

Soccer Chants: Origins and Connections (Draft)

I. Intro

From the earliest days of organized soccer, fans have supported their clubs by singing songs during matches. These soccer chants are often based on existing melodies with lyrics changed to pertain to the home club, rival, or events during the game. Over time these chants have been borrowed and modified from club to club. Some are based on traditional songs (the Welsh hymn “Cwm Rhondda” is the basis for numerous popular chants, such as “You’re not singing anymore,” “We can see you sneaking out,” and “I will never be a Blue”), while others are based on more recent popular music (Depeche Mode’s “Just Can’t Get Enough” has been adapted by fans of Celtic, Burnley, Sydney, and the Chicago Fire, among others).

This exhibit explores the origins, evolution, and connections between soccer chants across the globe. The central organizing principle for each Collection is melody. All chants with the same melody are grouped with their origin song, allowing users to easily compare and trace variations. In addition, maps enable users to discover chants and visualize the variations geographically. As chants have their origins in fan culture, the exhibit goes to the source with a feature that invites fans to contribute additional chants.

II. Site Breakdown

A. Theme - Custom Chants theme, based on Minimalist.

B. Plugins - Exhibit Builder, Neatline, Contributor, Commenting, Musipedia (in development).

C. Major Sections and Pages

1. Homepage

a) Featured collection - Twice a month, site administrators select a particularly robust Collection to feature on the homepage. The Collection Title, introductory paragraph, and one accompanying image appear on the homepage, with links to the full record. These featured collections can serve as an entry point to the exhibit for new or casual users, while also acting as good examples for contributors to follow when creating new records.

b) Browse on map - Using the Neatline plugin, the homepage includes a browsable map showing all chants in the exhibit.

Clicking on the map opens a larger version where users can filter the results by Collection, Club, or Location.

- c) Search - Every page in the exhibit has a simple keyword search box at the top right of the screen. Under this box is a link to the advanced search screen for those who wish to create more detailed searches. In addition to searching metadata fields, the advanced search also contains the Search by Melody feature, which uses the Musipedia plugin.
 - d) Navigation Tabs: Across the top of all pages on the site are navigation tabs. Clicking on these take users to the different sections of the exhibit: Chants, Collections, Add Your Own Chant, and About.
2. Chants - Each chant in the collection has its own database record. The record consists of an audio file, map, optional image, descriptive metadata, and a section for comments. The metadata fields are: Title, Date, Club, Location, Origin Song, Lyrics, Description, Audio File Type, Date of Recording, and Contributor. Clicking on the name of the origin song takes users to the record for the origin song's Collection. The map shows the chant and its origin song, both of which link to their accompanying records. Through the Commenting plugin, users may add their own perspectives on a particular chant.
 3. Collections - Collections are organized based on origin song, as identified by shared melody. Each Collection has a page containing the song's title, an audio file, a description field, list of variations, and a map. The description contains a brief history of the song's origin, composer, and key dates. Variations link out to the individual Chant records. The map shows all Chants in that Collection, offering users another way to explore a Collection's records.
 4. Add Your Own Chant - Fans can contribute additional chants to the exhibit with this feature, using the Contributor plugin. As chants are numerous and ever-changing throughout the world of soccer, this feature enables the exhibit to keep current with new developments. Since the Collections are arranged by origin song melody, the Musipedia plugin will be especially helpful in the Add Your Own component of the exhibit. Fans can easily identify which Collection their chant should belong to by searching the existing database for a matching melody.

5. About - The About page contains information on the goals, development, and creators of the exhibit.