.

Blakemore is entirely self-taught as a songwriter — he has never had a songwriting or music lesson outside of school, and has perfected his craft entirely on his own since the age of 16. He started writing songs as a teenager at John Henry Newman School in Stevenage, where music teacher Mr Wright selected one of his early compositions to be performed by the school choir. He went on to write songs for the charity Teens Unite Fighting Cancer and has received UKSC recognition across multiple years.

"When I was developing my craft, people used to laugh," says Blakemore. "They aren't laughing now."

By day, Blakemore is one of the UK's most prominent AI professionals. He is CEO of AI Caramba!, named AI Solutions Provider of the Year 2025, and serves as European Regional Director at Monarrch, known as 'The AI Royalty Company'. He was named in the Top 100 Influential People in AI (2025), awarded Forty Under 40 UK (2024), and is one of only four global Sub-Editors for ISO/IEC 8183, an international AI standard affecting 165+ countries.

Yet he never uses AI to write his lyrics. Not a single word.

"Every lyric comes from lived experience — the heartbreak, the joy, the frustration. That has to be human," says Blakemore. "What AI can do is help me realise the sound I hear in my head. I use it as a production tool to shape the music around my words, exactly as I envision it. That's empowerment, not replacement."

Blakemore uses AI music tools to iteratively shape and edit productions until they match his precise creative vision — a process far removed from the common misconception of simply typing a prompt and accepting whatever comes out.

His role at Monarrch places him at the centre of one of the biggest debates in the music industry right now: whether AI companies should compensate creators whose work is used to train AI models. Monarrch is developing a patent-pending AI Royalty Operating System (AIR-OS), designed to ensure fair remuneration for creators.

"I'm on the side of the creators," says Blakemore. "Not by blocking AI, but by making sure the people whose creativity feeds these models get their fair share."

This advocacy sits alongside his contributions to the EU AI Office's General-Purpose AI Code of Practice and his standards work through ISO/IEC and BSI, where he helps shape the governance frameworks that will determine how AI interacts with creative industries globally.

## CONTACT

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UK Songwriting Contest :: Cannes World Film Festival :: Songwriter :: Hitchin :: Hertfordshire :: London :: AI :: New Music :: Independent Artist :: Entertainment ::

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## TRACKS

- **Paper Cuts** (UKSC finalist — Adult Contemporary)
  https://open.spotify.com/track/0pg5WGtJQ5EExSzxnfCFgY
- **Absence of Care** (UKSC finalist — Singer-Songwriter)
  https://open.spotify.com/track/1qkOnqgklzAU7Wm2Op7N3g
- **Why Say Sorry?** (Best Song — Cannes World Film Festival)
  https://open.spotify.com/track/70K0S6PCbSlAEWKQhnSTwe

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