

Chord Charts for Selected Songs by David Rovics

These are a collection of chord charts, just the minimum needed to know the chords for a song (one verse and one chorus, or thereabouts). These are not in the actual keys I'm singing in, because I'm usually using a capo. These are just the chords I'm fingering (usually in some kind of open tuning, also not reflected in these simple charts).

There's sheet music available for about 200 of my songs. If I've made sheet music for a song then there will be a "sheet music" link after the lyrics for each song, which can be found in the Songbook section of my website, at davidrovics.com/songbook. The songs in here are generally more recent ones that I haven't done anything more elaborate for yet.

Busking in the Metaverse

D

The hospitals are full to overflowing

G

Every hallway lined with hospital beds

D

No one seems to know quite where we're going

A

Cemeteries overloaded with the dead

G

D

A

But my wifi is still working, I guess things could be worse

G

A

D

I'll be busking in the metaverse

Cheese and Bread

D

A

D

G

The gentry pulled the wire, told their men to open fire

A

And restore the rule of their estate

D

A

D

G

But as the night descended and the battle ended

A

D

The soldiers had all fled behind a gate

D

A

G

They chanted "cheese and bread"

A

Bm

And "our children must be fed"

D

A

In the days when Wales rose against the crown

D

A

G

They chanted "cheese and bread"

A

Bm

With a bloody loaf above their heads

G

Em

D

When the red flag flew in Merthyr Town

Commandante Fidel Alejandro Castro Ruz

D G
When we look at history and how it's all unwound
D G
There are few people on the planet that have been more tightly bound
D G
With the liberation of our troubled human race
D G
Than the man from Santiago with the beard upon his face
Em G
Dressed in green fatigues that he wore most of his years
D A
As he led his country longer than any of his peers
Em G
And few men have been vilified more often in the news
D A G
Than Commandante Fidel Alejandro Castro Ruz

Do Not Kill Your Landlord

D G
If your rent has doubled there are different ways
D A
To cope with the situation and make it through your days
D G
There are therapeutic methods, such as playing darts
D A
With a picture of your landlord's private body parts
G D
You can get a roommate, or 2 or 3 or 4
A D
Build a loft and squeeze more beds onto every floor
G D
You can scratch up each Mercedes that you find on your street
A D
Say "fuck off yuppie scum" to each yuppie scum you meet
D G
But do not kill your landlord - it will not end well
A D
You'll be living rent-free - inside a prison cell

East Kilbride

D G
Jet fighters bombed the palace, we all watched it on TV
A G D
The 11th of September, 1973
D G
All across the world people cried in vain
A G D
As we heard stories of the students being tortured and slain
A G D
Stories of the workers, shop stewards and the rest
A G D
Being slaughtered at the new dictator's behest
D G
Labor groups condemned it, said we were on the workers' side
A G D
Including all the engineers of East Kilbride

East Tennessee

Dm
I grew up on this mountain
A
It's in my very soul
So when the company moved next door
Dm
Started digging for the coal
Tearing up the mountain
A
With drillers and draglines
I knew then what needed
To happen to those mines
Dm
10, 9, 8
A
Sometimes that's just how it goes
3, 2, 1
Dm
Get out before it blows

Elijah Played the Violin

D G
His family moved from Denver to Aurora
D A
Mama thought they'd be safer out there
D G
Away from all the hubbub of the city
D A
Closer to the mountains and fresh air
G D
Some kids are into fancy cars and football
G A
Or getting lots of tattoos on their shin
G A D
But Elijah played the violin

Gough Whitlam

Dm Gm Dm
Gough Whitlam was elected in 1972
Gm A
By the time his prime ministership was through
The people of Australia got health care
Dm
Higher education everywhere
Gm Dm
Australian troops were taken out of Vietnam
Gm A
Whitlam spoke out against the savage bombs
He suggested that Australia be a different kind of place
Dm
He talked about shutting down the spy base
Gm A
No one could forget who was alive
Dm
Those days in 1975

I Was A Stranger

C F
For well over a century, it was a normal thing
D G
To have an extra jug of water that you might bring
C F
In the harsh Sonoran Arizona summer heat
C G
We'd rather give the vultures something else to eat
F C G Am
You didn't ask where I was going, nor where I had been
F C
I was hungry, you gave me food
F C
I was thirsty, you gave me drink
F C
I was naked, you gave me clothes
Am F G C
I was a stranger -- you let me in

Just A Renter

Am C G F
Ten thousand yuppies say don't complain
Am C G F
Now that the city is in the fast lane
Am C G F
It's just the market and it knows best
Am C G F
That's how the bankers built the west
Am C G F
So just get rich and you can stay
Am C G F
Otherwise just go away
Am C G F
There's no room here for us
Am C G F
Holding on under the bus
I'm just a renter, this ain't my town
G Am
Might as well just burn it down For all I care

Killing the Messenger

Dm

Showed us the corrupt ways they run affairs

From Iceland to the Indies to almost everywhere

G

Making clothes transparent on emperors all round

Dm

Everywhere that whistle-blowers are to be found

A

Wikileaks was too effective, it had to be beaten out

G

Let there be no doubt

Dm

A

Now they want to kill the messenger, while most of us stand by

G

Dm

Just waiting for this prisoner to die

Leila and Majnun

D

G

When Leila met Majnun it was at a traffic light

D

A

He handed her his number at first sight

G

D

It all happened very quickly, soon both of them were aware

A

Bm A

That life can be so good when it's shared

Liberty and Justice For All

D

G

Banished to the desert to live in hot tar shacks

D

A

Having no idea if you'd be ever coming back

Bm

A

How oft do you recall walking to the school

Em

G

Being taught about the glories of democratic rule

D

Bm

As you sat beneath the watchtower, surrounded by a wall

G

A

D

With liberty and justice for all

Mawda Was Her Name

D

It's a deadly thing, what some call immigration

G

England was their final destination

Bm

In a crowded van, driving to the port

Em G

On past Flanders' fields, yet another life cut short

A

Cops on every side, the vehicle surrounded

Bm

When the loud crack sounded

Em G

Mama held her daughter, tight in place

Em G

Then she saw the bullet hit her face

Bm A G

And Mawda was her name

Bm A G

And Mawda was her name

My Great Grandparents

Dm C

My great grandparents were refugees

G A

That should be a normal thing to say

Dm C

I was born in New York City

G A Dm

My people came from far away

G A

They fled the generals and dictators

C C#

The warlords of Moscow and Budapest

Dm C

You could be conscripted for the rest of your life

G A Dm

Or you could head west

The Pandemic of 1918

D Bm
 A world war was raging, like the Earth had never seen
 G A
 A whole generation lined up in trenches with killing machines
 D Bm
 But aside from a few islands and some mountain peaks
 G A D
 The pandemic killed more people in just 24 weeks

Say Their Names

D
 Jacob Blake was walking to his SUV
 A
 Alton Sterling was selling DVDs
 Bm
 Eric Garner had just broken up a fight
 G
 Breonna Taylor was asleep in the middle of the night
 D
 Tamir Rice was playing in the park
 A
 Elijah McClain was out walking after dark
 Bm
 Dominique Clayton was sleeping in her bed
 G A
 Where she was shot by a cop in the back of her head

Bm G D A
Say their names -- say their names
 Bm G D A
Say their names -- say their names

Smashing Elbit Systems

Dm C
Protests were going on, they were going on for years
Dm
And then Palestine Action started smashing up the gears
C
And that's when the people got up off their seats
Dm
Took their families into town and blockaded the streets
C
For three days and nights, you could hear the hammers swing
Dm
Though no one knew for sure what the future might bring
C
They knew one thing for certain - these weapons of war
Dm
Must not be sent to the ports they're heading for

G A
So this is a note to Elbit Systems - you will be shut down
Dm
When the sledgehammers of justice come to town

Song For A Refugee

Am C G F
I breathe the air that you do
Am C G F
I drink the water just like you
Am C G F
I eat the fruits of this land
Am C G F
I hold the apple in my hand

Am C G F
I am

Stock Exchange

D G D
The year was 1918, the place, 69 Jagtvej
Em A
The unemployed and hungry gathered to ask why
G D Bm
The bankers and stockbrokers lived like kings and queens
G A
While the ragged children starved behind the scenes

There's Water On The Moon

C
A place where some could start anew
Am
Another way to say we're not through
F
Despite all of the destruction, all the bad decisions made
G
All of the madness we could trade
C
For a place more remote than primate or penguin
Am
Has ever been
F
There's a discovery, a silver lining for the cloud
G
That has some folks singing out loud

Am
There's water on the moon way up there
F
Maybe you and I should go
C
Live on a frozen lake without a care
G
Looking down at the Earth below

They All Sang the Internationale

D A G A D
For Katharina Jacob the end was close at hand
Em G A
She was on a death march with a ragged, starving band
D A G A D
Marching through a forest, being led by the SS
Em G A
What would happen hours later seemed impossible to guess

D A G A D
When the sun rose the next morning, it was the first of May
Em A G D
And they all sang the Internationale
Em A G D
And they all sang the Internationale

They Lied

Dm C
They lied about the wars, took time to figure out
Dm
That democracy and freedom was not what it was about
C
They said we'd fight the terrorists, but all that I could see
Dm
Was I was occupying someone else's country

Tolpuddle

D A
On the south coast of England in 1834
D
There was a trial that pitted the rich against the poor
A
On one side were the landlords, with their private army
D
On the other were farmhands, and their hungry families
A
To combine was not illegal, but secret oaths were punishable
D
By torturing so cruel it's unimaginable
A
Transportation - seven years a slave
D
A sentence that ended in so many early graves

Watch the Buildings Crumble

I heard them marching, chanting "kill them all"
D A
I saw millions of people trapped behind ghetto walls
Bm G
I saw the soldiers shooting every Friday afternoon
D A
I saw some exposed to sickness with others made immune
Bm G
I saw the tear gas in Al-Aqsa, eyes open wide
D A
I saw the mob attack the motorist and beat him til he died
Bm G
I heard the generals lying, I saw the tanks moving in
D A
I heard the settlers shouting "let the killing begin"

Bm G
Look up above, hear the ear-splitting sound
D A
Watch the buildings crumble to the ground
Bm G
See the planes in the sky there by the sea
D A
So much like New York City

When Julian Met Stella

D Bm
When Julian met Stella, in the embassy
G A
In the only room for seven years that he would ever see
D Bm
Guarded by police, with cops on every street
G A
An unusual situation for the first time you should meet

