

# CUSTOMSFORGE'S

## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Issue #15

### ABOUT US

CustomsForge is a website created in 2014 by the Rocksmith community to make their own songs, communicate more easily and enjoy the game all together

Currently we are approaching more than 40,000 charts made by the community, and have more than 300,000 members.

We welcome thousands more each month

### WELCOME

Welcome to CustomsForge's monthly newsletter, where you can find the latest news about CF and Rocksmith 2014 Remastered.

### Stand up!

***The world is on fire.*** Passenger planes downed in Iran, violent repression in India against students, Hong Kong is at siege, half of the USA wants its president out, Extinction Rebellion has been cataloged as an extremist group for causing civil unrest and Australia is the closest thing to hell available right now. 2020 is coming hot and it's time we stand up for what we believe.

### Protests songs

N.W.A. – Fuck Tha Police

T.S.O.L – Silent Majority

Rage Against the Machine – Killing In The Name Of

Creedence Clearwater Revival – Fortunate Son

Pantera – Revolution Is My Name

Sex Pistols – God Save The Queen

Alice In Chains – Rooster

Green Day – American Day

Molotov – Frijolero

Dead Kennedys – Holiday In Cambodia

Marvin Gaye – What's Going On

Gil Scott-Heron – The Revolution Will Not Be Televised

U2 – Sunday Bloody Sunday

Lars Frederiksen and the Bastards – Vietnam

Rise Against – Hero Of War

The Cranberries – Zombie

John Lenon – Imagine

Manic Street Preachers – If You Tolerate This Your Children Will Be Next

Bruce Springsteen – Born In The U.S.A.

Frankie Goes To Hollywood – Two Tribes

Pixies – Monkey Goes To Heaven

The Clash – Rock The Casbah

Midnight Oil – Beds Are Burning



Rocksmith 2014 Remastered logo



Hong Kong police shooting at point-blank range a protester

**“Songs from this point of view try to attack people’s political inclinations or attract them to their cause”**

## May you be *heard*

**As long as there have been people in power, there have been people under that power. Since there has been expression, there has been repression. 2019 ended with rage in multiple parts of the world and we cannot ignore those screams as we continue into 2020. If you ever see injustice, say it out loud. And may your voice be heard.**

### What’s a protest song?

The name is quite self-explanatory, but for the sake of consistency, we are going to say it’s **a song that is associated with a movement for social change. It defies the status-quo** and it cannot support the actual social order. Genres may vary as well as themes. Some of the most important movements in the last couple of centuries are The abolition movement, women’s suffrage, the labor movement, the human rights movement, civil rights, the anti-war movement and 1960s counterculture, the feminist movement, the sexual revolution, the gay rights movement, animal rights movement, vegetarianism and veganism, gun control, and environmentalism. As different as they all are, we can see a defining characteristic in all of them. **Their members fight against what they considered to be injustices.**

### Footnote: The status-quo

Since there seems to be some confusion about what is exactly the status-quo and how songs can be or not against it, let’s explain it with an example. **Let’s suppose a strong popular movement wants to overtake the government and Sara makes a song**

**against them** since she likes the State as it already is. One could reason that she is against the actual status-quo since the rebels are the strongest social movement in that particular time. The problem with this argument is that **the status quo hasn’t changed yet.** The protesters want to overtake the government but they are still working on it. The assignment of powers hasn’t changed and as such, even if it does so precariously, the status-quo remains the same as before and **the song remains a propagandistic song.** And now that we got that out of the way, let the history lesson begin.

### *When Adam delved and Eve span, who was then the gentleman?*

Language has allowed us to express our concerns since we developed it 50000 thousand years ago. So it would be reasonable to think that these songs have been around since the dark ages or even before. In fact, **we can look to the Bible for the first outrage.** Psalm 137 is interesting since it is itself a declaration of political grievances (even if it’s from a post-factum standpoint) and it specifically addresses the difficulty of singing songs of praise when one would more so be driven to sing songs of protest in such trying times. **But this is not the most credible example** out there since most religious works of this type are of unknown authorship or are pseudepigraphical attributed, and their era of authorship can be given collectively as no better than belonging to a range of several centuries, in this case, is the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> BCE. So let’s jump some time ahead and visit old Britain. **Ballads** celebrating social bandits like Robin Hood, **from the 14th century onwards, maybe expressions for social justice, but** social criticism is implied and **there is no overt questioning of the status quo.** English folk singer A. L. Lloyd claimed, “The Cutty Wren” is a coded anthem against feudal oppression and dates back to the English peasants’ revolt of 1381. There is no evidence to this assumption aside from using one rhyme created in this

**Revolution in the XXI century**

Telephones! The industrial revolution! Cars! Vaccines! Internet! Electricity! The hydrogen bomb! Mass surveillance! The gradual destruction of privacy in favor of tense security! **The future is here and not everyone is happy about it!** Let's go ahead and make **a compilation of the latest revolutionary groups/songs in the last two centuries.** We can't possibly cover them all in just one article, so don't think we have forgotten about the rest! After all, the revolution will not be televised.

**Rage Against the Machine:** It is a group of rap-metal founded in 1991 by Tom Morello and Zack de la Rocha. The group became popular for their leftist ideology and their acts against US politics, like flash-mobbing Wall Street into closing for a day.

**Algerian raï protest music:** "opinion" (رأي) in Arabic is a form of folk music, originated in Oran mixed with Spanish, French, African and Arabic musical forms. It dates back to the 1920s and has been primarily evolved by the women referred to as cheikhas, who performed in cafes, bars or bordellos, often for men. It is considered a rejection of the traditional Algerian music of the time.

**Independence movements:** The Irish movement inspired bands such as *Black 47* and the Basque Country in Spain has had some songwriters like Mikel Laboa who brought the wish for liberty to the general masses in a much more melodic way.

**Bibliography:**

Rage Against the Machine Official Website

Inside Arabia: *Raï Music: A Powerful Tool of Social Protest in North Africa*

Universidad del País Vasco: *Mikel Laboa*

Black 47 Official Website

A. L. Lloyd: *Folk Songs in England*

John A. Lomax and Alan Lomax: *Negro Folk Songs as Sung by Lead Belly*

The New York Times: *The Ode Heard Round the World*

R. Serge Denisoff: *A Sociological Analysis of Urban Propaganda Songs*

Ron Eyerman and Andrew Jamison: *Music and Social Movements: Mobilizing Tradition in the Twentieth Century*

Bible Gateway: *Psalm 137*

Walter Scott: *Robin Hood*

**Four centuries later** and protest songs are more common, even if they are not sung as much. For example, **we can find the feminist song "Rights of Woman"**, sung to the tune of "God Save the King", written anonymously by "A Lady" and published in the Philadelphia Minerva, October 17, 1795.

**Attract or attack?**

There are many types of protest songs, but professor **R. Serge Denisoff** narrowed them down into **two types** based on their function and text, as they are a form of persuasion or propaganda. **Magnetic songs** attempt to promote a feeling of group solidarity and attract people to the movement. While **Rhetorical songs** aim to challenge the opinions of the public and/or express indignation. Thus, **songs from this point of view try to attack people's political inclinations or attract them to their cause.** There are some problems with **this approach** as it is reductionist and **ignores other aspects such as the importance of tunes**, which may be limited in Western music but are much wider and integral to these songs in other cultures. **Ron Eyerman and Andrew Jamison** point this out perfectly in *Music and Social Movements: Mobilizing Tradition in the Twentieth Century* and appropriately point out that **protest song serves to maintain existing movements** even if they do not have a presence regarding organizations or protesters **and create them as well.**

**Unexpected hymns**

Due to the nature of the songs, **they are inherently circumstantial.** For example, "Goodnight Irene" is a love song at face value but, since it was written by Lead Belly, a black convict and a social outcast were given an aura of "protest song" in its time. A similar thing happened with Beethoven's Ode to Joy, which challenged the status-quo back then by suggesting that all men are brothers and such we should love each other instead of focusing on hate. It is not a protest song by today's standards in many societies as its idea is accepted and considered normal.

## MAGFEST 2020

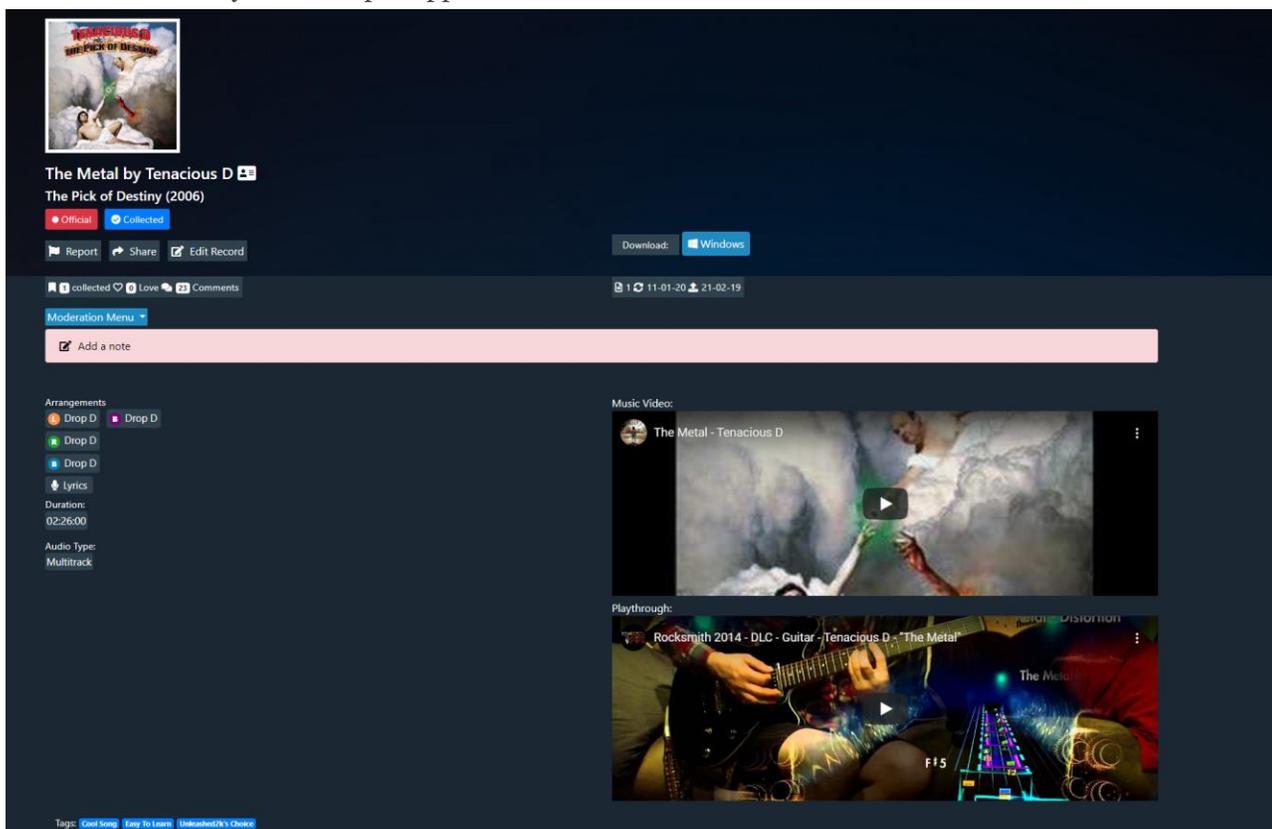
This year's MAGFest was a blast! With our new setup, we were able to use tuning pedals to quickly change songs without any issues! No strings were broken this year.



Unleashed2k & Toymachinesh closing the booth out with Tool.

## Ignition4 Update

We've added a new developer xxdalex and have been hard at work refactoring code and improving Ignition4. The main thing holding us up is creating our new notification system and comments system. After these features are done we can begin alpha testing with selected community members & Patreon members. If you want guaranteed alpha testing sign up to our Patreon and you will be pre-approved.



Preview of our new record page. If you'd like to see more screenshots please sign up on our Patreon!

<http://patreon.com/customsforge>



CustomForge's profile picture in all social media accounts.

### Meet us in:

Twitter: @CustomsForge  
Facebook: CustomsForge  
Reddit: r/CustomsForge  
Patreon: CustomsForge  
Discord: <http://discord.gg/CF>

### Merch:

<http://bit.ly/MerchCF>



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***Charter's tip of the month:*** "The better the Guitar Pro file is, the easier the synchronization with EOF will [be]" –  
***Kayadra***

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***Want even better sync?*** Purchase GO PlayAlong!

[Save 10% by using CustomsForge10OFF](#)

### Website Updates

If you see a dead link, make sure to report it! Please remember that the website depends on donations so donate once, in a while, any amount helps!

### Moderators & Server Admin

We are looking for some moderators and a server admin, if you are suited for these positions then follow the link at the bottom of the page.

### CustomsForge Song Manager (<http://cfmanager.com>)

Did you know, CustomsForgeSongManager is a tool to (amongst many, many other things) repair older CDLC files and add Dynamic Difficulty to CDLC that may still be missing it?

### Patreons

An extra special shoutout to all of those who support us with a couple of bucks every month. You may not realize it but your kindness helps us more than you can imagine.

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*Thank you for reading CustomsForge's monthly newsletter. Keep on rockin'!*

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**WANT TO JOIN? APPLY TODAY:** <http://bit.ly/applytoCF>