

The British Canterbury scene in the context of jazz history

(Titel auf deutsch: Die britische Canterbury Scene als Jazzgeschichte)

My doctoral thesis focuses on the British Canterbury Scene from the late 1960-s up until 1975 and explores, whether the musicians` cultural actions and their created music can be relocated in the context of jazz and jazzrock history, as opposed to a predominantly rock-centered discourse that has shaped academic and journalistic discussions about the Canterbury Scene heretofore. Therefore, I apply historiographic and music analytical methods as complementary tools for gaining insights into stylistic relationships around the Canterbury Scene.

Historiographical questions explore the musicians` musical background and their musical key influences as well as their social and musical positioning in the British musical landscape of the 60-s and 70-s in relation to various music scenes such as Psychedelia, Rhythm and Blues, Free Jazz and Progressive Rock. In order to understand how this positioning in the music industry and in the media took place, an investigation into the journalistic reception through music magazines of the 60-s and 70-s such as Melody Maker, New Musical Express and Downbeat is crucial.

Through the method of qualitative interviews, the stylistic self-positioning of musicians and their opinions on past and recent discourses surrounding the Canterbury Scene shall be explored. As part of my methodology music analysis can provide a corrective factor to historic and stylistic claims about Canterbury Bands formulated in the historiographical part of my thesis. For example, transcriptions of the music can either provide an affirmation to a particular statement or otherwise put that statement into question. Furthermore, the analytical investigation explores particular features of the music, whether Canterbury Bands played a distinctive style of jazzrock and how they incorporated musical elements, compositional and improvisational techniques from different music traditions in their music.