

The Use of Audiovisual Resources in Jazz Historiography and Scholarship Performance, Embodiment and Mediatised Representations

Research Problems

- Jazz historiography is overwhelmingly based on audio recordings, most of them studio-produced
- The studio atmosphere forces/forced jazz musicians to perform differently to how they would on stage
- Jazz is a holistic culture in which 'extra-musical' elements, such as dress, movements, gestures, and behavioural norms play important roles
- While much recent research involves audiovisual sources, there has been little methodological concern with how these sources can be interpreted, and what specifically they reveal.



The Emil Mangelsdorff Quartet being watched by a live audience and a video camera on the Römerberg in Frankfurt (2009)

Research Questions

- What is the potential for jazz historiography and scholarship of studying audiovisual resources?
- What analytical methods need to be adopted or developed for studying audiovisual sources?
- What cinematographic and broadcasting conventions have been developed for the audiovisual presentation of jazz performance, and what do they tell us about the diverse cultural roles jazz has performed at various times and places?
- What do these conventions reveal about representations of race, gender and class as well as the power structures operating within the broadcasting industry?

Structure and Methodology

Corpus: Altman Koss Collection of ca. 11000 VHS tapes of jazz broadcasts on TV, (to be donated to the) University of Sussex

Sub-projects

1. The Performing Body (Peter Elsdon):

- a) Gesture and Expression
- b) Group Interaction
- c) Embodied Knowledge and Historiography

2. Audiences, Venues and Performance Conventions in Comparative Perspective (Björn Heile)

3. Broadcasting, Mediatised Representation and the Ontology of Improvisation (Jenny Doctor)

Outcomes

1. Conference: February 2011, University of Glasgow
2. Volume of Articles based on conference, accompanied by DVD or website with clips discussed