Amplify the protest.

Occupation explores the potent vocal expression of public protest – music and song. Five different composers will compose new songs in response to crisis, protest, acts of resistance – as they happen. Read more.

From artist interviews to Jos Suli Charlie and protest playlists, re-visit our Occupation blogs - http://t.co/wStuiHwNhW

Are we no longer open minded? #Songb by @DWJmusic - http://t.co/3gpmUHUsB #Protest #ProtestSong

A protest in St David's to save a school is the perfect example of Welsh community power & what Occupation's about. - http://t.co/yzpb3JmoK

Latest Blog

The Occupation Journey

GIVE US YOUR PROTEST

Amplify the protest and contribute to the making of #Songb. Find out how you can submit your ideas to the protest composer Dan-Wyn James.
Amplify the protest.

Song One | Available to download now | Download the lyrics

The theme of my song, Grains of Dust, concentrates on the brutal patterns of human-to-human violation in the US, which takes a dangerous tone for the collapse of a nation built on the premise of unity and justice for all.

I got involved with the Occupation project because I think it’s a powerful channel of modern communication, delivered in an artist’s package, for people all around the world to feel a sense of empowerment, that their vocal objections to the global injustices of our times will make a difference.

Carleen Anderson

Download Song One | Grains of Dust | Download the lyrics | Listen to Carleen Anderson's intro

Grains of Dust

Last week saw the recording and filming of our first original protest song for the Occupation project.

Wed 13th Nov 2013

An interview with Occupation Creative Director, Tim Hopkins

We caught up with Tim to see him for his thoughts on Occupation, and his personal experience with protest.

The 8th Oct 2013

Carleen Anderson on her songwriting process

Songs come to me all at once: melody, lyrics, chords, and vocal harmonies flow simultaneously.

Tue 15th Oct 2013

Social Media and Protest

Social media has played an integral role in the recent wave of mobilizations in the Arab world and in protests across Western countries, such as the Occupy movement in 2011.

In conclusion, the use of social media in Occupations has been described as a \"game changer\" for the movement, allowing protesters to connect and share information, organize events, and spread awareness.

Furthermore, the use of social media has enabled a cross-cultural exchange of ideas and strategies, allowing protesters to learn from each other’s experiences.

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Cerys Matthews

Song Three | Available to download now

Cerys Matthews is a singer, songwriter, author and broadcaster. She won Gold at last year’s Sony Radio Academy Awards for her popular BBC Radio 2 show, which she programmes and hosts. She has also recently started a weekly BBC Radio 2 show. She is the One Show’s cultural reporter and writer and presents radio and television documentaries on subjects as diverse as Cuba, early classical composers, urban fishing and early female blues players. A collection of songs for over 30 years, Cerys is a columnist for the world music magazine Songlines, and her single ‘Long, High and Strong’ published last year by Pergamon, quickly became a Sunday Times bestseller.

In the author of memoirs stories “See From the Deep” and soon to be published “Dear, A Man’s Best Friend.”

Cerys has curated for the theatre and the Tate Modern and was artistic director for the opening ceremony of the World Music Expo 2013. Awarded an inaugural Sir David Award for her services to culture this year from the First Minister of Wales, she was honoured with an MBE in July.

Also in 2014, Cerys wrote and presented a six part television series looking into the history of vernacular Welsh songs in her native Wales. She is currently working on an album of music and poetry by Dylan Thomas, as well as an Archive Hour programme for BBC Radio 4, looking into her uncles, Geoff Edwards’s role in amassing a huge archive on this great lyrical poet. She also wrote and presented a BBC4 documentary on The Madrigal.

Cerys has created a brand new cultural festival, The Good Life Experience, which successfully launched in Hawarden, Flintshire on September 20. She is a judge for the Dylan Thomas Prize for young writers, and a judge for the Forward Prizes for poetry.

Her self-produced album of traditional Welsh songs, TL, is the biggest selling Welsh language album of the past ten years; the second volume, ‘AufFôn’, followed last year.

Cerys was the founding member of multi million-selling band Catatonia and duets with Sir Tom Jones on the single, Baby it’s Cold Outside.

She is Vice President of the homeschooled charity, Brofessor; Vice President of the Hay Festival, Festival of Literature and the Arts, is patron of the Dylan Thomas Society and Rules Cymru, and is Arts Ambassador for the London Judejude Festival – a separate school for sensory impairments.

Cerys lives in West London with her husband and children.

Download Song Three - I Can't Breathe

Listen to Song Three | Cerys Matthews

Blog posts

The history behind ‘Nobody Knows’

African American folk music is a long history of the turbulent events that happened throughout slavery and its abolition. This music, known as spiritual music, was created unaccompanied and in secret - singing and playing drums was not allowed.

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Shake the world. Your way.
Occupation - Five songs that shook the world

The democratisation of communication technology has fuelled rebellion and public protest like no other breakthrough since the mass-production printing press. It's increasingly impossible for a state to blinker its people. And a kickback against a regime can go viral to seismic in moments. Are ignorance, repression and censorship now on the run?

Technology has altered our social and political world. But change takes more than a digital medium and access to knowledge. It needs a powerful voice too.

Occupation explores arguably the most potent vocal expression of public protest - music and song - through social media. Five composers, from diverse musical genres, will compose original works in parallel to acts of protest and cries across the world. Protest songs take many forms. Some quietly enlighten and others call for immediate and audible action. Each piece, will be shared across social media channels. They will be observed on how they engage, inspire and enlighten communities - online and offline.

Be part of it. See and share the songs and be integral to their journeys. You might spark a change, even shake the world. Who knows what will happen next?

Occupation - five songs that shook the world.

Song 1 | Carleen Anderson | Available to download now

Song 2 | Judith Weir | Available to download now

Song 3 | Cerys Matthews | Available to download now

Song 4 | High Contrast | Available to download now

Song 5 | Dan Wyll Jones | Release date 23 Jan 15

Co-commissioned by The Space and Welsh National Opera.

Artistic partners include Film Cymru Wales, BFI Network and The University of Sussex.
Je Suis Charlie - Freedom of speech

With the events in Paris last week, the Internet has been awash with articles and blog posts about what freedom of speech really means.

When the last song is released on 23 February, Occupation - Five songs will have a shared history. In that sense, it's been a lifetime of listening to music and coming to terms with current events. The editors of the project have delivered many moments where people have stood for their rights. Cynically, the project has been fortunate to be able to present a variety of honest human responses to the current events of our modern age, and tried to offer space where audiences can tell us what they feel and think in response.

Whether you feel that you are Charlie Hebdo or perhaps have misgivings about the space that the magazine inhabited, the truth remains that you are allowed to express your opinion on either stance, without the fear of censorship. It can't be denied that Charlie Hebdo had the strength of conviction to fear self-censorship and division head on, and those behind it put their lives on the line to offer an alternative way of dealing with repression. As H.L. Mencken said in the first half of the 20th century

'I believe in the complete freedom of thought and speech - alike for the humblest man and the mightiest, and in the utmost freedom of conduct that is consistent with living in organized society. I believe in the capacity of man to conquer his world, and to find out what it is made of, and how it is to be used. I believe in the reality of progress. I believe that it is better to tell the truth than to lie. I believe that it is better to be free than to be a slave. And I believe that it is better to know than to be ignorant.'

With our final protest song we are bringing this power directly to the people by asking for your opinions on the political and personal events that influence your world. Join the ranks of people who have stood up for the unrepresented and send us your thoughts and opinions. Song 5 is an ambitious expression of the collective imagination - an attempt at making your dreams and wishes heard above the noise of news reports and the constant stream of information that we are subjected to on a daily basis. More than ever, in this time of difficulty, when we are all trying to come to terms with our fear and horror at the recent events, our final protest song aims to be a unifying force for good. Get involved here.

Emma Hammond

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Be the first to comment.
OCCUPATION

Five songs that shook the world

Song 4: I Can't Breathe by Gorgy Matthews

Gorgy Matthews

I Can't Breathe

My heart is on fire. My soul is on fire. I Can't Breathe. I Can't Breathe.

Song 3: The Sleeping Man Bailed by Judith Wes

The Sleeping Man Bailed

Yes, we're here to tell the story. Yes, we're here to tell the story. Yes, we're here to tell the story. Yes, we're here to tell the story.

Song 2: It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year by Celine Dion

It's the Most Wonderful Time of the Year

Yes, we're here to tell the story. Yes, we're here to tell the story. Yes, we're here to tell the story. Yes, we're here to tell the story.

Song 1: I'm Not Afraid of You by Demi Lovato

I'm Not Afraid of You

Yes, we're here to tell the story. Yes, we're here to tell the story. Yes, we're here to tell the story. Yes, we're here to tell the story.