



PEACE AND JUSTICE

Last updated: May 2023

Songs about Peace

People have the power

Some songs are used repeatedly in campaigns for peace and justice. One example is People have the power composed by Patti Smith in 1988.

- <https://youtu.be/pPR-HyGj2d0>

- <https://www.chords-and-tabs.net/song/name/patti-smith-people-have-the-power-2>

People Have The Power
Words & music by Patti Smith and Fred Smith
Arr by Rob Bullen

$\text{♩} = 123$

Harm
D G D G D G D G

Main
I was
Ooh Ooh

9
D G D G
dream-ing in my dream-ing Of an as-pect bright and fair And my
Ooh Ooh

13
D G D G
sleep-ing it was brok-en But my dream it lin-gered near In the
Ooh Ooh

17
D G D G
form of shin-ing vall-eyes where the pure air rar-ef - ied And my
Ooh Ooh

21
D G D G
sena-es new-ly op-ened I a - wak-ened to the cry That the
Ooh Ooh

In 2019, there was a performance at the US/Mexico border by a group called Choir! Choir! Choir!

Here is a video of their first collaboration with Patti Smith:

https://youtu.be/y6Wz3i_BYUc

In 2022, the interval performance of the. Second semi-final of Eurovision 2022 featured the song Fragile by Sting followed by People have the power as a mark of solidarity with the people of Ukraine:

<https://youtu.be/zONIA6ZYFus>

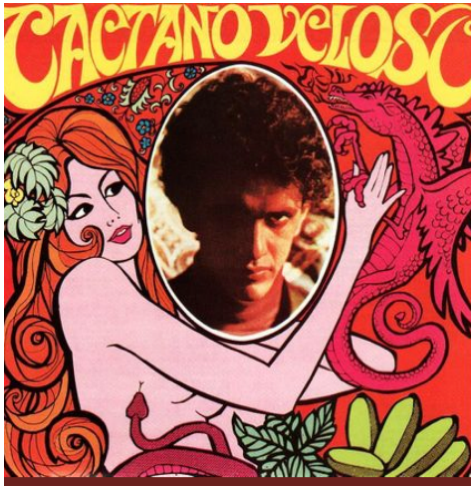
Suggested Activity:

- *Compare these performances using worksheet 3*
- *Discuss why this song was used in these contexts*
- *Consider if these lyrics could apply to any other campaign for peace*

Brazil

‘Alegria, Alegria’ (Joy, Joy) was released in 1967 by Caetano Veloso. The song was part of a genre that combined the political spirit of traditional Brazilian folk music with the experimentation of rock music at the time. Tensions rose as the government saw this as a threat to tradition. Veloso was arrested and exiled to the UK. This song recorded in Portuguese with its message of joyful persistence is still popular in Brazil today. [The 1967 recording](#) includes English subtitles Veloso performing the song in 2011;

<https://youtu.be/WL8l8olaMmI>



- *The album cover compare with two other album covers also from 1967 shows the extent of cultural mixing*

Suggested Activity:

- *Analyse Alegria, Alegria using worksheet 1*
- *Compare Veloso's 2 performances using worksheet 3*
- *Investigate human rights in Brazil today*
- *Below is the opening melody line, learn the tune and add your own lyrics showing solidarity with the Brazilian community in Ireland today using the same chorus 'I go!'.*

'Alegria, Alegria' (Joy, Joy)



I

go!

Estonia:

The Singing Revolution in Estonia occurred between 1987 and 1991, when hundreds of thousands of Estonians gathered publicly to sing forbidden patriotic songs and share protest speeches, risking their lives to proclaim their desire for independence. While violence and bloodshed was the unfortunate end result in other occupied nations of the USSR, the revolutionary songs of the Estonians anchored their struggle for freedom, which was ultimately accomplished without the loss of a single life.

Estonians have historically used music as a political weapon. It is said that song was used in protest of the German invaders of the 13th century, and also in resistance to the Russian occupation under Peter the Great in the 18th century.

In the 19th century Estonians started a song festival called Laulupidu, where choirs from around the country came together to sing for days with up to 30,000 people singing on the same stage at the same time. This festival was as much about the expression of the desire for self-determination and independence as about singing. At Laulupidu 2014, there was a performance of a song called 'Koit' (Dawn) by an Estonian composer Tonis Magi.

There is a film called 'The Singing Revolution' which tells this story. [Watch the trailer here](#). There are many violent images but it shows how culture held this people together and Estonia achieved 'freedom through singing'

Dawn

It's time to hold our head up high again
and cast away our robes of slavery
so that everything created in a creative spirit
could be born again.

It's dawn, a royal (magnificent) blaze
light's victory wakes the earth.
The horizon is free, the first ray
is falling to the ground.

A cry - we will break everything
so that we could breathe freely (as free men) again.
Look - the ice is broken
let us hold hands, combine our spirits.

With collective advice,
collective strength, we can achieve everything.
In front of us is the only road, a road to freedom
there can be no other.

Power, the power of light
the tribe of freedom, let's go together
on our lips are cries of joy
Look - the giant has freed his hand from the cliff

Belief will lead us forward, a heavenly ray
is walking with us
Like so - victory is just one step away
a short step, step

Land, motherland, this land is holy,
this land that will now be free
Song, our song of victory, will resound.
Soon you will see a free Estonia!!

Suggested Activity:

- *Read the translation of lyrics of 'Dawn' and imagine you were setting these words to music. Consider what the performance will be like under the headings - MOOD. VOLUME. SPEED. STAGING*
- *Now watch the performance at: <https://youtu.be/BTS4JvKXvMI> Review the performance and compare to your own ideas for these words*
- Here is a performance of Koit sung by the composer from 2008 - <https://youtu.be/8Zqeug7NGIc> Listen and compare to the performance at Laulupidu using worksheet 3

Arab Spring

Protests for peace and justice across the Arab world in 2011 were spurred on by music and particularly by the speed at which the music was shared via

social media. In Egypt the raps of the hip hop scene played a direct role in the popular uprising with lyrics in both Arabic and English e.g. [Rebel Arabian Knightz \(featuring Lauryn Hill\)](#)

Hong Kong

In the Umbrella protests in 2019 around a million people marched in a protest to call for universal suffrage. Their first campaign song was called '[Boundless Oceans, vast skies](#)' by the Cantonese pop group Beyond. Later they adapted the song [Do you hear the people sing](#) from the musical Les Miserables which was shared widely via an online video clip, and chord chart. It was sung at a rally calling on G20 members to raise concerns about Hong Kong on June 26, 2019. where it was sung in both English and Cantonese:

*Do you hear the people sing?
Singing a song of angry men?
It is the music of a people
Who will not be slaves again!
When the beating of your heart
Echoes the beating of the drums
There is a life about to start
When tomorrow comes!*

Suggested Activity:

- *Analyse any one of the songs above using worksheet 1*
- *Compare this version of 'Do you hear the people sing?' do any other version you may know*
- *Using a google search find some peace and anti-war music from a genre or region of the world in which you have an interest.*