

Abstract:

„Contemporary A Cappella - Arranging and Producing“

My PhD-thesis gives an insight into contemporary a cappella arranging. It focuses on two a cappella groups of the United States who emerged from the a cappella boom since the foundation of Contemporary A Cappella Society by Deke Sharon in the year 1991. Both Groups, each won the a cappella casting show The Sing off - Pentatonix in 2011 and Home Free in 2012 - and started/continued their career as professional a cappella singers. I will mainly focus on the arrangements of Pentatonix and Home Free in terms of writing- and production process and in what way the Music is released as media (CD, Spotify, iTunes, music video and sheet music). By using music analysis I am trying to understand how the arrangements of the above mentioned groups are processed and what techniques they use. With this knowledge I plan to explore these ideas via qualitativ empirical methods in the field of contemporary a cappella: interviews with arrangers, producers and a cappella singers, participating observation through camps, rehearsals and concerts, and being part of production-, mixing- and mastering sessions with the a cappella groups, arrangers and audio engineers. After gathering these informations I'm planing to transform them into a (german) „how to...“-guide for music teachers and conductors to create their own arrangement „in the style of ...“.

My central aim is to combine popular music research with music pedagogy to feed back knowledge I achieved to the actors in the field.

Keywords: a cappella, arrangement, contemporary, popular music, Pentatonix, Home Free

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