# *Popular Music in Canterbury Between 1965 and 1971 and Theories of Scene*

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# Abstract

This thesis examines the phenomenon and lasting influence of what has come to be known as the Canterbury Scene. It argues that the Canterbury music scene is best understood through an investigation of the scale and diversity of live music in the city in the 1960s, the nostalgia and interest it still evokes and the sense of popular music heritage which it contains. It adds to the relatively small body of literature about the Scene by examining academic and theoretical writing on the subject and using this and other paradigm examples to cast further light on the relationship between the music and its perceived location.

My original contribution to knowledge is a detailed account of the state of musical performance and the performative features in Canterbury between 1965 and 1971, in particular. Through this, an assessment of the importance of the music to the canon of progressive rock may be made, and new insight gained into the extent to which the Canterbury of fifty years ago might be said to have been the locus of a scene or, at least, have given some support to a network of musicians - albeit musicians in bands with little economic co-dependency.

The work draws on first-hand accounts of the music making of the time as well as local media accounts, fan magazines and online materials and attention is paid both to the translocal nature of the scene and musicians for whom Canterbury and East Kent remained the geographical focus of the musical practices.

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I could never have contemplated undertaking a thesis of this nature at the start of my seventh decade without the support and friendship of many people.

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I acknowledge the goodwill and patience of my interview subjects, especially Brian Hopper a true Canterbury musician and outstandingly nice man. Professor Shane Blackman and Dr Asya Draganova of Christ Church University College, Canterbury, were kind enough and had enough confidence to allow me to present in a day conference on the Canterbury music scene. It is as a result of this and a meeting with Professor Andy Bennett that ideas from Chapter 3 of this thesis will be published as a chapter in Emerald Books' *The Canterbury Sound: People, Place and Myth* during 2020.

I am deeply grateful to my friends, and to the musicians with whom I meet and play, especially Sandra Skeffington, for keeping me grounded and providing relaxation. Suzanne Davies has kindly given much of her time to help me with presentation.

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# Contents

# Introduction

This thesis examines the phenomenon of what is often termed the Canterbury Scene. It seeks to position this example of local music making as an aspect of late twentieth-century cultural heritage and to examine the extent to which its legacy remains a field of interest.[1]

The study provides a rich opportunity to consider and evaluate an orthodoxy which seeks to locate Canterbury at the centre of a local, translocal, international and virtual web and to write comparatively about the bands which played within what was later established as the Canterbury cultural brand. The idea of a Canterbury sound needs to be questioned as both a local geographical phenomenon and musical style. The music is frequently perceived as being whimsical, keyboard-driven,[2] drawn from the sensibilities of a small English cathedral city and a bucolic landscape and to have a creative basis in the work of a small number of local musicians who drew attention to their work by rapidly moving away from local venues, thereby building a more extensive network and attracting commercial deals which attracted a far wider audience. These are views examined throughout the thesis. I both acknowledge and share Andy Bennett's point of view that any consideration of music and local identity must

[1] It is Andy Bennett who argues forcefully in particular for popular music to be included as cultural heritage and that rock is 'firmly embedded in the cultural memory of an ageing baby-boomer generation.' (Bennett 2009: 477-8 and Bennett and Janssen 2016: 2).

[2] Composer, saxophone virtuoso and Canterbury resident John Harle told me in an interview that 'Soft Machine and Hatfield and the North seemed to cram all the jazz I liked into a popular music format and that, of course is what the Canterbury Scene was' (Interview March 20 2017). He cites Hatfield's jazz funk track 'Overdub', from *The Rotters' Club* (1975) as an example of the sound. Different paradigms will be considered throughout the thesis. Gong's bass player, Mike Howlett, considers the archetypal sound to be 'basically Caravan and Hatfield, it was more intellectualised with clever time signatures.' (Interview March 16 2016). Conversely, an academic viewpoint, and many views and perceptions of scene are included in the approach of this thesis, provides at least one foil to the idea of a sound by drawing attention to a different idea 'People make music within communities without creating (or wanting to create) a distinct 'local' sound, but learn from and work with each other, sharing bills and practice venues, and even musicians and songs, not so much as a subculture, but simply as people who enjoy the same music.' (Connell and Gibson 2003: 115). This viewpoint resonates particularly well with Canterbury music in the mid-1960s.

take proper account of the dynamic processes involved (Bennett 2000: 195). Academic frames of reference are sought throughout in order to focus the discussion.

The research is topical and particularly relatable to contemporary printed and broadcast media which have recently sought to provide a climate in which to set an extended discussion of the state of musical performance and the performative features of Canterbury-based music.

Media interest in progressive rock music has been significant recently. The story of progressive rock has recently been retold in a popular narrative form by David Weigel, a *Washington Post* reporter, who locates his narrative of the music as 'a response to the throwaway three minute pop song' (2017: 52) and includes biographical and musical detail of Canterbury practitioners. The 2015 film *Romantic Warriors III* embraces the zeitgeist of 1960s Canterbury, the importance of its physical landscape, its musical legacy and some topographical connections, but moves rapidly to the idea that the bands had to go abroad to find audiences. It also widely acknowledges European groups, most notably Dutch, French and Spanish, for whom the influence of Soft Machine, for example, is arguably important.

At a local level, Canterbury's *A New Day* festival, now an annual event at Mount Ephraim just outside the City,[3] hosted Caravan in 2016 and 2018 and Soft Machine in 2017; Canterbury audiences, and many from further afield, arrived in large numbers. Nationally, Caravan supported Yes on the Cruise to the Edge,[4] five nights' progressive rock from Miami in 2015. The Progressive Rock Awards continue to be made each October celebrating both

[3] The venue which also hosted the first performance by Gong in the area in the 1990s according to the band's bass player, Mike Howlett. (Interview March 16 2016).
[4] Detailed in an interview with Geoff Richardson of Caravan, July 16 2016, and in Weigel 2017.

long-established acts and the achievements of bands celebrating the legacy of those playing many years previously.[5]

It is against this musical and media background, both constructing and witnessing the renewed and continuing interest in progressive rock, that my work is situated. It is concerned with the way in which Canterbury musicians, in the mid-1960s in particular, drew together strands of different forms and traditions and mixed them with their own accumulated cultural capital, initially in local venues but soon outside Canterbury, to begin to construct a narrative of scene that continues to be constructed and reconstructed. Andy Bennett and Susanne Janssen point out in a recent article, that the history of popular music is now frequently celebrated and, even more importantly, represented 'as a pivotal aspect of contemporary cultural heritage', (Bennett and Janssen 2016: 2). Aficianados of Canterbury music remain active in the continued construction of this heritage.

As a site of popular music production, however, Canterbury has, on the whole, remained pretty much 'indifferent' to the music which continues to bear its name (Leroy 2016: 14). The City and its surroundings provided a combination of active musicians with a limited sense of space and infrastructure. There was no recording studio accommodation in Canterbury; live music provision was to be found in the nightclubs of East Kent and the colleges and the community halls of the City Centre.[6] Plans to start and maintain a Canterbury record label, whilst they were evidently discussed,[7] were never realised.

[5] Canterbury musician Steve Hillage's work was recognised with Reissue of the Year *for* Searching Further Sparks In October 2017.
[6] An outline map may be found in the Appendices which locates these venues.
[7] The Canterbury fan magazine *Facelift*, to be examined in detail in Chapter 4 of this thesis, details attempts by Hugh Hopper, an original member of The Wilde Flowers, to start a Canterbury label. This was not to succeed. Canterbury Music, a label recording and distributing from East Kent, was not established until the mid-1990s (*Facelift* 9: 22). Original Canterbury music from the 1960s was collated on the Voiceprint label at about the same time.

Aymeric Leroy's exhaustive year-by-year history of *L'ecole de Canterbury* starts from a perspective that questions whether the same musicians, of whom he sees ten central and influential figures created music in Canterbury by what he calls 'un hazard geographique' (Leroy 2016: 13), or whether their meeting and creating elsewhere would have produced the same work. This is clearly a retrospective point of view but it highlights the question of a cultural identity and a sense of genius loci and whether the music, in Leroy's terms, was drawn from the soil (le terroir) (Leroy 2016:16). Equally, the idea of physical definition, including a relationship with neighbouring Europe and easily-accessible London aligns with geographical location.[8] Social spaces and musical activities may be located and identified but evidence of the music's commodification and economic co-dependence is harder to establish. A sense of the Canterbury Scene as a space of transformation with obvious signs of infrastructure, signs and artefacts is also harder to theorise. The idea of a sound tends to be more accessible and frequently, more discussed. However, in research which aims to establish why music produced in the wake of the 1960s counterculture continues to exercise musicians and their audiences fifty years later, it is important to understand the City and its environs as a site of popular music production.

The origins and significance of the Canterbury Scene are sometimes associated with the influence of the Anglican choral tradition and performers' experience as church musicians. Macan, for example, cites Soft Machine's Mike Ratledge as a student of the organ in Canterbury Cathedral by way of example (Macan 1997: 149); he also sees this influence as a 'long shadow' (Macan 1997: 147) on the musical style which developed as a result. Macan also identifies, I believe erroneously, a 'late 1960s Canterbury underground' (Macan 1997:

[8] Caravan, one of the highest-profile Canterbury bands, was, according to the son of one of its members, so named because the group had no intention of staying in Canterbury but was unsure of its own destination, musically and geographically. (Interview July 16 2016)

147) based on his perception of the literary and musical interests of local musicians. The bands, especially The Wilde Flowers and Caravan, were very keen to attract mainstream audiences to the venues. Macan's account seems at odds with my findings in which key Canterbury bands including, in particular, The Wilde Flowers and Caravan aspired to popular success rather than maintaining any kind of 'underground' identity. Caravan's combination of folk-rock, jazz improvisation and adherence to pop song structures celebrated everyday themes and occurrences.

Significantly, in 1965, the newly-established University of Kent at Canterbury was beginning to host both local and nationally-recognised bands, no doubt as a consequence of its proximity to London, and to create a hub for performance. New audiences were drawn from within and beyond the city. At the same time the effects of West Coast psychedelia with its elements of apparent oppositionalism and uncertainty were starting to influence the production and reception of popular music in the UK. Whilst the exact line of progression from psychedelia to progressive rock is highly problematized, it is clear that certain key musical texts provided models of some kind, which many bands engaged and the effects of these are examined in Chapter 3. In Canterbury, local groups were providing entertainment in the city centre and East Kent venues[9]; very few of these have found lasting commercial success.

Some of these bands were covering the chart hits of the surfing music of the West Coast of the USA; some, like The Wilde Flowers were providing beat and rhythm and blues covers for weekly dances in church and village halls and at Canterbury's main venue at the time, The Beehive in Dover Street, near the city centre. The counterculture was certainly far away.

[9] These venues included dedicated spaces such as The Beehive and The Foundry nightclub in central Canterbury and, frequently, educational establishments which hosted evening and social events.

Having said this, the improvisational skills of The Wilde Flowers and the group's ability to experiment with jazz and popular forms provided a basis for the development of bands whose names are associated most frequently with their early association with Canterbury, Caravan and Soft Machine, later Hatfield and the North. This will be examined later.

This thesis argues, especially through the case-study approach of Chapter 3, that the Canterbury music scene, be it a brand, a musical genre, a topographical phenomenon or simply a journalistic narrative of ideas,[10] is best understood through an investigation of the scale and diversity of live music played in the City and beyond by locally-formed groups between 1965 and 1971 in particular. Equally important to recognise, investigate and document is the nostalgia and audience interest the music continues to evoke and the sense of popular music heritage which it contains. This includes the sense of community amongst fans which is bound neither by the conditions of performance nor by any particular geographical location. Through this, the relationship of the music to the canon of progressive rock can be explored and a sense derived of the extent to which the Canterbury musical provision of fifty years ago is evidenced as a scene or, more accurately, as a network of musicians who continue to maintain a fragmented audience but whose practices can hardly be said to serve as the basis of a scene as such.

Following details of the methodology employed, the first chapter of the thesis seeks to situate the broad phenomenon of English progressive rock within a context of significant venues, landmark albums of the time and the perceived (US-derived) counterculture, a sense of which informs much of what is to follow. The phenomenon of the counterculture is, again, a highly problematised construct. Its association with psychedelia and progressive rock music is

[10] Pye Hastings, writer, singer, guitarist and driving force behind Caravan from 1965 until the present, favours this interpretation above all others (email interview March 17 2017).

frequently tacitly assumed.[11] Edward Macan, the title of whose much-cited commentary on English Progressive Rock includes extensive reference to the counterculture, takes an unusual stance and sees the movement as 'primarily religious and humanistic, rather than political or ideological' (Macan 1997: 6). Macan also clearly opposes the sense of counterculture, as is frequently the received wisdom, as a bed of socio-political conflict.

Writing about the counterculture slightly later, Andy Bennett applies a more traditionally sociological perspective of disaffected youth seeking to dissent from middle-class parental values and using the contemporary music as a form of common experience (Bennett 2000: 26). His explanation is nuanced by acknowledging that the term may not be entirely premised upon white middle-class youth and seeing the counterculture as 'an umbrella term for an amorphous range of activities and ideologies which, for a brief period in the 1960s found a common voice' (2000: 28).

Canterbury musicians' experience of the counterculture favours the viewpoint of neither Macan nor Bennett, certainly in the early stages, nor does it align itself with commonly-expressed hippie values implying a force of subversion working at the roots of a conventional society[12] and a negation of mainstream values.[13] The Wilde Flowers, especially later in their short career, were dedicated to channelling the rhythm and blues and beat music, the common voice for which the dancers in the clubs of Canterbury and East Kent seemed to look. Brian

[11] Richard Middleton, among others, examines the validity of the link between late 1960s progressive rock and the counterculture and how well this sits with this music's relationship with an industry which so readily and quickly adopted it (1990: 27). Chapter 1 of this thesis considers a view which links early progressive rock with psychedelia through a reading of the importance of high-profile venues.

[12] Willis' work, whilst it is a dated commentary, takes an even-handed look at how a critique of conventional society was at the heart of the hippies' thinking (Willis 1978: 127).

[13] Robert Wyatt, Wilde Flowers drummer and a central figure of the Canterbury scene, offers, without apparent irony, that his parents had already done all the expected rebelling for him (Verity Sharp *At Home With Robert Wyatt, BBC Radio 3* October 17 2017).

Hopper, The Wilde Flowers' guitarist and saxophone player, and sometime member of Soft Machine,[14] speaks of his mother and father encouraging the band to rehearse in their home[15] on a Thursday before watching *Top of the Pops* in the evening. Later, Caravan and Soft Machine experienced London and European clubs as will be explained; Soft Machine played throughout the USA and in Paris during the student protests in 1968. It is a mark of the music of these bands, in particular, however, that opposition to established values was rarely articulated through the lyrics of the songs which were frequently self-reflexive, banal and semi-autobiographical, rarely challenging, as will become evident in a later chapter. The Wilde Flowers, like other Canterbury musicians, tended to retain the values characteristic of their middle-class background and grammar school education throughout their careers.

Chapter 2 of the thesis uses a literary basis to examine and problematise the idea of scene and apply theoretical views to further original research material evaluating the extent to which Canterbury may be included within these conceptual views, also looking at the still-continuing legacy of early musicians.

The centre of this study, Chapter 3, draws in detail on first-hand accounts, interviews, contemporary local journalism, university publications and published biographical materials both to explain and evaluate the scale of musical performance in and around Canterbury and far more widely. It seeks to situate the research within broad concepts of musical scene and question the received wisdom that Canterbury at the time was dominated musically in the 1960s by high-profile bands for whom progressive rock formed a generic musical basis. The thesis considers the work of The Wilde Flowers, their beginning, development and short-

[14] Brian Hopper did not tour with the band but contributed to Soft Machine's *Top Gear* sessions in 1969, long after the end of The Wilde Flowers as well as playing saxophone on the band's second album.
[15] Tanglewood is a large house on what was then the very edge of the new University of Kent's Canterbury campus. It now houses the University's Hospitality Offices.

lived musical career and also of demonstrably successful bands, Caravan and Soft Machine, who rapidly moved away from Canterbury and Kent to gain a significant following, commercial recognition and record deals. These key bands, recordings, venues and audiences are identified and located within different spaces. The bands' influences, music and relationship with audiences and record companies are examined in this chapter. Lesser-known, part-time bands will also be considered. Little is now known or remembered of these bands, but their music filled the local dance floors of late-1960s Canterbury and is surely similarly worthy of careful attention if we are to develop a more accurate understanding of Canterbury musical life at this time.

Chapter 4 of the thesis takes a –perspective on the way the Canterbury Music Scene has continued to be constructed in a virtual sense, as fan magazines,[16] online communities and a regular monthly podcast have developed. Bennett, particularly, indicates the power and importance of greater media access in redefining the ideas of history and heritage (in Cohen et al 2015: 18). The narrative has been continued into a detailed, complex and wide-ranging mediascape as Canterbury music enthusiasts create a new infrastructure and seek to preserve different memories and viewpoints via new cultural resources. Reference is also included to the contemporary (1965-71) incarnation.

Chapter 5 provides a conclusion, summarising findings and clarifying the ideas raised throughout the thesis.

[16] Here, in particular, *Facelift*, the dedicated Canterbury music magazine, the content of which provides both excellent research material and a sense of how the scene found something of a rejuvenation in the 1990s as correspondents began to relocate a sense of the Canterbury Scene within the written word and, subsequently, online.

Examples are described throughout in order to focus the case studies and make generic points to connect musical styles and identify similarities in the work of the participants. The work does not immerse itself in youth culture nor dwell upon the way in which progressive rock music in general created itself as the apparent antidote to the three-minute pop song or may even have viewed itself as some kind of transformative musical force of nature. Rather, it seeks further to locate this genre of popular music in heritage discourse and examine the extent to which it has continued to be embedded, as Bennett sees it, in the cultural memories of baby boomers (Bennett 2009: 477).

It is important, however, not to underplay or underestimate the idea and importance of the commercial nor the conditions and methods of production in a generation which came to see the studio used as a creative element in its own right. These were and are significant factors for Canterbury musicians. The concept of authenticity, which I see as a relationship with the shared values which underpin the Canterbury scene, is also an underlying idea in a musical discourse which is anchored by a perceived relationship with a particular site and sound, especially when it is constructed by a disparate and widely-spread audience through a complex and evolving mediascape.

The thesis questions and examines, in line with Hesmondhalgh and Negus (2002: 7), notions of musical style, audience reception, the pluralism of the music business and, in particular, the relationship with place and the movement from a local to an international and, more recently, virtual sense of location. Consideration of key bands, records, venues and how Canterbury may be represented as the host of a regional sound with a significant infrastructure forms is important to this work. The research is sited in the broader field of cultural studies drawing on widespread academic and more popular definitions of scene and

questions of popular music heritage. Andy Bennett suggests that popular music has been included in heritage discourse only comparatively recently (Bennett 2009: 472). Indeed, despite the idea of a musical or cultural scene's having retained popular currency for many years, academic consideration of this is still a relatively new phenomenon.[17]

How an interest in the work of Canterbury musicians working in the field of popular music was created and has been sustained over more than fifty years without any significant mainstream success, together with the clearly-evidenced point that the principal bands came to thrive on displacement from their physical roots rather than establishing a lasting co-dependency with the City, is at the centre of the analysis. The thesis works with qualitative data, inflecting it with academic theory to establish whether the Canterbury Scene, and the Canterbury Sound remain to evolve further or have retreated into a carefully-constructed myth.

Specific research questions to be addressed, aimed at helping to clarify and justify these terms include:

To what extent can the notion of a 'Canterbury Scene' be justified and how has the notion been constructed retrospectively?

To what extent can a Canterbury sound be identified as a category against a backdrop of progressive and psychedelic styles?

How has the legacy of Canterbury musicians' work between 1965 and 1971 continued to motivate contemporary audiences and musicians?

Allied to this, how has the online community and a mythology created by a mediascape sustained interest in the Canterbury Music Scene?

[17] Straw (1991) is one of the first analyses. This article is considered in detail later in the thesis.

# Methodology

**Introduction**

This section of the thesis seeks to situate and justify the choices of method involved in gathering data for research purposes. The work adopts a qualitative standpoint in seeking to discover, explain and understand the experiences of those who have a connection with the complexities of the Canterbury music scene since the mid-1960s. There were neither preconceptions of Canterbury music culture nor an underlying assumption of a scene. Having lived in the area for many years, I recognised that Canterbury was frequently described as a place with strong musical connections and the host city to a number of progressive rock bands. I began, therefore, with an area of study and sought both to extend existing work and generate new theory with concepts derived from the data. This is an approach based on 'grounded theory'; in this method data collection, analysis and eventual theory stand in relation to one another' (Strauss and Corbin 1998: 12). In this the research offers insight into a particular time and set of popular music narratives and the processes which have led to these. Whilst the early stages of the thesis were premised upon broad research headings concerning a local music culture, these were revised during the work especially following the literature review and the initial interviews. Reflection on the early data provided a source of open coding as a means of breaking down the data and making links and comparisons, remaining grounded in the research.

A level of objectivity is important even in qualitative work. Strauss and Corbin see this as 'a willingness to listen and to "give voice" to respondents, be they individuals or organisations' (Strauss and Corbin 1998: 43). This is a study dealing with meanings rather than measured data. Knowledge here is based on experience.[18] Penn Handwerker theorises this further by pointing out that ethnographers construct a story from the generalisations and similarities we have gathered about the people involved in the study drawing conclusions from the different variables which may be applied far more widely beyond these (Penn Handwerker 2001: 12).

I have selected a range of qualitative research methods and ways of approaching fieldwork with the aim of investigating Canterbury as a network of musicians associated with English progressive rock and investigating the validity of the concept of scene in describing the events of fifty years ago and during the years since. Following a review of literature relating to the subject, I selected two initial interviewees to establish different themes and concepts which might emerge from the data. These were generated to inform later research. Further interviews followed and these were supplemented by a lengthy and in-depth investigation of local archive material to form a detailed case study of the musical culture in and around the city. The more recent construction of the Canterbury music scene, in its virtual sense, was researched through the Internet using the same themes and concepts. Participant observation provided the opportunity not only to witness the performances of modern Canterbury, and other, bands but also informally to discuss audience members' memories and opinions of bands and their perceived authenticity.

[18] The anthropologist H Russell Bernard, when considering different varieties of positivism, sees that the central position lies in how 'we record what we experience-what we see others do, we hear what others say, what we feel, others feel. The quality of the recording, then, becomes the key to knowledge.' (Bernard 2011: 15).

Ethical clearance for my research was granted by the University of Kent. None of my interview participants chose to read the notes provided or fill in the form despite the information's being offered.

**Interviews**

A total of 22 interviews, of which a list is given in the Appendices, took place as well as informal conversations at musical events and elsewhere in which I adopted the free list approach[19] of asking subjects to tell me all they could think of about the Canterbury Scene. There was some snowball sampling (Bernard 2011: 144) with one respondent being suggested by another. For example, one member of the group Gong facilitated access to another.[20] My priority was to gather and to conceptualise the experience of past and present musicians and audience members. Email questions were sent to some subjects who were not local to East Kent and London. The interview with Robert Wyatt was a public occasion with questioning by Kent Chancellor Gavin Esler. All but one of my respondents were male, a point which seems to reflect the gender balance in progressive rock more generally. Not all requests for interviews were successful.

Interviews took place in a variety of locations over the course of approximately a year between March 2016 and April 2017. Participants often wanted to meet in coffee shops; sometimes I visited their homes. On three occasions I visited musicians' studios. As well as having the advantage of ready access to their work, and sometimes that of others they wanted to share with me, each of these sessions generated compact disc examples which I was

[19] Bernard advocates this approach as a simple, powerful way to generate data (Bernard 2011: 224).
[20] Mike Howlett provided access to Steve Hillage.

invited to take away. Some subjects had collections of newspaper cuttings which I photographed for later reference. In two of these cases the musicians were still actively engaged in creating music with what they considered to have a Canterbury influence.

Forms ranged from semi-structured interviews, of most use with the non-musicians, to informal conversations with prompts to guide, mainly successfully, the subjects back to my area of study. The analysis of data was facilitated by recording and transcribing the interviews soon after the meeting. Participants' permission was always sought to record the conversation and l tried, following Bernard, to encourage respondents to believe that l aimed to learn from them (Bernard 2011: 160). I understood that my first interviews should provide a foundation for those that followed and approached two respondents of different ages with differing expertise in Canterbury music of the 1960s in order further to establish the validity of the research points arising from the literature review and plan future work. Following Penn Handwerker, l wanted to establish points of comparison (Penn Handwerker 2001: 29) in later interviews.

My initial interview was a semi-structured conversation, included in the Appendices, with Matthew Watkins, producer of the monthly *Canterbury Sans Frontieres* podcast and an acknowledged authority on Canterbury music and its understanding and recognition throughout the world. This was followed a few weeks later by a detailed interview with original Wilde Flowers and Soft Machine member Brian Hopper. As an established member of the perceived Canterbury Sscene who has maintained the profile of the music by curating previously unpublished work, Hopper has continued to ~~continuing to~~ play live sets with contemporary musicians and to provide ~~ing~~ interviews for different media. Both ~~these~~

interviews generated a great deal of material; both respondents were as knowledgeable as I would have expected and, once transcribed, the interviews were coded in order to begin building what Strauss and Corbin call 'the building blocks of theory' (1998: 103) and to begin the process of generating new ideas about the Canterbury scene.[21]

Subsequent interviews were similarly coded. The mixture of semi-structured and informal interviews meant that it was not possible or even desirable to ask the same questions each time attempting to extract comparable information. My understanding of the Canterbury scene, its heritage and construction, was frequently restructured and revised throughout the interview process.

**Archival Research**

The research in this thesis is predominantly historical. Research into printed archives continued at the same time as the interview work and was sometimes useful in generating questions and areas for exploration in interviews and more conversations. For example, a newspaper article from 1966 about a Brighton band contest was a starting point for a discussion with Brian Hopper about the early days of The Wilde Flowers. Unlike interview information which obviously relies on a conversational and remembered construction of events, 'lived experience' (Bernard 2011: 158), archived materials are nonreactive and fixed.

Large amounts of research time were devoted to consulting microfilm copies of the *Kentish Gazette* between 1965 and 1971 in Canterbury's City Library. Information was more readily

[21] Open codes used in analysis included: authenticity, culture, heritage, history, mediascape, mythscape, nostalgia, scene, scene writing, sound, soundscape, translocal, transnational, venues, virtual.

available from the early copies; articles and contributions to a regular, if not weekly, *Beatscene* column were straightforward to understand and code and the process was inexpensive, local and convenient. With this, however, and also with paper copies of *Incant*, the Canterbury student newspaper, which were consulted in the University of Kent archives and also included reviews of gigs and articles on Canterbury bands, the possibility of informer and observer error, to which Bernard draws attention (Bernard 2011: 335), is strong. The conditions under which the archived data were created are, at least in part, unrecoverable.

Equally, the Canterbury scene fan magazine *Facelift* provides the basis in this thesis for a detailed discussion of the history of the Canterbury mediascape.[22] Paper and online copies were examined in detail. The possibility of understanding the conditions in which these had been produced was increased by an e-mail interview and later meeting with its creator Phil Howitt. It remains important to acknowledge the inevitability of bias in this particular aspect of writing about localised musical activity; competing narratives are strong in qualitative research which seeks to situate experiences and behaviour and the processes which led to particular musical outcomes.

**Literature Review**

A substantial review of the literature of progressive rock music, and, in particular, studies relating to its exposition in Canterbury, was carried out early in the research process. This was completed in order to derive concepts for study, interrogation and further development

[22] Andy Bennett defines a mediascape as the product of electronic dissemination of information around the world (Bennett 2002: 89).

and to place Canterbury music from the 1960s in context. Research ideas were generated by the literature; some of these acted as a starting point for interview questions, prompts for discussion and a means of reflecting on respondents' answers. Strauss and Corbin point out that literature can also both direct research to situations which would otherwise not be considered and confirm, or otherwise, findings (Strauss and Corbin 1998: 51). Consideration the work of writers such as Aymeric Leroy (2016) and Graham Bennett (2014) sometimes enabled me both to fill in gaps in the narrative of Canterbury music which forms Chapter 3 and question some of the participants about their perspective on the accuracy of different accounts.

As a secondary source, the literature also, importantly, provided a theoretical background to the study of popular music in a historical context. Key reference texts such as Macan (1997), Hegarty and Halliwell (2011), Bennett (2002) provided starting points for seeking bibliographical material relating to progressive rock music generally. Musicologists such as Moore (2001), Covach (1997) and Middleton (1990) and cultural theorists such as Frith (1996) led to further books and academic articles which provided, often, more recent perspectives on the music. Keith Negus's *Popular Music in Theory* (1996), in particular, was important in developing an understanding of theoretical orientation and disciplinary perspectives.

Of particular significance, however, was the body of writing relating to scene. From starting points in the work of Cohen (1991, 2007), Finnegan (2007) and Shank (1994) who provide narratives of local scenes in extended commentaries on particular locations to academic articles by Straw (1991-2015), Prior (2014) and the later work of Bennett and Janssen (2016),

concepts relating to scene were derived in order to inform interview, archival and online research and to reflect on the outcomes.

Themes derived from the literature search confirmed some of the open codes used for the initial interviews. It became evident that commentators suggest that it is hard to understand progressive rock as a single phenomenon and that a class-based approach which acknowledges the music's roots in both classical music and the counterculture, especially in Macan (1997), is occasionally of use in tracing its antecedents. There is a relatively large body of writing about the nature of the sound of progressive rock, both Canterbury-based and more widely, and suggestions that there is a characteristic sound and sense of the authentic are presented.

Theories of scene are suggested and differences between local, translocal, transnational and virtual examples provide a useful starting point for interrogating and understanding the activities of Canterbury musicians and how movement away from the city provided opportunities to join a perceived mainstream whilst retaining a sense of a local Canterbury identity. The way in which the image of the city is conveyed through music, an apparent 'aural soundscape' which exists in popular imagination and may be subject to constant re-examination and rewriting, is at the centre of the discipline of psychogeography. This forms one effective starting point for understanding Canterbury fans' affective connections to the music, and its dynamic mythscape, and examining the way in which the city supports and continues to support its own creative industries.

**E-Fieldwork**

Chapter 4 of this thesis deals in particular with the retrospective construction of the Canterbury music scene via both a printed and, more recently, virtual mediascape. Research derived from online ethnographic research is a comparatively recent phenomenon. In essence, it examines computer-mediated discussions and communications as a source of data. Kozinetts breaks this down further: 'Communication is the exchange of meaningful symbols, and all manner of human symbol systems are being digitized and shared through information networks (Kozinetts 2010: 8).

My aim was to establish how the Internet has united dispersed groups and individuals in a rewriting and redefinition of a Canterbury scene. This is, in Kozinett's terms, a social network analysis based in 'the various resources that are communicated between people in online communities and cultures' (Kozinetts 2010: 50). I questioned the extent, through a content and social network analysis, to which online, and printed, media had contributed to the musical and physical discourse of Canterbury as well as seeking to establish how the concepts of heritage and authenticity found representation in the developed mediascape. Globally-dispersed groups are united in real time constantly reshaping the experience of the Canterbury scene in virtual terms. Both Andy Bennett (2002) and Matthew Watkins in interview suggest that fanzines were rapidly overtaken by websites in the last twenty years as repositories of knowledge. The interactive format of social media suggests that this knowledge is constantly recreated, often within a historical perspective.

Creating a digital case study with weeks of observation of Twitter and Facebook feeds raises practical and ethical issues. I monitored open *Canterbury Scene* postings on both platforms

and kept notes of the content. I have not used data from Facebook groups requiring membership or acceptance, for example Robert Wyatt's Facebook page, and where an expectation of privacy might be expected. It is reasonable to assume, according to Schrooten that those posting openly have no such expectation and there are no perceived or identifiable gatekeepers mediating the exchanges (2016, p88). Clearly, unlike face-to-face contact and participant observation, however, there is no opportunity to define the demographic of the sampled postings.

During my virtual fieldwork I chose not to establish a new account of my own, rather observing exchanges and making notes in order to maintain what Schrooten calls the 'naturalness' of the process (2016, p87). It was important, but not always easy, to try to contextualise the Facebook postings relating to the construction of heritage. Postings frequently linked to YouTube sites[23] and suggested performances for comment and approval developing, as happened with the fanzines, a view of authenticity.

I listened to each of the *Canterbury Sans Frontieres* podcasts with a particular focus. The archive provides a huge repository of music, mediated through one individual gatekeeper. It also generates points of comparison and a sense not only of the virtual and transnational sense of a modern scene but also the ways in which Canterbury music from the last fifty years can be sited within the influence of other genres and continues to develop in Canterbury and beyond. I noted, in particular, the range of music associated in the podcasts associated with a perceived sound.

[23] Simon Reynolds points out that YouTube forms 'a whole field of cultural representation by consumers', a 'public library of recorded sound' (Reynolds 2011: 58-60).

The comparative ease with which e-groups may be accessed as a source of ethnographic information, the lack of cost involved and constant updating of data, may be counterbalanced by the disadvantages of lack of face-to-face communication and the very limited ability to see any kind of personality beyond the posting. Good practical fieldnotes are hard to maintain and, as Kraemer points out, few respondents use Facebook, for example, in a sustained way; information is added periodically and at irregular intervals (Kraemer 2016, p124) which prevents a continuous narrative from being constructed in communities which may be temporary.

**Participant Observation**

Some participant observation took place at live music events. Bernard theorises participant observation as immersion in a culture followed by removing oneself from the field of that culture in order to theorise it (Bernard 2011: 258). Attendance at larger- and small-scale rock events, a list of which is provided in the appendices, was, at times, an immersive experience. I took descriptive notes relating to the choice of music, composition of the audience, choice of venue and references to the Canterbury Scene. These could be coded using the headings derived from the initial interviews and literature. This was of particular value in judging the extent to modern bands which openly acknowledge a debt to Canterbury have assimilated the influences of earlier musicians. Brian Hopper attended a number of these events providing a clearly identifiable link with bands of the 1960s and those who have adopted their heritage.

**Conclusion**

A range of research instruments has been adopted in order to gather qualitative data and generate new concepts grounded in the findings. Internal validity, the need to ask the right questions and detect and describe different nuances of meaning are, according to Penn Handwerker (2001: 24), features of reliable research and the sense of getting it right. Findings derived from the data must be valid, accurate and lead to a generalisable view of scene. Interviews, in particular, were able to generate information which was focused on the time and place with which I was dealing. Choosing two very knowledgeable interview subjects to begin with provided a good starting point.

The archival research provided the opportunity to examine records fixed in time and to cross-refer with individual interview subjects' memories which, inevitably, were sometimes inconsistent and tinged with nostalgia, an important point in itself. Conversations with rock musicians frequently moved away from my scheduled questions. Snowball sampling, however, proved particularly useful. Equally, the subjective nature of social media posts, whilst engaging, needed to be treated with caution. The large number of podcasts devoted to the sound of Canterbury provided a fine resource, especially as the curator was available to interview.

There is a good and varied range of literature relating to the idea of scene and engaging with this provided not only a theoretical touchstone but also a starting point for coding and analysis. The study of popular music in historical context was also important to understand.

Overall, my thesis aims to consider how Canterbury as a location and as a fictive presence remains at the centre of a dynamic mythscape. Different research instruments have been employed to generate knowledge and to construct a point of which adds to the continuing narrative.

# Chapter 1

# Situating Progressive Rock

### 1.1 Introduction - Definitions, Origins and Precursors

Determining a provenance for progressive rock as a musical style is not at all straightforward. The music is generally considered to have developed most fully between 1967 and 1976 and to have superseded the folk revival which was an important cultural force in the United States and United Kingdom in the early- to mid- nineteen sixties. The notion of a counterculture is central to the understanding of early progressive rock and its subsequent development. Roy Shuker's suggestion that the two main centres of this development are the United States West Coast and London, UK (Shuker 1998: 212) is a widely accepted approach which will bear further analysis later in this thesis.

Progressive rock music has found definition, like the Canterbury Music Scene, mainly, in retrospect. The views of Jerry Lucky are expressed in nine bullet points which seek to provide a checklist approach to the identification of progressive rock. The points are clear but not mutually exclusive.[24] Lucky's emphasis is very much on progressive rock's incorporation of other musical styles and progressive compositions' relationship with orchestral works. Bill Martin's slightly earlier theory of progressive rock (1998: 121), an elaborate discussion

[24] * Songs predominantly on the long side structured, rarely improvised, *mixture of loud and soft passages.*use of a Mellotron or string synth*possible inclusion of a live orchestra*extended instrumental solos*inclusion of musical styles other than from a rock format*blending of acoustic and electronic instruments*multi-movement compositions*compositions from unrelated parts (Lucky 2000: 132-3)

summarised in five points,[25] sees 'the history of rock music itself as background' and as important to its identity, but he also, importantly, conceives the music as 'visionary and experimental'. Lucky considers progressive rock, by contrast, to be 'structured, rarely improvised', and situates it 'in its "core", of English culture' seeing it also 'as expressive of romantic and prophetic aspects of that culture'. Sheinbaum (2002, p25), in providing a further list of what he sees as the characteristics of progressive rock, a list which again highlights the music's debt to what he calls the 'symphonic repertory', links these features with the values of a 'high' culture. The apparent paradox of a music with its roots in the oppositionalist era of the counterculture being termed this way is explored through examples and with reference to the work of Edward Macan.

Macan's approach to a definition of progressive rock has its focus in two major areas. The first is through a clear link between progressive rock and the elements of classical music. This, according to Macan (1997: 13) is evidenced in the music by the influence of the symphony, multimovement suite and instrumental virtuosity of the players. The second area of approach is through progressive rock's roots in the 1960s counterculture. Lyrics and the visual content, as well as the nature of the performances, according to Macan, derive from what he terms 'the psychedelic zeitgeist of the period' (Macan 1997: 13). Progressive rock is here defined through its ability to demonstrate contrasts through the music. It becomes evident, however, and Sheinbaum's particularly useful table of the stylistic characteristics of progressive rock (2002, p26) makes this point, that any definition or typology of the style and characteristics of progressive rock must take account of what he calls the 'widespread eclecticism' (2002, p29) of the music, seen correctly here as its 'hallmark'. My own

[25] 1)Music is visionary and experimental; 2)it is played, as least in significant part, on instruments typically associated with rock music, by musicians who have a background in rock music and with the history of rock music itself as a background; 3)it is played in significant part by musicians who have consummate instrumental and compositional skills;4) it is a phenomenon, at its "core," of English culture;5) relatedly, in significant part, it is expressive of romantic and prophetic aspects of that culture. (Martin 1998: 121 )

definition holds progressive rock to be founded in a mixture of influences, jazz, blues, folk, the classical tradition and, to some extent, improvisation in complex, occasionally long, compositions. To this may be added the occasional Indian influence. These characteristics were also found, as Macan points, out in the psychedelic movement. This movement in general was characterised by the influence of hallucinogenic drugs and instrumental styles drawing on, for example, jazz and Indian ragas. Lengthy instrumental sections resulted with a sense of time being suspended. A link may be drawn between these long passages and the suspension of time in acid trips (Macan 1997: 41).

This chapter will outline the historical context of progressive rock in line with the development of the counterculture and the venues and groups which came to be associated with it. Origins, performances, venues, recordings, changes in consumption and their role in the development of the cultural landscape will be considered. Significant bands and performances on the West Coast and in London are given attention as is the way in which progressive rock developed from psychedelic and art rock. Further consideration is given to the work of Edward Macan (1997) who points out that the term progressive rock was applied to psychedelic music in general, principally to distinguish it from pop music belonging to the pre-psychedelic era (Macan 1997: 19). Attention is also paid in this chapter to prominent early concept albums. The chapter concludes with some ideas concerning the changes in musical consumption that were taking place towards the end of the 1960s. The question of when progressive rock emerged in its own right, as distinct from its musical antecedents in acid rock and psychedelia, remains a useful, if ultimately unanswerable, question.

### 1.2 San Francisco, the Counterculture and Psychedelia

A useful timeline for psychedelic and progressive rock might begin in the early 1960s and continue through key developments in San Francisco and the West Coast. The abiding symbol of the counterculture, the hippies, and their oppositional attitude to the establishment will be considered together with the importance of venues and the decline of the psychedelic movement and its influence on the UK cultural scene. Macan, in offering useful chronological detail of the genesis of progressive rock, emphasises its debt to R&B and jazz (1997: 17). Whilst progressive rock found its home in London clubs such as UFO and Middle Earth, at the same time, around 1966 and 1967, Canterbury audiences were listening to covers bands in the Beehive Club, the Foundry and in the local community halls.

Arthur Marwick indicates that 'the adjective 'hip' did not develop into the substantive 'hippie' till the spring of 1967' (1998: 482). The San Francisco hippies, who were to gain mainstream and international attention in the mid-1960s, formed an embodiment of the counterculture.[26] Edward Macan writes about the links between music and the counterculture indicating "the elements of surprise, contradiction and uncertainty" that the counterculture contained. (Macan 1997: 13).

Macan also identifies an urgency and stridency in the music of the counterculture in the USA and points out that words of the songs often deal, for example, with the perceived futility of the Vietnam War and voiced protest against materialism, organised religion, particularly Denominational Christianity, and conformity (Macan 1997: 78-9). This relationship, between early progressive rock and a counterculture which emphasises a social commentary and

[26] According to Arthur Marwick, 'the essential ingredients' of a hippie were 'LSD and everything associated with it' and 'nature'. He details the importance of new bands 'deliberately at odds with the slick presentation of conventional pop/rock radio, openly smoking grass while producing the music, proudly related to the Hashbury scene' (Marwick 1998: 482).

connection between lifestyle and music is a recurring theme of Macan's study of progressive rock.

> The main elements of the music itself reflect important aspects of the counterculture. The heavy reliance on tone colors derived from Western art music tradition reflects the sense of importance and even the ritual that the hippies attached to the music, while the consistent use of lengthy forms such as the programmatic song-cycle of the concept album and multimovement suite, underscores the hippies' new drug-induced conception of time. (Macan 1997: 13)

This rather broad-brushed claim underlies much of the remainder of Macan's narrative. Similarly, Macan tends often to assert a clear link between a counterculture and the music which expressed it. Demonstrations on college campuses by students throughout the USA were common throughout the mid-late 1960s in the USA. United States foreign policy was dominated by military activity in Vietnam through the decade and opposition to Lyndon B Johnson's policies energised both the residents of Haight Ashbury in San Francisco and the musicians who performed for them.

The music, yet to assume the label 'progressive' at this point, provided a backdrop for using psychedelic drugs and for rejecting institutional, commercial and parental values. Other sources of identity, clothing, album covers, poster art and performance light shows, can be linked with the San Francisco counterculture as well (Macan 1997: 16). Borthwick and Moy trace the development of hippie style in the Bay Area and explain, however, that what they call the 'full-blown hippie look' was not as straightforward or easily defined an archetype as might be suggested, at least not in 1967.

> In fact, the full-blown hippie look was the exception in 1967. The difference in the visual appearance of the crowds at San Francisco's 'Human be-in' in January 1967 compared to those at Woodstock in 1969 or the Isle of Wight Festival in 1970 is striking. Certainly, the visual disparities between dressed-up and dressed-down psychedelia were considerable. (Borthwick and Moy 2004: 55)

It was arguably music, however, that provided the principal representation of counterculture and articulated the psychedelic style that may have led to the establishment of progressive rock. The economic and political situation in the USA, then founded on a time of economic prosperity continued to be challenged by these countercultural elements. Edward Macan, whilst acknowledging that progressive rock music did not articulate a pure political philosophy, does support a link between the music and the politics of oppositionalism:

> Clearly, progressive rock has a political dimension, with a consistent core of central themes-fear of a coercive and manipulative government-corporate-media complex; contempt for herd mentality and blind conformity; rejection of militarism, concern over the atomization and commodification of society; and, above all, scorn of philistinism and materialism. (Macan 1997: 139)

It is to the performances and venues which supported this apparent this movement that the chapter now turns.

### 1.3 Performances

Sheila Whiteley notes that two major psychedelic venues had been established in San Francisco in 1965. These were the Avalon and Fillmore ballrooms and these hosted loud, improvised music drawing an audience from the growing hippie community, providing a platform for existing acts such as Jefferson Airplane, Big Brother and the Holding Company and the Grateful Dead and establishing new bands such as Country Joe and the Fish (Whiteley 1992: 119). Allan Moore also documents the effect and importance of these early performances:

> Culturally, we find here an 'alliance of loud improvised music with dance and the taking of LSD' and the emergence of Jefferson Airplane, the Grateful Dead, Big Brother and the Holding Company….While Country Joe and the Fish indicated links with the California folk scene, bands from LA (Love), Texas (Steve Miller) and the East Coast (Lovin' Spoonful) ensured a stylistic mix with pop and blues. The initial scene could be considered at its height in 1966. (Moore 2001: 70).

Whiteley further points out that the San Francisco scene was at its peak in 1966 and, viewed in retrospect, was short-lived. The involvement in and influence of San Francisco bands and locations in the formation of a Canterbury sound is summarised in Chapter 3.

Barry Shank's engaging account of the progressive folk scene[27] in Austin, Texas, notes that bands such as The Elevators, a local rock and roll group, Boz Scaggs and Janis Joplin were amongst those who made the trip to San Francisco from Austin to play at the Avalon Ballroom. Shank sees this as a source of 'commercial yet nonmainstream success' (Shank 1994: 50), a means of joining the West Coast counterculture and being economically

[27] To which more detailed reference will be made in Chapter 2.

supported at the same time. This also indicates something of how the mixture of different musical styles, including dance, protest songs of artists such as Bob Dylan and mid-sixties pop were assimilated into the proto-progressive, psychedelic rock which was being formed in the Bay Area. Frith and Horne examine this further:

> And so, as John Cippollina of Quicksilver Message Service later remembered, for young musicians, 'it was an unwritten law; it's okay to play rock 'n' roll until you were eighteen; after that it's folk,' while most local performers didn't even play rock 'n' roll in the first place. Which meant, as Charles Perry notes, that even after the rise of the Californian Sound, 'most of the rock musicians in San Francisco apartments were basically folkies learning to play electrified instruments. (Frith and Horne 1989: 94)

Around this time the message of love, peace and acid had begun to spread with the music as did news of the location of the San Francisco Bay Area as a centre for psychedelia and creativity. It is Paul Stump's view that the visit of the Rolling Stones to San Francisco in 1965 'was probably the single most significant event in unifying the disparate elements of an as yet unformed counter-culture on both sides of the Atlantic,[28] a suggestion that commercial credibility and avant-garde experimentalism could not only co-exist but form a synergetic, transfiguring thrust that would shock society to its core.' (Stump 2010: 17). Whiteley gives further, more extended, detail of a later visit in 1967:

> The Stones were welcomed by the more radical branch of the underground in San Francisco, who hailed them as 'comrades in the desperate battle against the maniacs who hold power. The revolutionary youth of the world hears your music and is inspired to even more deadly acts.' (Whiteley 1992: 79).

[28] The Beatles had already toured the USA in February 1964. According to Marwick, this was 'one single event in the establishment of the hegemony of youth-inspired British popular culture' (Marwick 1998: 456).

There is, then, a clear link to be made with both the folk scene and early 1960s rhythm and blues and psychedelia. Hegarty and Halliwell place even greater emphasis on the importance of this, pointing out that 'the Rolling Stones were central to the American popular music scene, as was Jimi Hendrix's schooling in the underground clubs of London and The Who's emergence as a transatlantic phenomenon in 1967' (Hegarty and Halliwell 2011:34).

In terms of West Coast performances, Jefferson Airplane, in particular, were already making extensive use of recording techniques developed some years before. Borthwick and Moy (2004: 44) describe how sound studios in the United States had developed post-production overdubbing and multi-tracking of rock music in the 1950s which came to characterise the sound of psychedelic, later progressive, rock. A performance in January 1966 by the Grateful Dead had also provided its enthusiastic audience with punch laced with LSD and a striking light show, another feature common to acid-fuelled performances, in conjunction with the music. Live events were becoming multi-media occasions. The State of California declared the use of LSD to be illegal, however, in October of 1966. Whiteley among others points out that the countercultural ideology was closely connected with "love and acid" (Whiteley 1992: 119).

A further major event in the development of the counterculture was the large-scale open-air 'Be-In' festival which took place in the Golden Gate Park, San Francisco in January 1967. The event attracted around 30,000 people and served to start spreading the message of the hippies further across the United States. Acts to perform included Country Joe and the Fish, Steve Miller Band, Jefferson Airplane and Grateful Dead. Sheila Whiteley explains, in quoting Neville, the apparent benefits of the drug culture which continued:

> A dazed Santa Claus liberally threw LSD capsules and marijuana to the winds. An overawed *Time Magazine* recorded 'the huge crowd was peaceful…an amazing tribute to Haight Ashbury.' More accurately, it was a tribute to LSD which had begun to suppress local aggression on an ever-increasing scale. (Whiteley 1992: 62)

The San Francisco event was recreated in Monterey, some one hundred miles away, in June, 1967. Whiteley considers this to have been an attempt more carefully to target the commercial influence of the record industry and the other commercial media who may have missed the earlier Golden Gate event (Whiteley 1997: 62). Groups, including The Byrds, the Grateful Dead, again, Mothers of Invention, Simon and Garfunkel and The Doors, were keen to join and to be associated with the clearly popular and highly successful San Francisco scene.

A few days before the Monterey event, in June 1967, a festival which emphasised the rural rather than the more commercial had taken place in northern California at Mount Tamalpais. Hegarty and Halliwell document the intriguingly-named *Fantasy Fair and Magic Mountain Music Festival* (Hegarty and Halliwell 2011: 48). This involved a similar lineup to that at Monterey including Jefferson Airplane, Moby Grape, The Byrds and The Doors. Significantly, however, the acts were often dressed in medieval costume and the audience was encouraged to explore and feel the effect of the apparent beauty of the environment. This concept of a 'rural utopia' with its associated visual aspect, sense of place and influence on the music continued to become important as bands continued to draw more on notions of myth and magic for inspiration. Macan's work on King Crimson's *In the Court of the Crimson King,* album released in 1969, (Macan 1997: 23), indicates that 'the medieval imagery and mystical undertones of the title' contribute to much of the album's influence on

later progressive rock.' The album's recognisable musical style and instrumentation are seen by Macan to be a major influence in progressive rock throughout the 1970s in particular.

As Whiteley points out, however, the music of the hippies was now to be seen as hugely commercially viable. (Whiteley 1992: 63). This, of course, is in addition to the music's significance as a symbol of the counterculture with its focus on hallucinogenic drugs, opposition to the establishment and heightened sense of the visual and fantastic.

**1.4 Dissemination**

Taking a broader perspective on the counterculture, however, and to turn to the approach taken by Roy Shuker, this commodification of West Coast psychedelic rock is a significant point.

Shuker points out that 'sincerity [was] becoming highly marketable during the mid-1960s' (Shuker 1998:58). In effect, this meant that the bands whose music had stood as a potent symbol for psychedelia and the counterculture and whose lyrics had reflected the spirit of the hippies were often linked with lucrative commercial deals as well as performing regular live events. Jefferson Airplane, who had performed widely on the West Coast, had already signed to RCA Victor in 1965. The Doors' popularity manifested itself in eight albums being released with Elektra between 1967 and 1971; the Grateful Dead were signed to the major record label Warner.

Richard Middleton also acknowledges the importance of radio stations in the development of the counterculture's music in the USA; both he and Macan use the term *progressive rock* readily as a descendant of the psychedelic music of the mid- and late-1960s:

> American music and new presentation styles were first breaking through into the existing system. American FM radio in the later 1960s beamed specific styles at specific 'subcultural' audience, at first progressive rock and then a wider range. (Middleton 1990: 86)

Macan addresses this developing point as well, particularly in relation to the underground press and radio stations associated with the dissemination of the music and style associated with the counterculture. His commentary makes a good general point about the preparation for the development of progressive rock:

> Without this specific alignment of cultural and economic forces-the appearance of the counterculture, the formation of the psychedelic style, the rise of a network of clubs, radio stations and publications around the music, and an entirely new relationship between the musicians and the record companies, the progressive rock style would never have emerged. (Macan 1997: 18)

The commercialisation of the American scene and the increasingly diverse ways in which the music was becoming distributed and consumed coincided with the release of Jim Morrison's *Unknown Soldier* with its lyrics intended to demonstrate how the media were continuing to represent the situation in Vietnam. The military marching soundtrack and requiem-like vocal response featured on The Doors' *Waiting for the Sun* album. The mournful 'Summer's Almost Gone' also featured on the album standing as a symbol of the end of the Haight Ashbury summer. The first phase of the counterculture could be seen to be at an end.

> [...] a series of events made the universalist hopes turn sour, including the murder of Martin Luther King Jr, the drug casualties overrunning San Francisco's Haight Ashbury and the state repression of youth in Chicago, Mexico City, Paris and Prague (Weinstein 2002, p92).[29]

More generally, Weinstein sees the counterculture, in retrospect, as having this 'universalist' basis in free-speech and anti-war sentiments which was, of course, being expressed by the lyrics in the music. The apparent failure of these towards the end of the 1960s gave way to the subsequent empowerment of movements for women, blacks, gays and other disadvantaged and minority groups. The British-based proto-progressive music started to emerge at the same time.

According to Weinstein, progressive rock is often known as 'art rock' in the USA although it is perhaps significant that the practitioners there, fewer in number, did not attend art school as was so often the case in the United Kingdom. It can be argued, more generally, though, that psychedelic rock, at least, had also started to find a substantial audience in the United Kingdom in 1967. Sheila Whiteley discusses the events in London which were mirroring the Haight Ashbury scene.

> Contemporary British reinforcement of the US psychedelic scene emerged in such slogans as 'Haight is love' and 'Make Love Not War'. Local underground magazines, legalise pot rallies, free pop concerts and psychedelic shops provided evidence of the evolving counter community which, in the summer of 1967, seemed to be symbolised by flowers and songs celebrating the acid experience. (Whiteley 1992: 64).

[29] The important links between San Francisco and Paris, in particular, will be explored in some detail later in this thesis.

The movement from psychedelic rock, evidenced in the music of the 1960s West Coast groups, towards psychedelic then progressive rock in the United Kingdom is not an easy one to trace. Artists such as Dylan, The Byrds, Jefferson Airplane, the Mothers of Invention and the Doors were rapidly becoming 'heroes' of the British musical counterculture in the mid-1960s (Whiteley 1992: 62). Macan makes the point that, 'it is difficult to imagine the progressive rock style having developed in the United States rather than England although it eventually did achieve great popularity there' (Macan 1997: 19). Weinstein agrees and extends this by pointing out that progressive rock and heavy metal both came into being at the same time and also 'originated and crystalized in Britain.' (Weinstein 1992, p107).

Overall, the experience of the West Coast of the United States was rooted in its own political system and economic and cultural forces as well as the increasing availability of hallucinogenic drugs. Psychedelic music had a recognisable style and the venues, particularly the large-scale venues such as Golden Gate Park and Monterey, affected the development of music which readily became subject to commodification and commercial pressures. It can be argued, in line with Hegarty and Halliwell, that psychedelia, as expressed in the performances on the West Coast, is essentially self-referential (Hegarty and Halliwell 2011: 134). It offered total experience rather than the more class-bound, intellectual aspirations that would characterise British progressive rock. However, the messages of the hippies began to have less impact in the States towards the end of the decade and the message of the counterculture began to become established in London and the United Kingdom. These locations are seen by some to be the true birthplace of progressive rock.

### 1.5 Rock, the Counterculture and the United Kingdom

The British counterculture undoubtedly developed into the mainstream in 1967 as the effect of Haight Ashbury's Summer of Love began to be felt in earnest. Several key strands can be identified as precursors to progressive rock in London and the United Kingdom. Psychedelic artists such as Cream and Jimi Hendrix will be considered together with the importance of different venues, how these changed over time, and the role of the art school in the creation of psychedelic and progressive rock music. Pink Floyd and Soft Machine will be examined as examples. The role of *Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band,* the album frequently considered to mark the start of British progressive rock, will be considered within the cultural landscape of the decade as will other significant concept albums which followed including the work of King Crimson, Moody Blues and Procul Harum. The section concludes with a sense of how the consumption of progressive rock was affected by radio, the development of the extended concept album and changed audience expectations.

Sheila Whiteley writes of celebrations of 'the acid experience' as a basis for the establishment of the counterculture in the United Kingdom (1992: 64). A direct comparison between conditions for performance in the USA and UK may be misleading, however. Borthwick and Moy highlight the social and geographical differences between San Francisco and London pointing out a less political climate in the UK, one which favoured a concentration on fashion and appearances rather than activism (Borthwick and Moy 2004: 49). The effects of the Vietnam War, for example, were far less significant in the United Kingdom and anti-war sentiment was less conspicuous in the UK music scene.

Whatever the details of these differences, there is a clear sense in which psychedelia became a feature of British popular music from the mid-1960s onwards. This was evident in the music of British groups such as Cream. From their debut performance at the 1966 Windsor Festival until their breakup in 1968, Cream enjoyed musical and commercial success. As a blues-based trio with the standard lineup of guitar, bass and drums, Cream locates firmly within a British blues tradition which had existed since the late 1950s (Hegarty and Halliwell 2011: 24) and which formed at least part of the basis of psychedelic rock.[30] Macan, among others, recognises this blues-influenced tradition as a significant precursor to progressive rock, emphasising the way in which blues music draws on specific musical ideas to produce a new performance, interacting with the audience on each occasion (Macan 1997: 159). Whiteley identifies Cream as part of a first 'wave' of British blues bands who had initially not succeeded particularly well commercially but, she claims with support from music magazines (Whiteley 1992: 37), found recognition with their first single 'I Feel Free'. A single the following year (1967) 'Strange Brew/Tales of Brave Ulysses', was released to promote the second studio album *Disraeli Gears*.[31] Whiteley's analysis further sees 'Strange Brew' as typical of both blues music and psychedelia. It certainly has blues form as well as the distortion and bass-driven sound that came to characterise the music of Cream. Whiteley situates it firmly in the blues orthodoxy; she notes that the track:

> [...]has certain similarities with Hendrix in the use of electronic guitar effects such as fuzz tone, reverb and the wah-wah pedal, and in the psychedelic language both of the lyrics and the sound itself. (Whiteley 1992: 75)

[30] Later analyses of Canterbury progressive rock, above all, pertains to the idea that the music drew on a blues tradition but it also assimilated many and diverse other influences.
[31] Atlantic, May 1967.

Together with the suitably nihilistic subject matter of 'Strange Brew', the witch, 'the demon messing in the glue', the track has definite elements of early progressive rock. It was to foreground folklore and the supernatural, whilst lacking the sustained keyboard work which gave texture to later bands, especially Canterbury's Soft Machine. Jimi Hendrix, an artist who, like Cream, was to abandon the singles market for more extended LP formats, similarly, gave virtuosic and blues-inspired performances developed with extended passages of improvisation. 'Hey Joe', for example, was released in December, 1966; Hendrix had been playing in London since August of that year.

The track has some similarities to the work of Cream. It is bluesy and dark with a powerful, overdriven style characteristic of much psychedelic music. Whiteley points out that the song has a simple harmonic structure and a 'menacing mood' (Whiteley 1992: 16). 'Purple Haze'[32] followed at the end of the Summer of Love in September 1967 and took its title from a particular brand of acid (Whiteley 1992: 20). Whiteley offers an extensive analysis of this track and her approach is particularly useful in identifying some of the features which are exemplified in both psychedelia and proto-progressive rock music. The lyrics, 'Excuse me while I kiss the sky….. Don't Know if I'm comin' up or down, Am I happy or in misery?' certainly suggest a drug-induced experience. Her account, then, is broadly musicological. Significantly here, she draws attention to the point that:

> The expectations generated in the opening riff are also picked up in the main break which moves towards an overt theatricality with its hammered and pulled-off notes, the jittered bursts of broken words over the free-flowing improvisation with its wild yet controlled sense of energy. (Whiteley 1992: 18)

[32] Olympic 1967.

The importance of the blues form, as represented here by some of the work of Cream and Jimi Hendrix, to psychedelia, the counterculture and the progressive music which was to follow them, is frequently commented upon and held to be of importance. Hegarty and Halliwell provide a useful summary of this, also highlighting other influences, for example Asian music, on what was to come:

> Between the expansion of the blues form into nascent rock music and the use of drugs that suggested a longer format for songs, rock literally expanded in time from the mid-1960s onwards. Even before this, popular music was expanding and stretching vertically into complexity, incorporating non-Western or non-rock forms. (Hegarty and Halliwell: 2011: 24)

Overall, despite the differing political and social contexts of the United States and United Kingdom both Cream and Hendrix found commercial success on both sides of the Atlantic. Whiteley notes a 'collectivity of experience' (Whiteley 1992: 38) as the audiences continued to be active participants in the countercultural community. Both acts redefined existing forms and provided the background for more developed, lengthy improvised musical forms which were to lead into the start of progressive rock.

Clubs and other venues hosting these artists and other psychedelia-inspired musicians opened in London throughout 1966 and 1967. It seems that Britain in general and, according to Borthwick and Moy (2004: 62), Southern England and London in particular, was seeking to echo both culturally and musically what was happening on the West Coast of the United States, despite certain key differences between the locales. What Allan Moore sees as 'free expression' (Moore 2001: 70) was now being given public platforms as new venues in London began to offer a particularly close-up psychedelic experience. Macan sees the relationship between the audience and the musicians as 'symbiotic' (Macan 1997: 18), a term

chosen to emphasise the joint responsibility that the musicians bore for the musical experience on offer. London's Marquee Club had no physical division between the players and the audience, for example, when bands played there on Sunday afternoons. It is the Marquee and other similar venues whose performances evidence and provide insight into the interactive nature of psychedelia in the UK as it moved towards progressive rock.

The UFO (Unlimited Freak Out), the Middle Earth Club and the event set up for the launch of the *International Times* are further examples of the developing links between the nature of the venues and the music they hosted and produced. Unlimited Freak Out was, according to Robert Wyatt's recent biographer Marcus O'Dair, attempting to create, or recreate, each Friday night one of the major events to have signified the counterculture in London, the launch of the *International Times*. This had taken place in October, 1966 in the Roundhouse, North London. Marcus O'Dair also details what happened:

> IT [International Times] launch, an all-night rave at the Roundhouse on October 14 1966, was attended by an estimated 2,500, including Paul McCartney (in Arab robes*), Blow Up* director Michelangelo Antonioni and Marianne Faithfull[… . ]Punters were handed sugar cubes on arrival – apparently only dipped in 'placebo acid' – and, once inside, rolled around within a giant jelly. (O'Dair: 2014: 69)

Similar multi-media experiences are documented for, in particular, The Technicolour Dream which took place in April 1967 at London's Alexandra Palace. This was, more than a musical event, a multimedia occasion which included film, performance art, poetry reading and light shows drawing the audience into the 'circle of experimentation (Hegarty and Halliwell 2011: 35) and featuring the early work of Pink Floyd. The UFO club had, since late 1966, according to Hegarty and Halliwell, been pioneering both the work of psychedelic bands such

as Procul Harum and Soft Machine and also the use of extraordinary visual effects to accompany the music. Brian Hopper, founder member of The Wilde Flowers and Soft Machine's occasional saxophone player and guitarist, speaks of Mark Boyle, a visual artist, and his assistant burning holes in coloured plastic with acid whilst standing on unsteady step ladders.[33] Paul Stump also draws attention to this:

> the Floyd appeared to be run-of-the mill popstars with a hotline to another dimension. Their lightshows were handled by art students, notably involving a slide/oil system developed at Hornsey by Mark Boyle, a 'destruction' artist who declared 'The most complete change an individual can effect on the environment, short of destroying it, is to change the attitude towards it.' (Stump 2010: 19)

More generally, though, the very names of some of the live music venues in London in the mid- to late-1960s- The Middle Earth, The Perfumed Garden, Gandalf's Garden as well as UFO and the Marquee-suggest a relationship with the extreme and alternative, very much a feature of progressive rock music, in much the same way as the audience engaged with the witches and demons of Cream's 'Strange Brew'[34] in California. The relationship between the music and the styling of the venues was evidently very close. There was a distinct sense of theatre and performance and of the steady evolution of a new, emergent, style of musical event.

Further examples of the importance of the relationship between the styling and development of the music and the nature of the performance venues can be found in the work of

[33] Interview March 14 -2016.
[34] On *Disraeli Gears* Atlantic 1967.

Canterbury band Soft Machine.[35] Marcus O'Dair documents the type of jazz fusion music which had found a basis here, and in the early, more avant-garde, sound of Wilde Flowers. This had also been newly created in the psychedelic venues in London:

> The Soft Machine's live sound was fast diverging from that laid down in the studio. UFO audiences-like those at the other key London hippie venues, the Roundhouse and the Speakeasy, in any one of which the Softs would appear most weeks- were less interested in dancing to tunes they recognised from the radio than in 'head music', extended versions that could be appreciated seated or even prone, more or less psychedelically enhanced. (O'Dair 2014: 73)

Stump's comments are useful and significant, though, in reminding us that the music was, at this stage, neither fully formed nor yet 'Progressive'. According to him, 'It was merely 'progressive' in the sense that there seemed to be a shake-up of extant popular classics and an alignment vaguely towards modernist currents in artistic praxis' (Stump 2010: 41).

Situating Canterbury in the chronology of this part of the 1960s (1967-8) is far from straightforward. The Wilde Flowers had already brought their jazz- and psychedelic-influenced rock to the audiences of East Kent and faded as band members moved on. Aymeric Leroy indicates that an attitude of 'Rien (ou si peu) a voir avec Canterbury' (Leroy 2016: 12) was, and continues to be, found; Robert Wyatt, a central figure of the Canterbury scene and frequent performer in the London psychedelic clubs, has created a more prosaic image:

[35] Probably the most successful and best known of the Canterbury bands which established in the mid- to late-1960s, the story and impact of Soft Machine will form an important narrative in the later chapters of this thesis.

I think the Canterbury thing is a bit like the Galapogos Island thing. We weren't part of the London scene and we developed some kind of homogeny, gils for hands. It meant we had to develop our own little ways. (Interview with Gavin Esler April 4 2016).

Commentator Bill Martin is more specific. He includes the importance of Canterbury bands in his selection of early progressive rock examples choosing to draw a distinction between the work and influence of Canterbury band Caravan on the one hand and Soft Machine on the other as the head and heart of the Canterbury scene respectively (Martin 1998: 169). He cites *The Soft Machine* (1968) as progressive rock's first 'album of the year' (Martin 1998: 171). Further analysis by Hegarty and Halliwell indicates that Soft Machine were, at that time, 'a guitar-free psychedelic rock band' (Hegarty and Halliwell 2011 110) with a strong jazz influence. This, l believe, is a perfectly adequate description of an early example of fusion-based progressive rock, vocally-driven and characterised by extended solo work. It is seen by Hegarty and Halliwell to be typical of the genre which was to develop. They see these features as an 'essential component' of the music (2011: 110).

Canterbury bands were finding a platform but rapidly moving away from the city to draw influences from elsewhere. The music that was finding a place in the city, and, on the whole, staying there was often far from progressive. I explore this in more detail in Chapter 3. The Wilde Flowers were very much in decline and Soft Machine and Caravan played rarely in Canterbury. The new University of Kent was providing a venue for mainstream and experimental music.

Overall, the desire to link music with performance, and art and to provide spaces where the alternative, the experimental and the improvised could flourish is summed up by Hegarty and Halliwell who also discuss the use of mythology and the 'altered states of consciousness'

which was so important in the live, drug-fuelled, performances in both the United States and United Kingdom (Hegarty and Halliwell 2011: 37). Unlimited Freak Out was, in fact, a comparatively short-lived institution; it closed in October, 1967. Stump's text refers to Robert Wyatt's own memories of Unlimited Freak Out and the influence the venue had on the performers who played there.

> Robert Wyatt's memories hint at the slow crystallisation of Progressive [sic] behaviours among bands and audiences alike, with a 'predominantly seated' UFO crowd. "It's very hard when you've got a room full of beer-swigging people standing up waiting for action, it's very hard starting with a drone. But they'd wait half an hour, sitting down, for the first tune to be played-and that influenced the musicians. As, presumably did the reactions of audiences elsewhere. The Softs learned to segue tunes so that the audiences who'd come for a dance never got the chance to boo. (Stump 2010: 20)

Soft Machine appeared at a BBC Proms Concert in August, 1970[36] and, as Macan points out many bands were also subsequently able to play larger, non-club venues such as the Rainbow Theatre and Lyceum (1997: 146). The venues' influence on the musicians and the audience and the music, then, was considerable and significant. An influence further explored by both Stump and Macan is that provided by an art-school background amongst the musicians and those around them. Macan asserts that 'the most important education institution for earlier English rock musicians, for example members of The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, The Who, had been the art school, an institution designed to help working class students escape a working-class future.' (Macan 1997: 47). This is a generalisation open to challenge, of

[36] Accounts of this event continue to exist. A particularly detailed example is included in the first edition of *Facelift,* the Canterbury sound fan magazine which will be examined in a later chapter of this thesis. The event is frequently considered to be unsuccessful for both group and audience.

course, but Macan qualifies his thinking by adding 'few progressive rock musicians attended art school; few needed to.' (Macan 1997: 47).

The most significant group with an art-school background, Pink Floyd, were put together by Roger Waters, an architecture student at Regent Street Polytechnic, and Syd Barrett from Camberwell College of Art (Stump 2010: 19). Pink Floyd appeared regularly at Unlimited Freak Out. Passages of improvisation during their live performances contributed as well as the arrangement of the venues to the formation of a 'unified whole' (Moore 2001: 70). In what would seem to be a paradox, however, the unified whole was challenged as the musicians sought to destroy what Moore sees as the 'textual norm' of the rock music. This was dislocated as members of Pink Floyd performed individualistic and extended solos throughout their live performances in the clubs whilst remaining, according to Allan Moore, concerned with the production of a single 'show'. He offers further comparison to *Sgt Pepper* in this, noting a similarity in that both Pink Floyd and The Beatles were concerned with a single 'package' rather than separate items (Moore 2001: 70).

In summary, the multi-media experience which was constructed through a symbiosis between the musicians, the audiences, the venues and the work of extra-musical arts practitioners changed the direction of late 1960s rock music in the pre-progressive era. The link between music, light, colour, film and drugs enhanced the relationship the audiences were expected to find with the extreme and alternative. As expressions of the counterculture, London indoor venues were similar and readily identifiable; Canterbury hosted its own bands far less frequently. However, the outdoor venues were equally significant in the process.

Hegarty and Halliwell's commentary is useful in reminding us that outdoor music festivals in the United Kingdom were very much the legacy of the Golden Gate, Monterey and Mount Tamalpais events on the USA's West Coast (Hegarty and Halliwell 2011: 48). In August 1967 the Festival of the Flower Children was hosted at Woburn Abbey. With a lineup featuring The Kinks, Small Faces, Bee Gees and Marmalade this was not a fundamentally psychedelic event but the surroundings, outside the capital, provided a rural background to the music. Hegarty and Halliwell locate these Hyde Park events in a 'pastoral backdrop' (2011: 48). Others followed over the four years, 1968-71, however, featuring Pink Floyd and Jethro Tull as very much proto-progressive bands. Together with the large-scale Isle of Wight Festival, which according to Hegarty and Halliwell experienced both commercial and artistic tensions throughout the late 1960s (Hegarty and Halliwell 2011: 48), the outdoor performance events of 1969, in particular, were seen as highly significant in fusing jazz, blues folk and 1960s psychedelia. These are all features to be considered as part of the then-contemporary Canterbury sound.

These open-air events linked the music with an apparent pastoral, albeit in one case in the centre of London, context, provided a showcase for emergent artists and also represented through the programming a further fusion of different musical styles and influences. Emerson, Lake and Palmer, for example, played the Isle of Wight Festival in August 1970, and, according to Macan were thereby 'catapulted to stardom', with an arrangement of Mussorgsky's extended work *Pictures at an Exhibition*[37] (1997: 147). Allan Moore links the highly-visual, performance-based development of progressive rock which was nurtured and developed through open air performances, for example, with the musicians' change of focus from the singles market to album-based work. (Moore 1997: 78). He notes that 'The

[37] Island 1971.

musicians' ideology thus became integrated into the new youth ideology where 'doing your own thing' became the operative phrase'. (Moore 1997: 79). The very important rise of the concept album was to follow shortly.

Venues for psychedelic and early progressive performances, then, had developed and taken the direction of the music very much with them. The clubs, small venues and outdoor festivals which had nurtured progressive rock's development through psychedelia to a more fully-formed genre by the end of the 1960s began, however, to give way to highly-commercial stadium and large venue events. Paul Stump cites the DJ Jeff Dexter in explaining the move from counterculture to large sums of money generated by big-venue tickets and recording deals. Dexter blames the festival: '[t]hey destroyed the underground – everyone tried to make a buck' (Stump 1997: 50). The counterculture which had been seen at the roots of psychedelic and progressive rock was now completely at odds with the high-earning bands who began to live and record outside the United Kingdom to avoid the higher rates of taxation (Holm Hudson, 2008: 19).

The 1960s had been, both in the United States and United Kingdom, a time of well-being, new-found prosperity and full employment in the UK. Music had been far more readily available and was recorded with far more sophisticated equipment. The 1970s saw a changed economic climate. According to Holm Hudson 'hippie idealism soured under persistent economic hardship' (2002, p19). The apparent obscurity of some of the music and its imagery did not do well with some working-class 1970s listeners (Holm Hudson 2002 p19). Those who attended the events at the larger venues, and festivals, often found it hard even to see the progressive rock musicians whose concerts they attended. Certain groups dominated the profile. Stump details these: 'the pre-eminent branch of Progressive, led by the evolution of

Pink Floyd, Yes and ELP towards Romantic classical models of musical thinking, proved to be the most commercially successful arm of the genre' (Stump 2010: 83).

The intimacy and audience involvement which had characterised the performances in the London clubs and venues in the mid- and late-1960s was no longer to be found as progressive rock matured and, eventually, started to decline. Psychedelic, art- or proto-progressive rock as an expression of the counterculture was all but gone as the nation moved through the 1970s. Paul Stump uses some bright imagery to sum this up:

> The counter-cultural rock explosion fizzled and died, the classical dilettantes straightened their ties and fled with as much dignity as they could muster, pop launched a megaplatinum assault on youth with T. Rex and the Jackson Five.(Stump 2010: 82)

Overall, venues had been both the root and the expression of the counterculture. Intimate London clubs had combined the music with the audience with extra-musical features including film and lightshows which drew on the skills of art school practitioners. Outdoor venues, many beyond the capital, sought to link the music in performance to rural surroundings and a feeling of freedom; these, and the club-based, events often provided debut performance opportunities for psychedelic, later progressive, bands who were to become extremely well-known. As performances by these and other bands started to take place in larger venues, and economic circumstances changed, early countercultural elements were subsumed and audiences began significantly to change.

### 1.6 The Cultural Significance of *Sgt Pepper* and the Concept Album

A great deal has been written about and claimed for *Sgt Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band.*[38] Hegarty and Halliwell see it as 'a transformative moment in the history of popular music' (2011: 33). Sheila Whiteley's book on rock and counterculture devotes an entire chapter to the album dealing with each track from the point of view of context, content, musicological analysis and the significance of each track within the overall narrative of the piece. The album, seen by many commentators as both a focus of psychedelia and the first example of a UK progressive rock album, is a challenging piece. Its cheerful symbolism and relationship with the 1967 Summer of Love, including the words on the gatefold sleeve and stylised costumes on the musicians, belies a work which deals with alienation, separation and loneliness in an intense way. Whiteley's commentary takes this further:

> While the songs expressed the problems, they offered no direct solutions and the individuals within the narrative were often inarticulate and haunting images of loneliness who were constantly castigated by an indifferent world. (Whiteley 1992: 47)

Macan's study quotes Joan Peyser who sees the work as 'a search for meaning amid the sterility and quiet desperation of everyday life' (Macan 1997: 77); it is certainly not a celebratory piece to greet the Summer of Love nor an assembled succession of popular songs. Rather it is another album to be considered as a whole.

Reising and LeBlanc trace the album's lineage through San Francisco psychedelia, its apparent visual debt to Jefferson Airplane's *Surrealistic Pillow's* [39]cover design and the way in which it linked the drug-induced countercultures of the United States and United Kingdom

[38] Parlophone June 1967
[39] RCA Victor, Feb 1967.

(2008 p 105-6). Allan Moore's study adds to this in examining the preparation of the album, as 'The strange mixture of an Edwardian brass band transported to psychedelic San Francisco' (Moore 1997: 21). Each writer stresses the immense significance of the album to music and popular culture in general. In terms of a forerunner to progressive rock, its release may be seen as the event which started to move the music from psychedelia through 'nascent' to the presentation of a proto-progressive concept album which formed a basis for much that followed. It is undoubtedly a turning point.

*Sgt Pepper* tells a story, creates characters, more believable and realistic here rather than mythic and folkloric, however, and affirms quite overtly the free use of mind-expanding drugs. Allan Moore's study of the album notes that John Lennon, in particular, was a frequent user of LSD and marijuana during the album's preparation but questions whether the apparent drug interest in the work was a connection to the counterculture or simply a source of 'optimistic escapism' (Moore, 1997: 61). These, might, however, amount to much the same thing. It is certainly a musical bricolage of psychedelia, Indian raga, classical arrangements (particularly 'A Day in the Life'), rock and roll, pioneering recording techniques, improvisation and vaudeville playfulness.

Allan Moore's other work places the album within the countercultural context. He notes that the album 'represents an explicit attempt by The Beatles to align themselves with an unspecified 'hippie' position, coinciding with the growing protests over the USA's involvement in Vietnam, the rise of 'flower power' and the concomitant infatuation with Indian religions' (Moore 2001: 94)

This analysis, together with the remarks Moore makes in his detailed study of the album, in which he credits the work with 'the cultural legitimization of popular music' (Moore 1997: 62), suggest an end rather than a beginning, a reaction rather than a revolutionary starting point. The music of The Beatles, grounded in this early concept album with its extended format and assimilation of many different musical styles, moved from a pop singles market towards, according to Allan Moore (Moore 1997: 72), a more lucrative album market. Wagner (in Julien 2008: 90) is one of several commentators who point out that it is hard to anchor the piece within any clear or established popular, or indeed classical, musical framework. It may still not be seen as progressive in some definitions, however, Moore reminds us that 'of course Progressive Rock, as we came to know it did not exist then, and no band playing at the time would have identified themselves with that label except in the broadest of senses.' (Moore 1997: 21) The term continues to owe much to the benefit of hindsight.

Stephen Lambe's short and anecdotal study of the history of progressive rock, however, also seeks to place *Sgt Pepper* in a musical historical context. He too sees the work as both visionary and revolutionary (Lambe 2013: 15); Macan, in line with the arguments of his study, emphasises the connection with classical idioms.

> The practice of tying a series of songs together by using both a recurring melodic theme and a program – that is, a unifying idea or concept which is developed in the lyrics of the individual songs – can be traced back to the song cycles of early nineteenth-century composers such as Franz Schubert and Robert Schumann. (Macan 1997: 21)

Overall, *Sgt Pepper* was released into the middle of the Summer of Love. It provided for both a focus and a heritage for bands' work which was to follow and established a format which

was to be copied very widely. The work is not essentially a joyous piece, however: Macan sees it as containing 'self-conscious eclecticism, a mixing of many different styles (Macan 1997: 20), and despite demonstrating many of the characteristics of an example of a progressive rock, an extended concept, striking visual and musical content, a mixture of styles and a character basis, it was not defined as such at the time.

Two further highly-influential albums were released in 1967, Pink Floyd's *Piper at the Gates of Dawn*[40] and the Moody Blues *Days of Future Passed.*[41] Pink Floyd's work, which is far less structured than *Sgt Pepper*, was influenced by their UFO performances according to Hegarty and Halliwell (2011: 43), and too experimental to locate within the same symphonic, narrative and musical tradition as *Sgt Pepper*. The cover art is representational yet stylised, much in the *Sgt Pepper* form, but the work is far more of a soundscape than a narrative with some lengthy improvised passages.

The second important album, *Days of Future Passed*, came from The Moody Blues, a band which had developed from its roots in early-decade rhythm and blues. The album, released in November 1967, provided an account of a day in one individual's life. It has a cast of characters, children and pensioners, and was produced with a pioneering recording technique, the Deramic Sound System. It had a live orchestra, symphonic arrangement and extended instrumental introduction. Hegarty and Halliwell (2011: 43) point out that, whilst the album has definite psychedelic elements containing drug lyrics such as 'The smell of grass /Just makes you pass/Into a dream', and the cover art is true psychedelia, there is a time-based narrative strand, lacking in the other two examples considered, relating a clear story.

[40] EMI, May 1967.
[41] Deram, November 1967.

If *Sgt Pepper* marked the birth of the proto-progressive concept album then King Crimson's first album *In the Court of the Crimson King*[42] is seen, by Lambe, Macan and Stump at least, as a further, even more, significant turning point in the history of the music. The work was released two years after *Sgt Pepper* and the agreement of the three writers is important in that it highlights several features in common, these being the jazz influences, medieval imagery, distorted guitar playing, vocals and symphonic elements. Macan's summary of the album is, perhaps, the clearest and, in this case, most relevant in relating its musical and its narrative content to what was soon to follow:

> Both its melancholy minor-key passages, permeated by acoustic guitar and the Mellotron's symphonic colorings ("Epitaph") and its muscular polyrhythmic jazz-tinged stylizations dominated by alto sax and fuzz guitar ("21st Century Schizoid Man") and the medieval imagery and mystical undertones of the title cut greatly influenced later progressive rock bands as did the album's surrealistic, gothic cover art. (Macan 1997: 23)

The album only had five tracks; Macan asserts that what he calls 'the multi-faceted influence of Crimson's first album' led to other bands finding a similar style. He cites Yes and Genesis as particular beneficiaries of Crimson's breakthrough work (Macan 1997: 25) but it is also evident that Canterbury musicians were influenced in their work by the form of this album sometimes including just four or five extended tracks on their early LPs. This will be considered later in this thesis as the scale of the Canterbury scene is examined in detail.

Stephen Lambe's study builds on this, using the language of progressive rock itself as he emphasises the importance and watershed nature of Crimson's first album. He sees 'the gauntlet thrown down, it took a while for anyone to pick it up. Not that the world of

[42] Atlantic, October 1969.

experimental music was in any way quiet but the symphonic form of Progressive Rock remained largely in the cauldron brewing and not yet ready to be administered.' (Lambe 2013: 24). Paul Stump is less prosaic but he goes further in explaining the quite distinct importance of *In the Court of the Crimson King* as the 'discrete inauguration' of progressive style. Stump states:

> All the elements that characterise the genre's maturity suddenly fall into place. Jazz and blues influences, superficially equal partners, eventually are subsumed into a musical language of compositional rigour shaped by Western classical and symphonic thinking.' (Stump 1997: 43).

It is this album, rather than *Sgt Pepper*, that frequently finds definition as the first true progressive concept album which demonstrated the required qualities and styles.

Away from the output of albums, the particular classical influences demonstrated in Procul Harum's 1967 single 'A Whiter Shade of Pale', recorded on Deram, show more of the antecedents of progressive rock. Covach looks further at the classical background to this proto-progressive piece and how it is shaped. His comments apply more generally too:

> What was distinctive about the progressive rock movement that arose out of the British invasion scene, however, was an attitude of art-music "seriousness" – critics often called it pretentiousness – that many of these musicians brought to their music-making. Among the most ardent fans of progressive rock at that time, there was the perception that these musicians were attempting to shape a new kind of classical music – a body of music that would not disappear after a few months or weeks on the pop charts would be listened to (and

> even studied), like the music of Mozart, Beethoven and Brahms for years to come. (Covach 1997:4)

'A Whiter Shade of Pale' fuses jazz, rock, blues and classical influences taken from a J S Bach cantata. Richard Middleton's analysis makes links between the use of harmonic progression in baroque and rock music as exemplified in the single. More fundamentally still (1990: 30). Robert Walser makes an analysis which includes the work of groups as diverse as The Moody Blues, The Who, The Kinks and Emerson, Lake and Palmer and starts to question why classical music is used extensively by these groups. Walser concludes that 'prestige' is the most important answer. He also asserts that 'classical means have been used to expand the rhetorical palette-and social meanings-of popular music' (Walser 1993: 62).

Stump is rather more confrontational in his consideration of progressive rock's use of classical themes and techniques. He refers to the importance of one of the highest-profile combinations of the classical and rock repertoire, John Lord, Malcolm Arnold and Deep Purple's *Concerto for Group and Orchestra* [43] as "ill-starred" and cites others' adverse criticism of the work too (Stump 2010: 72). His commentaries, however, deal far more often, and far more importantly, with late 1960s rock as overtly progressive rather than nascent or proto-progressive. In discussing the 1960s, he writes:

> What followed was exemplary both of the burgeoning progressive genre's growing confidence and its artistic sensibility rocking up into a naïve, adolescent self-importance. Most importantly, it was a blatant public revelation of the dichotomy between the agendas of "heavy music" and what was to become Progressive. (A shotgun marriage between rock and orchestral voicings, paradigmatic of two ostensibly opposed musico-cultural positions,

[43] Harvest 1969.

> engagement with symphony orchestras was, however, rejected by more radical elements of Progressive as irredeemably bourgeois). (Stump 2010: 69).

Further evidence of classical music's influence on progressive rock musicians is offered by Macan who indicates how two forms of music, the nineteenth century genres of the multi-movement suite and the symphonic poem, exercised progressive rock musicians. Program music with its aims, Macan points out (1997: 42) of conveying a story, landscape or visual image, provides an example of these forms. Examples of progressive rock which followed this idea are plentiful. Instrumental sections of music became extended and were combined with vocal work to provide multi-movement rock suites which occupied entire sides of albums (Macan 1997: 42). Bands' enthusiasm for recording with symphony orchestras in early progressive rock from *Days of Future Passed* in 1967 to Nice's *Five Bridges Suite*[44] and Pink Floyd's early *Atom Heart Mother*[45] was an important, yet short lived, phenomenon but the symphonic structure remained (Macan 1997: 42).[46] Bill Martin links the 'legacy' of 'romantic classical music, including its complex counterpoint and harmony and its conceptual density' {Martin 1998: 113), to progressive rock but sees this legacy not in purely musical terms but also with and ideological link to the ethical and political.

It is clear that the links between classical and progressive rock suggest that in place of psychedelia came structure. Borthwick and Moy term psychedelia 'undisciplined' and suggest a complete break took place (Borthwick and Moy 2004: 57).

[44] Charisma 1970
[45] Harvest 1970
[46] Macan cites the continued use of the symphonic in Emerson, Lake and Palmer and Van der Graaf Generator among others.

Overall, the cultural significance of the mid- to late-sixties concept album may be seen in both the focus for the development of psychedelic rock it provided and also the way in which many different and distinctive musical styles and narratives could be gathered into an extended format with a significant visual contribution. The principal works were not a celebration of the 1967 Summer of Love but each demonstrated a feeling of disengagement from society and created characters and musical ideas using pioneering studio recording techniques.

The albums' legacy was, in part, the format and use of ideas derived from classical music. Allan Moore's study of *Sgt Pepper* gives yet another perspective on this when commenting on the album's use of classical musicians. He notes:

> The inability of the working-class band to resist the invitations of the educated musician replays, in a sense, the accommodations black US singers had made with a producer like Phil Spector. Perhaps the issue is less one of striving for legitimacy from below, than of easy annexation from above.' (Moore 1997: 74).

Whether the pressure to work with the classics was driven by a desire for prestige, the extent to which it might be seen as 'bourgeois' and how different bands made use of the genre and its practitioners may ultimately be a matter of perspective and hindsight. The concept albums highlighted provided particular examples of how progressive rock became a more fully-formed and recognisable musical idea.

### 1.7 Changes in Consumption

Richard Middleton takes an interesting standpoint in the early stages of his book on the progressive movement, drawing attention to the idea that the music and the counterculture it sometime sought to represent may not be as closely connected as many suggest. He asks 'how can the use made of elements and attitudes characteristic of "legitimate" music be squared with the counterculture's "oppositionalism"?' (Middleton 1998: 28). As concept albums became more common and more commonly accepted and the use of different musical sources within progressive rock became more evident, the consumption of the music began to change. Complex narratives, folkloric tales and medieval and supernatural characters – Hegarty and Halliwell show that progressive rock albums opened up cultural history as a 'resource' – dominated the concept works with their extended tracks and improvisations and the sale of rock albums starting to outsell those of singles in 1969 (Hegarty and Halliwell 2010: 75).

The idea of improvisation in progressive rock is contested.[47] Modern Canterbury bands, examples of which will be discussed in later chapters, are highly-skilled exponents. Macan argues that progressive rock is not a form of music which has supported what he sees as 'wholesale improvisation' (Macan 1997: 160). He extends this to suggest a 'mistrust' of progressive rock musicians towards improvisation over a chord progression. In the case of the Canterbury bands of the 1960s, elements of improvisational jazz and the structures of the pop

[47] Derek Bailey's engaging and detailed treatment of the idea of improvisation provides an interview with Steve Howe, guitarist with Yes. Bailey sees an 'improvisation principle' in rock music, a view that a performance is never entirely fixed. Howe gives the idea that long, improvised solos developed around 1967/68 and acted as a force of 'opening out' (Bailey 1992: 39). Instrumental breaks which drew on the techniques of jazz and Indian music as well as the blues are to be found in the work of The Wilde Flowers and early Caravan. Examples on the Wilde Flowers' eponymous first and only album show a clear sense of blues improvisation; Caravan's extended track 'Nine Feet Underground' is among the group's best-known extended tracks relying as it does on complex improvisation over a melody line. I adopt the idea that this is improvisation's guiding principle, a sense of constantly changing musical practice.

song, particularly in the cases of the work of The Wilde Flowers and Caravan, could be said to be at the heart of a new and distinctive sound.

This expression of this particular type of cultural history was to be particularly appreciated by what Macan refers to as ‘a subculture of highly educated young people’ (Macan 1997: 147). He points out that the musical and extra-musical references made by the progressive works were the substance of a ‘high culture’, unavailable to those from ‘a working class environment’. The market was, apparently, responding to an educated group of practitioners. Bands, notably here Pink Floyd, Genesis and King Crimson, were forming, of course, in colleges and universities as well as art schools through the 1960s and 1970s.

Established record labels, such as EMI and Decca, began to diversify with specialist ‘progressive’ imprints (Stump 2011: 61) and new labels such as Atlantic, Harvest, Charisma and Virgin provided patronage, according to Martin, (1998: 95) for emerging big-name bands such as Yes and King Crimson in their early work. Gatefold album covers with striking and psychedelic imagery, (the counterculture was, perhaps, never entirely left behind) became common and an integral part of the music package through the 1970s.

Macan and others, then, provide insight into the way in which the progressive taste public changed as the influence of the counterculture lessened. Macan refers to its devotees as ‘a genuine subculture’ (Macan 1997: 201) and a wider, apparently educated, literate and musically-aware, youth culture started to consume the music. Bands such as Yes, Emerson Lake and Palmer and Jethro Tull were filling arenas.

Radio consumption of music by audiences, previously fragmented in the United Kingdom by a wide variety of pirate radio stations, had been brought into line and formalised by the BBC in 1967. John Peel, presenter of the hugely-influential *Top Gear* on Radio 1, with its playlist almost entirely made up of album tracks, had spent time on the West Coast of America in the mid-1960s and, according to an interview with Paul Stump, pirate Radio London (Stump 2010: 137). The idea of transatlantic exchange, in particular the USA FM radio of the 1960s, was never far away. Television established more acts with *The Old Grey Whistle Test* from 1971 and, according to Stump (2010: 61), the student market flourished with live university and college events providing a commercial forum with bands to playing for educated young people.

The story of progressive rock as the 1970s began was to be told through specialist record labels, widespread large-scale live and media performance which tested the waters of audience taste and made use of complex instrumentation, technology and arrangements. The new supergroups such as Yes and Emerson Lake and Palmer released high-profile albums to waiting audiences who paid well to see the revenue-raising live versions. The drug-fuelled happenings of the counterculture no longer took place; the original devotees of psychedelia and early progressive rock were now alienated from the process of its growth and development.

### 1.8 Conclusion

In broad terms, British popular music shifted in emphasis from pop and folk to psychedelia in the mid-1960s. This and the fusion of the blues influence led to bands producing more extended work, sometimes based on the experience of drugs, but including a range of mythic

and supernatural characters. Bands such as Cream and Jimi Hendrix both pioneered this and also foreshadowed the forms of progressive rock by favouring more extended album productions above the single. Progressive rock music's development may be further understood by the insight provided by consideration of performance venues in the United Kingdom. These small clubs, whilst often short-lived, accommodated experimental, psychedelic and sometimes multi-media experiences which included the work of non-musicians, sometimes with art school influence and background. Canterbury may be situated in this development as the higher-profile bands that had formed there took the musical influence and musicians to London's major venues.

The music developed still further as a symbiotic relationship with the audiences was encouraged and the counterculture continued to provide a point of reference in this respect. Festivals opened the music to wider audiences, often in pastoral settings, and featured high-profile bands in some of their earliest performances. Small venues eventually gave way to larger arenas and economic circumstances changed; high-earning bands moved away, the taste public changed and the counterculture was no longer such an important point of reference.

The 1960s saw the development of both the concept performance, as evidenced in the multi-media events in the clubs, and also the concept album. Three major works were important in the Summer of Love; these fused different musical, including classical, styles and a range of narrative ideas and provided a legacy in terms of the musical, the visual and the extended format. In these works the principal features of progressive rock began to be demonstrated.

In line with the changes of venue, changes in musical consumption became evident as the decade changed from the 1960s to the 1970s. Progressive rock was developed in colleges and universities, including the University of Kent at Canterbury, and found audiences there too. The style and substance of the music had a basis in high culture and this was reflected in the audiences and location of events. Music radio and television also affected consumption. Progressive rock music entered the 1970s having left the values of the counterculture behind. The high-profile groups who were to carry the genre forward abandoned the voice of protest and developed the music as a complex commercial and cultural enterprise.

# Chapter 2

# Conceiving Scene: theories, debates and practices

## 2.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the extent to which the Canterbury music scene is supported by a sense of the city and/or finds its basis in a carefully-constructed myth.[48] Examples are drawn from the research evidence to discuss commentators' theoretical points and conclusions are formed regarding both the physical and virtual nature of the scene and how it may be best viewed as a scene of ideas which has been constructed by an increasingly sophisticated mediascape. By drawing on different commentators' points, new light is offered on historical data which has previously not been presented in this way and I pay attention to the extent to which the Canterbury music scene is a scene of ideas.

[48] It is convenient at this point to allude to Mark Duffett's working definition of myth as 'ways to tell an artist's story that satisfy the public. They need never actually have happened.' (Duffett 2012: 230)

The notion of a musical scene may be defined in both public and private terms; it may be limited in space and time or extend an influence far beyond these boundaries. A scene may exist in a state of economic co-dependency with its immediate location and its participants may develop a relationship with others nationally and internationally. The concept of the scene as a defining notion and provider of musical identity has been explored by a range of ethnographic writers from a number of standpoints. This stands at the centre of this thesis' analysis. Scenes are constructed on a number of different levels, perhaps most easily and most frequently understood as local, translocal and virtual as defined by Andy Bennett (2004). Bennett also provides a useful summary of the main commentators on musical scene considering the most informative and richest accounts of local music scenes to be those given in Bennett (2000 and 2004), Sara Cohen (1991), Ruth Finnegan (1989) and Barry Shank (1994) in his analysis of music scenes in Austin, Texas. To the views of these commentators can be added those of Straw whose comments on the idea of scene as a place of mediation, for example, also inform this chapter.

It is evident that in the creation of the Canterbury narrative much nostalgia has been involved in its construction by musicians, fans, academics and enthusiasts. The story has been greatly augmented through recent online activity by individuals and groups as fans have viewed the cultural and commercial value of the music and assessed it against other examples of the progressive rock orthodoxy. The mythology is frequently constructed by those who have had no direct involvement in the creative process.

I make extensive reference in Chapter 3 to the beat groups that were playing in the city in the mid-1960s and the relevance of these both to a wider rock community and to the history of

live music in Canterbury. Chapter 4 details the virtual construction of the scene and the mediascape that has been created to preserve and extend it.

Through this thesis I examine the extent to which the work of musicians local to Canterbury has led to the perception of both a genre and a number of claims concerning a characteristic sound; questions of economic co-dependency have also been raised. The implicit question of the interchangeability between the terms sound and scene remains, also, highly contested. The two terms are frequently used to mean much the same phenomenon. I share Bennett's view here that it is the idea of a Canterbury sound that perpetuates the mythscape and continues to attract fans to a shared image of Canterbury (Bennett 2004: 209). A sense of a Canterbury sound built on distinctive melodic and rhythmic structures, improvisation, overtly virtuosic playing and quirky self-reflexive lyrics which has assimilated different cultural and musical influences is offered through examples in this study.

Equally important is the view put forward by Connell and Gibson, and cited in my Introduction, that a sound is, more simply, derived from bands 'sharing bills and practice venues, and even musicians' (Connell and Gibson 203: 115) thereby rooting it squarely in the topography of a location. This is a viewpoint considered through the work of Nick Prior and local Canterbury examples later in this chapter. Adam Krims' work on reception and scenes makes a link between scene and style:

> Many scenes, of course, are about musical styles (as well as other things), such as the aforementioned grunge scene of Seattle, and the local spread of such styles is often accomplished through the drifting of musicians between bands, the developing enthusiasm of audiences for new approaches, or even some musicians cravenly copying what appears to be a successful formula. (Krims 2009, p407)

This is a convincing point of view. There is perhaps a sound but no clearly identifiable scene. The idea lends further weight to the notion of a recognisable and cohesive musical style. The movement, or 'drifting' of musicians between bands is certainly at the heart of the development of the bands in the mid-1960s.[49] Jack Ryder, a musician for whom Canterbury was a destination rather than a starting point, [50] and whose performance is considered later in this chapter, rejects the notion, however, that the city holds any kind of clear ownership of the sound:

> Canterbury has always been rather ambivalent about music within the city walls. There's no Canterbury sound, just Canterbury musicians but the Canterbury influence extends in all sorts of areas. (Interview September 18 2016)[51]

Just as Anderton has pointed out that the genre of progressive rock in general has frequently but erroneously been constructed as cohesive and free from other, symphonic and European, influences (Anderton 2010: 422), so the perceived sound of Canterbury may indeed sometimes be founded on a highly contested retrospective view. The prevalence of this view appears to be intensified by the point that both previously-archived and new material are more accessible and more open to comment than ever before.

[49] A particular example, and many could be cited, is the work of Richard Sinclair, whose musical career can be traced from The Wilde Flowers through Caravan to Hatfield and the North. His distinctive vocal style and narrative lyrics are quickly recognisable in all the bands.

[50] Geoffrey Richardson, another musician for whom the city was a destination, speaks of the attraction of Soft Machine and particularly Caravan whom he joined having arrived in Canterbury in July 1972 (Interview July 20 2016).

[51] In a further, somewhat contradictory, viewpoint in the same interview, Jack Ryder acknowledged a debt to the Canterbury sound in his film score *To Live and Die in LA* and the album track 'Wait'. Further discussion of the legacy of the perceived Canterbury Sound forms a later part of this chapter.

Online communities and individuals are able to author their own involvement in the story of both the sound and the scene; those musicians who were creating music in Canterbury fifty years ago, however, will be shown to want to present, preserve and curate the work and a particular view of the city[52] which is more fixed and rooted in real rather than imagined memory.

Above all, my work seeks to situate Canterbury popular music of fifty years ago within a broader cultural narrative as well as a context of the music business and in relation to a worldwide audience the size and composition of which could barely have been imagined at its outset.[53] Questions will be raised regarding the nature of popular music folklore, heritage and the emotional and affective connections musicians and fans have made with the city and the sound. It will become clear that the important role played by innovative local musicians, whilst evident and present, has been mediated and developed in communities of musicians that have been developed through movement to the translocal, transnational and most recently virtual playing platforms rather than remaining in a single defined location.

It is worthwhile turning to Andy Bennett here:

> Canterbury Sound fans look for other ways to collectively celebrate their common musical taste and thus forge the sense of 'fan community' which is deemed central to any music scene. In this sense, the city of Canterbury plays a crucial role. Thus, while physically

[52] Here I draw attention again in particular to Robert Wyatt's metaphor of Canterbury as a parallel to the Galapagos Islands with a musical homogeny distinctive and separated from all others (Interview with Gavin Esler, Canterbury April 4 2017) as well as Brian Hopper's curation of *Canterburied Sounds* on Voiceprint and the stewardship of Dave Sinclair's son, Nicholas Blow. Blow, according to my own interview with him (April 2016) and the view of *Kentish Gazette* writer Paul Crampton (interviewed April 11 2017), regularly takes Caravan tracks down from YouTube in order to discourage online fan narratives and prevent loss of income for the group.

[53] Whilst in essence a throwaway comment when the recorder had been turned off, Brian Hopper's idea that if The Wilde Flowers had known that people would still be discussing them fifty years later they would have played better indicates a particular view of the music at the time (Interview March 14 2016).

> removed from Canterbury, 'Canterbury Sound' fans effectively forge a sense of community through their collective construction of the city in musicalised terms, the online image of fans being informed by a shared image of Canterbury as an urban space that provided the necessary stimulus for the birth of the Canterbury Sound and which remains central to its 'spirit' (Bennett 2002: 91).

I make it clear from research evidence[54] that overseas visitors to the city in particular have in the past expected to find far greater physical evidence of the importance of the sound to the location. Both Andy Bennett (Bennett 2002: 89) and Matt Hills (Hills 2002: 90) write about the potentially disappointing experience of visiting a location the heavily mediated image of which has been widely shared, celebrated and disseminated. Canterbury, years later, continues to host a highly significant religious and cultural heritage, evidently. The presence of the Cathedral, celebrated in both musical and iconic terms[55] in the Canterbury mythscape, continues to draw what Matt Hills calls 'touristic pilgrimages' (Hills 2002: 144).

The physical images of Geoffrey Chaucer and Christopher Marlowe stand on the streets and lend their respective names to tourist attractions. The mythscape is heavily synergised with other cultural and religious aspects of the City; the cultural capital is heavily institutionalised. Whilst fans can visit the site of the Beehive, now a Chinese restaurant but with a mural of Robert Wyatt on one wall, the Foundry, the Drill Hall, now a modern community centre, and Tanglewood, part of the University of Kent's administration complex, there is no evident

[54] See in particular reference in Chapter 4 to visitors from other countries to local record shops. Andy Bennett also makes the point that the 'tourist gaze' in Canterbury is rarely drawn by the music (Bennett 2002: 96).
[55] Specifically, Richard Sinclair, again, in *Romantic Warriors 3,* the film dedicated to the Canterbury sound which will be further considered later in this chapter, and the cover art of *Canterburied Sounds* suggest this. Robert Wyatt further advocates a link between the sacred music of Canterbury Cathedral and the city's sound *(Late Junctions, at home with Robert Wyatt BBC* Radio 3 October 17 2017). I discussed the late Hugh Hopper's view with a close friend of his. Hopper rejected the church claim in favour of influences of Cage, Stockhausen, avant-garde jazz and Frank Zappa. (Interview Paul Crampton April 11 2017).

route for musical pilgrims of the type exemplified by Matthew Watkins and Daevid Allen in the podcast detailed in Chapter 4.

So far, this chapter has returned to a central theme of this thesis: the composition and nature of the collective construction of Canterbury in topographical, musical and virtual terms. I make it clear in Chapter 4 that online activity has provided much additional information and many of the opportunities to define and redefine the scene. This offers dual perspectives of real and imagined locations which are formed by those not directly involved in the creative process. The distinction between a sense of sound and the musicians who have created it is important and the city itself falls short of creating a route for those attracted by its musical heritage rather than religious or literary foundations. Fans who are drawn by the regular monthly podcasts have the opportunity to extend their ongoing influence over the scene through a virtual and visual information exchange, thereby both accessing a mediated transnational view and also claiming some ownership over the scene's construction from a position of anonymity.

All this adds further to a sense of the city as a place of musical importance. The view which has been constructed by many different online commentators who create a continuing narrative, a nexus for devotees of the Canterbury sound, both sustains the myth of a local Canterbury scene and also nourishes a new generation of fans. Commentators[56] write about Canterbury and its music with no notion whatsoever of the city's topography, nor do they feel a need to acquire one.

[56] In particular Macan (1997), Stump (2010) and Lucky (2000).

The remainder of this chapter considers the particular definitions of scene and the extent to which musical activity in Canterbury evidences those definitions. The work of popular music scholars as Shank, Straw, Prior, Cohen and Bennett is considered in some detail.

Questions of popular music heritage are examined as is the sense in which meaning has been ascribed to some particular locations. It will be seen that the work of scene theorists can be used to reflect upon and highlight aspects of musical life in Canterbury which is evidenced in the research. Straw's early academic definition with its particular focus on community, but generalised set of terms, provides a starting point and leads to his far more nuanced and detailed later examination of what may be found in a music scene. The more location-specific analysis of Nick Prior and case study approach of Austin, Texas, by Shank provide a basis for comparison. Equally, Cohen's vision of a clear reciprocal relationship between Liverpool and the music produced there in the 1960s provides further points of comparison for the events in Canterbury and East Kent at the same time.

The theoretical and analytical perspectives of Andy Bennett, especially those specific to the Canterbury Scene, are examined with reference to the research material. Above all, Bennett has taken the view that it is a mythscape which has, particularly latterly, provided the link between a perceived musical style and the urban space of its birth. Bennett has applied the view that whilst Canterbury sustains the role of anchoring the myth which defines a scene, principally in a virtual sense, there remains the entrenched preservationism to which he alluded in his early commentary.

Later commentary explores something of sense of a sound and the legacy of the original Canterbury 'scene' through reference to the work of contemporary music and musicians in

performance. There is also a recognition of how both academic and more popular writing is maintaining a connection between the city and a music with its roots fifty years ago.

### 2.2 The Nature of the Canterbury Scene

The use of the term scene has now commonly been accepted to encapsulate both a site within which popular music is produced and consumed and what Inglis (2011, p381) sees as a 'collective consciousness'. It may also be a force of transformation, susceptible to innovation, constant rewriting and local, translocal and virtual definition by participants. Whether the city of Canterbury has, or ever has had, the capacity to support a scene, to define a relationship between music produced and performed there, and the topography of the area, are at the heart of this research.

The idea of the Canterbury Scene has become a common currency with popular music commentators in order to locate a genre of music within a particular time. Evidence of the scene being spoken of at a local level during the time of its apparent beginnings in the 1960s is sparse. The generic construction of the Canterbury Scene is of most use when applied retrospectively and seen, perhaps, as an accepted set of signifiers with roots far more easily placed in sound than scene. This part of the chapter, therefore, continues to cite research evidence of scene in Canterbury to inflect the established theory and define how it has been constructed within a narrative of venues, musicians, commentaries, individual memories and, more recently, online activity.

I have already suggested that it is deeply disingenuous to cast music produced in Canterbury in the 1960s, and those musicians performing it, in the role of forces of the underground[57] and as existing in something of a musical time capsule which has retained a discreet Canterbury-based set of values over the last half century. Wyatt's Galapogos metaphor holds little sway over a group of bands for whom the mainstream was the goal. The Wilde Flowers was hardly an underground band; there was no 'underground scene', no countercultural connection, but rather a group of musicians for whom audiences in East Kent and then the clubs of London provided an incentive to play. Equally, there is little evidence to substantiate Paul Stump's assertion that 'Canterbury bands often struggled to convince urban promoters to host them. Gong were made for the role of urban festival band.' (Stump 2010: 100). The success of both Caravan and Soft Machine in London, Europe, Canterbury and in the media, mitigates against this. Whilst festival work was important to the bands and provided both contacts and influential material,[58] and accepting the point that Gong did not play in Canterbury until a festival at Mount Ephraim, just outside the city, until nearly forty years later,[59] the bands also had both college and club followings well beyond Canterbury.

The music can also be situated within a climate of historical change. The story of the counterculture and its embracing the forces of the psychedelic and the avant-garde has underpinned parts of this thesis. The principal bands, as has become clear, were motivated by musical developments in London and Europe, far beyond Canterbury; other, lesser-known and lesser-remembered, Canterbury bands of the type to be evidenced in Chapter 3 reflected

[57] Macan opines that both Soft Machine and Caravan 'sprang out of Canterbury's underground scene of the late 1960s (Macan 1997: 20). I find little evidence to support this.
[58] Caravan shared a bill with Frank Zappa at the Amougies Festival according to Macan (1997: 134) and Soft Machine assimilated the influence of Miles Davis, their labelmate. at a festival in France in 1969 (Interview Paul Crampton April 17 2017).
[59] According to Mike Howlett, Gong's bass player (Interview February 16 2016).

the rhythm and blues and rock orthodoxy of the time and moved, mainly, within East Kent in the clubs, pubs and village halls.

The importance of interaction within a site of musical cultural production and a perceived sense of local identity is important in any definition of scene. Finnegan and Cohen have both sought to foreground the importance of live music within sites defined as communities.

Shank, in particular, however, moves further to describe the idea of scenes producing transformations, constant changes set in opposition to the dominant culture in force (Shank 1994: 128). In narrating the significance of Austin, Texas as a cultural centre which constructed many differences from the mainstream, rendering itself 'a center of cultural possibility' (Shank 1994: 49), Shank is adopting an ethnographic framework building a picture of an exciting scene, a 'cultural synecdoche' (Shank 1994: 16) which foregrounds the city's clubs and music venues and produces a sense of inclusivity and a 'production of identity', which opposes the mainstream (Shank 1994: 128). He explains that what he sees as 'the constitutive features of local scenes' is most evident in what he calls 'semiotic disruption,' a 'display of more than can be understood.' This produces transformations within what he sees as 'dominant cultural meanings' but these are seen as 'momentary' (Shank 1994: 122). For Shank, the view of scene is one of a 'production of identity', an idea to which he returns of a constant change which 'repulses' the dominant culture (Shank 1994: 128).

Canterbury musicians, as has become clear, did not seek to provide a force of rebellion; many, including Robert Wyatt, embraced values of the commercial pop of the day. Some Austin performers headed for the ballrooms of San Francisco to find recognition and extend their musical skills. Shank identifies these musicians as 'moving west in search of a hip

community large enough to provide economic support for the professional musical expression of cultural difference' (Shank 1994: 50). Equally, Canterbury bands moved to other locations, London in particular, to find economic support and improved commercial prospects.

To reflect on Canterbury as a 'cultural synecdoche' may work in considering the history of the Church of England but it does not work in considering the history of late 1960s popular music. Shank's theory is rich in the trappings of a rock and roll scene which may seek to oppose the dominant culture.[60] Canterbury musicians, particularly those playing in the dance halls, community centres and East Kent night club venues were reinforcing a mainstream culture rather than seeking to disrupt it. It is evident from the comments and recollections of members of the beat groups and their audiences, though, that constructing a dynamic and transformative scene was not their aim.

The importance of proximity within a given locale is clear, however; it can enable the sharing of facilities and the cross-fertilization of styles between musicians as well as noting an emphasis on scenes being frequently self-defining. It is worth restating Bennett's point of view here:

> To summarise, we view a local scene to be a focused social activity that takes place in a delimited space and over a specific span of time in which clusters of producers, musicians and fans realize their common musical taste, collectively distinguishing themselves from others by using music and cultural signs often appropriated from other places, but recombined and developed in ways that come to represent the local scene. (Bennett 2004: 8)

[60] O'Connor, in an article which argues for the relevance of the concept of music scenes in five cities, argues that Shank's view of scene as producing 'momentary transformations from dominant cultural meanings' (Shank 1994: 122) is particularly suited to punk musicians. (O'Connor 2002: 228)

Again, the sense of scene as a created entity, a separate local phenomenon, rather than an idea of a set and stable community is significant here. Meaning and belief in the scene is created; self-definition, above all, is important. Comparisons between Liverpool, Austin, Texas and the community activity in Milton Keynes and Canterbury may fail on the principle of size and scale alone. Canterbury does not demonstrate a sense of a common musical taste as suggested by Bennett above; active construction of a scene drawing on influences from elsewhere and finding a synthesis and shared musical values in the city is not evident.

To create a further perspective on the city as a community in which heritage is reflected, the experience of Simon Langton Boys' School gained by Robert Ellidge, Pye Hastings, the Hopper brothers and Mike Ratledge, with its clear Cathedral connection[61] and academic and high-cultural values, reflects that of an upper-middle class community. The group of ex-Langton Canterbury musicians who formed The Wilde Flowers aspired to be a local dance band playing Rolling Stones, Beatles and rhythm and blues covers in The Beehive, The Foundry, Tofts nightclub in Folkestone and local village halls. They were influenced by beat groups such as The Rojeens as well as folk music, jazz and, later Indian and Indonesian music favoured by Brian Hopper.[62] They did not court a sense of otherness or embrace the oppositional. At the same time, in the mid-1960s, schoolfriends from Chartham, near Canterbury, formed the beat combo The Ways and Means. The two bands shared a bill on at least one occasion. Bands, now completely unknown, such as The Four Methods, The Runarounds and Kingpin were also channelling mainstream pop of the day and sharing the venues but, according to the lead singer of Ways and Means, viewing Canterbury no

[61] What Sara Cohen refers to as 'indigenous music-making' goes some way to site the influence of the Cathedral. It is an idea to which Richard Sinclair, Canterbury musician, in particular returns.
[62] Interview March 14 2016.

differently from Sittingbourne or Faversham[63] despite increasingly demanding evening playing commitments.

The University of Kent, following its establishment in 1965, provided a large venue for both high-profile bands[64] and local musicians such as The Wilde Flowers; equally, jazz evenings were produced in attempts to draw the local community to the campus.[65] Evidence of student groups formed at the University is sparse. The folk-rock group Spirogyra met at Kent in the late 1960s and claimed some commercial success with three albums; Steve Hillage met Caravan during his short stay at the University of Kent.

One of the principal loci for the musical practices in Canterbury in the mid-to-late-1960s, however, was the Technical College. This venue hosted Pink Floyd in March 1967 and Soft Machine's first performance in Canterbury of May in the same year. The Wilde Flowers performed one of their last live gigs at the College in April. It is in this particular location that elements of what Straw refers to as cross-fertilization' (Straw 1991: 373) and the appropriation of cultural signs from beyond the city, following Bennett above, become a little more evident. There is, however, little evidence here or elsewhere to suggest that the College formed the basis of a scene.

The translocal nature of a perceived Canterbury music scene is now understood. It is a particularly early example of the effects of this which demonstrates that Soft Machine drew

[63] Towns within a fifteen mile radius of Canterbury situated on the A2 towards London.
[64] According to Paul Stump, it was only the student unions of the Universities of Kent and Essex that made any profit from gigs in 1969 (Stump 2010: 61)
[65] Jazz and folk music was a common feature of community life in Canterbury in the 1960s with an annual festival at Kingsmead Stadium.

the cultural signs and musical influences from the performances in the London clubs,[66] particularly the UFO, which they shared with Pink Floyd in the early months of 1967 following their first European trip to Hamburg. Cross-fertilization of musical styles as Soft Machine returned from their London sessions with Pink Floyd, and later time spent in Paris and throughout France and touring with Hendrix in the USA, is clear. The band's return to what was considered to be their home city, as well as the story of The Wilde Flowers and week-by-week publicity relating to the local rhythm and blues bands was mediated, principally by the Kentish Gazette's 'Beat Scene' column.

Music in Canterbury in the mid-1960s borrowed influences from mainstream rock and roll and the psychedelic-infused pop of the London clubs. This was hosted to some considerable extent, but by no means entirely, by the city's educational establishments. Canterbury showed little evidence, according to musicians who played at the time and those who followed them, of curating its own musical activities into a common taste recognised by the community which might host it. Whilst the audience at the College gigs experienced the production of a spectacle,[67] the city remained uncelebrated as a scene. The local newspaper column 'Beat Scene' was germane to the earliest mediascape, however. The journalists, whilst anonymous, were clearly young and knowledgeable fans of local music and the musicians who were producing it, frequently encouraged their readers to be proud of locally-formed bands who returned to Canterbury to play following London gigs. Soft Machine formed in Dulwich and played only outside their perceived home city but were welcomed home in the 'Beat Scene' of May 13 1967. The column frequently gives a sense of the 'range of musical practices'

[66] In particular The Roundhouse where they performed with Hendrix (King 1994) and Pink Floyd with whom they had shared bills since late 1966 (O'Dair 2014: 70).

[67] Sara Cohen sees a sense of Collective Creativity in Liverpool events in which live performance forms a unifying force between musicians and performers. Evidence from local Canterbury reviews suggests this is not uncommon in the city (Cohen 1991: 41).

(Straw 1991: 373) in evidence in Canterbury in the mid-1960s combining news of West Coast surf-influenced bands such as Ways and Means with details of the College gigs.

Will Straw's very broad early theoretical definition of scene is of limited use in analysing musical practices in Canterbury. Straw's distinction between a scene and 'older notions of a musical community' (Straw 1991: 373) implies the difference between the geographically specific and a 'cultural space in which a range of musical practices coexist.' (Straw 1991: 373). Whilst it is difficult wholly to disapply the perceived Canterbury music scene of the 1960s from his perspective of the 'processes of historic change occurring within a large international music culture' (Straw 1991: 373), the view could clearly be applied to any urban centre. The analysis lacks nuance and detail, relying, rather, on very loosely defined notions of 'coalitions' and 'alliances' which need to be maintained rather than clear cultural practices. This is a highly fluid construction of a music scene. Keith Negus points out that Straw's early article on scenes 'affords relatively little indication of the dynamics that might be involved' and his view implies little more than people forming musical taste groupings around different genres (Negus 1996: 23).

Straw's later article, which examines 'Some Things A Scene Might Be' (2015), offers greater specificity, however. Straw is validating his narrative with clearer references to defined and identifiable places, and provides a framework of applied perspectives which includes reference to infrastructure of a developing scene, envisaging 'applied proactivity and engagement with objects and artefacts' (Straw 2015: 479) to include written materials such as fanzines. There is no evidence at all of fanzine activity produced within Canterbury. *Facelift* did not exist until 1989, was not produced in the city at any point and, most importantly, its content led its readers towards the rewritten mytholological and preservationist scene

viewpoint put by Andy Bennett above (Bennett 2009: 483). Straw's 'scene as space workplace' (Straw 2015: 479) found its nearest representation in the 1960s in the Kentish Gazette's 'Beat Scene' column. Whilst significant, this was irregular, hosted no reader input and was frequently to be found on the same page as a review of a classical concert in the city. The 'Beat Scene' column is not included at all in the newspaper after late 1969. The University of Kent's *Incant* newspaper also presented student reviews of gigs and albums but on an infrequent basis.[68]

Straw's article provides further theoretical framework templates of scene with which to consider the nature of 1960s Canterbury music making. He sees the importance, as is common, of a physical definition, a given locale which is recognised, an idea of physical proximity and a sense of 'pulling together cultural phenomena in ways which heighten their visibility and facilitate their circulation to other places' (Straw 2015: 478). It has been demonstrated that bands such as The Wilde Flowers and the rhythm and blues combos played both in Canterbury and throughout South and East Kent; the more prominent Canterbury bands played only irregularly in the city focusing their efforts instead upon performances in London, elsewhere in the UK and in Europe. There was no clear and identifiable space to act as a locus for what Straw sees as the two apparently conflicted forces of 'dynamism and conservation' (Straw 2015: 483). Venues such as the Beehive, Drill Hall and Foundry hosted a variety of bands; the colleges and universities presented both local and national musicians. None sought to curate a scene which showed any kind of deterministic relationship, imagined or otherwise, between the city and the music.

[68] The writing here has a more opinionated, less inclusive, quality as indicated earlier: 'Caravan's weakness, as always lies in their lack of vocal ability. Not one of them has a particularly striking voice as the singing tends to sound weak' (*Incant* November 4 1970).

In addition, there is no evidence of bands recording in Canterbury during the 1960s. In Straw's terms, any cultural phenomena (Straw 2015: 278) which were generated in the city were not drawn together and circulated by a studio or local record label in the same way that Sara Cohen details the work of Liverpool musicians[69] or even in the same way as recording facilities were shared in the nearby Medway music making in the 1970s and 1980s.[70] *The Kentish Gazette* of June 24 1965 provides details of a new recording studio in Canterbury to be housed in the Beehive Club and available for the creation of demos at three guineas per hour. The Wilde Flowers were expected to be amongst the studio's first clients but there is no evidence of their using the space. Live recordings were made in the Foundry and elsewhere but not curated into anything which sought to provide paradigm examples of a Canterbury scene until the Voiceprint series in 1994.

Straw's article moves between the theoretical and the applied but its strength lies in providing a sense of the dual importance of physical location and the action of participants to create a scene. Canterbury undoubtedly demonstrated social interactions in the performances at the Beehive, the gathering of rhythm and blues fans in the halls and the London-like performance experiences at the Technical College. A house in St Radigund's, within the city walls, provided a creative space for art college students as well as, at times, Steve Hillage, Geoff Richardson of Caravan and the members of Spirogyra. There is no sense, however, that the Canterbury scene was consciously curated, retained, or was deemed as what Straw calls 'a space of traversal, acceleration and deceleration', taking an active and dynamic role in defining its own progress with the aid of commodification or other related cultural symbols or activity (Straw 2015: 482). Canterbury welcomed the performances which brought with them

[69] Young bands in Liverpool were self-promoted by labels in the city such as Probe Plus; tapes were mastered in Liverpool but cut in London (Cohen 1991: 111).
[70] There existed in the 1960s a single Medway studio which circulated music produced there. (Collins and Snowball 2014: 36)

a sense of the London clubs and these were mediated by local and student journalism. Any sense of infrastructure beyond the venues is limited and the translocal connections of the high-profile bands suggests that Canterbury's ability in the 1960s to create, sustain and spread what Straw deems the 'cultural activity' (Straw 2015: 478) was not linked to any particular geographical locale.

Nick Prior's 2014 article, based in Reykjavik, examines local music making in terms of musical practices and the relationship between the local and the national. The locus of the article in recognisable and common musical practice draws attention to aspects of scene and locality which are important to understand. Here the desire of musicians in a city to construct differences rather than similarities in their work, to point out the creative difficulties within the infrastructure, should be emphasised. His work, like that of Straw, is concerned with the dynamism of a perceived scene (Prior 2014: 82). He grounds his research further in the nature and folklore of Iceland and the day-to-day lives of musicians. Prior's particular focus is on the locale of Reykjavik city centre and the role it plays in generating creative differences whilst sharing facilities, particularly during a local festival. Here again is evidence that cross-fertilization of styles between bands is a feature of scene and that the idea of marketing the product via 'cultural entrepreneurs' is an important consideration (Prior 2014: 88). Prior's article usefully links musical spaces with everyday musical practices whilst acknowledging that 'every scene has its own history and reputational goods, its own relationship to place, its own sonic colours and textures.' (Prior 2014: 88). It is a commentary that, above all, conceptualises social space and proximity between bands.

Relationships between members of 1960s Canterbury bands are demonstrably close. Bands frequently shared personnel[71] and gigs involved both the more experimental and avant-garde Canterbury bands and the beat combos. Canterbury could very easily claim to be at the centre of a network of musicians. Musical practice in the city and, particularly, beyond was robust and can be evidenced.[72] The sense of a creative network, one of Prior's particular organising ideas, (Prior 2014: 81) is important. There is, however, an occasional view in the research that the power of the band's identity, when rooted in a creative network, can allow for personnel changes without affecting the quality of the music. Jack Ryder, leader of the contemporary Canterbury Quartet, looks at progressive rock in general and Canterbury music in particular in a straightforward way:

> A lot of it is down to its being about the music and the playing and the quite technical aspects of the music and the way that if the keyboard player leaves you can get another keyboard player who can play those tricky parts and the band carries on. Everybody in the band is dispensable. The band's identity is the thing, the individual members aren't. (Interview September 11 2016)

Separating the music from the musicians, the bands' identities from their musical output is an unpredictable exercise. Robert Wyatt put forward the view that The Wilde Flowers at the time of members leaving to form Caravan 'are impossible to assess objectively. They are changing a lot and I am sure they will make it.' (*Kentish Gazette* May 13 1967). They didn't play as The Wilde Flowers in public again. Changes in the musical styles of the high-profile

[71] Sara Cohen also stresses the importance of this. She sees movement between bands as a 'mythology', an important sense of shared backgrounds (Cohen 1991: 38).
[72] I draw particular attention to the Sakamoto family tree described in Chapter 3.

bands as a result of changes of personnel were evident,[73] however, and these were generally unrelated to any sense of location. Nick Prior's particular emphasis is on musical practices 'embedded' in the city (Prior 2014: 89) amongst musicians who share facilities and audiences and who may wish to construct differences rather than similarities in their work. The locale in his research constitutes more than a backdrop.

The perspective offered here is, however, more readily applied to the local beat groups in Canterbury and East Kent than the activities of Soft Machine, Caravan and Hatfield and the North. Bands such as The Four Methods, Kingpin and particularly The Ways and Means, the only band of this type of which anything appears to be historically recoverable, regularly shared concert billing, played in pubs, village halls and larger venues such as Dreamland in Margate.[74] The question of locale remains. It is difficult to claim that the beat bands' work reflected the particulars of their surroundings in any notable way as they preferred to offer popular music aligned to the charts so as to establish a broad audience base. There is a regular co-economic relationship with the locations and a sense of proximity, however.

A sense of topography is given in the early work of Caravan who, despite regular gigs in London clubs, retained a base in Graveney Village Hall, on the North Kent Coast, about ten miles from Canterbury, and created *The Land of Grey and Pink* to reflect the characteristic light in the Thames Estuary and *Blind Dog at St* D*unstan's* to celebrate an area of the city. Significantly, despite an apparent connection with clearly-recognisable locations, music

[73] Particular examples might include the demonstrable change in keyboard style when Steve Miller took Dave Sinclair's place for Caravan's fourth album *Waterloo Lily* and the movement away from a clear folk influence to a far more electronic, rock style. The Kentish Gazette reported 'Pye Hastings' verdict was that the band had changed but the sound is not really very different. We are still Caravan, a more funky Caravan perhaps, but we're basically still the same' (*Kentish Gazette* October 1 1971).

[74] Interview with Les Stanvovich April 20 2016.

associated with the city was never recorded there. Brian Hopper and Robert Wyatt curated very early recordings in London into the *Dalmore Road Sessions*[75] but there is no deterministic relationship here between the locale, Honor Wyatt's home in Dulwich, South London, and the work which features Hopper and Wyatt in a free improvisation session.

Prior's article constructs a sense of scene in a given location. Research is usefully grounded in the lives of musicians and those involved in the creation of musical activity. The music created by the musicians of Reykjavik is seen to value 'experimentalism, the unusual and the progressive with a claim to its own authenticity' (Prior 2014: 88). Clearly, there is a strong sense of Canterbury here. Canterbury musicians, particularly those in Soft Machine and especially following the influence of Hugh Hopper, celebrated the avant-garde in performances throughout the UK and Europe. Equally, the idea of scene that is evoked by Prior is based in 'lived practices' (Prior 2014: 89) and recognises that each paradigm example will combine people and space in a different way. A creative network was certainly able to have been identified in Canterbury as musicians may have moved between different bands and some lesser-known bands evidence common musical practices by having shared local venues and events. The relationship between the local and the national and the need to commodify a product was accepted by higher-profile Canterbury musicians who drew at times on the topography of the area yet accepted the opportunities that London studios and clubs offered, delivering innovative performances. With hindsight, it can be seen that the work of Soft Machine in particular valued the experimental and that fans have historically ascribed the music a degree of authenticity whilst equating the musical activity with a sense of scene. The mythscape has grown as that experimental and avant-garde approach has continued to be celebrated and associated with the city.

[75] To be found, in particular, on *Canterburied Sounds* Volume 4.

Whilst Sara Cohen's detailed study provides, perhaps, some relevant forms of comparison and a means of comparing the scene in Liverpool with the situation in Canterbury in the 1960s, she does not provide a theoretical perspective in the same way as in the articles by Driver or Prior. Her emphasis is on the processes of music making in Liverpool, the nature of its participants and, in particular, the social relationships associated with this (Cohen 1991: 7).

The activities of the City of Liverpool stand distinct from the type of musical activity occurring in the South East, and Cohen is keen to stress how the nature of Liverpool as a transatlantic port rendered it particularly 'susceptible to American cultural trends' (Cohen 1991: 12). The scene that she describes is contemporaneous with the production of music in Canterbury in the 1960s but it shared few of its distinguishing points. Her vision is particularly of a reciprocal relationship between the music and the location (Cohen 2007: 35) and of the identity of the area being strongly linked with audiences who share a socio-cultural background and also share allied art forms such as fanzines and poetry (Cohen 1991: 40).[76] The Liverpool music scene she describes makes a defined contribution to what she sees as the life of the city, its 'cityness' (Cohen 2007: 36).

These ideas are scarcely recognisable in the creation of music in Canterbury in the 1960s. Whilst the city clearly occupies a geographical location between London[77] and Europe, it lacks size, scale and the strategic importance of Liverpool as a centre of international trade and influence. The energy gained through live performances, however, and the uniting of

[76] The publication in 1967 by Penguin Books of *The Mersey Sound,* a collection of the work of Liverpool poets Adrian Henri, Roger McGough and Brian Patten provided a link between the music and mainstream poetry. It has sold over half a million copies to date and remained in print for more than fifty years.

[77] Both Liverpool and Canterbury bands experienced a relocation to London as a career move. According to Cohen, it was considered a cliché for bands to do so as soon as they had a deal (Cohen 1991: 129).

audiences in a musical spectacle has already been made clear. The musical and cultural innovation provided by The Beatles, the many small bands they inspired and other high-profile Liverpool groups, however, and their proclivity to associate themselves so freely worldwide with the city of their formation renders Liverpool and the music that Merseyside provided a particularly strong factor in the maintenance of the 'cityness'. Canterbury bands were slow to cast themselves in the role of ambassadors and representatives of a dynamic musical collective of the type related by Sara Cohen's account of Liverpool in the 1960s. This implied relationship came much later for Canterbury musicians. Interestingly though, the message that was being spread via the Canterbury fan magazine *Facelift* that the bands who had formed and played there had made a clear and distinct contribution to progressive rock history started to be expressed, at the start of the 1990s, at much the same time that Liverpool began to commodify the 1960s experience of The Beatles.[78]

Clearly, the sense of a local music scene in a co-dependent relationship with its surroundings in the mid- to late-1960s in Liverpool is strong and clearly evidenced. Cohen suggests that the more recent, that is early 1990s, construction of Beatles as tourist attraction derives from the 1960s fans growing into city councillors (Cohen 1991: 13). The same cannot be said for Canterbury, although the renewed sense of the importance of the music occurred at much the same time.

[78] The marketing of The Beatles' legacy is examined in some detail by Kruse (2005) who experiences a narrated Beatles tour in Liverpool referring to 'The Commodification and Representation of a Beatles Landscape'(Kruse 2005: 91) and acknowledges that experience of the real landscape gave the tour guests 'shape to internal landscapes of fantasy and personal narrative.' (Kruse 2005: 94)

## 2.3 The Scene and the Sound

The work of Andy Bennett has provided a theoretical touchstone throughout this thesis. His arguments linking musical styles with particular urban spaces via a mythscape,[79] which has been constructed, in Canterbury's case in particular, since the mid-1990s (Bennett 2002: 87), indicate the importance of the retrospective viewpoint, especially that associated with both print and online media. Bennett often uses the term Canterbury Sound in order to engage with the way in which a 'network of globally dispersed fans'(Bennett 2002: 90) defines itself, or started to define itself through electronic media years after the performance of the original bands.

The recently-produced documentary film which seeks to chart the creation and influence of the Canterbury musicians, *Romantic Warriors 3*, takes a chronological stance and contrasts the viewpoint of Caravan musician Pye Hastings, the idea of the sound as a retrospective journalistic construct, with that of other, mainly European, musicians who identify specific musical examples. Just as Sara Cohen evidences that in Liverpool the 'Mersey Sound' was a broad definition,[80]so opinions of the composition of a Canterbury sound are represented differently according to a range of bands and commentators. Bennett and Peterson's later work takes the view that the sound itself is best judged in terms of the work of Caravan and Soft Machine in particular, also describing the term Canterbury Sound as a journalistic expression that was used in the late 1960s and then forgotten until the establishment of the Calyx website in 1999 (Bennett and Peterson 2004: 208-209).[81]

[79] Defined in an early work as 'Decontextualised information…recontextualized by audiences into new ways of thinking about and imagining places.' (Bennett 2002: 89)

[80] Cohen points out that 'several people proclaimed their ability to distinguish Liverpool bands from non-Liverpool bands. Yet when I enquired as to the characteristics of that sound each gave a different answer pointing to a particular quality of voice, use of keyboards, rhythm and other factors.' (Cohen 1991: 14).

[81] This website started to draw fans together to establish the virtual community detailed in Chapter 4 of this thesis. Bennett and Peterson also note that Calyx recognised "a certain Englishness" and "a uniquely English

The most recent exploration of the idea of the Canterbury Sound was made in October 2017 at a day conference in Canterbury. Adopting a working definition of the Sound as having an affinity for experimentation, distinctive chord progressions and jazz allusions in a rock music format, the proceedings of the event demonstrated both a musical understanding and an organising concept for fans who attended. The term 'scene' was regularly used as synonymous with 'sound' and both the cohesiveness of this and the sense in which the scene has been adopted as a kind of psychological reality long after the event was frequently discussed. The particular combination of fans, few of whom were in Canterbury in the 1960s, were authoring their own involvement in the narrative. They shared memorabilia in a real, rather than the far more frequent and frequently-documented virtual, sense. This, together with recollections and views of past and contemporary musicians highlighted, above all, the nature of the scene.

The contribution made to the event by live music was also notable. Performances by Jack Hues and The Quartet, the stage name of Jack Ryder, the Canterbury electronic musician Koloto, modern progressive Canterbury band Lapis Lazuli and a headline set by SoupSongs playing the music of Robert Wyatt both demonstrated the heritage value of the Canterbury Sound and the extent to which its legacy, the shared values it is considered to create, is now found in the work of local musicians. Each of the bands has a strong Canterbury connection: Lapis Lazuli formed in the city but play there comparatively rarely. Koloto, the professional name of Maria Sullivan, sister of Lapis Lazuli's bassist; a new Canterbury sibling connection, has her work frequently included in the *Canterbury Sans Frontieres* podcasts. I want to pay attention to the Quartet and the Soupsongs.

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lyrical and vocal content" as identifiable factors of the music's composition (Bennett and Peterson 2004a: 209).

Jack Ryder's ambivalence towards the idea of a Canterbury sound has already been indicated in this chapter. He and his musicians presented *ROTE-Thru*, commissioned by Canterbury's *Sounds New Festival*, [82] which combined words and music in an exposition of free jazz which connects, in particular, with the sound of early Soft Machine. This draws, according to Ryder, on the influences of Ornette Coleman[83] in much the same way. Ryder's music, like the early work of Soft Machine,[84] also shows the influence of Miles Davis. He has a view of the relationship between his role as a composer and the performing musicians:

> Your job as a composer is to get out of the way of great musicians. The first two Quartet albums have some really interesting jazz experiments in a harmonic and melodic sense which you can definitely attribute to the Canterbury Scene. We don't have a Hammond Organ, the distorted Hammond Organ was always the sound of the Canterbury Scene.
>
> (Interview September 20 2016)

His comments about the work presented at October's conference reveal a further sense of connection. Rejecting the idea of a Canterbury genre as mythology, Ryder identifies the importance of Canterbury's Orange Street Music Club[85] as a means of drawing audiences to create the type of exciting live performances which would have been found in the Beehive and the Foundry some fifty years earlier. The influences of classic free jazz, pop and progressive rock and the link between the Quartet's music and the infrastructure and

[82] An event hosted regularly each year within the city to highlight avant-garde and contemporary local music in particular. A twentieth anniversary festival, in 2017, which was due to mark the Canterbury music scene of the 1960s and 1970s, to be curated by John Harle, was abandoned through lack of funding. (Interview March 20 2017).

[83] Ornette Coleman (1930-2015) was an American jazz saxophonist. Macan, and others, cite his influence on the early music of Robert Wyatt (Macan 1997: 147).

[84] Soft Machine shared a stage with Davis at the Amougies Festival in 1969.

[85] Hosted in a vintage ballroom in mid-Canterbury, usually on a monthly basis, the Club features contemporary local and visiting musicians specialising in jazz and avant-garde with dj sets by Matthew Watkins in his alter ego as Professor Raphael Appleblossom.

expectations of the modern city suggest a deterministic relationship which evidences a link between locale and sound produced within it.

Soupsongs, an eight-piece band whose members also play frequently with other high-profile musicians, specialise in recreating the music of Robert Wyatt. Although not a tribute band in the more popular sense, it has been assembled with Wyatt's support through his musical collaborator Annie Whitehead to reinterpret, rather than reproduce, his work. The band provides access in a lineup which is led by trombone and includes a rhythm section, saxophones and three singers[86] to the canon of Wyatt's work.

Robert Wyatt, despite his University of Kent honorary degree, has not lived or performed in Canterbury for many years. His perceived status as something of a founding father of the Canterbury Sound as a member of Wilde Flowers, Soft Machine, a soloist and frequent guest musician on others' work, assures his status and ability to draw interest. This stands, however, as something more substantive than the examples of preservationism formed by curated recordings and internet activity cited by Andy Bennett (Bennett 2009: 483). Wyatt's music is here being culturally positioned for a modern audience rather than merely experiencing a redistribution. Annie Whitehead explained something of the idea:

> There are quite a few people doing covers of his [Wyatt's] stuff and he feels like they're doing a kind of surface thing. When you get underneath it, it's very difficult and extremely detailed. Maybe that's why he's nervous. It's enormously complicated rhythmically. It's so difficult. You've sometimes got two different keys going on, two different times happening 4/4/and 5/4. I started doing his stuff in different ways. My band are all incredible musicians

[86] At the event in Canterbury the band was joined on a one-off basis by Geoff Richardson of Caravan.

> so when things do change and it feels like the right thing, we go with it. (Interview May 17 2016)

The need to be highly competent, versatile and innovative is now evident for Canterbury musicians. Much of the material presented at the event in October 2017 was taken and rearranged from Wyatt's 1974 *Rock Bottom* album, a work with no Canterbury connection and a strong autobiographical basis including a tribute to his partner Alfreda Benge, This may refocus the discussion towards Jack Ryder's somewhat arcane view suggested earlier in this chapter that there is no Canterbury Sound, simply Canterbury musicians. Certainly, Jennifer Maidman, Soupsongs' guitarist, resident of East Kent, emulates Wyatt's slightly characterless estuarine tenor singing voice in a way that suggests close attention to the original recordings.

Soupsongs' sound, however, does not evoke a sense of the Wilde Flowers' rhythm and blues,[87] the free keyboard-driven jazz of early Soft Machine, nor the jazz rock of Caravan but it creates a newly-formed sense of nostalgia organised around what may be a fictive construction of the importance of Robert Wyatt's music to Canterbury and its relevance to a sense of scene for a modern appreciative audience whist retaining the idea of the preservationism to which Andy Bennett referred (Bennett 2009: 483).

This is both a retrospectively-gathered and dynamic way to evoke and develop the characteristic detail of the music. Some of Bennett's most recent writing cites DeNora 'on the propensity of music both to link individuals with their past and to emotionally ground them in the present' (in Bennett and Janssen 2016: 1). It is very much a constructed evocation of the sound, a celebration of the work of Robert Wyatt, albeit distanced from his association with

[87] Brian Hopper has been a member of Soupsongs since its inception. His presence on the evening implies more than fifty years of continuity. Hopper's jazz-infused tenor saxophone breaks were greeted with great enthusiasm.

Canterbury, presented to a contemporary audience with the vivacity and excitement of a live performance.

Canterbury's scene, whilst it has been established that it demonstrates some sense of local integrity with musicians and venues organised in a cultural space with an awareness of audience needs and interaction between the groups of musicians, can be understood as a translocal construction as indicated here with the benefit of considerable hindsight. Above all, however, the sense of the Canterbury Sound as a phenomenon whose identity is constantly being rewritten and redefined as fans have engaged in creating and recreating 'a quintessential 1960s rock scene' (Bennett 2009: 483), and via a mediascape that has been developed long after the event, is particularly strong.

The cultural narratives of music, print and online media and occasional performance have been drawn together to produce the scene that those who hold what Bennett called the 'DIY preservationist sensibility' (Bennett 2009: 483) want and which is viewed via a carefully-constructed view of the city, and, perhaps, the sound which needs no basis in the real whatsoever.

Curated memories and recordings which continue to be circulated and shared via online media, including podcasts, have allowed an ongoing connection to the city and its apparent scene. The dialogic nature of some of the media allows comparison with music without a Canterbury origin. Participation in the virtual scene may be generationally based but online anonymity does not make this clear. The importance of an affective relationship, an emotional connection, with the city is defined by a sense of musical heritage rather than a series of locations.

Canterbury remains a nexus. As Bennett pointed out, it provided and continues to provide the anchoring role for the constructed myths which define the scene (Bennett 2002: 88). Bennett's work was published in 2002, long before social media and regular podcasting and foregrounded the idea of the 'active audience' (Bennett 2002: 93). Self-evidently, participants in the scene writing that was undertaken mainly through website communication at the time of the article were providing many different narratives and making their own links with the music. The notion of 'Canterburyism', however, Andy Bennett's conceptual link between the music and the city (Bennett 2002: 96), whilst it may continue to remain set in the holding form of the *Canterburied Sounds* compact discs and now online, is rarely articulated by individuals or businesses within contemporary surroundings.

Overall, Bennett's more recent writing, in particular, develops the narrative of the Canterbury scene as a 'scene of ideas' (Bennett 2004: 217), a fictive construction rather than a stylised set of venues and musicians. His analysis is not one of local music makers and live performances but of a musical heritage that is being claimed by those with a view to preserve a set of musical values. An emotional connection with the scene is maintained as participants construct the continuing story and seek authenticity via social media, in particular responding to others in real time.

**2.4 The Canterbury Brand**

A recent paper in the *Journal of Popular Music Studies* revisits the music scene in Austin, Texas. Just as Barry Shank lauded Austin as a musical 'center of cultural possibility' in the 1960s (Shank 1994: 49), so Andrea Jean Baker shows music in the city to 'play a role in the

production of individual, collective and local identity.' (Baker 2016: 338). The article is a combination of local and cultural history and qualitative data analysis indicating a similar methodology to this thesis.

Assimilating the framework of UNESCO cities of music[88], the work applies a four-point perspective to the idea of the fluidity of music scenes and how smaller, in this case United States, cities may meet certain stated criteria. The key areas which inform research into the music cities paradigm are i) the political economy of the city including the financial value of the music, ii) the way in which cities use the term 'music city'[89] and accredit and brand themselves as such, iii) 'city twinning', alliances with other music cities, iv) the geography of music scenes, (Baker 2016, p336). Whilst Canterbury does not reflect upon itself as a "music city" (and neither do my commentators nor interview respondents), this theoretical framework is of interest.

Cross-reference to Canterbury in the 1960s needs to be approached with considerable care and qualification. Any suggestion of a homological relationship between major US music cities and Canterbury is, initially at least, problematic. However, both Baker's research and my own findings suggest, the links between a local music culture and a sense of place as well as indicating sites and sounds associated with the 'authentic' and 'innovative' (Baker 2016: 342). The article contributes to an understanding of the importance of self-branding, a quality barely embraced by the first Canterbury bands despite its attempted creation by *Kentish Gazette* journalists evidenced in Chapter 3 as the music became both innovative and

[88] These cities include Liverpool and Glasgow in the UK; there are no USA cities on the list. (Baker 2016, p335)
[89] The criteria to become a full UNESCO city of music include an excellent background in music making, education, community involvement, music heritage and regular high-profile events of local and international significance. (Baker 2016, p335)

original.[90] As the scene has developed its local, translocal, international and virtual dimensions to the extent that modern-day Canterbury musicians may perform in all of these, the sense of a brand has become an attractive lure and one that is endorsed, in particular, by social media for whom the terms Canterbury Sound and Canterbury Scene hold an all-inclusive quality.

The mediascape is both ongoing and speculative[91] as further detail is added and included, and the heritage is written and rewritten. The Canterbury scene viewed over the last fifty years has generated little employment and, overall, has not drawn tourists to the city in any significant numbers to enjoy the culture of its music.[92] The exchange of music facilitated by much more recent online recommendations and distribution, on the other hand, generates consumption of the work of many bands and artists who enjoy a Canterbury branding, fluid as that may be. Innovation and originality are mediated within that brand,[93] which will attract those for whom the scene extends far beyond topographical boundaries.

There is no evidence of city twinning as such in the Canterbury scene despite sustained interest in the music in Europe and Japan in particular. As shown, the city is not

[90] Brian Hopper's recollections suggest that innovation and originality in the music of The Wilde Flowers was important at the time. He told me that 'It wasn't until it started to be recognised that we were doing something a bit different from all the other bands that we got a bit of a following and people started to think of it as something which was a little unique to Canterbury and that probably set the germ of this idea of the Canterbury sound, scene, whatever you like to call it.' (Interview March 14 2016).

[91] Mark Duffett examines this in detail in relation to cult texts (Duffett 2012: 211).

[92] Connell and Gibson consider that music traditions in particular can be responsible for the alterations of places in this way (Connell and Gibson 2003: 18).

[93] Here I again cite as an example the music of Lapis Lazuli, mentioned earlier in the chapter, a band formed in Canterbury ten years ago whose work includes what might be seen as an archetypal progressive mixture of jazz, funk and world music presented in extended tracks reminiscent of the work of Soft Machine. This is branded 'New Life-Affirming Canterbury Sounds' on their 2016 album *Wrong Meeting*. They play rarely in Canterbury, most recently, as indicated, in October 2017, but have toured with Gong and the Japanese band Acid Mothers Temple internationally. The band markets its records via Canterbury Rock, the city's only independent record shop, and Canterbury Wholefoods, by a pleasing coincidence situated on the same site as The Foundry, a regular local band performance venue in the 1960s.

demonstrably proud of what its musicians have achieved over the last fifty years,[94] An exception to this, and something of a further indication of both heritage and branding, is the awarding of honorary academic degrees.

Canterbury Christ Church University conferred honorary fellowships on Pye Hastings and Geoffrey Richardson of Caravan in November 2012 in recognition of their contribution to the Canterbury sound.[95] Robert Wyatt both accepted an honorary University of Kent doctorate in 2014 and gave a public interview to the University's Chancellor, Gavin Esler, to a full concert hall at the University in April 2016.[96] This sense of Hastings' and Wyatt's reception of high academic status fifty years after their years at Simon Langton Boys' School is interesting. The two universities' associating themselves with the values of the Canterbury music scene affords a recognition that could scarcely have been envisaged in the scene's early days and this recognition contributes to the continuing discourse of the city and its musical heritage.

The extent to which Canterbury has become a cultural brand, therefore, is also important. The City may market itself as a tourist destination but neither the musical heritage provided by past musicians nor the current range of live music attracts the attention of those charged with its public relations. Henning and Hyder (2015, p99) document the acquisition of a brand by the distinctive sound of Bristol with which, for example, the visual work of graffiti artist

[94] Connell and Gibson, in proposing the idea that a Bristol scene doesn't really exist for much the same reasons as the situation in Canterbury note that 'It's a case of some local acrimony that the Bristol bands don't actually perform in Bristol' (Connell and Gibson 2003: 101). Canterbury still remains overall passive and indifferent to its own musicians' achievements.

[95] Source: Caravan website *Caravan-info.co.uk*

[96] Whilst Robert Wyatt tends to reject any personal connection with a counterculture, his early departure from Simon Langton as he struggled with its academic demands (O'Dair 2014: 29) and his view of a mainstream career path- 'We didn't have things like CVs and careers, being in a band was an alternative ruling routine and if there is a war on, which there always is, we kind of came out of the light.' (Interview with Gavin Esler, April 4 2016), hardly connect with higher education values.

Banksy has combined to establish the city as a significant cultural destination. Present-day Canterbury bands such as Gizmo adopt the history and iconography of the city[97] and, unusually, write and record in Canterbury. The City offers a musical history and heritage which combines a sense of location, defined by cultural signifiers such as the Cathedral, with the names of high-profile bands which have played in there.

**2.5 Conclusion**

This chapter has set different theoretical and applied perspectives on scene and branding against empirical findings regarding music making in Canterbury in the mid to late 1960s and much more recently. Musicians and venues and performance have been considered in terms of a deterministic relationship between the location and the music produced. It has become clear that those involved in 1960s early progressive rock groups and rhythm and blues combos, whilst not completely eschewing the notion of a scene defined in terms of a space for cultural production, show little enthusiasm for celebrating its existence.

Publicity was provided by local journalism and the sharing of musicians between bands and the cross-fertilisation of the music of the London clubs, with bands such as Soft Machine, created a link with the apparent underground, a characteristic sound. The audiences for the events in the city and the local area were young, often student-based, but this did not lead to the production of fan magazines, for example, to mediate the experience, and the highest-profile bands spent far more time away from Canterbury than playing there.

[97] The band's trilogy *Marlowe's Children* (Canterbury Music 2015) is based around s child's fictitious upbringing in the city.

Nostalgic affective relationships with the music have been developed as the scene finds a home in internet discourses of heritage and authenticity and new interpretations of the sound. Here the idea of scene is best considered as a perspective on popular music rather than a phenomenon to have been enjoyed at the time. The deterministic relationship remains elusive and later work of Bennett's suggests that the concept of scene is a more recent organising phenomenon within the study of popular music (Driver and Bennett 2014: 100) and that recent academic attention to popular culture and popular music in particular means that 'those who invest in popular music as an aspect of cultural heritage are equally apt to articulate this in translocal, generationally based terms' (Bennett 2000: 20).

Finally, the cultural brand of Canterbury is seen principally to celebrate the Church of England and history, perhaps to a lesser extent the success of its past and present musicians. Interrogating the output of these musicians and their relationship with the city in both live performances and via virtual constructions of their memories will lead to a sense of a clear scene of shared ideas but also a construction of the location which is both fluid and, at times, almost irrelevant.

# Chapter 3

# ‘Canterbury Music’ and Music in Canterbury, 1965-71

### 3.1 Introduction - Key Issues and Perspectives

The importance of the relationship between the geographical, the cultural and the musical ~~becomes clear in~~is usefully explored through an exposition of the state of live music in Canterbury between 1965 and 1971. This chapter provides an explanation of how different bands related to Canterbury in different ways and the sense in which their respective identities may be related to the physical composition of the City, its sense of culture and identity, at a time when the effects of –psychedelia and an apparent feeling of the anti-authoritarian were exercising the commercial music industry, are particularly important to consider. The chapter takes a broad chronological look at the musical events in the context of the perceived counterculture and developments in Canterbury and beyond at a time when the establishment of the apparent Canterbury Sound was taking place.

The idea of aligning the values of rock music to those of the counterculture is, as has already been discussed, not without its challenges~~, however~~. Patrick Burke, in a comprehensive and perceptive study of racial politics in 1960s San Francisco with particular reference to the work of Jefferson Airplane – a group seen by him to typify the composition and progress of ‘the counterculture at large’ (Burke 2010: 67) – engages with the issue. In questioning the role of rock music as metaphor for countercultural values, Burke points out that ‘scholars

who take this approach focus less on community than on the impact of rock on individual consciousness, and often question rock's connection to politics as normally defined' (Burke 2010: 64). He draws a distinction between the broader significance of rock music to a generation and its more specific effect on the thinking of individuals.

He draws attention also to the limited value in considering rock music as a countercultural force of political opposition, some kind of anti-authority unifying force, seeing it as important to recognise music as an expressive form within a pluralistic society (Burke 2010: 65). Equally, Mitchell, in examining French rock music's response to the counterculture, draws attention to the dangers of attempting to establish some kind of international countercultural movement with common aims and ideals, preferring to adopt a more nuanced approach to 1960s revolutionary politics and music in France in particular (Mitchell 2010: 7).

The importance of this will become increasingly evident as the narrative of Soft Machine, in particular, develops later in this chapter. The argument that progressive rock musicians in the 1960s were steeped in the values of the counterculture[98] to the exclusion of other forces and influences will also be considered. The paradigm cases included in this chapter form the subject matter of a discourse examining commercial forms of rock, including, in particular, the success of the Canterbury bands and the adoption of the music of the avant-garde.

To establish the history, content and significance of the music of Canterbury at this time, the opening of University of Kent with its first cohort of students in October, 1965 is an important focus. This provided a ready source of potential audience members as well as a cultural centre and a venue for performance which had previously been lacking in and around

[98] To the extent that Keister and Smith cast them as 'creative leaders of the counterculture' for example (2008: 448).

the City. Also important to understand is the musical relationship between Canterbury and its surrounding areas and the performance opportunities available in London, Europe and the United States which provided the basis for a great deal of activity and some source of inspiration for the music.[99]

This relationship between the local music dynamic, mainly represented by live performances in and around Canterbury, and opportunities, in the UK and overseas, for recording and distribution of the bands' output will be highly significant in this account. Popularity may be judged by both the following of local audiences and also record sales. The account of live music performances provided by Frith et al (2013) sets out a discourse which foregrounds the experience of musicians in live performance beyond a judgement made on record sales alone. Frith points out that most musicians 'make their living selling their services as performers rather than from their returns from record sales or copyrights' (Frith et al 2013: 62). This challenges a musical history based on recording success alone by drawing attention to three important considerations. It is argues firstly that musical tastes change gradually and that new ways of making music sit alongside, rather than replace, older ones.[100] Secondly, this narrative points out that musicians' lives exist beyond their recordings and extend long afterwards. Frith's approach here also puts forward the idea that the history of popular music is very much linked with the history of technology and a sense of progress through this.[101] Finally, it is argued that musicians have 'an unquenchable ability to take on new styles and sounds to meet market demand.' (Frith et al 2013: 62). These points are not considered to be

[99] Adam Krims discusses the importance of universities, as well as bars, restaurants and bookstores, among non-musical venues as 'loci of socialization' (2009, p409). He sees them as agents capable of both producing and sustaining musical scenes.

[100] Frith has previously examined this in a demonstration of a 'musicological' model of popular music which sees that new music genres are formed at the interstices of existing genres to take on their own characteristic forms. These are then perfected and corrupted (Frith 2007: 252).

[101] Recalling Chris Cutler's association of progressive rock and its progress with the new means of production (Cutler 1985: 171).

mutually exclusive and this becomes evident in studying the work of the Canterbury musicians.

The musical history of Canterbury bands needs to examine the relationship between mainstream and underground music, live performance and record sales and the extent to which the apparently innovative styles and developments were driven both by musical ambition and commercial interest. I claim extensively in this thesis that progressive rock music drew on many musical and non-musical sources in its development.[102] Simon Frith argues further to include the idea of musicians 'moving out of pop/rock into the jazz and/or academic avant-garde worlds' (Frith 2007: 258). Rock, in this case, is defined against the commercialism of pop, the music that dominates charts and large-scale commerce. Frith's argument also includes the idea that progressive rock defined itself against pop music which was seen in terms of 'easy listening' (Frith 2007: 248). Chris Atton's ~~engaging~~ article, ~~which~~ examin~~ges~~ing 'difficult albums' ~~as he sees them,~~that occupy~~ing~~ an intersection of the popular and avant-garde, concludes that a popular avant-garde genre may be identified in its own right. Albums exemplifying this genre draw~~ing~~ on a range of other musical influences such as rock, pop, free jazz, folk, improvisation and minimalism (Atton 2012: 352). This too is evident in the examples of the work of Canterbury musicians.

The consideration and examination of what Sarah Hill calls "the long 60s": the perpetuation of an ideology beyond the confines of geographical or temporal space' (Hill 2016: 9), in her work on the music of San Francisco, provides an ~~interesting~~ important perspective on the way the history of rock music, particularly live rock music in Canterbury, continues to be constructed through a mixture of memory and nostalgia. An analysis of "the long 60s", Hill

[102] Anderton disapplies Canterbury music from his 'symphonic orthodoxy' instead noting a 'jazz-infected style' (Anderton 2010: 419).

notes, needs to consider 'the legacy, whether musical, cultural or social, of the short 60s' (2016: 301).[103] The Canterbury legacy, as will be discussed in this and later chapters of this thesis, finds its formation in personal recollection and, increasingly beyond geographical confines, in virtual communities and contemporary bands.

Aymeric Leroy's recent lengthy commentary, which adds a further dimension to the narrative in its title *L'Ecole de Canterbury,* asserts that Canterbury itself has remained, on the whole, 'indifferent' to the music which continues to bear its name (Leroy 2016: 14). This is a view which remains to be examined. Leroy's highly detailed account of Canterbury progressive rock includes the life stories of the major bands, especially The Wilde Flowers, Soft Machine, Caravan and Hatfield and the North. He also selects ten 'Central Figures' (Leroy 2016: 707) whose names are associated principally, if not exclusively, with the Canterbury scene as he sees it,[104] individuals whose biographical details are often cited in the literature elsewhere. The sense of Canterbury music at this time as the product of a network of individuals, rather than a scene, is an important starting point.

A short film made for the BBC many years after the music was created[105] gives the Canterbury musicians, Daevid Allen, Hugh Hopper and Robert Wyatt as key representative figures at the roots of English progressive rock and as possessors of a unique sound. In what would seem to be a clear example of what might best be termed the

[103] Hill defines this in terms of a period of psychedelic experimentation in San Francisco, 1965-1967 (2016: 9). John Covach, in a perceptive chapter on *The Hippie Aesthetic* links this experimentation with a collection of attitudes and practices including improvisation, use of technology and the importance of lyrics. (2011, p70). It is interesting that the lyrics of progressive rock receive far less critical attention than other musical expression and practices.

[104] These are Daevid Allan, Pye Hastings, Hugh Hopper, Phil Miller, Pip Pyle, Mike Ratledge, David Sinclair, Richard Sinclair, Dave Stewart and Robert Wyatt.

[105] *The Canterbury Scene* for BBC South East News, July 2009, from the archive of Brian Hopper.

Canterbury mediascape,[106] the film's commentary argues for the importance of Soft Machine, undoubtedly the highest-profile Canterbury band in the late 1960s and early 1970s, touring with Hendrix and the exposure of the music this entailed. A ~~n identifiable~~ deterministic relationship is suggested between the physical landscape of ~~the~~ Canterbury and its surrounding~~East Kent~~ area and the music which continues to bear its name. The BBC documentary programme makes much of the music of Gong, a band which neither formed in Canterbury nor even played in the area until the 1990s; the principal links are through the membership of the group of Daevid Allen and, later, Steve Hillage who studied for a year at the University of Kent. It pays extremely limited attention, however, to the fact that many local bands were performing to audiences within and around Canterbury at venues where the music was derivative of work charting at this time and probably of a style to be found in many other small and larger cultural centres in the United Kingdom. This was music which was neither at the roots of a new genre nor could it be considered to provide a challenge to any perceived authority, social, political or otherwise, or existing musical style.

The remainder of this chapter provides an essentially narrative account of the development of the higher-profile Canterbury bands in relation to local and translocal scenes and the sociocultural background of the most prominent of the musicians between 1965 and 1971. The music is seen not only as the paradigm examples of a discourse of rock but also in terms of a discourse of place. It is also seen as a new product within a burgeoning 1960s rock business and some of the attitudes involved and outlets for this will be examined.

Events and influences within the United Kingdom and beyond are also ~~considered to be~~ significant. Evidence is drawn from local journalism of the time and interviews with

[106] See Bennett 2004 and Chapter 4 of this thesis.

musicians and commentators who have contributed to a retrospective view and construction of the scene. A theoretical background and reference to commentators and biographers provide a method of relating the music to a wider cultural context and developments beyond Canterbury.

Any narrative account of the Canterbury music scene, in whatever broad definition, is of necessity highly selective. Even with the benefit of contemporary theory and the mediation of events by those who were present at the time, it is important to realise that any ~~time-based~~ account of the events can only help develop a partial~~contribute to an~~ understanding of any so-called scene. However, the remainder of this chapter will provide important insight to this field. By considering music making in Canterbury in broad matter-of-factual terms, it will offer a new perspective on music in Canterbury, allowing us to see beyond the myths of 'Canterbury music'. ~~rather than defining it.~~

In the early 1990s, a Japanese devotee of Canterbury music (~~there remain many such fans in Japan~~Japan has a one of the largest Canterbury music fan communities), Sakomoto, constructed a Canterbury family tree of bands.[107] This extends to four A3, very close written, sheets, some script in Japanese, and it documents in enormous detail the provenance, lineups and personnel changes which form the extended sense and range of Canterbury music. Many of the bands are now unknown; some of the bands are high-profile, large arena musicians who flourished throughout the 1970s and 1980s[108] and can claim little if any direct connection to the city or the area. Whilst it is clear that this construction provides a sense of Canterbury groups and musicians as germane to something far wider, it is the earliest bands which provide the starting point for analysis in this thesis. Of particular interest, and

[107] The document was created by Osamu Sakomoto of the tribute band The Soft Weed Factor *(Facelift* 7).
[108] Curved Air, The Police, Roxy Music for example.

occupying much space in Sakomoto's family tree, are The Wilde Flowers, Soft Machine and Caravan and these are the bands that feature most prominently in the rest of this chapter. The principal research questions to be addressed ~~in this chapter~~ are:

What activity characterised music culture and activity in Canterbury between 1965 and 1971?

Is Canterbury evidenced as a scene or a loose network of musicians with little economic co-dependency?

To what extent is Canterbury as "place" evident in the musical practices of Canterbury bands or bands subsequently aligned with progressive rock?

### 3.2 The Early 1960s~~The Beginnings of the Bands~~

There is a very common narrative which indicates that the start of the 1960s in Canterbury was an important, creative and ~~, overall,~~ successful time for young, ~~and intending local~~aspiring musicians.[109] Daevid Allen, a young Australian beat poet, had moved to the area in 1960 to live in Wellington House, Lydden, near Canterbury, with the parents of Robert Ellidge (~~the name~~who named himself Robert Wyatt ~~was not formally adopted until~~ in 1967). With other musicians – including Mike Ratledge, the son of a local head teacher, and Brian and Hugh Hopper – Allen and Ellidge listened to be-bop and other American jazz.[110] These regular listening sessions took place at the Ellidges' family house in Lydden, near Dover and~~,~~ at ~~and Tanglewood, home to~~ the Hoppers' ~~brothers,~~home in Canterbury, called

[109] For example, Marcus O'Dair writes of 'a shared sense of the English phantasmagoric' (2014: 52) amongst young players; both O'Dair and Graham Bennett (2014: 201) cite the importance of the early creativity of The Wilde Flowers.

[110] For example Mingus, Monk, Miles Davis and Coltrane.

Tanglewood. Leroy notes that Ratledge, in particular, was also drawn to Stockhausen, John Cage and others as influences on his own keyboard playing (Leroy 2016: 24).[111] Ellidge, the Hopper brothers and Ratledge had all been pupils at Simon Langton Boys' Grammar School, Canterbury, in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

Graham Bennett's long and highly-detailed account of the life and performances of Soft Machine and other Canterbury bands emphasises the importance of the Langton regime as a means of engendering 'a creative form of rebellion' (Bennett 2014: 354). The future members of both The Wilde Flowers and Soft Machine were destined, according to Bennett, to follow a musical path which opposed 'everything their school stood for' (Bennett 2014: 365). The reality of the musicians' school experience suggests something of a sense of what was to come later, however. Honours boards in the reception area of Simon Langton School demonstrate a visible pride in the work and achievement of many alumni. Pye Hastings, later of Caravan, Mike Ratledge, Robert Wyatt, Hugh Hopper and David Sinclair are listed alongside classical harpsichordist Trevor Pinnock and flautist Adrian Brett. It is interesting to note that Marcus O'Dair, whose work devotes much less space to the School than Graham Bennett's, points out both that music writers have tended to romanticise the Langton n. . . ''as a hotbed of music and art' (O'Dair 2014: 29).

Archive material ~~from~~relating to the School in the late 1950s and early 1960s exists and is accessible.

*The Langtonian*, Langton's school magazine, documents Brian Hopper's considerable achievements on the classical clarinet for instance:

[111] There is also evidence on *Canterburied Sounds 1* Voiceprint 1998 that Mike Ratledge had a significant repertoire of American cocktail lounge standards.

> Of all seniors, B.L Hopper played a transcription of Debussy's 'The Girl with the Flaxen Hair'. It was an ambitious choice which was fully justified by his playing which revealed a confidence and maturity beyond his years. (*The Langtonian*, Spring 1958)

This early training and knowledge of classical music in performance is significant in terms of demonstrating a clear awareness and engagement of an established musical canon. In addition, Brian Hopper, as well as gaining academic recognition with a Biology prize, is noted to be 'a very feminine guest' in the school play of 1959 (*The Langtonian*, Summer 1959), to have 'an ever-increasing mastery over his clarinet' in the school concert of the same year and to have been the composer (*The Langtonian*, Summer 1962) of the incidental music for the school play. Mike Ratledge gave what was considered to be an outstanding performance in the review of the school production of *Coriolanus* in 1960 (*The Langtonian*, Spring 1960).

Robert Ellidge also was seen to make something of what the Langton offered, at least in terms of extra-curricular opportunities. He contributed to *The Langtonian* with an extended fiction piece and poetry, 'A Walk with Roger, What Wouldn't' in the Summer of 1958, and a far more abstract commentary, 'Solitude/ Bird's Custard', in spring of 1959. This presents an adolescent view of the world but shows clear creativity: 'He could feel his weight pleasantly smarting under his pseudo-bohemian jacket and jeans…The land round there was probably flat but it didn't matter because he had always been there and nothing had happened for ever. The world was in oblivion except him'.

It was a feature of the early 1960s grammar school experience at Langton, however, that a lunch time jazz club existed with regular meetings to play and discuss jazz records. Robert Ellidge was an important participant in the club and he led sessions.

> [In] Spring, 1961, Ellidge took over [the lunch time jazz club] with a long period of meetings spent listening to individual stylists of the fifties: Dizzy Gillespie, Miles Davis, Thelonious Monk, Sonny Rollins and others. We were lucky to have an associate with a collection of over a hundred records and after he moved it became considerably more difficult to give interesting and varied talks. Ellidge left at Christmas. (*The Langtonian*, Spring 1962).[112]

This mixture of the extremely traditional, the academic, the encouragement of performance and highly-diverse views of music is significant and interesting. Marcus O'Dair's recent biography of Robert Wyatt points out that, in later life, Wyatt dismissed what he saw as the school's bohemian ethos as 'a fantasy' (O'Dair 2014: 29). The jazz club notes suggest this point may need some further qualification. Robert Ellidge was not a strong academic, unlike Brian Hopper and Mike Ratledge, and he struggled, according to O'Dair, to adjust between his life at home in Wellington House, with all its creative influence, and the single-sex environment of the Langton (2014: 31). It is, though, certainly a simplification which borders on the misleading to see the academic values of the Langton as polar opposites to those of the music which it subsequently formed and influenced. Classical music training, ~~cultural~~ familiarity with high-art forms, including poetry~~knowledge, confidence, a sense of the poetic~~, and enthusiasm for ~~creative,~~ jazz and avant-garde ~~-~~are all ~~to be found in the~~seem to play a part in the early establishment of Canterbury music. This suggests, therefore, a view[113] of the development of a Canterbury sound which is ~~relatable~~connected, to a significant extent, to a

[112] Robert Wyatt's selection of music for a *Canterbury Sans Frontieres* podcast (May 2014) included Duke Ellington, Stravinsky and Dionne Warwick. His influences remain clear and varied.
[113] Following Frith's exposition of a sociological discourse of popular music (2007: 253).

broad, essentially middle-class, ~~aesthetic basis~~set of cultural values~~ and the educational experiences and achievements of its early proponents~~.

In 1962, after leaving the Langton, Robert Ellidge was able to stay in Deia, Spain and in London, in the company, and under the influence, of Robert Graves.[114] He returned to lodge with the Hopper brothers and they spent time in Tanglewood, Giles Lane, Canterbury, and at the new Ellidge family home in Dulwich, South London, and at Mike Ratledge's home on the Whitstable Road, Canterbury, writing and recording original material on Ratledge's reel-to-reel machine. The early link with London is important. The musicians were already looking for inspiration. The importance was already notable according to Brian Hopper.

> Daevid brought with him his huge collection of modern jazz records which we really delved into. Robert's half-brother, Mark Ellidge, was also a very big jazz fan and had a good collection of records so between the two we sort of got subsumed into the whole jazz scene. Later, when we were not at school, we used to go up to London to see American musicians at Ronnie Scott's.[115] ~~,~~ That was a big part of our lives. We weren't doing any rock or pop, we were playing free jazz and Mike and I were experimenting with jazz loops on an early recorder. We did basic recordings and played around with some types of modern classical things, Debussy and Ravel and those sorts of people as well as Stockhausen and some modern poetry. They didn't have titles at the time, they are references to things like Dalmore Road[116] which was where Robert's parents lived in Dulwich ~~,~~ (Brian Hopper interview March 14 2016).

[114] Robert Graves (1895-1985) was an English poet and novelist and long-term resident of Deia.

[115] It is pointed out by Frith et al that, in 1963, Ronnie Scott's Club in London was itself in a state of development moving from a 'jazz only' venue to include Rhythm and Blues sessions as a method of attracting a wider audience. A space was to be cleared for dancing for the first time~~.~~ (Frith et al ~~-~~2013: 175).

[116] *Dalmore Rode* – featured on *Canterburied Sounds 4* is an improvised duet between Brian Hopper and Robert Wyatt. Wyatt improvises on both the 'cello and the piano beneath Hopper's busy alto sax line in an early piece of free jazz.

~~There was soon to become a~~We gain here some sense of the discourse which has come~~is~~ to characterise so much Canterbury music and the work of its practitioners: the contrasting forces of avant-garde experimental jazz and commercial pop and rock, the perceived distinction between work based on a high cultural experience and aesthetic and the ability to draw both a local and a mainstream audience and to attract industry attention to the music. Connell and Gibson theorise this effectively:

> Local music cultures are bound up in questions of economy (how much musicians are getting paid for gigs, the companies involved in producing and selling musical instruments, the commercialisation of local sounds, the changing economy of music retailing); meanwhile economic aspects of musical activity are always socially and culturally embedded, relying on aesthetic judgements and particular networks of actors that are not always economic (Connell and Gibson 2003: 9)

Brian Hopper's suggestion, however that the musicians were concerned primarily with twentieth century jazz and a classical tradition is not readily reflected in surviving recordings which are frequently blues-based. This is difficult to square with the views of Connell and Gibson. Hugh Hopper relates further to this in a 2001 interview, -apparently challenging the idea that commercial production and popular audience response had been in any way incompatible with the more innovative approach the Canterbury musicians had been seeking to adopt at the time and to include in their music: 'We were open to all sorts of music, not simply the cerebral approach of the classics or jazz, but also the more direct and electrical energy of rock.' (Leroy 2016: 30, my translation). These views are retrospective. Here and elsewhere the values of a constructed Canterbury sound, and the legacy which followed seem

to become both evident and significant. A perceived authenticity based on the local[117] is created from within and this may lead to a myth where the discourse of place becomes apparently important but dealt with in retrospect.[118] Robert Wyatt, speaking in April 2016, scene, has, on occasions, also rejected the validity of the idea. According to his biographer:

> Wyatt isn't keen on the term [the Canterbury scene]. No musician likes to be pigeonholed, and he is not the only one to find something claustrophobic in former school friends forever re-enacting the bonds of the past. Robert also makes the point that Canterbury was not a kind of Haight-Ashbury, but a fairly conventional English cathedral town. (O'Dair 2014: 51)

Matthew Watkins, writer and presenter of the podcast dedicated to the Canterbury Scene, *Canterbury Sans Frontieres,* to be examined in detail in a later chapter of this thesis, also takes the view that Wyatt 'speaks about the City in quite negative terms, of his own experience and being unhappy at the Langton'.[119] The construction of the myth is a dynamic and contradictory process.

Geoffrey Richardson, multi-instrumentalist and Caravan's viola player, and not a former school friend of Robert Wyatt,[120] was able further to relate to this:

> In the Robert Wyatt interview, when he was asked the Galapagos Island question about why Canterbury, he said remember the Galapagos Island where things have evolved parallel to everywhere else in the world and that's Canterbury. It's the best explanation I've heard. (Interview, Canterbury July 16 2016)

[117] Connell and Gibson also examine this in considerable detail (2003: 111).
[118] Chapter 4 provides a detailed treatment of this retrospective construction of place.
[119] Interview November 22 2015
[120] Geoffrey Richardson came to Canterbury from Manchester in 1972 to play with Spirogyra. He joined Caravan in 1973 to play on *For Girls Who Grow Plump in the Night* – the band's fifth studio album (interview July 16 2016).

As expressions of gentle nostalgia and an indication of the existence of a popular music with its roots in a particular time and space, these are engaging, if sometimes inconsistent, points of view. They fail to specify, however, how these apparent confines may have led to the creation of any type of locally-defined authenticity or of how the sounds transferred into commodities, a discourse rooted in the commercial music world outlined by Simon Frith in which 'musical value and monetary value are…equated' and musical events provide 'an escape from the daily grind' (Frith 1996: 41). Both Wyatt, in his interview with Gavin Esler, and Richardson suggest a discrete musical community in Canterbury, a vision of what O'Dair terms 'a style of jazz-tinged, pastoral and very English psychedelic rock, slightly surreal, sometimes slightly silly, and as warm and whimsical as a stoned summer afternoon.' (O'Dair 2014: 52). Robert Wyatt, we might argue, is simply extending the myth his audience wanted to hear.

This notion of escapism and a parallel existence for a Canterbury music scene is, I would suggest, deeply flawed and open to question. The bands rapidly left the perceived whimsy and comfortable middle-class life of their home city[121] and area for performing opportunities and ~~a more~~ the more tightly-knit economic networks of London, the United Kingdom, Europe and the United States. Marcus O'Dair's- is a description of a sound that ~~, as will be discussed later in this chapter~~ might only be applied, with considerable qualification, to some of the music of Caravan and, perhaps, –Steve Hillage's group Khan and the University of Kent student folk-rock band Spirogyra. The Wilde Flowers' output was hardly psychedelic; it bore little resemblance to the work of groups such as ~~and~~ Pink Floyd and The Moody Blues, for example. Both Caravan and Soft Machine, also Hatfield and the North in the 1970s, rapidly

[121] Robert Wyatt, in fact,- lived in Lydden, about half way between Canterbury and Dover.

established audiences in London, Europe and, for Soft Machine, the USA returning comparatively rarely to Canterbury. They absorbed different influences and experienced different geographical influences and dependencies as will be shown.

This chapter continues to site The Wilde Flowers, Caravan, Soft Machine and Hatfield and the North within this creative context and ~~as well as~~ examine~~ing~~ the work of bands for whom Canterbury remained a locus and whose work rarely attained any translocal status.

### 3.3 The Bands 1965-67 ~~– The Wilde Flowers~~

The Wilde Flowers, according to Marcus O'Dair ~~'s biography of Robert Wyatt~~ (O'Dair 2014: 49), formed in Tanglewood, Canterbury in April 1965[122]. Graham Bennett puts the establishment of the group earlier, in the autumn of 1964, and, in agreement with Jerry Lucky and Aymeric Leroy (2016: 31),~~,~~ the first public performance at the Bear and Key pub in Whitstable in January 1965 (Bennett 2014: 837). The band's early lineup consisted of Robert Wyatt as the vocalist, Brian Hopper on guitar, Hugh Hopper on bass and Richard Coughlan on drums. By this time the group very much wanted to be a dance band and play pop and rock covers, a point that sits awkwardly with the suggestion that the members of the group were primarily concerned with jazz and twentieth century classical music. The Wilde Flowers~~y~~ were by no means the first East Kent group of musicians to attract the attention of the local press. A Whitstable band, the Rock-a-Beats, had started in 1958 and were well established by 1962. With a Beatles-style lineup, it is reported that they had auditioned for a spot at Dreamland, Margate, and own 'instruments valued at over £800' (*Whitstable Times*

[122] An earlier recording exists, however, (reproduced on *Canterburied Sounds,* Voiceprint 1998) of The Wilde Flowers rehearsing The Kinks' *'*You Really Got Me*'* in Tanglewood for local gigs in the summer of 1964.The same curated CD also includes improvisatory work based on Thelonius Monk and original compositions including the use of tape loops.

June 23 1962), clearly some measure of local success. One of the Wilde Flowers' first locally-documented performances in Canterbury is surprising, however:

> Canterbury Beat Group, The Wilde Flowers were a big hit when they performed at the ABC Cinema on Saturday. They entertained the ABC Minors Club[123] and they were so popular that manager Mr Brian Pritchard has asked them back to play again this Saturday. *(Beat Scene, Kentish Gazette* October 22 1965)

Brian Hopper's own recollection[124] is of a promotion event for a film featuring the Dave Clarke Five, a nationally-successful act, but it was also a good opportunity to gain publicity for the Wilde Flowers who never returned to the cinema but started to play regularly at venues both in Canterbury and other parts of South and East Kent. These varied from school and college halls to Tofts nightclub in Folkestone, where the band supported West African and Caribbean musicians and made the acquaintance of the then-local bass player Noel Redding (bass player of the Jimi Hendrix Experience) long in advance of Soft Machine's, and later Robert Wyatt's, work with Hendrix.

Brian Hopper recalls a setlist which mixed early Rolling Stones numbers with material written by the Hopper brothers and Robert Wyatt with about a third of the repertoire standing as original material. Songs which had been created in Tanglewood, Canterbury, and at Robert Wyatt's family homes in Wellington House, Lydden and in Dulwich, and which had roots in classics and free-form jazz, -were included with pop covers.[125] The sound of Canterbury was

[123] The ABC Minors Club was a weekly event providing Saturday morning cinema for children throughout the country.
[124] Interview March 14 2016, Heathfield.
[125] Examples are to be found in Brian Hopper's curated CD collection *Canterburied Sounds.*

rooted in rock and roll but, in the music of The Wilde Flowers, also looked outwards to a more avant-garde approach.

Graham Bennett here takes a retrospective view of the music which includes the idea that The Wilde Flowers had both suffered a 'persistent failure to attract serious attention' (Bennett 2014: 996) but also embraced 'a period of enormous experimentation, inspiration, creativity and stylistic development punctuated by the odd gig.' (Bennett 2014: 1003). This assertion is interesting. Notes provided for *Canterburied Sounds 3*, written by Brian Hopper, -suggest that it had always been the intention of the group to establish a dance band playing rock and roll numbers, to establish, that is, a kind of live popularity. In detailing the purchase of their instruments, acoustic and bass guitars,~~;~~ it is noted that instruments were acquired:

> With the express purpose of becoming rock and roll stars (like so many other aspiring youths before and since) – influenced by the records we heard on the radio – Luxembourg 208 and BBC Saturday Club, plus my own excursions to the 21's coffee bar in Soho! As neither of us had a sufficiently 'authentic sounding' voice to go with the dream, we rehearsed several other singers (this being prior to Robert Wyatt's direct involvement in such music.) (Brian Hopper 1998).

Borrowing one of Frith's definitions of authenticity as 'a description of a musical form before progress' (Frith 2007: 254), it is important to consider the values indicated in this description. The Wilde Flowers were attracted to an emergent form of music, there was a sense of changing popular taste which was influenced by contemporary media and evidenced in live

performance, and the band had clear commercial aspirations, a need to find a sound which worked for them, within that apparently new musical form.[126]

A demo disc was cut, according to King (1994), in March 1965 but not issued commercially until some thirty years later when Voiceprint collated the material.[127] Authenticity, as Brian Hopper sees it here, is a commodity to be identified and marketed. Venues played during 1965 included The Canterbury Jazz and Folk Festival at Kingsmead Stadium in Canterbury, Canterbury College of Art, Bekesbourne Youth Club and numerous returns to The Beehive (King 1994). Brian Hopper remembers the early days and the combination of different influences in the setlists:

> We became one of the house bands at Tofts in Folkestone. We were doing a lot of covers, rhythm and blues as it was called at the time and all the covers of The Rolling Stones and other blues things. A few more poppy things and the increasingly we just introduced our own stuff which was basically written by Hugh or myself, so we gradually introduced those. I would guess around a third of our repertoire when we were really going was original stuff, very unusual for that time. (interview March 14 2016).

There is no particular evidence to suggest that Hopper's use of the word original in this context should imply anything experimental. The setlist mixed numbers by Booker T White and Chuck Berry with Hopper originals such as his blues 'Slow Walkin' Talk'.[128] He acknowledges that the Wilde Flowers were influenced by the Rojeens[129] with whom they shared some gigs. This was a blues-based Thanet group with an organ lead and a strong live

[126] O'Connell and Gibson argue a construction of authenticity in music in relation to commodification, the contact with what they see as 'wider musical economies'. (O'Connell and Gibson 2003: 28). The Wilde Flowers did not achieve this as they might have wished.
[127] *The Wilde Flowers,* Voiceprint 1994. The CD's tracks have no experimental basis.
[128] On *Canterburied Sounds 3*, Voiceprint 1994.
[129] Interview March 14 2016.

sound. There is an allusion to jazz in Hopper's recollections too but still the suggestion that the Wilde Flowers wanted to remain a beat combo and establish a dance following. Brian Hopper recalls further:

> A lot of our stuff was quite rhythmic and quite in the beat style. It was quite danceable, most of it. I mean some of the more extended things we did because I was playing sax and also guitar and we had one or two sort of John Coltrane-influenced things which were still a bit spaced out. I mean they still had a pulse to them but you couldn't really say they were sort of pop songs. Some did have words or vocals but we used to extend them with instrumental bits and things and we incorporated a few more of the bluesy jazz things like the Adderley Brothers' 'Sack of Woe' and 'Worksong' which introduced a more jazzy, bluesy kind of thing to our set. .(lnterview March 14 2016).

Brian Hopper continues, in retrospect, to stress the importance of the experimental and innovative in the music of the Wilde Flowers. It is clear, however, that these practices were far less important than the band's commercial aspirations. In late 1965, The *Kentish Gazette's* regular 'Beat Scene' columnn, journalist also began to take an interest in The Wilde Flowers:

> One of the local groups we have regretfully been unable to interview are The Wilde Flowers. They are without doubt one of the best groups from this area and are causing a sensation at The Beehive.[130] They have already played at the new University and went down so well that they have been asked to play there again. This group are certainly getting around, especially with their new drummer [state name of new drummer]. If you've not seen them lately, then make a note to do so. (*Kentish Gazette* November 19 1965)

[130] The Beehive, 52 Dover Street Canterbury, finds advertising space in *Incant* in 1967 (Feb 14). It opened each night, charged a membership subscription of £1.1.0, served espresso coffee and soft drinks and claimed 'ample space for dancing'. The venue specialised in hosting local groups.

The awaited interview took place some weeks later *(Kentish Gazette* January 21 1966) and The Wilde Flowers, seen by the journalists as 'one of the most exciting and original bands playing the local scene these days,' featured in local newspaper coverage in some detail. At this stage the four musicians[131] are seen as semi-professional but of particular interest here is a view of their music. A band which had, only weeks before, entertained ABC Minors at the Saturday morning cinema was now noted in the *Gazette* column (January 21 1966) playing a setlist consisting of their own work.

Robert Wyatt's own memories give a further insight into the thinking behind the Wilde Flowers' music:

> It only emerged later that there were certain characteristics which the musicians that I played with which we thought were just normal things that you put to the music. It turned out that they weren't necessarily so, particularly Brian Hopper here had a very big record collection that we used to listen to and we'd get tune ideas from old jazz records so that was part of our stuff and Brian doing a lot of jazz stuff and I'd been brought up on Twentieth Century music and always understood that there is no such thing as a discord, for example. To me the word doesn't mean anything. I liked Schoenberg, for example, then moved on and realised that there's nothing you can't do but we wanted to play for dances and for people to listen. As Charles Mingus once said, "You get too far from song and dance, you've lost it." I really liked the charts, pop and rock music. I liked playing for dances, it's fun watching people dancing. I always think men dancing look stupid, actually. (Interview with Gavin Esler, Canterbury April 4 2016)

[131] Richard Coughlan, drums, Brian Hopper, lead guitar and tenor sax, Hugh Hopper, bass, Robert Wyatt, vocals.

There are again apparent contradictions here. A band which wanted to play beat covers for dancing is tied to a musical canon of classics and jazz. Connell and Gibson make the, perhaps self-evident, point that 'The whole notion of a scene involves receptive and enthusiastic audiences, and music-listening practices, without which a critical mass of activity cannot develop.' (Connell and Gibson 203: 102). Robert Wyatt's retrospective view encourages the notion that the audiences at these commercial dances accepted what is clearly being presented many years later as a particularly avant-garde approach to the evenings at The Beehive. This claim, like those of Brian and Hugh Hopper, should be treated with caution. It seems clear that numbers flowed into one another in a continuous set which was intended to keep the dancers on the floor, not necessarily a force of the avant-garde. However, Wyatt added:

> I don't think in Canterbury we really felt that we had to play for a particular audience. We used to play in The Beehive for dances. Brian would do a bit of Chuck Berry and I'd do some drumming. I think the legacy is that there are no rules (Interview with Gavin Esler, Canterbury April 4 2016).

There are, again, contradictory values here. The 'legacy' may well be a carefully-constructed myth. The Wilde Flowers did not record their live sets at The Beehive and had no commercial deal, no sense of commodification. The eponymous CD curated for Voiceprint[132] many years later provides evidence of mainly lyric-driven beat numbers with some influence of African-American blues guitarist Booker White and Chuck Berry. The '-rules' are those, in particular, suggested by the charting beat groups of the time, very much aimed at a particular young audience who wanted to dance. *A Kentish Gazette* article of June 1965 reveals the band members' different approaches:

[132] *The Wilde Flowers Voiceprint* 1994.

> The members of the group [The Wilde Flowers] claim to differ from each other in their tastes in music. Graham [Flight, an original member] is a firm fan of Bob Dylan while Richard prefers Nat King Cole. They believe too that they have their own very individual outlooks on life because feeling that way, Robert said, better things come from it (*Kentish Gazette* June 24 1965).

Aymeric Leroy's narrative also considers some rules and encourages a further retrospective sense of the sound including ~~and~~ the view that the Canterbury musicians at this time were looking to break what he calls 'the shackles' (les carcans) of timing, theme and syntax of an archetypal contemporary pop song of two or three minutes. It is certainly a recurring theme in the narrative of the time. Leroy introduces a taxonomy which places the music of The Wilde Flowers in particular, and Canterbury progressive rock music in general, at the 'confluence' of three forces ('courants'): psychedelia had permitted and encouraged different styles and influences, the narrowness of the pop song was broken and jazz improvisation techniques were introduced to develop the genre further (Leroy 2016: 15).

Journalists, in particular, make clear that, despite each of the players having something of a jazz background and a clear interest in the avant-garde, playing beat music was what the audience wanted and there were, as indicated earlier, clear aspirations in The Wilde Flowers to develop commercially.[133] Whilst there is no evidence of any significant emerging canon, a perceived local sound was being further created and validated as continued press attention became evident. An advertisement (*Kentish Gazette* March 11 1966) for the regular City

[133] The nearest The Wilde Flowers came to a record deal, according to Graham Bennett's biography, was winning a Radio London Rock Music Contest, jointly with The Runarounds, at Dreamland, Margate in June 1966. They played a set of covers and were awarded the prize of a test recording with a (unspecified) record company. The opportunity hardly offered commercial success (Bennett 2014: 1111). Pye Hastings, who had joined the band to replace Richard Sinclair that year, and is still Caravan's lead singer, remembers 'We came first in the competition. The session turned out to be just some bloke with a tape recorder in a back room. What a let down. Welcome to the music business!' (email interview December 18 2016).

Youth Dance, which was at Canterbury Technical College, a bigger venue, billed The Wilde Flowers as a beat group as did another a few weeks later (*Kentish Gazette* February 25 1966) when they shared a bill with The Runarounds at St Thomas' Hall on April 2 1966. They played the City Youth Dance at The Frank Hooker School, this time sharing the evening with The Secrets, on May 14.

An audience member of the time recalls the sense of a different sound:

> The music was new and I think there was a lot of influence from outside at the time. I don't know where the influence for the Canterbury Sound came from, it may have been the influence of Simon Langton, it may have been the folk scene, and it must be the historic thing of Canterbury. Maybe it was the 1967 San Francisco sound, I can't help thinking that must have had something to do with it. (interview Trevor Link, Canterbury April 16 2016).

This, again, is a clearly retrospective and, in all probability, highly unreliable view but it offers a take on the obvious sense of what was seen by one observer to be new and different about the music in Canterbury at the time, 1966-1967. The conection with the perceived countercultural sound of San Francisco is interesting but subjective, hardly direct, self-evident or straightforward. The British perceptions of the values of the West Coast scene, derived as they may have been from John Phillips' "theme song" to the Monterey Pop Festival,[134] may have been drawn from commercial pop recorded in Los Angeles rather than any sense of the live events in San Francisco itself. The dance hall scene in San Francisco city, the Fillmore and the Avalon, was hosting a range of artists from Otis Redding to The Grateful Dead. The music did not, however, have a uniform sound.[135] and to link the musical

[134]' San Francisco (Be sure to Wear Flowers in Your Hair' 1967 examined by Hill (2015: 148).
[135] According to Hill (2016: 213).

values of mid-60s San Francisco with those of Canterbury is potentially highly misleading. Canterbury bands had no apparent political motivation.[136] ~~. Burke points out that the counterculture was changing in 1968 San Francisco in any case.~~ New moods of militant protest were reflected in the music of Jefferson Airplane, for example,[137] which distanced it convincingly from John Phillips' anthemic celebration.

..

Overall, the early history of The Wilde Flowers, as evidenced by newspaper journalists, suggests a popular local gigging band of like-minded musicians attracting a regular following within a beat scene which could exist in many similar towns and cities in the mid-1960s with a resident spot in a local venue[138] and frequent dance gigs. This is the activity which characterised Canterbury musical culture at this time. Importantly here, The Wilde Flowers' music was starting to be associated with a particular locality, if not the topography of the area, and to be supported by a ~~clear~~ newspaper print media. It was still not, however, identified with any significant commercial success.

The 'Beat Scene' column a few weeks later describes the band's experience at the *Melody Maker* band contest in Brighton. The Wilde Flowers were well-supported by travelling fans who came by car and in a hired coach; they didn't win the competition but provided a

[136] Chris Cutler argues that West Coast music was both uninfluential and even 'inappropriate' in Britain. He points out. however, that 'the lifestyle, philosophy and most of all the drugs spread through a stratum of British youth like a prairie fire.' (Cutler 1985: 182). There is no particular evidence of this in East Kent but Graham Bennett's narrative associates 'the power of mind-expanding drugs' quite explicitly with what he sees as a British youth culture and 'underground' music in the middle 60s. (Bennett 2014: 1275)

[137] Burke notes that the 'jarring tempo changes and thick instrumental textures marked by distortion and feedback 'shown by Jefferson Airplane in their 1967 psychedelic single 'White Rabbit' were further being used to make points of political protest in the 1968 album *Crown of Creation.* (Burke 2010: 67).

[138] *Incant* of February 12 1969 reports an attempt by the Kent Union to take over The Beehive. This was not successful.

performance which may well have distinguished them from other beat combos and indicates the evident ambition of the musicians:

> One of the rules of the contest was that the groups had to play one of their own numbers and the Wilde Flowers, realising that many of the groups there would be playing similar numbers to them, decided to make their act entirely of their own composition (*Kentish Gazette* March 3 1966)

Brian Hopper is quoted in the same article as describing the event as 'a good scene'[139] and the column offers 'Congratulations to the Wilde Flowers for putting Canterbury on the map', a striking phrase which seems both significant and highly prescient now as the article attempts further to create a sense of belonging, some local values and musical identity. He remembers, in particular, London promoters at the event being drawn to Robert Wyatt but nothing commercial developed from this at the time.[140] It is later pointed out by Brian Hopper in the notes to *Canterburied Sounds 3* that Wyatt's drumming that is featured on the highly-experimental and improvised track 'Frenetica'[141] involved some degree of 'simplification' to carry the repertoire, or most of it, of The Wilde Flowers.

The Wilde Flowers, who were by now adopting the principle of a continuous set list - at the time a straightforward device to keep people at the Beehive dancing - also acknowledged influences which were closer to home. The Rojeens continued to form an influence on both the Wilde Flowers and later Soft Machine with a blues-based setlist led by a Lowry organ of the type later to be adopted by Mike Ratledge in the early work of Soft Machine Brian Hopper remembers the music as The Wilde Flowers came to the end of their life in 1966:

[139] Brian Hopper remembers the event and the audience's enthusiastic response to this unique performance.
[140] Interview March 14 2016.
[141] *Canterburied Sounds 3*, Voiceprint 1998 Track 2 (1964).

> It was quite danceable, most of it. I mean some of the more extended things we did still had a pulse to them but you couldn't really say they were pop songs. Some had words but we used to extend them with instrumental bits. The guitarist from the Rojeens, John Larner, and his brothers joined me in a band I formed after The Wilde Flowers called Zobe (Interview March 14 2016).

Whilst Zobe did perform a number of gigs in East Kent during 1969 and early 1970,[142] the band did not enjoy any significant success. Recordings exist of the group discussing hiring a studio and making an LP (at the cost of ten pounds and thirty shillings respectively)[143] and there is further recorded evidence on the same CD of ~~material~~ combining original material by Brian Hopper with work by John Coltrane but this ~~innovative~~ experimental approach, again, failed to find commercial success.

The account of The Wilde Flowers' music and influences so far highlights several significant points of analysis of music in Canterbury in the mid- to late-1960s. The musical relationship in the band between contemporary pop, rhythm and blues and avant-garde jazz, and how this is deemed significant today by participants, audience members and commentators is very relevant to the development of a perceived Canterbury sound. ~~,~~ T~~t~~he influence of other bands and artists, the sense of musical development in response to the audience and the idea of a Canterbury band splitting up and reforming as another are all issues to be highlighted and further explored.

[142] According to Brian Hopper (email October 12 2016).
[143] *Canterburied Sounds 3*, Voiceprint 1997.

The Canterbury rock bands were not alone in performing in the City at that time. ~~**3.4 Lesser-Known Canterbury Bands and Performances**~~

We can gain an understanding of live performances on the University of Kent campus by consulting the student publication *Incant*. Still published, this student newspaper produced weekly editions with news of campus events, student politics, arts and entertainment. Early editions of *Incant* suggest that live performances on the newly-established campus were varied in the mid-1960s.

There were high-profile performances by acts such as Georgie Fame. Alan Price headlined an all-night dance in February 1966, but that month also featured, according to *Incant* –of February 1 1966, a folk evening, gigs by~~,~~ now long-forgotten~~,~~ bands such as The Marionettes, Duffy Power and a jazz concert. One of the most commercially successful bands to perform in the University's early days was Manfred Mann who played at a Union Ball ~~on March 25~~.

Jazz, performed, in particular, by tenor saxophone players, was very much in evidence in University of Kent venues in the last few years of the 1960s.and beyond. Tubby Hayes played in March and the award-winning Tony Coe[144] features on several occasions, playing in Eliot Dining Hall, for example, in October 1966. The gig, according to the *Incant* reporter, was 'a great success, with elements from the city and other colleges as well as from the University.'[145] *Kentish Gazette* had previously reported that the gig had aimed to attract both students and a City audience, pointing out that there were few opportunities to listen to live jazz in the city itself. Interestingly, *Incant* also notes that the gig and a lecture by a visiting journalist, 'Trends in Modern Jazz'~~–~~,were 'intended to revitalise jazz at the University and

[144] Tony Coe refused my interview request claiming that he could remember nothing of the 1960s or 1970s.
[145] *Kentish Gazette*, however, when reviewing the event, was less kind. The newly-found venue, Eliot College Hall, led, apparently, to 'terrible acoustics which bounced the sound all around the hall. Two hundred fans were bitterly disappointed' (October 25 1966). The University would have to do better.

also to establish links with the town'. Reviews and articles make frequent reference to other institutions and wider audiences.

Later editions of *Incant* document Don Rendell playing at 5pm in a small common room in December~~, Dec 5 1967~~, and Tony Coe returning in~~on~~ January ~~30th~~ to perform in a bar. Audiences are always noted to be appreciative. As well as demonstrating an enthusiasm for high-profile jazz musicians, the University welcomed folk players to the campus and reviewed performances at the Marlowe Theatre. Bert Jansch~~,~~, whose work was held to be 'the music of dreams', played to the University Folk Club (*Incant* June 6 1967).

In a self-appointed role as arbiter of the musical choices of his students, however, Peter Newell, Head of Kings School in the 1960s, delivered a speech in the summer of 1966 which seems to offer some insight into the views of the Canterbury cultural establishment of the time:

> On music, he said, they learnt very good music at the school but once they got all the ridiculous modern gadgets, such as tape recorders and record players, to listen to modern music their tastes degenerated. They must maintain the standard level in music they had learnt at the school. (*Kentish Gazette* July 27 1966)

In what would seem to be something of an irony, The Beehive Club extended its hours to open afternoons at 3 pm some weeks afterwards (*Kentish Gazette* October 25 1966). The Wilde Flowers' popularity continued through this time; they continued to play at The Beehive and the *Kentish Gazette* of October 18 1966 notes the increase in their fan base 'left, right and centre' They were continuing to share the venue with local beat groups whilst, apparently, still aiming to make a name for themselves beyond the city.

Shortly after this, in the first week of 1967, evidence of live music in Canterbury took a different turn. *The Kentish Gazette* of January 6 picks up its journalistic phrase of just a few months earlier and finds another group, up to then, and, in fact, since, almost completely undocumented, which was destined, like the Wilde Flowers in Brighton, to put Canterbury 'on the map' and stake its influence on the national pop scene, this time drawing, perhaps, more overtly on mainstream sounds and models.

The band The Ways and Means were from Chartham, near Canterbury and, according to the columnist, were long-time favourites of Canterbury audiences and took their repertoire from surf music.[146] They had played at the Whisky-A-Go-Go and the Royal Albert Hall in London, had a record deal with Pye and sourced their new single from the highly successful US producer Kim Fowley.[147] The record 'Sea of Faces', was not a chart success. Online archive *thestrangebrew.co.uk* documents that the band, like Soft Machine, worked with Hendrix, also Roy Orbison, unwisely turned down 'Baby, 'Now That I've Found You'[148] and recorded sessions for the BBC. Despite two of The Ways and Means retaining local jobs outside the band, *Kentish Gazette's* January column suggests that tours in Germany and Sweden were planned for 1967. Any kind of deterministic relationship between the music produced by The Ways and Means and the surroundings of its creation in East Kent is rejected by Les Stancovich, the band's lead singer and guitarist, still playing in the Canterbury area, remembers:

[146] Including a cover on Columbia in 1966 of Brian Wilson's 'Little Deuce Coupe'

[147] Writer and producer of B Bumble's 'Nut Rocker', a UK chart No 1 in 1962 and the producer of Soft Machine's 'Love Makes Sweet Music', their first commercial single in early 1967. He is also credited, according to Aymeric Leroy, with the discovery of Cat Stevens, Slade and Family (Leroy 2016: 58).

[148] A subsequent No 1 for fellow Pye band The Foundations. The ex-lead singer of Ways and Means firmly denies this (interview April 20 2016).

> We were doing surfing, harmony music like Beach Boys things. We didn't do any of our own stuff in those days. We used to do pubs and village halls quite a bit. St Thomas' Hall and the one on the London Road Estate, one called the Drill Hall in Sturry Road. We played in Ashford, Faversham, and the Dreamland Ballroom in Margate and the Quarterdeck in Ramsgate. I don't remember anything special for Canterbury. It was just a place where you played, no different from Sittingbourne or Faversham. We were on a billing with The Wilde Flowers, they were good because they were original (Interview, April 20 2016).

This is the creation of music which is responsive to market demand. There is no sense of the oppositional or the need to be original and there is a clear co-economic relationship with the immediate location and beyond which channels the values of mainstream and commercial pop. There is nothing of the perceived whimsy or aspirational approach of the bands which formed the apparent scene. Unlike The Wilde Flowers, Ways and Means had both management and commercial production.[149] Equally, this is a narrative of recording and live performance which demonstrates a link between musicians and promoters which is not evident in the musical development of The Wilde Flowers. The difference between a Canterbury scene based on local beat groups, especially in the case of The Wilde Flowers, building a following and playing regularly but achieving little outside the area and those, equally local, musicians, The Ways and Means with a high-profile producer and a London connection is clear and considerable. It is interesting that bands such as The Ways and Means do not feature in a media mythscape of the city. The Ways and Means would probably have been at least as familiar, if not more familiar, to audiences in Canterbury than, say, The Wilde Flowers after 1967, and yet their more obvious distance from narratives of experimentalism and originality has led to their exclusion from the Canterbury mythscape.

[149] The band was managed by Barry Glass of EMI (interview April 20 2016).

An emerging Pink Floyd played Canterbury Technical College in March 1967 according to the *Kentish Gazette* of February 10 1967 and The Wilde Flowers, meanwhile, were further adapting to what their, apparently considerable, following ~~audience~~ wanted. Marcus O'Dair refers to The Wilde Flowers' 'dancefloor influence' (2014:66) both in their own music and also on that of what was to become Soft Machine. A fairly extended *Kentish Gazette* piece on the band bears out this view. The band has 'turned from their burning soul sound to a sound the public seem to want more – Temptations music and Tamla Motown' (March 3 1967). New members have joined, Dave Sinclair, according to the piece an inexperienced pop player but an accomplished organist, and Dave Lawrence, a transfer from Chaos, another Canterbury band of whom little is now known. Pye Hastings, ex-Simon Langton, a further recent addition to The Wilde Flowers' lineup, indicates two important points: the importance of slightly different musical direction in the band, albeit different from the *Gazette's* perception, and also a sense of the translocal scene in London whilst retaining the idea that Canterbury was continuing to host live music events. As Frith suggested, new music genres were formed at the interstices of existing work (2007: 252).

> We [The Wilde Flowers] had morphed from an R&B band into a soul band and I absolutely loved it. I still do. The style was being superseded rapidly by a new form of experimental music which was taking the clubs in London by storm and any gigs we had were dying out so fast that the writing was clearly on the wall that you had to change or be left behind. The venues were mainly local pubs and occasional clubs like Tofts in Folkestone, Bridge Country Club and, of course The Beehive in Canterbury. Canterbury was buzzing at the time with the University having been established as a great place to play and of course a large number of pubs putting on music nights which gave us the platform to practise our craft. (e-mail interview December 20 2016).

It is important to keep in mind that in the mid-sixties the frequent local newspaper advertisements for, and continued references to, local beat groups such as The Four Methods, The Marionettes, Chaos, Countdown and Kingpin, bands of whom nothing is now documented and much is historically unrecoverable, also suggest at this time a vibrant and popular local beat scene played out, mainly, in local venues which constituted clear sites of production and consumption. These were served by local media which provided basic marketing and a sense of community.[150]

The Wilde Flowers, according to the same Kentish Gazette column, however, and in line with Pye Hastings' recollections, were still drawing audiences to Canterbury's Beehive. Local bands such as The Earl Gutheridge Explosion and, again, the Rojeens came along to dance and to listen. The Wilde Flowers were obviously seen to be in a state of change, however, and aspired to the sound of high-profile artists.

> They have proved they can cover a wide range of music from soul to the Tamla Motown sound and used to feature an act of their own compositions. Now with new members and new ideas The Wilde Flowers agree that avant-garde blues is not generally accepted by the general public at the moment and are moving towards a big Tamla Motown sound influenced by the work of The Temptations and Curtis Mayfield. (*Kentish Gazette* March 3 1967).

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This is clearly a substantial and important development in sound and approach for the band who played in the Brighton contest the previous year. The sound was changing. Marcus O'Dair again reminds us that The Wilde Flowers made no commercial recordings at this

[150] These concepts of scene and the relationship with an information exchange are explored by Inglis (2011, p379).

time[151] ~~but that Polydor had released Soft Machine's 'Love Makes Sweet Music' in February (O'Dair 2014: 67).~~[152] The *Kentish Gazette's* enthusiastic article celebrates the appeal, the new direction and the future of The Wilde Flowers stating that 'it looks as if The Wilde Flowers will be going strong for a long while yet' (March 3 1967) but it also spends some time introducing Soft Machine as Robert Wyatt's new musical venture.

Musical activity in the early- to mid-sixties in Canterbury was both varied and popular with young audiences. At a time when jazz, rhythm and blues and soul music were ~~providing the preconditions~~dominant before the emergence of ~~for early~~ progressive rock, evidence suggests a collection of bands and individuals performing at a range of venues with the beat groups of the day attracting particular attention. The life of The Wilde Flowers was to be short-lived and the band failed to integrate into a network of co-dependent economic relations in the area despite a print mediascape which sought to align the band with the cultural life of the city. ~~The story of Soft Machine takes the development of progressive rock significantly further~~It is from this context that the band Soft Machine emerged.

## ~~3.5 The Bands – Soft Machine~~

Despite their very recent formation at the time, the *Kentish Gazette* identifies Soft Machine as 'the second group recently who are giving Canterbury a meaning in the world of pop music, the other being Ways and Means' (March 3 1967).[153]It may be that the new group, like Ways

[151] Despite having no commercial recording success, The Wilde Flowers did, as indicated, record both privately and at studios in Broadstairs and London at different times between Summer 1965 and Autumn 1969 (long after the band had stopped gigging in public). Many of these tapes have been remastered and curated onto the Voiceprint CD ~~-~~ 'The Wilde Flowers', 1998.

[152] ~~The single is radio-friendly at just two and a half minutes, heavily bass and keyboard-driven and features Robert Wyatt's distinctive vocal style in a typical rhythm and blues verse/chorus form. A middle-eight modulation suggests Soft Machine's own treatment of the form. It did not find chart success and was the band's only release on that label. This was the only recording the band made with original member Daevid Allen.~~

[153] The first lineup of Soft Machine comprised Robert Wyatt on drums and vocals, having left The Wilde Flowers, Kevin Ayers on bass guitar and vocals, Daevid Allen on guitar and Mike Ratledge playing organ. Hugh Hopper occasionally substituted on bass.

and Means, had, according to the article, played and recorded in London. Soft Machine, also, are noted to be 'creating a wild scene on the London club circuit' (*Kentish Gazette* 3/3/67) whereas The Wilde Flowers remained, it seems, with a mainly local fan base and no record deal.[154] The local fanbase remained strong, however. The same newspaper column showed an appreciation of The Wilde Flowers performance at The Beehive that week,[155] noting in particular their perceived role as 'musical trend setters'.

As The Wilde Flowers moved towards mainstream, crowd-pleasing Tamla Motown and rhythm and blues in The Beehive,[156] Soft Machine were starting to try to find success in the capital with some new, unknown material. The *Kentish Gazette* is fairly uncompromising in its description: 'Soft Machine's music is not pop. No, it's self-created, self-penned and self-exploited sounds coming entirely from The Soft Machine. The Soft Machine are new, talented and weird.' (March 3 1967). Graham Bennett argues that the early sound of Soft Machine encompassed, as might be expected, a wide range and unorthodox range of influences including free jazz and be-bop as well as the legacy of The Wilde Flowers and the lesser-known Rojeens who used a Lowrey organ. Soft Machine used a Lowrey on the B-side of their debut single, 'Love Makes Sweet Music' (2016: 1518).

Chris Cutler is a rather more analytical advocate for the new group setting the music in a context of Dave Brubeck's 'odd' jazz time signatures and the a-rhythmical work of Terry Riley (Cutler 1985: 185). Cutler, who views Soft Machine as both innovative and influential,

[154] Graham Bennett sums this up. 'It was the realities of having to hassle for the next gig that forced them to temper their musical ambitions' (2014: 1264).

[155] The band was also experiencing one of the first of the many changes of personnel that defined Canterbury music in the 1960s and has since. Dave Sinclair, then unknown, and Dave Lawrence, a transfer from Canterbury blues band Chaos, joined the Wilde Flowers early in 1967.

[156] A sample setlist for the time still mixed Chuck Berry, Booker T White and Spencer Davis, Herbie Hancock, The Who Bob Dylan and Martha and the Vandellas with original compositions by Brian Hopper and Robert Wyatt (in King: 1994).

defines the group's own roots in jazz rather than rhythm and blues, and soul more than pop. (Cutler 1985: 186). Macan also defines Soft Machine as 'instrumental jazz rock' (Macan 1997: 127) and again, explores, albeit briefly, the importance of Terry Riley for introducing the band's main creative force, Daevid Allen, to drones and tape loops whilst he was in Paris in the mid-60s.'[157]

Some kind of further context for the establishment and early development of Soft Machine is important. 'New, talented and weird', although quite evocative is wholly inadequate and it provides a disappointingly limited sense of the group. Graham Bennett's commentary also points out that the middle period of the 1960s in Great Britain considered London to be the pop capital of the world (Bennett 2014: 1264). Graham Bennett argues the ~~Together with the~~ notion that 'youth culture' (Bennett 2014: 1279) was becoming increasingly premised upon mind-expanding drugs and that there was then a new generation of 'musically aware youth' (2014: 1264) who were particularly attracted to live performance and the music of rhythm and blues.[158]

Graham Bennett also constructs a difference between what he sees as the 'triviality' (Bennett 2014: 1279) of pop and the innovative sound of the 'underground' - a genre into which Soft Machine rapidly found their way from bucolic Canterbury. In addition, the BBC, according to David Simonelli (Simonelli 2007), was at this time, 1967, positioning the emergent genre of progressive rock music towards a more discerning and niche audience than that principally courted by the pop programmes of the newly-created Radio 1. He argues, as does Graham Bennett, that if progressive rock was seen as an expression of the perceived counterculture, it

[157] Canterbury musicians were not new to tape loop technology. Brian Hopper speaks of The Wilde Flowers' making use of them in jam sessions in Tanglewood two years before Daevid Allen worked with Terry Riley (Interview March 14 2016).

[158] Frith et al echo this pointing out the growth of live performance which took place alongside the development of the recording industry in the 1960s (Frith 2013: 87).

should be seen as distinct from 'pop', that was being listened to and bought by people who he saw as knowing no better (Simonelli 2007: 99). Progressive rock was felt by the BBC, in Simonelli's view, to be serious and intellectual and it was given its own broadcast home in John Peel's *Top Gear* Radio 1 programme between 2pm and 5pm on Sunday afternoons. (2007: 106).[159]

Against this ~~slightly complicated~~complex background, British bands such as The Beatles were appearing on television, writing their own material[160] and, importantly, taking part in an apparent 'British invasion' (Frith et al 2013: 87) of the United States.[161] ~~:~~

A 1975 interview with Soft Machine's keyboard player, Mike Ratledge, cited by Aymeric Leroy, suggests that the band found themselves indebted to what was going on far beyond Canterbury.

> With the explosion of The Beatles and afterwards the formation of all the art college groups like The Kinks, pop music had ended up becoming something respectable, taken seriously. We discovered that we could play the music that we liked, present it as pop music and have the chance to be listened to and heard. (Leroy 2016: 44, my translation)

[159] Soft Machine's first appearance on *Top Gear* was in December, 1967, with a set recorded in the Aeolian Hall, London. A later collated BBC collection of the band playing these Sunday afternoon sessions indicates that the early programme consisted of shorter works such as 'Clarence in Wonderland'. The band moved on to showcase their longer works in later programmes. With a typical self-awareness, Robert Wyatt included the lyrics 'Although we like our longer tunes, it seemed polite to cut them down,' in a live version of 'Facelift' at the BBC. (Soft Machine BBC Radio 1967-1971)

[160] Graham Bennett argues that bands writing their own material and relying on album sales rather than those of singles constitutes 'a new culture of musical and social progression' (2014: 1290)

[161] Chris Anderton also indicates the role played by pirate radio stations in broadcasting British, European and American bands in the late 1960s and how the illusion of a coherent international underground scene may have been created. (Anderton 2010: 422).

The genesis of Soft Machine is, therefore, interesting in its geographical, social and musical context. Influences on the band are broad and there is no sense of the importance of Canterbury as place in their formation. Both Graham Bennett and Marcus O'Dair~~, Wyatt's biographer,~~ indicate that it was the short-lived band Mr Head[162] which, having played just two gigs[163] in 1966, set the scene for Soft Machine rather than the musical activity of any of the other Canterbury groups. In early 1966, Wyatt left The Wilde Flowers and Canterbury for the band Mr Head. He joined Daevid Allen, who had formed the group, in London and they sought a record deal.[164] Mr Head formed a base in Honor Wyatt's home in ~~Dalmore Road,~~ Dulwich, London, which is about four miles south of the River Thames. ~~and b~~By the time the record deal had been offered by Anim Records[165] the band's name had changed to Soft Machine.[166] The first gig took place at the Midsummer Revels, Coombe Springs, West London, in August 1966. This was followed by a short, unsuccessful, stay in Hamburg. O'Dair suggests that around fifty per cent of the set list at this time was, however, still derived from Wilde Flowers' material (O'Dair 2014: 63).

While Soft Machine were engaging the music of the London club audiences, The Wilde Flowers continued to share the Canterbury music scene ~~innov~~with ~~locally-based performances of the West Coast pop sound of~~ The Ways and Means. A *Kentish Gazette* review of the Wilde Flowers' performance in April of that year suggests that while 'Surf music and rhythm and blues do not mix' (14/4/67), Canterbury fans appreciated both. The

[162] Information regarding Mr Head is limited. Marcus O'Dair points out that Robert Wyatt played drums and shared vocal duties with Daevid Allen and Kevin Ayers who also played guitar and bass respectively. Larry Nowlin an American guitarist, also played. This lineup was a clear forerunner to that of Soft Machine. (O'Dair 2014: 57).
[163] At Herne Bay Jazz Club and with The Wilde Flowers at the Beehive (Bennett 2014: 1122).
[164] Wyatt was replaced in the The Wilde Flowers by Pye Hastings, another ex-Langton student.
[165] Anim Records also hosted Jimi Hendrix and took on the members of Soft Machine on a retainer of £12 per week each. (Bennett 2014: 1344). The earliest lineup of the band was Daevid Allen, Mike Ratledge, Kevin Ayers and Robert Wyatt.
[166] According to O'Dair (2014: 62).

Wilde Flowers warmed up for The New Vaudeville Band, a contemporary chart act, at Canterbury Technical College[167] in April. Soft Machine, on the other hand, who also shared a bill with the New Vaudeville Band in January 1967, were often playing with Pink Floyd[168] and continuing to establish themselves as a London phenomenon in the Marquee, the UFO and the Zebra Club and occasional university venues such as the London School of Economics. Marcus O'Dair asserts musical similarities between the two bands indicating that 'for what The Soft Machine and the Pink Floyd[169] were doing, there was simply no precedent. It was made up of bits of jazz and bits of this and that' (Newey in O'Dair 2014: 70). This is a bold claim.

~~Other~~ Eengagements for Soft Machine in early 1967 included recording demos with their labelmate Jimi Hendrix; the band also supported him at London's Roundhouse, London, in February. Michael King's commentary points out that Soft Machine made the acquaintance of Mark Boyle and his psychedelic lightshow for the first time in the Roundhouse in April that year (King: 1994).

Soft Machine's first documented performance at a Canterbury venue was not until a gig at the Technical College on May 6 1967. The *Kentish Gazette* correspondent makes much of a local group returning home to the city despite both its formation and all its live gigs to date having taken place in London and beyond. This is perhaps a key moment in the development of thee mythscape of the Canterbury scene ~~had found its basis~~. The band was to play at a college rag dance in their home city. Soft Machine were, clearly, sharing high-profile events

[167] The Ways and Means, however, made an appearance on the BBC's 'Monday Monday' programme and played three surf numbers in April 1967 (*Kentish Gazette* April 14 1967)

[168] The sharing of a bill with Pink Floyd started in August 1966. Pink Floyd were advertised as The Pink Floyd Sound (G Bennett 2014: 6270).

[169] A view of the sound that is confirmed by John Harle who compared the experience of listening to See 'Emily Play' with the best of Soft Machine (Interview March 20 2017).

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in London clubs with bands such as the early Pink Floyd at the height of psychedelia, Their contribution to the development of a progressive orthodoxy is evident here. The evening was shared with The Wilde Flowers. Reception seems to have been favourable and Robert Wyatt took the opportunity to make further local connections between the bands claiming that The Wilde Flowers 'are impossible to assess objectively. They are changing a lot and l am sure they will make it. They are practically The Soft Machine's sister group.' (*Kentish Gazette* May 13 1967).

The rag dance gig, as if to reinforce this view, included compositions by Hugh and Brian Hopper in the Soft Machine set, as had become frequent by this time. The newspaper article also suggests that the work of Mark Boyle, the UFO Club's lighting and effects designer contributed, for the first time with this band, to the evening. This was an altogether different event from the beat gigs of the last few years at The Beehive. The final paragraph of the same *Kentish Gazette* piece raises a particularly interesting cultural point about the nature of Soft Machine's development. We learn that:

> The Soft Machine are writing some short plays for radio and Daevid has a tape which is to be used on the Third Programme but there will be no music dates on the radio until their new single is released. [170]~~released.~~ (*Kentish Gazette* May 13 1967)

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The sense, even in this local journalism, of Soft Machine's heritage through the poetry of Daevid Allen and the grammar school music education of Robert Wyatt is significant. Soft Machine began to look to establish themselves beyond the dance hall and UFO events, certainly well beyond anything Canterbury had to offer, aiming at the BBC's highest national cultural output. There is no further evidence that Soft Machine continued with their radio

[170] The single, 'She's Gone', a short, radio-friendly piece, was never released.

plays, however, and the band moved on to spend summer 1967, the Summer of Love, away from the United Kingdom to~~in~~ France.

The Wilde Flowers, however, following the Rag Ball gig with Soft Machine and despite Robert Wyatt's optimism, did not make it. Just a few weeks later the *Kentish Gazette* reported that the group no longer involved any of the original members and was seen to be in 'semi-retirement' (June 9 1967). New members Pye Hastings, Dave Sinclair and Richard Coughlan had withdrawn to work on a new sound for the group. The article suggests some optimism for the future, however,:'[i~~-~~n] a few months the new style Wilde Flowers are hoping to explode onto the scene again and perhaps join up with a London agency.' Marcus O'Dair argues that The Wilde Flowers had emerged 'arguably in the wrong place' (O'Dair 2014: 69), an imprecise and unsubstantiated claim that does little to explain the band's failure which even when explained in the most simple terms would have to take account of the many changes of personnel and the groups' apparent ambivalence around identification with popular music genres.

Paul Stump's ~~commentary~~ suggests ~~claims~~ that 'Soft Machine took the Wilde Flowers' template and made it into a vast, swirling sonic monster.' (Stump 2010: 16). There was certainly no big re-emergence nor explosion onto a scene for The Wilde Flowers. The band's music, however, was a particular influence on that of the nascent Soft Machine, and, later, Caravan, unsurprisingly considering the overlap of band members.

Soft Machine played several events in the South of France in July and August 1967. Both Graham Bennett and Aymeric Leroy make much of one particular performance in St Tropez. Far from the rhythm and blues found in the Wilde Flowers' material and the attempted

commercial success sought by the band's only single thus far 'Love Makes Sweet Music',[171] the band performed 'We Did It Again' simply repeating the title without variation for around forty five minutes[172] (Bennett 2014: 1878). To return to Frith (2013 ~~above~~), this is a clear paradigm of the development of new music and the importance of a band, currently without any significant recorded output, creating meaning with a live audience. The inspiration and intentions for the performance are documented carefully by Aymeric Leroy. Kevin Ayers attributed the source to dervish dancing; Robert Wyatt as the opportunity for some extended soul music drumming.[173] Kevin Ayers also saw the piece as a force of zen-like spiritual liberation (Leroy 2016: 81). Daevid Allen, according to Graham Bennett, recalled 'the profound effect the performance had on [the] audience' (Bennett 2014: 1887). Graham Bennett, like Chris Cutler, ~~above,~~ outlines the importance of Terry Riley in setting a context and a precedent for this work.

This exposition of extended minimalism found, according to Graham Bennett, excellent reviews in France (Bennett 2014: 1897) and the band came home to the United Kingdom with plans to return to Paris at the end of the year. Kevin Ayers considers that 'Soft Machine became famous in France, adapting their music to French music, before anything else happened. They adopted us. The French like arty things' (in Bennett 2014: 1867).

Soft Machine's rise in recognition continued and was regularly noticed by columnists in the *Kentish Gazette's* 'Beat Scene. Dates in London clubs, Middle Earth, UFO and the Electric Garden are mentioned; the band was continuing to produce a busy touring schedule:

[171] An unreleased single 'She's Gone' includes, atypically, a piano and lead guitar.
[172] A concept which is recreated using many different artists' interpretation of the song *on Canterbury Sans Frontieres* 34.
[173] The style of Robert Wyatt's drumming is often commented upon. Mike Howlett of Gong (interview (February 2016) and Jack Ryder (interview September 18 2016) both spoke of its 'top kit' nature, allowing the bass to come not from the kit but from the organ and bass guitar.

> After two months working in the South of France the group came back to go to Scotland for the Edinburgh Festival. On Sunday The Soft Machine were in Holland with the Mothers of Invention and after a fortnight of possible recording sessions in London they are off again to France! (*Kentish Gazette* September 29 1967)

There was, however, a clear sense of Soft Machine 'coming home' - again - according to the *Kentish Gazette* of October 13 1967 as they returned from the South of France without Daevid Allen to appear as a trio at Canterbury Technical College for the first dance of the academic year. They shared the gig with two other local bands, Specta Quinn Team and the Earl Gutheridge Explosion, ~~for whom I have been unable to find further information,~~ and Mark Boyle's London light show combined with Soft Machine's music to emulate the band's London performances in what was seen to be their home town:

> Jefferson Airplane, Wilde Flowers, jazz and church music were all stirred together, brought to the boil and let out in a galaxy of singing colours and velvet music. The second set began with a blackout, folk singing and a poetical story – gradually recreating the magical atmosphere in the Hall. Slowly the crowd were taken for a trip into unknown depths with wailing music all around and finishing with an elevated drum solo from Robert. *(Kentish Gazette* November 3 1967)

The other bands anchored the gig by providing Tamla Motown and soul music for dancing and the evening was held to be a great success. It is notable that Soft Machine eschewed the minimalism and avant-garde approach that had found such favour in St Tropez when playing in the United Kingdom. Canterbury, it seems, was not considered an appropriate venue for the more radical experiments reported in France.~~.~~

As a means of viewing and understanding any type of live music scene in Canterbury in the mid- to late-60s, the Technical College dance provides, however, an interesting point of focus. The local college audience experienced a mixture of musical styles and influences, poetry, story, contrasting genres, free-form and mainstream performances and virtuoso musicianship in a single evening. All these feature in the discourses of the Canterbury Sound and Music Scene. It is also clear[174] that the days of the local beat groups playing covers for dancing in small halls were coming to an end.

Soft Machine found themselves part of the scene in Paris as they embraced the philosophy of pataphysics[175] (Leroy 2016: 86, Bennett 2014: 89) and, despite their not visiting France again until 1969, the music of the band came to be connected with the French counterculture and the values of a new youth movement in France.[176] Associations with Canterbury are distant and hard to establish and the band had yet to release an album.

## 3.4 The Bands 1968-1971

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There is an even greater sense of distance between the band and its apparent birthplace when we consider that Soft Machine travelled, in the early part of 1968 to the West Coast of America to open their tour supporting Jimi Hendrix.[177] The opening gigs were planned to be

[174] This view was confirmed by Brian Hopper in interview.
[175] The term was invented by Alfred Jarry (1873-1927) to describe an imaginary realm, beyond metaphysics.
[176] According to Stuart P Mitchell who points out that France wished to counter the infiltration of Americanised rock as a symbol of distrust in American affairs generally (Mitchell 2010: 12). Biggs too (2015) argues that progressive rock was the genre of choice of the 1960s Paris underground rejecting, as he saw it, cultural barriers.
[177] Kevin Ayers pays a veiled tribute to the city in an interview with Marcus O'Dair – 'We got on the Jimi Hendrix tour simply because we had the same management. And I think Hendrix happened to like us because

at the Fillmore Auditorium in San Francisco. The venue had been hosting psychedelic concerts for the past two years; Sarah Hill points out that the ballroom circuit in San Francisco had expanded to allow more space for gigs, thus supporting the music scene 'in a (literally) concrete way' (Hill 2016: 213).

Nadia Zimmerman further documents performances at the Fillmore Auditorium by Grateful Dead and Jefferson Airplane pointing out that the high-end electronic mediation of performances which the venue offered through its technological and sound capabilities seemed to critics to mask far more nuanced performances than might be expected. Grateful Dead, among other groups who played at the Fillmore, provided a paradigm of the San Francisco sound of the mid-60s as 'jug band scraping against jazz', an unwelcome combination to the listener of acoustic and electronic sounds. (Zimmerman 2011, p80). This venue was drawing discerning and expectant West Coast audiences. The Auditorium was a seated venue operated by Bill Graham, a businessman with whom Robert Wyatt rapidly fell into disagreement (Graham Bennett 2014: 2106) resulting in the band's dismissal from the venue with two dates to come. As the support act for Jimi Hendrix, Soft Machine would have experienced different audiences, expectations and performing conditions from the St Tropez Festivals of Free Theatre and indulgences of Paris just three months before.

Soft Machine's tour of the United States as support to Jimi Hendrix is widely and fully documented elsewhere (in Graham Bennett 2014 and Leroy 2016 in particular). Commentators are in agreement that the venture was not a success for the group who were not accustomed to the extreme distances and demands of large-scale touring. Robert Wyatt's

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we were weird. But that was it, we were just thrown in there. We were just little amateur musicians from Canterbury who'd never had a proper soundcheck'. (O'Dair 2014: 87)

drinking, for example,[178] despite being seen in part as a serious attempt to overcome performance nerves on the tour, affected both his playing and relationships within the band. The time in the United States did, however, provide the opportunity to make use of Hendrix' Probe record label and studio to record Soft Machine's first album in New York.[179] The band was allowed four days in the studio[180] in April 1968.

The eponymous album is a combination of songs, rather than instrumental tracks, recorded, according to Leroy (Leroy 2016: 117) as if live and frequently in a single take. The choice of songs reflects the band's psychedelic and rhythm and blues influences and propensity for extended improvisation. Aymeric Leroy is a clear advocate of the importance of the work to the Canterbury brand and the sense in which the notion of a sound is starting to emerge.

> With this first album, Soft Machine offers a prototype, incomplete yet already convincing, of that which is going to become the Canterbury style: ambitious rock music, open to improvisation, rich in atmosphere, marked by the dominant presence of the organ and the use of the human voice as an instrument and words which are humorous, intellectual and absurd. (Leroy 2016: 122 my translation)

This is, in my opinion, a particularly lofty claim for an album which took just four days to record to completion after some fifty nights on the roads of the United States. Whilst Leroy's view may, in part, recall the earlier nostalgic construction of a Canterbury music defined by surrealism and whimsy, the album has drawn far greater influence from the band's

[178] This is examined in detail in O'Dair both 2014: 88 and *Popular Music* 2016 Vol 5 p 216.
[179] There is a popular narrative, suggested by Rob Weir (2014: 143) amongst others, that the music industry on the East Coast was far less relaxed than that on the West Coast.
[180] In contrast with the work on Hendrix's *Electric Ladyland* which had occupied eight months' studio time (O'Dair 2014: 90).

experiences in the psychedelic clubs of London, as part of the rock music of choice of the Paris underground and the musical freedom of the San Francisco dance halls.

The earlier work of The Wilde Flowers' Brian Hopper is recalled in a keyboard-driven interpretation of 'Hope for Happiness'. Graham Bennett interprets the album as a multi-suite work with Kevin Ayers' 'Joy of a Toy' forming the first combination of tracks with the Hopper original. The eccentric, autobiographical and introspective lyricism of Robert Wyatt's 'Why Am I So Short?' leads to a dense and improvised and extended drum solo in '~~-~~So Boot If At All' and the hymnal love song closes the second suite and first side. Side Two of the album opens with the rhythm and blues-influenced 'Save Yourself' and Mike Ratledge's keyboard cadenza in homage to his then-partner 'Priscilla'. The album did not generate a single release but 'Lullabye's Letter' is perhaps its most ~~commercial sounding~~'radio-friendly' track. Robert Wyatt's vocal lead trades with Mike Ratledge's extended keyboard breaks and Kevin Ayers' driving bass in a production recalling the single 'Love Makes Sweet Music' which did not feature on the work.[181] 'We Did It Again' does find a place, however, following the one-minute instrumental bridge of 'Plus Belle qu'une Poubelle', abandoning the minimalist and extended treatment enjoyed by the French pataphysicists in favour of a compact rhythm and blues arrangement overlaid with Ratledge's fuzzbox organ which grows towards an accelerating crescendo. It is perhaps also notable that this band, which had spent months on the road with Hendrix, produced an album which did not feature a single guitar chord. The work closes with the rambling narrative of Wyatt's 'Why Are We Sleeping' and an extended, experimental and adventurous jam.

[181] A remastered edition of the album for 2009 did include the track.

It is the intention of this thesis neither to dwell upon nor to provide detailed discographies or accounts of numerous albums. Soft Machine's first studio album, however, is a product of long periods in the United States which may have created a homogeneity which was not in evidence in St Tropez the previous autumn. The album is certainly a fusion of rock, jazz, classical influences and psychedelia. There is little or no engagement with political movements and ideas in the work nor does it take any kind of countercultural or anti-authority standpoint.

The album did not find any significant commercial success,[182] particularly in the UK, but it has been adopted by commentators as setting the parameters for a Canterbury sound. This, again, is a bold claim. The producers chose the gatefold sleeve and psychedelic artwork which characterised the era. The album is the first recorded exposition of a band which had spent very little time in the community of its perceived home city, certainly neither contributing to the sense of the discrete community hinted at by Wyatt, Richardson and O'Dair earlier in this chapter, nor benefitting from an economically co-dependent local scene. Canterbury played little role in the production of Soft Machine's first album, however, and there is scarce connection with the musical culture of the city. Yet there is a perceived sense of authenticity which is linked to the Canterbury brand. According to Aymeric Leroy, the members of Soft Machine marked the conclusion of their recording and a break from the United States tour with a return to the United Kingdom, to Dulwich, and then to rehearse in Canterbury, in June 1968, before returning to America for the remainder of the tour.

Robert Wyatt remained in the United States at the end of this to record demos with Hendrix. The resulting work, 'Rivmic Melodies', found its way, in part, onto Soft Machine's second

[182] The album, according to King, was not, apparently, even issued in the United Kingdom and only available via import. It reached no 38 in the US Billboard Chart.

album. Some of the material, however, was not heard until its release and broadcast online in 2013 where it found distribution, among other places, in the *Canterbury Sans Frontieres* podcast.[183] The work is typically introspective and includes the lyric 'I wish I were at home again in West Dulwich. I miss the trees.' ~~Wyatt had chosen not to return to the UK and his family with the other members of Soft Ma~~

In Canterbury, The Wilde Flowers had been booked to play at The Beehive in April 1968 according to the *Kentish Gazette* of April 11 1968, having changed personnel and practised a new set. There is, however, no review of the performance and it is evident that advertisements for the Youth Dance and regular nights at St Thomas' Hall no longer feature prominently in the local press from 1967/8 onwards.

At the same time, the University of Kent was adopting the zeitgeist, fulfilling its role within the apparent local scene, and hosting, in Rutherford College, ~~the~~ two psychedelic bands named~~a of~~ Ten Years After and Pictures of Dorian Gray.~~,~~ ~~n~~Neither were ~~of which were~~ local to Canterbury; they~~, who~~ played a mixture of Cream, Hendrix and blues standards in combination with their own material and a light show reminiscent of that of Mark Boyle (*Kentish Gazette* March 8 1968). The Christmas Ball, later in the same year, hosted Gun, again a distinctly different sound from that of the rhythm and blues mainstream bands that had played in the earliest days of the University. Gun played the sought-after mixture of Cream numbers and original creations and had played on John Peel's Sunday afternoon Radio 1 programme and ~~, interestingly,~~ had also featured as the first pop group to appear at Ronnie Scott's jazz club in London. (*Kentish Gazette* December 13 1968).

[183] Podcast 10, November 2013, the work is released by Cuneform and simply entitled *'68.*

The importance of Soft Machine to the aesthetic of British progressive rock is evidenced by extensive media reference and commentary and, in particular, by its influence as a fusion-oriented band on high-profile mid-70s progressive outfits such as Henry Cow, a band often erroneously linked with Canterbury.[184] Soft Machine had little economic co-dependency with other business activity in Canterbury and rarely maintained the same lineup for long periods. Despite extensive touring in the UK and in Europe and the USA with Jimi Hendrix, there was limited recording success and the band rarely returned to play in its city of origin thriving on the translocation that their trip to the USA had brought about.

Soft Machine's second album, *Soft Machine 2*, was also on the Probe label but was recorded in London in the Spring of 1969. Regarded by some commentators (Leroy 2016: 149, Graham Bennett 2014: 2839) as demonstrating both musical development from, and even greater diversity than, the band's first eponymous album, the work consists of two multimovement suites comprising shorter tracks, conceived as the correct length for radio but rarely commercial. The tracks frequently feature vocal solos by Robert Wyatt as he reflects on his life and the band's music; the album provides a vision of Bill Martin's theory of the nature of progressive rock discussed in the previous chapter.[185] It is also self-referential, and for the first time included the saxophone contributions of Hugh and Brian Hopper.

The first multimovement suite, 'Rivmic Melodies', is introduced by Wyatt singing the English alphabet as a preface to the opening keyboard-driven rock of 'Hibou, Anemone and

[184] Macan explores this with more detailed examples (1997: 128).

[185] 1) Music is visionary and experimental,2) It is played, at least in significant part, on instruments typically associated with rock music by musicians who have a background in rock music and with the history of rock music itself as a background 3) It is played in significant part by musicians who have consummate instrumental and compositional skills, 4) It is a phenomenon, at its "core", of English culture, 5)relatedly, in significant part, it is expressive of romantic and prophetic aspects of that culture (Martin 1998: 121).

Bear', a Mike Ratledge composition from the days of The Wilde Flowers,[186] which leads to a Wyatt soliloquy on aspects of his life. The track, in 13/8 time, marks Soft Machine's first use of complex irregular time signature that was to find further exposition in the far more commercially-successful *Third* which was to follow. The track had, bizarrely, provided music for dancing in the Middle Earth Club. Mike Ratledge pointed out that 'the public continued to dance to our music as if there was nothing to it' (Leroy 2016: 147). This is reminiscent of the days of the continuous dance sets in Canterbury's Beehive Club by The Wilde Flowers. The suite includes an explicit reference to Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire*, a brief jazz interlude entitled 'Thank You Pierre Lunairee', which gives Robert Wyatt not only the opportunity to acknowledge one of what he has described as one of his major influences, there is little evidence of this, but also the opportunity to thank Jimi Hendrix for the exposure offered by his tour. The suite concludes with two minutes' free-form improvisation.

The second suite retains the sense of experimentation with a combination of apparently chaotic improvisation in 'Fire Engines Passing with Bells Clanging' and stand-alone songs with an English folk influence in the conventional and simply accompanied 'Dedicated to You But You Weren't Listening', the most conventional song on the album, never performed live but featured in electronic form in a John Peel *Top Gear* session during 1971. The remainder of the second multimovement suite, the second side of the album, offers Wyatt continued opportunities both to reflect on life and trade vocal figures over Hugh Hopper's distorted bass in the rhythmically complex 'A Door Opens and Closes' and the driving jazz fusion of the final track '10:30 Returns To The Bedroom'.

[186] According to Brian Hopper (Interview March 14 2016).

Soft Machine's second album had shown them working, despite Robert Wyatt's temporary absence from the band at the end of the US tour, to produce an album that demonstrated links with the early Canterbury days of The Wilde Flowers, their recent work with Hendrix and the desire to challenge their audience. It's a short multipart piece that foregrounds the vocal facility of Robert Wyatt. Musically, it shows a diversity represented by free form improvisation, a rendition of the alphabet backwards and the hard rock approach to 'As Long As He Lies Perfectly Still', a message to Kevin Ayers that he should still be with the band. The album shows the clear influence of jazz, although the jazz musicians fail to find a credit on the cover.

### ~~3.6 The Bands: Caravan and the End of the Beat Scene~~

Caravan's debut performance at The Beehive had been in the first week of April 1968.[187] The review of the event noted that the band played a mixture of original compositions, Soft Machine numbers and Hugh Hopper songs. Caravan is seen as 'the new name for The Wilde Flowers' (*Kentish Gazette* April 11 1968) and the band was well received in its home city. The wording of the newspaper review is interesting:

> The changes and development was [sic] remarkable. They made strong contact with their audience with songs connected with people they knew. There is no doubt in my mind that Canterbury has produced another group to explode on the national scene. The Soft Machine return on April 23 from their two-month stay in America, touring with Jimi Hendrix and recording. Canterbury should be justly proud of her musicians (*Kentish Gazette* April 11 1968).

[187] Very early recordings exist (presented on *Canterburied Sounds* Volume 3 for example) of the band also playing at The Foundry in Jury Lane, Canterbury, at that time. The first Caravan lineup, in fact, shared only the drummer Richard Coughlan with The Wilde Flowers. The group also consisted of Pye Hastings, guitar and vocals, Richard Sinclair on bass and his cousin David Sinclair as the keyboard player. Robert Wyatt made no significant contribution to the work of Caravan.

Therefore, the new band was clearly assimilating both the people and the repertoire of previous Canterbury lineups. Caravan's more lyric-driven, folk-based style is hinted at, although the exact set list is unknown here, and the band's relationship with Canterbury has far more in common with that of The Wilde Flowers, and, indeed, beat combos such as Ways and Means, than that which can be gathered from the narrative of the beginnings of Soft Machine. The members of the band, whose name, according to the son of one of its members[188] signified equally a tribute to Duke Ellington,[189] a total lack of sense of destination or simply a useful metaphor for a collection of ideas.

Pye Hastings, for over fifty years the lead singer and founder member of the band, adds detail in his recollections of the split in personnel which had broken up The Wilde Flowers in 1967 to form both the new groups, ~~:~~ Soft Machine and Caravan.

> Other players left The Wilde Flowers and I was determined to carry on playing music as I had discovered something in my life that finally made sense and I had begun writing my own songs[190].

What became the early incarnation of Caravan had both a regular relationship with Canterbury city venues and also showed a more conventional link between repertoire, ambition and commercial interest than either The Wilde Flowers or Soft Machine. Pye Hastings' songwriting ideas are described in an interview cited by Aymeric Leroy as easy to

[188] Interview, Canterbury, July 16 ~~26~~ 2016.
[189] Caravan – Tizol/Ellington 1938.
[190] E-mail interviews December ~~8~~ 2016.

learn and commercial with interesting harmonic progressions[191] (2016: 115). Hastings, a guitarist, had been joined in his new band by an ex-Wilde Flowers musician Richard Coughlan on drums and the cousins Richard and Dave Sinclair, both local musicians and, like Hastings, ex-Langton students, on bass and keyboard. There is again here allusion to a sense of scene in the city and its surroundings. Caravan were playing regularly in The Beehive and The Foundry in Canterbury.

However, in mid-1968, whilst rehearsing in Graveney Village Hall, a few miles from Canterbury on the North Kent Coast, and camping in its grounds by way of accommodation, the band landed a gig at Middle Earth in London. Unlike Soft Machine who lived and rehearsed whilst in London in Honor Wyatt's house in Dulwich, therefore retaining a very limited relationship with the East Kent and a very strong one with London clubs, Caravan had no London base and commuted from Canterbury when needed. Whilst playing at Middle Earth, the band was spotted by a London record executive:

> In the audience was a budding record producer called Tony Cox who worked as an in-house songwriter for Robbins Music (Publishing Company) in Soho Square London. His boss, Ian Ralfini was looking for a British sounding band to take to the USA and on Tony's recommendation came with his business partner, Martin Wyatt, to the Beehive Club to hear us play. The result was everything we could have wished for. Ian loved the song 'A Place of My Own', which was incidentally the very first song I ever wrote and he invited us up to London to discuss a recording contract. (e-mail interview December 2016)

[191] Pye Hastings later described his song writing in a fan magazine interview. 'In the 12 years with Caravan only a portion [of my type of music] was used because it had to fall into a specific style of music, which became Caravan music. All the other stuff got left behind' *Facelift* Issue 12 August 1994.

Caravan signed with Robbins[192] and also with the newly-created American Verve label,[193] which already hosted Mothers of Invention and The Velvet Underground (Leroy 2016: 127), thereby aligning themselves with the wider development of British progressive rock, and they chose 'A Place of My Own' as their debut single.[194] This was recorded in London in January 1969 and achieved both local and national recognition. *The Kentish Gazette* picked the band up quickly:

> Canterbury's progressive music group, Caravan, are fast becoming in demand all over the country, especially around the London club scene where their talent is frequently being spotted by programme producers and the press. Since the release of their debut single last week, Radio One has been plugging the recording and sales are pretty hopeful. Whether it will become a hit or not will be seen in the next few weeks but even if it does not reach the charts, it will have put their name on the map (*Kentish Gazette* January 16 1969).

The band also made an appearance, unfortunately not recoverable, on BBC 2's *Colour Me Pop* early in 1969 and moved rapidly towards the studio recording of their first album. *Caravan* at Advision Studios in London. This is very much an album of single tracks rather than giving any sense of suites of different lengths. There is one extended track of eight minutes, 'Where but for Caravan Would I?' This shows something of the album's relationship with a progressive orthodoxy progressive, being in 11/4 time, and also draws on The Wilde Flowers repertoire in a reworking of Brian Hopper's 'How Many Tears' thereby assuring a certain continuity of sound. Other pieces such as 'Love Song with Flute' had been included in Caravan's recent live set and were seen by local press to connect strongly

[192] Part of the MGM group.
[193] Frith et al explain the growth of American labels setting up in the UK during the mid-1960s. (2013: 154). This is a further example of the expansion of the UK rock market into the USA.
[194] Robert Wyatt celebrates this track as one of the best pop songs ever written. It was quoted on Soft Machine's second album (Leroy 2016: 129).

with the audience. This is a very different dynamic from Soft Machine's American-based, import-only debut album lodged in a foreign tour. There is a clear sense of a discourse of both scene and pride in a local band's achievement in the *Kentish Gazette's* review of the piece.

> It is an album of softness, for Caravan are a talent of seemingly endless scope and have the power of controlling emotions with their music, showing and leading the way. Locally evolved, they are a group with whom many people feel some identification and as they progress, so do their surroundings and friends. Caravan are not a group out of reach and are not way out as they have just translated their lives into words and music. Caravan have a magic of their own, developed by the people they have met and the places they have seen~~., an.~~ *Kentish Gazette* March 7 1969)~~.~~

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This sense of connection with place here is interesting; it is stronger than that of either The Wilde Flowers or Soft Machine. The local newspaper account of live music in Canterbury in the late 1960s rarely reflects the idea of a scene beyond news of local bands and the occasional mention of a change in lineup. The sense of a local scene with some audience identification with the music and a sense of community being defined through it is significant.

A frequent movement of musicians between bands had come to be expected in Canterbury. It had been noted in August of 1968 that Andy Somers left Soft Machine to join The Animals (*Kentish Gazette* (August 2 –1968), for example, but many other changes seem to go unreported. There is, however, a sense that Canterbury, or, in particular the Technical College, was embracing the music produced by the city's highest-profile local groups to the extent that other bands were seen to be lacking. A review of the first dance of the new

academic year, recalling the Soft Machine experience of twelve months earlier, had suggested a sense of disappointment with what was produced:

> The Technical College's first dance of the academic year had an appreciative audience and both groups played well-if only the music had been more original. We had the usual "Top Gear"[195] sound without the individuality that has led to the success of other "progressive" artistes. (*Kentish Gazette* November 11 1968)

There were still pop acts to be found and appreciated in Canterbury, however**.** The Drill Hall in St Peter's had been refurbished for use as a venue in early 1969 and was set to stage a series of events aimed at those looking to listen and dance to rhythm and blues and chart covers. For one particular gig, the bill was shared by The Mojos, a Liverpool band who had experienced chart success, and a local group The Crimson Lace, from Whitstable.

The Mojos, according to the reviewer, despite their commercial success, may not have lived up to expectations producing 'good but rather repetitive pop music.' The local Whitstable band had a better reception:

> The Crimson Lace, on the other hand, supported the fast-failing Mojos and played some of the best blues music to be heard for some time in East Kent. They made no claims to be different or amusing and thus, instead of disappointing the crowd with bottomless promises, surprised those who had not seen them before with excellent performances. (January 10 1969)

There is a significant point to be made here. In line with a common progressive rock narrative, it seems that demand for and appreciation of original, sometimes local, music is

[195] John Peel's Sunday afternoon Radio 1 programme.

often found in the educational establishments of Canterbury, the University and the Technical College, both of which looked to host progressive bands with the experience, for example, of light shows. Gigs beyond the University and College, although the dances seem to be fewer in number than in the mid-1960s, retain a sense of the popular and mainstream and attract local audiences. Whilst it is clearly possible that locals and students attended both progressive and mainstream gigs,[196] there is an identifiable division.

The split in Canterbury between pop and rhythm and blues dance events and the experience offered by an evening of progressive rock is articulated in a *Gazette* article from February 1969.

In a piece entitled *What Does Canterbury Want? (Kentish Gazette* February 7 1969), the regular 'Beat Scene' columnist contrasts the dances of the type set at the Drill Hall with the progressive experience. Beyond the dances it was seen that 'there is also another "school of thought" that feels young people do not want to dance so much now, but would rather listen and watch an event or "happening". The Youth Theatre Director of the Marlowe Theatre at the time argued for the role of the Theatre to be at the centre of local events and local culture in Canterbury. He indicated that Pink Floyd would be returning to play at the Marlowe in Canterbury two years after their Technical College gig and branded the event a concert rather than anything else. He was keen to define his reasons for bringing the culture of pop into a particularly middle-class environment for the first time in the City of Canterbury:

> I think the time has come when people want to go to a concert again. All those old "rock" concerts were wrong…. Nowadays, though, many of our groups are better to watch because you miss so much when you are dancing and you can't really appreciate the music…People

[196] Brian Hopper speaks of The Wilde Flowers attending many local gigs as audience.

like Pink Floyd are able to express themselves more freely in a building like The Marlowe. (*Kentish Gazette* February 7 1969)

The response, evidenced by the review, questioned whether as a progressive band Pink Floyd had really 'progressed' as the concert, to the writer, felt more like a rehearsal than a performance without the light show that had been presented at the Technical College. (*Kentish Gazette* February 28 1969).

Caravan were to continue sharing local Canterbury bills with bands such as The Earl Gutheridge at The Drill Hall through 1969. The band was also playing in London at Middle Earth. Soft Machine worked in London with Hendrix, throughout the UK at colleges and universities and in France and the Netherlands. Despite certain logistical connections, for example Caravan had toured using Soft Machine's equipment whilst they were with Hendrix in the States, the two bands did not play together until October 1969 in Amougies, Belgium.

The sound of Caravan's earliest music is frequently and powerfully argued to be~~identified~~ as the sound of Canterbury. The band came to be seen as having established, and maintained, a relationship with the city both as place and as a home to which members occasionally returned. This is evident in audience reaction to their gigs and some topographic reference in their songs. There is some embodiment of place which includes the musicians living in the area, reference to the location in songs and something of the adoption of a folk rock tradition[197] that paralleled their surroundings. Caravan shared local gigs with local bands as well as touring more widely in the UK and beyond.

[197] Macan aligns what he sees as Caravan's 'dreamy folk/rock/classical fusion' with the early work of Yes and Genesis (1997: 128).

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## ~~3.7 The End of the Decade~~

Having released their second album and~~,~~ made numerous live and recorded performances,[198]~~,~~ Soft Machine now included a four-piece brass section in the lineup for the Amougies festival. This enabled, for example, Mike Ratledge to solo more freely on the organ without having to provide a harmonic background. Caravan, too were able innovate at Amougies with a shared performance with their MGM labelmate Frank Zappa[199] producing a longer, heavier, rock-based performance of their own song 'If I Could Do It Again, I'd Do It All Over You'.[200] Edward Macan argues that 'the harder-edged and more incisive satire of Frank Zappa's Mothers of Invention lends their [the Canterbury bands'] music a certain sense of irony, which further contributes to the fact that even their longest, most complex, pieces rarely appear to bear a cosmic message in the manner of so much symphonic progressive rock' (Macan 1997: 134).

This continues to contrast with O'Dair's earlier view of a warm and whimsical musical scene exemplified through a summer's afternoon in Canterbury's bucolic surroundings. The bands are driven by albums and by touring and by the musical influences of their labelmates, both in the cases of Soft Machine and Caravan, musicians from the States.

Caravan's second album was released in September 1970 on the Decca Deram label, an imprint created to host progressive acts in particular. Their management was then in the

[198] The Peel Sessions featuring Soft Machine at the BBC from 1968-71 onwards were released on a double album by Strange Fruit in 1993.
[199] Geoffrey Richardson recalls touring in the USA with Frank Zappa in 1975. Caravan also supported Fleetwood Mac – interview July 16 2016.
[200] Available on Canterbury *Sans Frontieres* Podcast 11 December 2013. This was the title track for the band's second (1970) album.

hands of Terry King, an individual far more used to cabaret and mainstream pop acts such as The Fortunes.[201] The album is a work which varies between driving, repetitive keyboard rhythms, and extensive long soloing, and lyrical storytelling. The single, 'Hello, Hello' which had achieved some commercial success in the lower reaches of the British charts earned the band their only appearance on the BBC's *Top of The Pops.*

The album combines Latin dance rhythms with the multi-movement jazz rock suite 'For Richard' which has remained in the band's live set ever since. Canterbury's student newspaper *Incant* rapidly reinforced the band's provenance and importance to the city:

> Caravan is Canterbury's own homegrown band. In common with Soft Machine, they have a solid reputation built on musical ability and their success in appearances up and down the country (*Incant* November 4 1970)

The student reviewer continues by celebrating Caravan's integrated approach and consistency of style. There is harsh, unmerited adverse criticism too, however:

> Caravan's weakness, as always, lies in their lack of vocal ability. Not one of them has a particularly striking voice as the singing tends to sound weak. However, their strength is in the complexity of their music and their competence as musicians. They create in a far more complex way the "Wall of Sound" effect of groups such as the Jefferson Airplane. *(Incant* 4 November 4 1970)

Aymeric Leroy, however, cites the 'perfect complementary timbres' of the voices of Pye Hastings and Richard Sinclair (Leroy 2016: 167) and Edward Macan notes Caravan's

[201] Geoffrey Richardson – interview July 16 2016.

creation of 'homophonic arrangements in which the voices move in note-against-note motion with each other and contrapuntal arrangements where two or even three separate vocal melodies are presented at the same time' (1997: 40). In fact, the balance on Caravan's second album, between accessible pop ballads such as *Hello, Hello* and the extended jazz rock suite *For Richard* which occupies the whole of the second side of the album both reflects Caravan's live set, then and now. The differences between the two sides of the album are striking.[202]

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Listeners, and commentators, seeking any sensetype of Canterbury style or sound within these high-profile recordings at the start of what Aymeric Leroy, for example, sees as the second generation of the Canterbury scene at the start of the 1970s (Leroy 2016: 203) have no easy task. The bands played in both Canterbury and London, occasionally in other East Kent clubs such as Dreamland. Only Caravan exhibited a sense of place in their music, and neither Soft Machine nor Caravan maintained a significant connection with the area.

Soft Machine's third album, *Third*, the band was now on the CBS record label, emphasised an even broader division between the group's music and that of other Canterbury bands. Released in the summer of 1970, the double album is an excellent paradigm case of extended material that both stands in opposition to commercial pop and also exists as a further illustration that the development of technology, together with the band's assimilation of styles of minimalism and tape manipulation, was moving the music beyond the jazz rock of Caravan. Pye Hastings gave a contemporary view in a 1970 interview:

[202] For a substantial analysis of the album see Leroy- 2016: 166.

> We have obvious points in common with Soft Machine, not just because we have a past in common. We like Soft Machine very much but the musical resemblances are very limited in my opinion. We're interested in writing and arranging songs rather than instrumental pieces and the melody is at the centre of our work. Soft Machine has dropped that aspect. (in Leroy 2016: 221, my translation)

Of *Third*'s four side-long tracks, 'Facelift' was created by Soft Machine by splicing tapes from two different live recordings together. The remaining studio work on the album included the saxophone-led 'Slightly All the Time', Robert Wyatt's intensely autobiographical, stripped back and lyric-driven 'Moon in June' and the minimalist 'Out-Bloody Rageous' with its clear and apparent debt to Terry Riley's tape loops.[203] Despite some commercial success,[204] ~~,~~ Soft Machine's achievements still mainly lay in their contact with live audiences, principally in European venues, who sought to connect with the emerging new forms, finding an alternative to mainstream pop and being drawn towards the live spectacle.

In welcoming the band to play in Darwin College at the University of Kent, however, the *Kentish Gazette's* 'Beat Scene' column suggests some ambivalence ~~exposes a cynicism~~ with regard to~~wards~~ Soft Machine:

> Their tour of America in 1968 brought them rave reviews. In this country they have met with a mixed reception. At first they were acclaimed but just lately the acclaim has turned to criticism of what they are doing, nobody has yet disputed their obvious musical talents. Just

[203] Edward Macan highlights the resemblance between Out-Bloody Rageous and Terry Riley's 'Rainbow in Curved Air', produced at about the same time.
[204] The album was reissued in 2007 in remastered form.

> how far Soft Machine have gone along the road of progression in modern jazz improvisation can be heard this ~~evening~~ evening. (*Kentish Gazette* January 29 1971)

Unfortunately, there appears to be no surviving student or local newspaper review of the event. However, Hugh Hopper gives some insight into what may have been the band's point of view. He recalls the evening in Canterbury:

> It was a steaming electric set that took the music of the past six months suddenly up to a new level. It's usually like that in music that has an improvisational basis – you play away for several weeks or months on a kind of plateau and then something sparks a quantum pole vault out of the blue (in Graham Bennett 2014: 4105)

As well as hosting high-profile live bands,[205] the University of Kent experienced 1971 as a centre for growing talent of its own. Steve Hillage had joined the University of Kent in the autumn of 1969, apparently unaware of any particular musical connection in the area.

> I was on the campus near Keynes College and there was a house nearby with a van with Soft Machine written on it and I realised that Caravan came from here and within a few months I'd kind of plugged into that. I liked Caravan's music, the sound, keyboard style, melodies and chords, major sevenths, different time signatures, a whole bunch of things that made it quite distinctive. After being at Kent I thought I'd pack it in and do music (interview March 17 2016).

The resulting band, Khan, was formed with Caravan's management and record company. Steve Hillage left the University at the end of the academic year. Khan is located firmly within the narrative of Canterbury progressive rock in Aymeric Leroy's review of its first

[205] An emergent Led Zeppelin played a Rag week concert in March 1971, for example.

album *Sea Shanty* released in December 1971. He sees the work as more than 'typically Canterburian' and constructed with complex rhythms, harmonies and keyboard styles. Hillage appreciated these in other Canterbury bands' work.

The Wilde Flowers, early Caravan, many local beat groups and now Khan, of whom little is documented,[206] were joined by the Kent student folk-rock group Spirogyra in claiming a physical, co-dependency with the city. Student newspaper *Incant* notes that:

> Spirogyra have been turning away many bookings this term owing to pressures of academic work. There are some discussions on recording going on but on the whole Spirogyra do not intend to flog themselves to death. (*Incant* February 19 1971)

The band, like Steve Hillage, subsequently parted company, at least temporarily, with the University and relocated to a house in St Radigund's Street, near the City Centre.[207] Hillage had also lived there, lodging with Canterbury Art School students. His place was taken by Geoffrey Richardson a year later when he arrived to audition with Spirogyra. The house, at 5~~29~~ St Radigund's, features strongly in the mythscape of the scene. It is mentioned as a kind of creative commune in interviews with both Steve Hillage and Geoffrey Richardson.

The autumn of 1971 would enable Canterbury concert goers to assess, over a comparatively short period, the recent musical progress of Caravan and Soft Machine as well as Spirogyra. Caravan had released *In the Land of Grey and Pink*, the band's third album and named for the particular light over the Thames Estuary, as seen from Graveney, in May. Again, the album

[206] The band played between 1971 and 1972, reforming some ten years later. *Facelift 16* p38 offers a brief biography of the band and Steve Hillage.
[207] Spirogyra played together until 1973. Three albums were recorded, the first named *St Radigund's.* Further material was released in 2009.

presented two stylistically different sides with single releases and lyric-driven tracks giving way to the side-long 'Nine Feet Underground', the title according to a fan magazine[208] being an allusion to the location of the Middle Earth Club, site of their earliest gigs. Caravan, in particular amongst Canterbury bands, used clear topographic reference again to connect with its audiences. The long track consists of separate tunes built into a keyboard-driven whole and played without a break. Caravan's connection with Canterbury as place remained strong. There was both a musical and economic integration with the city and some sense of an identification with the location.

Caravan's progressive rock music may be better understood as a further instance of drawing on a variety of widely-available musico-cultural materials, as had happened with rhythm and blues and Motown in the earlier work of The Wilde Flowers. The musical materials are now the folk revival musics of the mid-60s. These materials, perhaps, provided Caravan with a new opportunity to exploit the cultural resonances of Canterbury - a sense of deep history and rurality. This may help to explain their references to the city alongside their limited time spent actually performing there.[209]

Caravan and Soft Machine also both lost key figures in 1971. Robert Wyatt left Soft Machine [210]to be replaced by Phil Howard;[211] Dave Sinclair, whose keyboard sound, like that of Mike Ratledge in Soft Machine, had defined Caravan, was replaced by Steve Miller for one album

[208] *Facelift* Issue 6
[209] The band's seventh studio album (1976) was entitled' *Blind Dog at St Dunstan's'* – a reference to a particular area of the city.
[210] Robert Wyatt's, not entirely happy, departure from Soft Machine and his apparently embittered response .to it is explored extensively in Graham Bennett 2014 (4100ff)
[211] And, from 1972, John Marshall

only.[212] The new project of Sinclair and Wyatt, Matching Mole, generated an eponymous album which was released in early 1972.

The new lineup of Caravan played an Art College Concert in Canterbury Technical College Hall in October 1971. The *Kentish Gazette* columnist reviewed the event:

> It was the group's first local appearance without David Sinclair [their tenth appearance as a band] whose place has been taken by Steve Miller on electric piano. If the first batch of tunes and songs is anything to go by, Caravan's success in the future is assured. Pye Hastings' verdict was that the band has changed but the sound is not really very different. 'We are still Caravan, a much more funky Caravan, perhaps, but we're still basically the same.' (*Kentish Gazette* October 1 1971).

Caravan's event was well-received and sold out. Soft Machine's November 1971 gig at St Thomas' Hall, a modest venue in the centre of Canterbury, was billed by the *Kentish Gazette,* apparently ignoring the University of Kent concert in January 1971, as the first time the band had returned to Canterbury for several years. Again, there are no contemporary reviews. Soft Machine did not return to play in Canterbury until 1975. The gig is advertised in a November copy of *Incant* but there is no further evidence of its content or reception.

Whilst their work is essentially beyond the scope of this thesis, being lodged between 1972 and 1975, the jazz fusion of Hatfield and the North, guided by its only Canterbury-based member Richard Sinclair,[213] provided some of the most complex and interesting music

[212] *Waterloo Lily*, Caravan's fourth album, had a far more jazz funk sound to it as a result.

[213] Dave Sinclair provided keyboards until January 1973 when he rejoined Caravan and was succeeded by Dave Stewart as permanent replacement. Dave Sinclair, a highly competent keyboard player, recalls that 'What came out of the Hatfield experience for me was that I was never really drawn to the ultra-complex pieces that Richard wanted to play. I remember themes changing with every note.' (in Leroy 2016: 353, translated).

associated with the city.[214] Sinclair had provided the link between The Wilde Flowers, the lyricism of Caravan's early songs and the technically-demanding arrangements of Hatfield. Hatfield receives comparatively little attention in the literature of the Canterbury Scene but signed to Virgin, touring in the UK and abroad, the band was particularly popular in France and the Netherlands (Leroy 2016: 363) and recording at the same time as Gong, the band produced two albums of which the second, *The Rotters' Club* is frequently considered[215] to be another archetypal Canterbury Sound. The album is also a rare inspiration for a novel which shared its name.[216] A mixture of long and shorter tracks, played as an hour of continuous music in a replication of the band's live performance, the album is somewhat reminiscent of Soft Machine's second in terms of uneven time signatures and eccentric vocal settings. The band made use of synthesizers and tone generators as well as a soprano choir of three 'Northettes' to provide backing vocals.

The complex yet commercial-sounding instrumental 'Underdub' with its extended keyboard and flute lines leads to the multi-part and Dadaist 'Mumps'. 'Your Majesty is Like a Cream Doughnut', at twenty minutes the longest track on the album, is a fusion of folk song and stream of consciousness with a multi-layered backing, alternating vocal and virtuosic keyboard. Longer and shorter tracks are alternated in a way that also marked the early albums of Soft Machine and Caravan.

The band had no permanent or economically dependent relationship with Canterbury. Richard Sinclair, the distinctive voice of Caravan, provided the continuity and the local

[214] Hatfield and the North retains the distinction of being the only scene band I saw during their original popularity. They played both the Odeon Canterbury and the University of Kent during 1975.
[215] By saxophonist John Harle, for example, as indicated in the Introduction to this thesis
[216] The Rotters' Club by Jonathan Coe (2001) is set in the 1970s and includes direct reference to the band. One character is told "You wouldn't like the music. It's very complex and difficult. A bit like Henry Cow…It's just not the kind of thing girls like, I'm afraid." (Coe 2001: 102)

contact. Hatfield and the North was a short-lived band which, despite the time of its formation, did not embrace the symphonic or the artifice of their labelmate Gong's space rock. Remembered and styled as an influential Canterbury band, however, Hatfield provided a more nuanced jazz rock than Soft Machine and a more complex approach to the music's folk roots than Caravan.

### 3.5~~8~~ Conclusion

Aymeric Leroy writes of a second generation of the Canterbury scene (Leroy 2016: 203). He draws a distinction between the 'historic' bands with The Wilde Flowers as their starting point and a collection of locally-born musicians and younger groups such as Hatfield and the North whose Canterbury connection is combined with musicians from elsewhere. A high-profile band like Gong, whose affiliation to the Canterbury brand is frequent and much-prized, joined Daevid Allen, later Steve Hillage, with other musicians in a band which was to form a further, generally undiscussed, manifestation in Banana Moon before producing the *Flying Teapot* trilogy which defined its early work in 1973, a work that had no connection with Canterbury.

None of the Canterbury bands, with the possible exception, at times, of Caravan according to Macan (1997: 133), embraced the symphonic rock sound brought by the large-scale stadium acts of the 1970s. It is also argued, by Macan (1997: 131) that the period following 1970 witnessed a difference in approach between progressive and jazz rock styles. Canterbury bands had, perhaps, encompassed both up to that point along lines suggested by Frith as 'a deliberate pursuit of the opaque'. (Frith 2007: 248), especially in the work of Soft Machine. This music, however, whilst retaining elements of the psychedelic, does not reflect the values

of what Sheinbaum in his analysis of progressive rock's musical values sees as a 'politically conscious counterculture' (2002, p23). It is rarely oppositional, seldom a voice of protest.

It is positioned, rather, within the 'Hippie Aesthetic' a collection of attitudes and values organised within concepts of musical ambition, technology, virtuosity, lyrics and the concept album (Covach 2011, p68). Covach's point enables progressive rock to be understood within a continuous body of music. This is looking to increase its sophistication and scope by assimilating other musical styles and is evident in the music of Canterbury from the work of The Wilde Flowers onwards, especially in the music of Soft Machine whose work drew on their extensive international touring, This sense is also present in Caravan's music as they drew from experience in London clubs and it is central to music activity in Canterbury between 1965 and 1971.

A discourse of apparently opposing forces of popular and avant-garde was at the centre of music created by Canterbury groups throughout the period between 1965 and 1971. The music of Caravan in particular provided some integration of these. Many local bands playing beat and rhythm and blues covers for audiences in local dance halls have not been included or retained in the Canterbury mythscape despite their prominence at the time. A nuanced understanding of this mythscape is therefore required. Memory and nostalgia suggest that the construction of a scene may have its basis around Soft Machine and Caravan and, in particular, in the creativity of Robert Wyatt. This construction is continued as the bands continue to play live, identifying with the shared idea of a scene and a sound and attracting established and new audiences.

Therefore, it is clear from an examination of musical culture and activity in Canterbury between 1965 and 1971 that the high-profile bands which have been taken to form the Canterbury music scene, rapidly moved away from the city to draw cultural and clear musical influences from elsewhere. These bands have since been remembered and feted within a nostalgic construct which has evolved, and is evolving, into what is best described as a brand. Local gigging bands which played at venues throughout the city and in East Kent provided a diversity of popular styles and sometimes shared concert bills with the higher-profile bands. The venues throughout the city which hosted beat performances are frequently ignored in the common narrative of the area.

The notion of progressive rock as a 'popular avant-garde' (Anderton 2010: 425) and as seen by Chris Atton (above) can be applied to the music of Caravan and, to an extent, Soft Machine despite their work not being linked by any particular coherent style. Soft Machine's musical practices drew extensively from their work well beyond East Kent, in particular Paris and San Francisco. Musical culture in Canterbury in the early stages of English progressive rock is characterised by the activities of friends making music in changing groups. Andy Bennett's 2002 article suggests that the Canterbury musicians were 'sharing a locally situated sensibility which found its expression through informal musical liaisons and their gradual maturation into more coherent expressions of song and instrumental improvisation.' (Bennett 2002: 92). This sense of the scene as a network of individuals, most of whom had little economic co-dependency with the city in their musical activity, but who, nevertheless, ~~perhaps~~ shared musical values with one another as a result of a shared socio-cultural context, that was, at least to some extent, particular to Canterbury, is a ~~powerful~~ more compelling idea.

The early Canterbury progressive rock music only rarely evokes the city as a place in time and space. Much activity took place translocally and took on the Canterbury brand in the mediascape of contemporary local journalism. Without an extensive exposition of genre theory, it is clear that generic definitions of progressive rock in general and the work of the early Canterbury bands in particular is a fluid and changing concept constructed in retrospective views of the music.

It is to the virtual and fan-based construction of the genre/scene and the forms of communication, which have facilitated and expanded these ideas that this thesis now turns.

# Chapter 4

# The Virtual Construction of the Canterbury Scene

### 4.1 Introduction

The narrative of the Canterbury music scene, so far detailed as a dynamic physical phenomenon that thrived, in particular, on translocation has been created and maintained since the early 1990s by an increasingly more sophisticated mediascape.[217] From a local geographical starting point and then moving into a clear translocal collection of playing communities (Bennett and Peterson 2004: 6), increasing access to fan-produced print and media-based texts has arguably democratised the scene and created a continuous dialogue and redefinition of its nature. In particular, fan magazines, websites, regular podcasts, the activity of a virtual community and the presentation of 1960s music associated with Canterbury through film and CD reissue have encouraged access to a dynamic mediascape and virtual music scene. As Ian Inglis points out, this is a redefinition of scene in line with recent 'technological expansion of popular music and its modes of production, delivery and reception' (2009 p380). It is a movement away from corporate-led production towards consumer-defined values underpinned by claims of authenticity. This chapter of my thesis

[217] Andy Bennett details Appadurai's thinking about media and mythscape noting that the electronic dissemination of information, in particular, 'offer[s] individuals the potential to construct particular, and often highly romantic, ideas and images concerning the nature of places. If this is a primary form of an audience's experience, it may combine decontextualized images with existing ideas to form a mythscape, a represented view of a place with a life of its own.' (Bennett 2002: 89).

sets out, above all, to concentrate on the construction of the Canterbury mythscape using original research and academic reference.

Andy Bennett's perspective on The Revival of the Canterbury Sound (Bennett and Peterson 2004: 208ff) provides a convincing account of the importance of *Facelift*, the fan magazine and *Calyx*, the fan-based website which sought to unify a globally diffuse community with many different fan narratives in competition. In an earlier publication he points out that the term Canterbury Sound was a loosely-applied term in any case (Bennett 2002: 87). A key point of Bennett's understanding of the early 1990s revival of the scene, particularly the online revival, is a shared sense of the city in both musical and physical terms. This is an application of the theory of a virtual scene which needs reassessment within this chapter in view of more recently-developed social media.

Therefore, the creation of what Chris Atton's perceptive and detailed consideration of progressive rock fanzines describes as a 'community of interest' (Atton 2001:40), and the role played by the fan reader-writers, is both dynamic and at the centre of a significant dialogue. Ahlvist, in a much later work, examines fan construction of progressive rock; in this case online fan reviews of rock albums. His article contributes further to an understanding of the theories of both Bennett (2004) and also Atton (Atton 2011: 642) by indicating their respective standpoints on the changing virtual community; it also encompasses more recent technology and includes access to online reviews. Ahlvist has a clear idea of the importance of fan activity seen through his study:

> In writing online reviews of prog rock albums, today's fans engage in a discourse about a changing progressive rock paradigm that takes symphonic and neo-prog into account making 'paradigm writing' an apt description of their practices. (Ahlvist 2011: 642)

What Andy Bennett refers to as 'scene writing' (2002: 93), the active creation by fans of a narrative of music associated with Canterbury, has developed into a more value-based and more immediately-accessible discourse. These more recent revivals of interest in progressive rock music noted in the introduction to this thesis have been centred, in part, on the artisanal creation of fan-based materials. Media representations, fanzines, websites, social media, reissued CDs and film of the Canterbury music scene are constructed to engage their respective audiences in a discourse of sound and place with particular emphasis on these values of authenticity that purport opposition to more commercial imperatives.

The work of Andy Bennett has provided a theoretical touchstone throughout this thesis. Bennett's arguments linking musical styles with particular urbans spaces via a mythscape[218] which has been constructed, in Canterbury's case in particular, since the mid-1990s (Bennett 2002: 87), indicate the paramount importance of the retrospective viewpoint, especially that associated with print and online media. In this respect, Canterbury Sound, is the term used by Bennett in order to engage with the way in which a 'network of globally dispersed fans' (Bennett 2002: 90) defines itself or started to define itself through electronic media years after the performance of the original bands.

The recently-produced documentary film which seeks to chart the creation and influence of the Canterbury musicians, *Romantic Warriors 3*, takes a chronological stance and contrasts the viewpoint of Caravan musician Pye Hastings, the idea of the sound as a retrospective journalistic construct, with that of other European musicians who identify specific musical examples. Just as Sara Cohen evidences that in Liverpool the 'Mersey Sound' was a broad

[218] Defined in an early work as 'Decontextualised information..recontextualised by audiences into new ways of thinking about and imagining places.' (Bennett 2002: 89).

definition,[219] so opinions regarding the Canterbury Sound are represented differently according to a range of bands and commentators. Bennett and Peterson's later work takes the view that the sound itself is best judged in terms of the work of Caravan and Soft Machine in particular, also describing the term Canterbury Sound as a journalistic construct that was used in the late 1960s and then forgotten until the establishment of the Calyx website in 1999 (Bennett and Peterson 2004: 208-209).[220]

Andy Bennett's later paper applies the theoretical concept of preservationism to the Canterbury fans' Sound. Redefining heritage to include aspects of popular culture and rock music in particular (Bennett 2009: 475), he argues that aspects of preservationism, curation and re-release of recorded material, gathered through internet sites, constitute also a rewriting of popular music history. His theoretical exposition of a 'DIY preservationist sensibility' reinforces the idea that Canterbury music fans in particular 'are actively engaged in the production of an alternative history, bringing to bear their own local knowledge of a particular urban space, melding this together with a series of aesthetic judgements pertaining to issues of musical and cultural value.' (Bennett 2009: 483)

Consideration may also be given here to the effect of time. In an examination of the scene and community associated with Northern Soul, Nicola Smith explores the nature of participation and the process of ageing. In dealing with participants' control over the scene, Smith raises the issue of attitudes changing over time and the resulting possible redefinition (2009, p436). The essentially nostalgic reconstruction of a musical community that first

[219] Cohen points out that 'several people proclaimed their ability to distinguish Liverpool bands from non-Liverpool bands. Yet when I enquired as to the characteristics of that sound each gave a different answer pointing to a particular quality of voice, use of keyboards, rhythm and other factors.' (Cohen 1991: 14).
[220] This website started to draw fans together to establish the virtual community detailed later in this chapter Bennett and Peterson also note that Calyx recognised "a certain Englishness" and a "uniquely English lyrical and vocal content" as identifiable factors of the music's composition (Bennett and Peterson 2004: 209).

existed nearly fifty years ago is likely to be dependent on a particular demographic with differing degrees of commitment and affective connection to the music.[221] A similar demographic, with an equal leaning towards nostalgia, provides the basis for the continual definition and redefinition of the Canterbury music scene, again a community of nearly fifty years of age.

An examination of the extent to which a feeling of community has been developed and maintained in relation to the Canterbury scene of the 1960s requires a case study-based approach. Participants who are geographically dispersed, yet who apparently share certain beliefs and values, may seek to maintain the mediascape through online means, and historically via fanzines, in an attempt to share information and experiences. Both the nature and the content of this communication provide an exposition of the state of the virtual scene as it currently stands.

The remainder of this chapter examines two key areas. Firstly, it develops a view of the contemporary (1965-1971) mythscape and examines the extent to which the online community, which sustains interest in Canterbury music of the 1960s, has shifted control and definition of Canterbury music to a widely-dispersed fanbase. Secondly, it considers how this has changed the parameters of the scene and its narrative. A consideration is also given to *Facelift*, the Canterbury scene fanzine. Research questions to be applied to both printed fanzines and internet communication via podcasts and social media include:

How have printed and, in particular, online media contributed to the discourse of the city in musical and physical terms?

[221] One perspective is offered by a recent commentator, Gebaudo, who deems participants in online media to be 'swarms without hives,' individuals in need of some kind of leader or signifier (Gebaudo 2012: 26).

What are the features of the fanzine and online community that contribute to a sense of heritage in music associated with Canterbury?

What role is played by the notion of authenticity in the construction of the online discourses?

### 4.2 The Contemporary Mythscape

The incarnation of the mythscape associated with the Canterbury fan community is predictably uncertain. Journalists of the 1960s, some of whose work I have examined in Chapter 3, evidences a fairly loosely-assembled group of musicians performing locally and building a local audience in established venues. The activities of Canterbury musicians were routinely reported by local journalists of the time.

Changes in these groups were sometimes noted and gigs were evaluated; changes in musical approach were noted.[222] The essentially translocal nature of the Canterbury scene and lack of any kind of Canterbury music label, however, meant that the bands' aciivities were also reported in the London music press and national music magazines.[223] Soft Machine's visits to Kent were rare and their activity frequently drew the attention of the *New Musical Express*,[224] The magazine also contributed to the accumulation of audiences for Canterbury and other local bands in the 1960s. My interview subjects speak of finding advertisements for gigs at the University of Kent in Canterbury venues such as the University, St Thomas' Hall and the Westgate Hall but recall neither acknowledgement nor construction of any notion of scene, mythical or otherwise. One respondent's retrospective view of Canterbury as 'the San

[222] The Wilde Flowers, for example, were reported to have 'turned from their burning soul sound to a sound the public seems to want more' (*Kentish Gazette* May 6 1965)

[223] The editor of the International Times, the London underground magazine, reports on Caravan's gig at Middle Earth in June 1968 (Leroy: 2016: 125).

[224] Marcus O'Dair writes of the importance of the magazine in documenting Soft Machine's Albert Hall concert (O'Dair 2015: 216)

Francisco of this country' was included with the proviso that 'It's about the stuff that was going on at the time. It's not like something you can keep coming back to.' (Interview Trevor Link, April 16 2016).

Evidence of a contemporary mythscape is sparse, as is reference to a perceived local scene. Journalists do not seek to promote a view of scene as set out by Andy Bennett since the highest profile bands frequently played away from the city of Canterbury and drew ideas from translocal influences. Bennett indicates that there is 'an underlying implication that music scenes necessarily involve an element of physical participation of fans in the celebration of their common musical tastes, for example, through attendance at clubs and/live performances.' (Bennett 2002: 90). Canterbury musicians, in some cases, grew up and went to school together forming bands which played in both local venues, nationally and internationally as detailed in the previous chapter. Audience members did not celebrate their common musical tastes in a 'fan community' (Bennett 2002: 91), the like of which becomes more evident as a widespread fanbase sought to unite itself through electronic means after the 1990s.

Graham Bennett's long history of Soft Machine, hardly a contemporary account, mythologises the early days of Canterbury rock as a 'cradle' (Bennett: 2014: 308) but I have found little indication that participants or journalists of the 1960s viewed themselves as complicit in any kind of assembly of information into a mythscape. Bands which regularly played in Canterbury have been retrospectively ascribed to a mythscape sometimes centred on educational venues, sometimes City Centre venues and, occasionally, those in South and East Kent. In order to access the detail of this more carefully, it is necessary to look at more recent media, print-based then online.

### 4.3 The Canterbury Music Fanzine *Facelift*

In order to understand and explain the significance of *Facelift*, consideration is given to the twenty editions of the Canterbury fan magazine issued at irregular intervals between 1989 and 1998. The final issue was produced online only.

The development of *Facelift* is much in line with the technological expansion of music production and distribution to which Inglis refers, above, moving from the earlier days of the CD revolution to access to music via the internet. At its peak of production, *Facelift* had more than 300 subscribers in 39 countries. Peak readership was established with issues 5 and 6 in 1990.[225] The inspiration for its creation and the subsequent formation of an appreciable community lay in a growing fanzine market and the personal engagement of the creator, Phil Howitt:[226]

> I'd already spent a couple of weekends with my head buried in old magazines at the National Sound Archive in London and started to become aware of things like Pete Frame's Rock Family Trees, Fred Tomsett's fanzines covering other heroes such as Peter Hammill and King Crimson. No-one seemed to be doing a Canterbury scene fanzine (Phil Howitt, email interview, October 12 2017).

The first edition was marketed through advertisements in the music press, produced simply using the Amstrad computer technology of the time and a Xerox machine, and made it clear

[225] Andy Bennett, in particular, credits *Facelift,* together with a German equivalent *Canterbury Nachrichten,* with the revival of interest in the Canterbury Sound (2004a: 208). Chris Atton, in questioning why so few progressive rock fanzines existed at the time of the music's creation, explains that the mainstream music press of the time provided a link between fans and musicians and positioned readers as oppositional to 'mainstream' commercial taste thereby adopting the same standpoint as fan magazine writers (2002: 29). Edward Macan provides a further view of rock journalists' relationship with the music at the time and especially the question of whether a relationship with the classical tradition enhanced its quality. According to him, the idea was that progressive rock's use of the classics was felt by critics to distance the music from its roots in rhythm and blues (1997: 169).

[226] It is notable that Phil Howitt has no direct link with the city. The magazines were produced in Manchester.

in an editorial that future scope and copy of the magazine would not be confined to bands with a distinct geographical connection with Canterbury. Gong and Henry Cow were considered to be part of the Canterbury orthodoxy, despite having no geographical link with the city, and interest was further encouraged with links to the Gong Appreciation Society. Overall, production values were low; layout and composition lack consistency. Pages are not numbered and there is neither contents page nor any easy way to navigate the articles which are created in long paragraphs without crossheads. Content is drawn, however, from the stories of the highest-profile Canterbury bands and artists.[227] The publication has ambition and was issued at a time of increasing interest in similar publications. *Facelift*[228] is usefully addressed by Chris Atton's opening and engaging positional statement as he examines the nature of fanzines in general in line with the history of progressive rock and its representation through a printed mediascape:

> In short, how does an essentially artisanal, non-professional, anti-expert method of communication (the fanzine) engage with what was a predominantly high-art musical activity founded on the highest values of professionalism and virtuosity? (Atton 2001: 30)

Atton seeks to place a theoretical perspective on the music in order to provide a context for his study. This is three-fold and details progressive rock's 'status as a commercial, popular music product; its aim to achieve "art" status as an electrified form for classical music and the countercultural elements from which it was born' (2002: 31). Building on this, he notes that a critical framework was developed by the *Melody Maker* of 1969 and 1970 that informed subsequent discussion of progressive rock and saw it as popular, long-lasting and classically-

[227] Including, in Issue 1, Soft Machine, Robert Wyatt and Daevid Allen.
[228] Named for the first Canterbury track Phil Howitt ever heard, from Soft Machine's *Third* album.

influenced.[229] Significantly, this classical influence is not evident in the discourse contained within the pages of *Facelift*. The nature of the magazine is such that, whilst not rejecting the importance of the classical and high-cultural elements which may have been felt to distance the music from its readers, it aspires, rather, to maintain the longevity of the Canterbury scene and its perceived relationship with various underground and countercultural sources and publications and a clear sense of their commercial importance.

This is made most explicit with references to lesser-known psychedelic magazines and American and European works available via mail order.[230] Despite this, and an ongoing feature, from Issue 5 onwards, which provided *The Layman's Guide to Obscure Canterbury Bands,* the magazine's editorial emphasis still lies clearly in the high-profile Canterbury acts: Soft Machine, Gong, Caravan, Hugh Hopper's group and solo work.[231] Magazine reader involvement appears to become more important as the fanzine develops but a core team of some 12, all male, writers, named in Issue 20, provide a great deal of the early copy.

There is no clearly-defined letters page in *Facelift.* There is scarcely any need for one; rather the fans are contributing to form a discussion that leads to the "paradigm writing" referred to by Ahlvist, above, by way of a changing view of progressive rock music. In Ahlvist's research, fans were writing online reviews of progressive rock albums*; Facelift* correspondents' writing was mainly related to experience of live performances and, in

[229] An uncredited article in Issue 8 of Facelift asserts that 'NME, Melody Maker, Sounds et al decided that they had to adopt punk to survive' (*Facelift* 8: 16).
[230] Issue 8 provides details of the psychedelic publication *Ptolemaic Terrascope* as well as a variety of Spanish and Italian underground magazines to be recommended (*Facelift* 8: 17).
[231] Hugh Hopper is one of the few Canterbury musicians whose activities were considered newsworthy by the mainstream *Kentish Gazette* in the 1990s. The Hugh Hopper Band, including four new European musicians, was reported to be playing 'in his own backyard', more accurately in both the Tankerton Arms, Whitstable, and Broadstairs Library, about twenty miles from Canterbury (Kentish Gazette June 26 1992).

particular, reviews of new and existing recordings. Both contribute to a dynamic and changing definition of the music.

Early readership involvement becomes particularly evident in Issue 3, however, as *Gigs Past and Present* (Issue 3: 36) mixes reviews of the tapes of a Soft Machine performance in the Fairfield Halls, Croydon, in January 1970 with a memory of Hatfield and the North's last ever gig in Twickenham, London, and contemporary performances by musicians with a Canterbury connection. The fan narratives present anecdotal recollections of live bands and reviews of albums making aesthetic judgements and finding connections with Canterbury but rarely, in the earliest of the editions of *Facelift*, developing a clear sense of community. There is little reference to the city in physical terms. There is, however, an implied sense of authenticity, of a sense that a Canterbury sound was created, or influenced, by established Canterbury musicians in some of the reviews. Richard Sinclair's having been part of Caravan and Kevin Ayers' and Jimmy Hastings' involvement with Soft Machine are enough to provide a legitimate connection to the city's music. Writing about an album by guitarist Tod Dillingham, *The Wilde Canterbury Dream*, this connection is exploited:

> Todd Dillingham is a guitarist, singer and songwriter whose material first appeared on a Ptolemaic Terrascope EP with the excellent title 'Lament'. His brother Mick will be well known to Facelift readers as a constant supporter of Canterbury music, Richard Sinclair's in particular, and is a regular contributor to PT. And presumably because of these connections this CD features bass and backing vocal work by Richard Sinclair, drums by Andy Ward and flute/sax by Jimmy Hastings. There, the CD title and the donning [sic] of its hat to Kevin Ayers notwithstanding, the Canterbury connection ends. *(Facelift* 11: 46)

By this stage of the production run of *Facelift,* in 1993, the magazine includes a far more reader-friendly structure, contents page and use of clear sections. Issue 12, however, has no *Canterbury on CD* section, unlike most of its predecessors, and mainly features interviews and articles with live gig pieces. Again, production is much improved and the issue takes a standpoint against bootleg gig tapes changing hands for money in a letter signed by Canterbury musicians.[232]

The creators and writers of *Facelift,* among other fan magazines and electronic media, can be said to follow the model of cultural intermediary, first defined by Pierre Bourdieu[233] (Krims 2011, p400). Krims extends the definition of Bourdieu to encompass the idea that the writers in the role of cultural intermediary can shape the reception and production of popular music. Extending the exposition further, he sees those writing as cultural intermediaries to be 'relatively well-educated people, holding at least a Bachelor's degree and sometimes more, who are cosmopolitan in outlook and versed in the liberal values normally propagated in higher-education contexts.' Equally, those cultural intermediaries working in the popular music industry are also:

> By and large avid *consumers* of popular music so that an elaborate feedback loop develops between their leisure and their production. […] Their own consumption, along with their production, of music is *reflexive* not only in the sense that they reflect on their own choices and preferences, but also in the sense that they regard the music as reflecting something important about them. (Krims 2009, p401)

[232] Small advertisements in the magazine, free to readers, contain an ironic appeal for Soft Machine bootleg recordings, offering money in return.
[233] Normally, according to Bourdieu defined as people working in marketing, advertising, fashion, journalism, public relations and design (Krims 2011, p400).

Edward Macan recognises that, even more than twenty years ago when his major work was published, it was 'nearly twenty years too late to do a statistically accurate demographic study of progressive rock fans' (Macan 1997: 151). The editions of *Facelift* tend to suggest clear and distinct communication between writers who are avid consumers with something to say about music, which was then in some cases nearly thirty years old. These are fans whose reception of the music was shaped by what they read. Issue 16 deals in detail with a fairly common event, both through the 1990s and more recently, the release of previously unpublished archive material. Mike King, subsequently author of *Wrong Movements: A Robert Wyatt History* (2001), frames the story behind the discovery and release of an apparently long-lost 1969 recording session of Soft Machine with an ingrained enthusiasm:

> Here is the most extreme music committed to tape from a band crowned and renowned for breaking idiomatic rock with those twin pillars of the avant-garde: minimalism (played/tape looped) and improvisation (tonal/atonal)…. Forgive my presumption in feeling duty bound to share with fellow Facelift travellers my own part in this discovery, and detail the editing decisions that reduced the original 103 minute recording to the 67 minute 'Spaced'. *(Facelift* 16: 13).

Several pages of detailed background behind the reissue of the music follow, including editing and marketing decisions made. There is a sense of striving for an authenticity and an accountability towards the readership, clearly assumed to be Soft Machine aficionados, who are told, 'Don't worry, you're not missing that much.' *(Facelift* 16: 16) in respect of originally-recorded material that has been omitted.

The language is deliberately inclusive. It relates to members of a community with a sense of nostalgia, the creation of a progressive rock heritage and scene identity. *Facelift* readers are

encouraged to feel what Nicola Smith sees as ‘an identity and a form of cultural involvement that results in the achievement of scene-specific status, personhood and subsequent selfhood’. (Smith 2009, p436). Cultural intermediaries amongst the writers are encouraging continued participation in an ageing scene and a shared sense of belonging by providing a link between fans and musicians.

The magazine frequently features extended biographies of Canterbury bands and artists, including Caravan, Hugh Hopper and Kevin Ayers, which are spread, part-work style, over several issues both to encourage continuity and continued circulation. Issue 6 provides details of three ‘Fondly remembered gigs’ by Soft Machine, Egg and Kevin Ayers, none of which was in Canterbury. Overall, gig reviews, and these form a significant proportion of the magazine’s editorial content, site musical activity well beyond Canterbury and East Kent, frequently in Europe and occasionally in the USA. A later feature, especially evident in Issue 16, enables readers to find ‘What you missed-autumn gigs’ (*Facelift* 16:5). Richard Sinclair, Hugh Hopper, Kevin Ayers and Gong all played abroad. This evidence of a transnational scene serves to justify Andy Bennett’s early perspective on the Canterbury mediascape:

> Thus, while physically removed from Canterbury, ‘Canterbury Sound’ fans effectively forge a sense of community through their collective construction of the city in musicalised terms, the online discussion of fans being informed by a shared image of Canterbury as an urban space that provided the necessary stimulus for the birth of the Canterbury Sound and which remains central to its ‘spirit’. (Bennett 2002: 91)

This notion of a ‘spirit’ remains problematised. It is both commonly expressed and, equally, indefinable, waivering as it seems to do between the topographical and a perceived sense of a familiar soundscape. Later online contacts between fans certainly intensified this sense of

Canterbury as an affective musical environment, above all, with a recognisable aesthetic but *Facelift's* construction of the scene makes it clear, particularly in the later editions, that the translocal nature of music making evident in the 1960s and early 1970s continued well beyond that time.

The sense of Canterbury as place, as an urban space, is evoked in the magazine, however. The importance of East Kent venues to the early career of Caravan, Issue 5 onwards, and Steve Hillage, Issue 16, for example, forms part of the continuous narrative of the scene's history that the magazine provides. This narrative is extended in 'Mark Hewins' Canterbury Tales', a part-fictional, highly nostalgic, set of accounts of excursions from Canterbury to venues in the UK and Europe with recognisable landmarks and contemporary musicians. Bands were often invented to fit the narrative[234] but the topography had a sense of realism and provided a link with, for example, the commonly-held view of Caravan living and rehearsing in Graveney. This is evoked in quite prosaic terms:

> The house itself sits at the top of Graveney Hill. The sunsets and dawns in such a place have been hinted at by Turner in his paintings of Whitstable Bay, and the atmosphere. I remember that clearly in the summer of '76, sparked with life. (*Facelift* 12: 45)

The production run of *Facelift,* especially at the time of Issue 9 of the magazine in 1992, reflected, maybe even formed, a contributing cause of a substantial interest in curating collections of existing music and developing new musical projects with contemporary Canterbury bands.

[234] Polite Force, Joe and the UFO feature in Issue 12, for example.

According to the issue, the Voiceprint label,[235] in particular, sought to redistribute early Wilde Flowers and Daevid Allen Trio material and reviews of independent labels which have gathered the music of Canterbury artists feature strongly, as do mentions of contemporary groups such as Gizmo who created a Canterbury Music label of their own.[236] Gizmo's 1992 album *They're Peeling Onions in the Cellar*, reviewed in Issue 12, is a good example of the legacy of Caravan combining with new compositions for the 1990s revivalists. Track 1 is a clear Caravan composition by the original lineup of Richard Coughlan, Pye Hastings and the Sinclair cousins, David and Richard. Later tracks on the album written by the members of the band, however, suggest that 'Gizmo emerge in their own right as an articulate progressive band with some fine driving guitar playing*.' (Facelift* 12). Canterbury music is frequently created, discussed and written about in the magazines using high-profile bands such as Caravan as benchmarks, thus forming an ongoing discussion of the nature and development of Canterbury-based music and establishing a sense of heritage, a canon of work to which new music can be related.

The magazine's tone and engagement with its audience and regular advertisements for record dealers and sales by private individuals[237] suggest the need in the readers for an extensive collection of Canterbury music, books and merchandise. Chris Atton, in an overview of the commercial content of several different fanzines, notes that *Facelift* carries more advertising and record reviews than any of the other titles under consideration (Atton 2002: 37). Atton

[235] Voiceprint in conjunction with Brian Hopper curated and released *Canterburied Sounds* (1994), a project to which Andy Bennett refers as a significant part of the Canterbury mediascape (2002: 97). The collection is reviewed very favourably in Issue 14 with a suggestion of great authenticity. Bennett later argues that the Voiceprint label has come to be seen at the forefront of 'heritage rock' (Benntt 2015: 17).

[236] Canterbury Music continues to exist and its creator, Dave Radford, is currently working with the band Gizmo on the second part of an autobiographical trilogy, *Marlowe's Children,* a concept album with an evident Caravan influence (Interview, April 20 2017). Dave Radford also ran a record shop in Canterbury through the 1980s and 1990s as detailed later in this chapter.

[237] The 'Pluggery' feature dealing with mail order music and merchandise begins in Issue 6 and continues throughout the run of production.

also sets down a key point which helps to explain *Facelift's* approach and production values. He notes that:

> We might expect the fanzine to be more sensitive to the financial implications for its readers of embarking on such extravagant buying programmes and yet – outright warnings not to purchase aside – there seems to be little concern for the collector's pocket. The tacit assumption appears to be that if you are a fan you will want these, regardless of whether you can afford them. (Atton 2002:36)

Reader-writers and advertisers, who almost without exception have no perceived link with Canterbury in any geographical sense, have, as Atton points out (Atton 2002: 39)[238] a certain level of commercial power over an audience, equally geographically spread, but with a commitment here, to the Canterbury mediascape. It is clearly no coincidence that improved production values, design and layout, as well as increasing identity as a brand with a recognisable masthead and glossy, colour cover,[239] show a clear relationship with the revenue gained from increased advertising content.

Having recognised the values and editorial decisions in *Facelift,* and its apparent engagement with its audience, we are better equipped to address the first of our research questions. This relates to the discourse of the city created by the Canterbury-based media. There is a competing set of discourses in *Facelift.* Here the printed media and its reader-writers are establishing a dynamic sense of scene and, occasionally, via part-fictionalised accounts appealing to a nostalgic view of the topography of Canterbury and East Kent. The magazine positions itself, certainly in the earliest issues, as a nexus for Canterbury scene music,

[238] Atton's particular example is of a new recording by a disbanded group, Steely Dan in this case, encouraged by reader-writer pressure.
[239] From Issue 12 onwards.

musicians and fans. High-profile bands with a more direct connection with the city are featured in an attempt to attract readers but bands with a lesser link such as Henry Cow and Gong, and its subsequent incarnations, also maintain an interest and a presence within its pages. There is a sense of perceived authenticity, a revival of the music brought about by both a wide exchange of views and memorabilia but also a sharing and appreciation of new music by Canterbury practitioners[240] and newer bands such as Gizmo, who retained a link with the city and the area. There is what Chris Atton calls 'an overlap of community and commerce through the amateur entrepreneurial efforts of the fanzine editors and their reader-writers' (2002: 44) and the city of Canterbury, in musical rather than topographical terms, serves to define and focus that community.

Later editorial writing (Facelift 15:4) in September 1996, makes the first significant mention of the growth and power of the internet. Phil Howitt, the creator and editor, acknowledges its formative power, recommending early websites for bands such as Gong and recognising the importance of the emergent Canterbury mediascape in his 'Canterbury on the Internet' column, 'Considering the total absence of information on Canterbury music that really sparked this magazine into existence in 89, it's staggering quite how much has and is being written about it in this day and age.'*(Facelift* 12:9). The magazine continued to co-exist with the web-based Canterbury music community for three years. The first website dedicated to the Canterbury scene, *Musart*, now long defunct, established in 1996, sought to provide a

[240] These range from Caravan's Dave Sinclair gaining publicity for his re-released 1970s solo album recorded clandestinely in Canterbury's Gulbenkian Theatre during the night, according to both Issue 12 of *Facelift* and an interview of my own with Dave Sinclair's son (July 16 2016), to extensive coverage of Richard Sinclair's new 1991 *band Caravan of Dreams* in Issue 7 (pp6-9). The latter was considered sufficiently important locally also to be featured in the *Kentish Gazette* of April 14 1992. The article recognised that 'the whimsical style, strong melodies and lush, warm voice will be instantly familiar and welcome to Caravan and Canterbury scene fans'. Overall, the fanzine provided information to its readership which had previously only been available in a limited way through the mainstream local press.

weekly news update and link to *What's Rattlin,* Canterbury commentator Aymeric Leroy's dedicated newsletter with details of upcoming gigs and biographical details of musicians.

Issue 18 of *Facelift* makes a clear attempt, by publishing website details, to open up a web-based sense of community between fans. Gong was the first band to publish details of a fan website via the Gong Appreciation Society but apparently 'unofficial' websites, including examples for Caravan and Robert Wyatt, found recommendation in the pages of the magazine too. It was indeed the Gong Appreciation Society, hosted in Glastonbury,that maintained a more general information source for fans as *Facelift* completed its production run of 19 issues in May 1998. Phil Howitt considers that 'I guess people started to get used to getting the thing done for free' (e-mail interview October 12 2017). The final, online, publication did not appear until 2005 but gave new consumers the opportunity to buy back numbers as well as a kind of summary of high and low points in the magazine's life.

*Facelift* gave the opportunity for its reader-contributors to rewrite and reinvent the Canterbury music scene with multiple narratives and within a discourse of preservationism. The mediascape which it represents, and which developed during the 1990s, provides unashamedly nostalgic access to the Canterbury brand but also to progressive rock music that had little if any connection with the city, but which found representation and publicity amongst news of local bands. Both the curation and re-release of original Canterbury music and the creation of new bands and albums were encouraged and documented and a sense of community developed as *Facelift* often assumed a high level of knowledge of, and commitment to, the scene and its musicians on the part of its readers. Views and accounts of the gigs and recordings were in the hands of fans more than ever before. The city is frequently constructed in musical terms and there is some acknowledgement of its physical

sense in semi-fictional accounts of events. A perceived sense of authenticity is located in the writing which encourages participation in an ageing scene and the constant regeneration of a musical heritage.

The nature of printed media and the sometimes irregular intervals at which *Facelift* was published mean that interest in events could not be created in a time-sensitive way. Atton, however, writes of progressive rock magazines in general 'regaining a defining moment in rock history' (Atton 2002: 44) and the archival value of the publications is considerable as the sense of interest in Canterbury music and enormous variety of live gigs and recordings is recorded and evoked in a way that mainstream media failed to do. The fanzine captured the spirit of an existing community and extended it in a way that mixed aesthetic involvement with a sense of the commercial. *Facelift* was, of course, a subscription-based printed resource with a relatively small readership. The development of the Internet, initially Web 1.0 with its inability to create user-generated content, and the creation of *Calyx*, Canterbury's second dedicated fan-based website, was able to extend the mediascape and sense of community far more extensively.

**4.4 The Online 'Communities'**

Andy Bennett argues that it was the website *Calyx* that encouraged the renewed interest in the Canterbury scene and the starting point for what he calls proto-music tourism, encouraging visitors from overseas, in particular, to visit the city in search of evidence of the sound (Bennett and Peterson 2004: 17). Bennett's analysis draws on two contrasting views of what he terms the Canterbury Sound in the form of two comments, one drawn from a local interview, the other a quotation drawn from the pages of *Calyx* in 1999. The latter is a nostalgic view of a Canterbury scene, by Canterbury musician Richard Sinclair, which is

characterised by English tonalities and a European musical heritage finding a distinctive outlet and expression in the city. His views, in an interview with Andy Bennett, are generalised and, arguably, sweeping:

> So it's quite an important stepping stone of whatever this thousand years have covered, I think it's not to be mocked because it's a centre of communication here and its's a meeting point –many nations come here to visit the cathedral, so you get a very unique situation happening. (Bennett and Peterson 2004: 224 )

This is, as Bennett points out, a populist view and it is one which supports the idea of the mythscape as an easily-available point of reference.[241] This view sits in contrast to the other view of the Canterbury Sound, that gained in interview by Andy Bennett with a local music shop owner. When asked about the existence of the Canterbury scene, Bennett's interview respondent replied, 'I've lived in Canterbury all my life and I was never aware of it.' Dave Radford, Canterbury musician and, different, local record shop owner of some thirty years' experience draws on both those points of view. His recollections form an interesting and increasingly familiar construct:

> A lot of people were aware of the scene and went to the gigs and stuff, a lot of people expect there to be some sort of museum. A Belgian family came into the shop once and asked whether we had any Pink Floyd or Soft Machine. I used to sell CDs for Hugh [Hopper]. This Belgian family was so excited about being in Canterbury. The scene was going in the sixties, going in the seventies, early seventies certainly. You could definitely go out and watch somebody, certainly every weekend. (Interview April 20 2017)

[241] Hugh Hopper, on the same website in the same year, provided an oppositional viewpoint 'Canterbury has never really been a good place to play' (Bennett 2002: 90).

This is the type of perspective on the events into which Aymeric Leroy's Calyx invited its readership. The site is no longer active but pages have been archived and are accessible.[242] *Calyx* included links to gigs, artist biographies, music and lyrics, now long out of date but standing as evidence that the site[243] provided the opportunity for multiple narratives and individual histories of the Canterbury scene, a term whose frames of reference were and are highly contested but which found some definition in the various musical views of *Calyx'* correspondents and contributions to *What's Rattlin*, the weekly newsletter. Views of the scene were being further embedded in the accounts of fan writers, now much more immediately than previously, via email exchange. There is no evident sense, however, of Canterbury as place, as a topographical or even a fictive presence in the narratives which seek to construct a view of sound and scene. The website is not contributing to any kind of discourse of the city in physical terms. Particularly common on the site is an appeal to the perceived sophistication of Canterbury musical practices. Such discourse tends to suggest that it is possible to judge musical practices by legitimate criteria that have nothing to do with matters such as nostalgia. Below the criteria concerning musicianship and advanced understanding are posited and these seem to be taken to stand apart from the vagaries of history and culture.

> Sticking to one very narrow style of music, such as British psychedelia, is an annoying kind of elitism, principally because it is generally based on nostalgia, one of the worst criteria of judgement. I like music that shows high quality musicianship, good knowledge of advanced musical principles and how to use them, and is in some way distinctive. I believe that jazz-era Gong and Soft Machine meet these criteria, that they were not simply generic fusion bands

[242] http://web.archive.org/web/20160414115138/http://calyx.perso.neuf.fr
[243] Principally hosted by Aymeric Leroy, author of *L'ecole de Canterbury* (2016).

and that they deserve their places in the hearts of Canterbury music fans. (David Layton, *Calyx)*

As Andy Bennett points out, the creation of fan websites has enabled the formation of 'transnational discourses' (Bennett 2002: 90) which open up discussion of musical styles associated with Canterbury. Participants are no longer bounded by topographical constraints or even a relatively static print media which is slow to respond and fixed in time. There is no longer a cultural intermediary in the form of a fanzine writer to interpret and rewrite the scene. Online fans are authoring their own involvement and constructing the musical, and physical discourse of the city.

In considering more recent, and hence far more interactive, forms of internet activity and the way in which this supports, or otherwise, the notion of a locally-defined music culture, similar views of authenticity and the construction of musical heritage must be considered. It is useful here to borrow Connell and Gibson's perspective on music sub-cultures creating and maintaining 'zones of exchange' (referring to devotees of the Grateful Dead in San Francisco and more in particular)[244] to view the way in which online fans seek out that which is considered authentic and develop, indeed rewrite,[245] a scene which attempts to link the music with some kind of local infrastructure. Online zones of exchange provide lines of communication, opportunities to network and access music and share the values associated with it, including customer reviews of recorded bands and memories of gigs. Sub-cultural

[244] The original devotees of The Grateful Dead, the Deadheads, created newsletters, exchanged tapes of performances, encouraged and sanctioned by the band, and displayed trademark clothing and bumper stickers in order to identify one another. Sub-cultural spaces such as parking lots were established for fans to meet at and around gigs (Connell and Gibson 2003: 228).

[245] Bennett, in particular, sees this internet activity as a global attempt to rewrite popular music history (2009: 483)

spaces are now virtually constructed with repositories of information available in real time and subject to constant redefinition.

Jan Ahlvist's detailed and well-illustrated examination of online fan evaluation of progressive rock albums, the "paradigm writing" noted above, draws a distinction from his sample between consumer reviews posted on online shopping sites which deal with the music as commodity and the questions of aesthetic judgement highlighted on fan-generated websites (Ahlvist 2011: 642). This is a distinction to be observed as the remainder of this chapter includes analyses of the online communities Twitter, Facebook and the monthly Canterbury scene podcast *Canterbury Sans Frontieres*.

In 2000, Marjorie Kibby documented how, in 1996 and at about the same time as the start of *Calyx*, a small, independent record company, *Oh Boy Records*, set up a web chat page for fans of one of its artists, John Prine, to exchange messages. The intention of the record company was to 'provide a shared experience and sign of community.' (Kibby 2000: 91) but there was a clear commercial intent as well as a relationship promoted between the artist and the audience participants. Kibby's article details the two-year survival of the chatroom; it was eventually taken down following off-topic and unacceptable postings. Whilst the chat room retained a kind of implicit and recognisable identity and some connection between participants through knowledge and links to John Prine, Kibby makes the very even-handed point here that such a connection is not necessarily the precursor to any form of community (Kibby 2000:95).[246] Clearly, the assembly, online or elsewhere, of a collection of points of view may be the precursor to a form of gathering together but it is not necessarily

[246] Kibby adopts a sociological sense of community as 'a group of people who share social interaction and some common ties between themselves and other members of the group, and who share a defined place or area for at least some of the time.' (2000: 96). This arguably does not apply to Canterbury.

synonymous with community. Even so, Kibby was able to define and distinguish certain zones of exchange, small communities perhaps, from her study including participants' reception of the music of John Prine, media sightings, song lyrics and speculation about the possible participation in the chatroom of the artist himself (Kibby 2000: 96).

Of equal interest are two particularly insightful studies by Vince Miller. Both of these relate to the characteristics of new media, what he sees as 'microsocial relationships' (Miller 2008: 390) and both lead to the conclusion that it is the maintenance of a network that has become a primary focus rather than any form of communication based on mutual understanding. Social networking is based on an ephemeral exchange of data. This is a shift from a narrative to a database form of communication – a collection of individual items, termed 'phatic exchange', that preserves the network but does not inform or exchange any meaning. (Miller 2008: 393).

Miller argues, in particular, that Twitter stands as a world of connection over content, the maintenance of the network itself is the primary focus. Miller's second, much more recent, article, takes into account the very considerable advances in digital technology and cites three interrelated features of the new media: first, ease of production of new media has resulted in lack of hegemonic control of information by media corporates; second, political action is easier to connect and motivate across space; third, the increased ability to express one's own political views has led to increased public conversation (Miller 2015: 2). Miller's 2015 narrative centres on the Arab Spring as a narrative of what he calls 'social media activism' (Miller 2015: 3). He now argues that phatic communication here and elsewhere, however, is not trivial and is 'an important part of creating affective bonds which in turn create a sense of belonging, intimacy and community.' (Miller 2015: 11). His overarching conclusion is that Twitter and Facebook, in particular, are windows on events which contain little by way of

two-way communication or dialogue, rather standing as a model of broadcasting (Miller 2015: 15). Social media reproduces the status quo rather than changing the definition of events. Participation is seen as talking for the sake of 'convivial recognition.' (Miller 2015: 15).

In applying these points of view to the social media content of the Canterbury scene, and the variety of reasons evident for posting online messages, it is important to make a qualitative assessment of the communication. It is particularly important to see it in terms of its ability to provide a recognisable sense of virtual community and the extent to which distinctive zones of exchange, including the perceived opposition of the aesthetic and the commercial, emerge. Whether communication rises above the phatic to create meaningful dialogue among the participants and assumes the role of a zone of exchange is also a matter for question.

The *canterburyscene* Twitter account, reviewed over a period of three months, does little to provide a rallying point for Canterbury music enthusiasts.[247] The tone is phatic, barely that of interaction, and frequently, within the generic character limit, little more than a redistribution of existing media representation via hyperlinks to YouTube clips and the appreciation of an occasional gig, for example, to a tour by Gong:

> 40 years after the golden 70s era, it's super exciting that we (25+/yo) are able to see #CanterburyScene legends (March 10 2017)
>
> Happy days require happy records…#Caravan #landofgreyandpink #Canterburyscene #prog March 28 2017)

[247] It is self-evident but attention is drawn by Gebaudo to the point that Twitter relations are asymmetrical, that to follow in Twitter does not involve a reciprocal arrangement (Gebaudo 2012: 102).

The more prominent Canterbury bands are mentioned frequently in tweets, some via no more than an image of an album cover but any transformative sense of the exchanges is rarely evident. Questions are posed mainly from correspondents outside the United Kingdom:

*Waar blijft Caravan? Je vergeet ze toch niet (*March 11 2017*)*[248]

There is substantial evidence of Dutch interest in the Canterbury music scene, here and elsewhere. Details of the next Caravan tour, starting in November, are highlighted in a later, commercial, tweet. In essence, the Canterbury scene Twitter feed is a collection of points of view, a perspective on the past. Links to other sites such as progarchives.com and ProgRock.com provide information but do not suggest any genuine sense of community. There is, however, some sense of taking a standpoint on the nature of the scene which moves beyond the simple reassertion of the status quo and maintenance of the site.[249]

This extends from the gently ironic, but hardly provocative, suggestions of band names for Canterbury groups (Best Vestibule, Boiling Cattle, Stormy Mattock) to a far more robust challenge in a link from @progrocksGr to comment on '12 prog epics from the Canterbury scene' (April 11 2017.). Surprisingly, this extensive piece merited no reply, retweets or even apparent 'likes'. The article is long and detailed. It includes justification for the inclusion of tracks of music by Soft Machine, Egg, Caravan and Hatfield and the North but also, with a heavy emphasis on the, here retrospective, transnational nature of the scene, Supersister, and its fellow Dutch band, Pantheon, the French band Moving Gelatine Plates, Italians Picchio Dal Pozzo and Zyma from Germany. Zyma, rarely mentioned elsewhere, clearly have no

[248] Where is Caravan? I will never forget them.
[249] The entire composition of the Canterbury scene's site's tweets for three months numbers no more than sixty in total. Traffic is not brisk.

geographical claim on Canterbury at all but a relationship is created through claims of a shared sound:[250]

> The intense percussions come gradually to the fore, then it is the organ's turn and along with the bass the company of instruments, which is the ring of authenticity of Canterbury sound in Zyma, is finally shaped. (April 11 2017)

This view, the connection with Canterbury and the appeal to a view of an authenticity is not challenged by Twitter participants. It is clear, however, that the global nature of the communication facilitates multiple perspectives but does not allow identification of credible zones of exchange.

A close review of Facebook's group *The Canterbury Scene*[251] over the course of two months[252] reveals a clear sense of Canterbury at the centre of a complex and highly-populated web with multiple perspectives and, because of the nature of the social media which allows instant and detailed response, an intensely developed sense of the dialogic. The '12 Prog Epics from the Canterbury scene' posting was made to Facebook at the same time and generated multiple responses and challenges. For example:

> I'm always really cautious about non-English 'Canterbury' bands.... I like Supersister but only a little. Do you people recommend bands like Pantheon and Zyma? (April 12 2017)

[250] The track in question is called' Businessman' (1978).
[251] There is a further Facebook group dedicated solely to Robert Wyatt and his work. Wyatt himself never contributes but memories of his music, digitised photographs and other memorabilia feature widely. Admission to the group is by application and acceptance. This enables an even more nuanced connection with the Canterbury mythscape via the cultural signifier of an individual.
[252] March and April 2017.

The Facebook page, like the Twitter feed, links frequently to other, more generic, progressive rock sites such as FreeProgRock and also allows participants access to the monthly *Canterbury Sans Frontieres* podcast.[253] The site speaks above all, however, to a sense of three different discourses. These concern the nature of the music, how the Canterbury sound is represented as popular music heritage and, importantly, how the music stands within a topographical view of Canterbury. There are identifiable zones of exchange here.

There is a sense of belonging to a community identified by a set of shared musical values; the canon of the scene is frequently able to be detected. A newcomer to the site is welcomed and responds:

> Thanks for the acceptance. I'm looking forward to hearing more about the Canterbury Scene, I'm familiar with Henry Cow[254] and Soft Machine. Looking forward to hearing the others (April 9 2017).

Thirteen comments draw attention to personal favourite Canterbury bands and tracks. Equally involving is the arrival of a new correspondent from outside the UK:

> Hello from Germany. My favourite Canterbury bands are Curved Air and Caravan. I have seen Caravan live in Mainz it the early eighties, it was great. Geoffrey Richardson-fantastic violin. (April 8 2017)

New bands make use of Facebook contact to align themselves with the Canterbury brand. A connection with the perceived characteristic sound is seen as a good online marketing tool.

[253] To be examined later in this chapter.
[254] Frequently included in the Canterbury canon despite the band's formation in Cambridge. They are described 'at their most Canterbury' in a post of April 25 2017.

Two recent examples attempt to interest the community in newly-created music. The band is Zohmn from Nottingham.

> Quite a bit of Canterbury influence with this young UK group; the guitarist in particular seems to be very fond of Phil Miller's sound. I am not related to the group or anything, just thought you might like to check it out.[255] (April 30 2017)

Another band, Magic Bus, is seen in a Facebook post to be:

'Very canterburyesque indeed!'.

> Magic Bus. Have wrapped themselves in an English countryside time bubble all of their own. This is retrogressive rock but when it is this good and unassuming, one can only have praise (May 2 2017)

This implied understanding of the dominant narrative of Canterbury progressive rock music as both steeped in bucolic values and, in this sense, locked in time is highly significant. It speaks to a view of the mythscape that tells the musicians' story in a way that satisfies those who choose to associate with it. The view is created and maintained by a further function of the Facebook postings, of which there are many more than Twitter; the database is expanded on a daily basis. This is the formation of an online archive, a sub-cultural site, which is accessible and able to be augmented by participants as a musical heritage. This creation and appreciation of online Canterbury sound nostalgia, recognisable here as popular music heritage, is the force which underlies the virtual community and extends the exchanges frequently to transform the status quo of the scene.

[255] Member of Matching Mole and Hatfield and the North.

Creation of archive may be as clear as online tributes to the guitarist Allan Holdsworth, veteran of just one Soft Machine album, *Bundles*,[256] assimilating his work into the Canterbury mythscape and advising of an open memorial service to be held in the future. Equally, participants are occasionally invited to create a choice of albums to represent an archetype of the Canterbury scene, or maybe a single band, frequently Caravan. Photographs of musicians,[257] gig programmes, a post from April 30 2017 shows an original example in the programme for a performance of *Tubular Bells*, the Canterbury connection being via the participation of Steve Hill age, in London in June 1973, and original album covers will encourage online sociability and different perspectives on the music drawn from others' memories. There is a sense of both equality of views and also a recognition that a Canterbury authenticity is represented here; the material has its roots in the Canterbury brand defined by established participants in the scene and memories of music created there. Most recently, instant reviews of a present-day Soft Machine gig[258] are posted in very much the same way as those in *Facelift* over thirty years ago. 'Who saw Soft Machine last night?' generated responses which extended from 'I find it sad. Just leave it where it was.' To 'The three veteran members of Soft Machine play with an energy and intensity that men a third of their age would find difficult to muster.' (April 27 2017).

Particular musicians and individual music attract the attention of correspondents. Views are extended via the mediascape and multiple perspectives. For example, the experience of listening again to Robert Wyatt's 'Shipbuilding',[259] posted several times through April,

[256] Soft Machine's eighth studio album, 1975. Allan Holdsworth died on April 15 2017.
[257] The social media site is not entirely democratic and without gatekeeping, however, Dave Sinclair's son points out to a Caravan correspondent that 'You do not have the authorisation to download this photo from my father's website and upload it to here.' (March 3 2017)
[258] Ribble Valley Jazz Festival April 30 2017.
[259] The song was written not by Wyatt but by Elvis Costello and Clive Langer in 1982. Released both as a single and on a compilation of Wyatt's work, *Nothing Can Stop Us,* (1982), it concerns the contraction of the British shipbuilding industry at the time of the Falklands War and the loss of life in the South Atlantic fleet. It is,

resulted in the sharing of highly affective memory, 'Nice post. Everything is so right with this piece of music, everything in the right place for the right amount of time,' (April 29 2017) but also, in earlier posts, political interaction about the intentions of Margaret Thatcher in 1982 and the effect of the song in evoking those memories.

Links to YouTube, and occasionally Soundcloud, are used further to curate the online archive and its storage. The nature of YouTube and its own facility both to collate aspects of online sociability and also to provide a stimulus for imagined memory[260] and writing of musical heritage is important to consider at this stage. There is a great deal of footage of Soft Machine[261] but links to the Caravan tracks work successfully far less often as access has sometimes been denied by members of the band.[262] Simon Reynolds views YouTube as a form of cultural practice but also recognising the importance of questioning the values of the collection:

> YouTube's ever-proliferating labyrinth of collective recollection is a prime example of the crisis of overdocumentation triggered by digital technology. When cultural data is dematerialised, our capacity to store, sort and access it is vastly increased and enhanced. The compression of text, images and audio means that issues of space and cost no longer deter us from keeping anything and everything that seems remotely interesting or amusing. (Reynolds 2011: 56).

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according to *The Voices of Robert Wyatt* BBC Radio 4, October 6 2012, written for Wyatt but not his own political statement; Wyatt sees himself as the instrument on which the writers played the tune with no intention to interpose himself between the music and the listener.

[260] Mark Duffett is drawing a distinction between myth and imagined memory when he sees the latter as 'the product of a fan's desire to have experienced one of the early performances of their favourite star'(Duffett 2013: 229).

[261] The Concert at Amougies and the Peel Sessions are frequently featured as important. These events would have been marketed as bootleg CDs, for example, in *Facelift.*

[262] According to Dave Sinclair's son, Nicholas Blow, interview July 16 2016.

The construction of collective memory and continual reassessment of the Canterbury scene as an online entity form a dynamic and user-generated sense of popular music heritage. The Canterbury mythscape has been created, largely, by electronic means. Reynolds points regarding overdocumentation can certainly be applied to the Canterbury mythscape which is rooted in online acticity.

Further zones of exchange relate the music to a topographical view of the city itself. YouTube is evidently open to all and extracts are frequently embedded in Twitter and Facebook postings in order both to document a birthday or an anniversary of a particular gig but also to invite comment on and recollection of particular events, thereby writing and rewriting a musical heritage via specific online performances. Fan narratives, as Duffett points out, move backwards. (Duffett 2013: 230) A Facebook posting of Soft Machine's 'Slightly All The Time' from *Third* on YouTube adds a small but important item to the narrative of the early days of Canterbury rock music:

> I have never stopped listening to this album despite all the faults the audiophiles love to point up. Weirdly this band was formed from the Canterbury group The Wilde Flowers who I once booked for a sixth form dance in Broadstairs (July 18 2017)

Allusion to Canterbury and the surrounding area as places of physical significance amongst Facebook correspondents is sometimes contained within biographical pieces, for example an appreciation of Bill Bruford in a post (March 3 2017) and a kind of Where Are They Now? appeal, now online and immediate rather than time-bounded within the pages of a magazine, for formally high-profile figures such as Mike Ratledge (March 2 2017). Residence in the city is occasionally used to legitimise and brand a sound: 'I live in Canterbury. Listen to the opening track of my new Canterbury Sound album.' (March 13 2017), an interesting

combination of presumed local authenticity and commercial imperative. Most direct, however, is the evocation of sense of Canterbury as a place of popular pilgrimage for Caravan fans wishing to locate the St Dunstan's area, after which the band's seventh studio album was named.[263] The correspondent has advice for modern-day followers and recommends Canterbury city in a posting as 'a very nice place except for the violence which was everywhere as soon as night fell.' (March 25 2017).

As was the case with the printed medium of *Facelift*, user-generated content, online contacts reflect the spirit of a musical community but in an instantly accessible and, importantly, a rewritable way that defines and redefines the musical heritage and allows for imagined memory and the sharing of archived live performances. Whilst clearly subject to the idea of overdocumentation and Reynolds view, above, that material may be only remotely relevant, the scene becomes dynamic and works in something approaching real time. Values are grounds for discussion and renegotiation and memories may be stirred by the online curation of images and artefacts. The implications for a sense of scene are significant as both print and online media continue to provide the opportunity for a transnational community to seek both an identity and a sense of authenticity.

**4.5 Canterbury Sound Podcasts**

Fan magazine reader-writers and those correspondents who discuss progressive rock music online, in chat rooms and on social media, make frequent and sometimes extensive use of benchmarks in situating the bands and artists under consideration. Dowd et al, in an extensive review of *the Dutch Progressive Rock Page* over a period of ten years, established the benchmarks, other progressive rock bands used as a point of reference and comparison,

[263] *Blind Dog at St Dunstan's* (1976).

which were included with the online postings (Dowd et al. 2016: 7). Their reasoning established a kind of differentiation and perceived ranking between bands:

> Those under review held in high esteem were likely to have no or few benchmarks applied to them, as was the case for bands/musicians associated with the birthplace of prog and with metal subgenres. In contrast, benchmarks were plentiful for bands/musicians receiving their first-time or flattering reviews. Critics thus used benchmarks to construct a history of sorts extending back to the 1960s and to ground the progressive rock recordings delivered in the 21st century. (Dowd et al. 2016: 37)

Bands are discussed in relation to one another.[264] Progressive rock is considered a series of overlapping subgenres each with a particular claim to authenticity. A further example of the infrastructure and the rise of specialist rock critics with an eye to defining style and genre is the establishment of online podcasts providing access to a wide variety of historical and contemporary progressive rock. Again, the particular theoretical concepts of how Canterbury is constructed in both musical and physical terms, a sense of the need for heritage and differing views of authenticity need to inform this case study. There are several examples of web-based, therefore transnational, progressive-based online podcasts from the US-based *PM Show*, frequently to be accessed via the Canterbury Scene Facebook page and now numbering 162 separate broadcasts, to *From The Yellow Room*, a wider-ranging 90-minute monthly piece which includes progressive rock in its mixture of harder and space rock. The principal online podcast dedicated to the Canterbury music scene is *Canterbury Sans Frontieres,*[265] formerly *Canterbury Soundwaves*,[266] hosted in Canterbury and displaying a total archive of some 70 online broadcasts. The podcast is uploaded each month to coincide with the full

[264] Ahlvist draws attention to shared genre expectations and how a recording can act as a reference point for later music (2011: 644).
[265] canterburywithoutborders.blogspot.com.
[266] canterburysoundwaves.co.uk.

moon, an allusion to the work of Gong who recorded in the same way. The curator, Matthew Watkins, finds the online construction of a Canterbury scene part of a process:

> In a sense what I'm doing with my podcast is kind of complicating this [idea of Canterbury having some kind of genius loci] or contributing to it in some ways. Here l am. I happen to live here and I'm broadcasting from a caravan under a chestnut tree when I'm playing music which is the Canterbury sound even though it might be recorded in London mixed up with bands from here now so people might say you're just muddying the waters but on the other hand it sort of makes sense to me and I can do what I want. (Interview November 22 2015)

The affective construction of Canterbury in musical terms is evident in the series of *Canterbury Soundwaves* streamed between November 2010 and January 2013. Watkins' playlist mixes the work of high-profile Canterbury bands with contemporary artists such as Syd Arthur, who were playing on the short-lived Lounge on the Farm Festival,[267] which took place for several years just outside the City of Canterbury. Soft Machine are included in embedded YouTube video playing on French television and the selection of music is particularly characterised by live performances rather than the more readily-available album versions. Occasional references are made to the antecedents of the sound. For example, *Soundwaves* 12 features a 1964 keyboard study by Terry Riley aligned with the Royal Albert Hall performance by Soft Machine; connections are clear. The mixture is particularly centred on Canterbury musicians but it also speaks to the clearly-established transnational nature of the scene with recorded performances from different European jazz festivals[268] and the inclusion of contemporary bands with an evident Canterbury influence such as SoupSongs,

[267] Episode 4, February 2011
[268] Episode 13, for example, draws on music recorded in France, Germany and Italy.

specialising in the music of Robert Wyatt,[269] and Penguin Café Orchestra including local musician Geoffrey Richardson.

The inclusion of first-hand accounts of music in Canterbury in the 1960s and 1970s is a particular feature of the podcast's establishment of a popular music heritage. Very few interviews and accounts are original to the *Soundwaves* production; a Kevin Ayers interview featured in Episode 14 is included 'date and origin unknown', and there is frequent evidence of embedded YouTube accounts and memoirs. A YouTube interview with Kevin Ayers, again, Soft Machine original and Canterbury local who died in 2013, is curated into Episode 14 with his views on the 1967 14 Hour Technicolor Dream. The material is given a context and wider audience via the podcast.

Of particular significance is the final podcast of the *Canterbury Soundwaves* series of podcasts, 'A Day Out With Daevid Allen in the Canterbury Area'.[270] In a rare example of linking the music with the physical reality of the city, and establishing connections with particular historic venues, Daevid Allen is taken around Canterbury landmarks where he occasionally reads his own poetry or makes reference to the mythology which has become associated with, for example, the St Radigund's area, home to Spirogyra and Steve Hillage, Lydden House, Wyatt's childhood home and the Beehive. The music of The Wilde Flowers, Soft Machine and Gong underpins this tour but there is also some allusion to the music's antecedents as listeners are directed to the work of Duke Ellington, part of the collection Allen[271] brought to the UK in the early 1960s to share with Robert Wyatt.

[269] Wyatt's own view of Annie Whitehead, SoupSongs' leader, is included in the transcript of a 1997 interview in Episode 13 'She's wonderful because she listens. She's not thinking". How can I do my own thing?" as much as "how can I help this song?" and her ears are extraordinarily acute.'
[270] January 2013
[271] Daevid Allen died in 2015, a tribute mix of his solo work and contributions to early Gong work was podcasted in Episode 21 of *Canterbury Sans Frontieres.*

Matthew Watkins' *Canterbury Sans Frontieres* podcast website provides a link to a user-generated Google Maps screen[272] which, in contributing further to the discourse of space details both local and international locations of significance to the Canterbury sound. These range from East Kent venues long since included in the Canterbury popular music folklore such as Graveney Village Hall, temporary home to Caravan in the 1960s, and Canterbury colleges, to what was perhaps the nearest the city came to a commune at 5 St Radigunds Street.[273] Other Google locations speak to the perceived transnational scene. For example, Saint Tropez, site of a Soft Machine gig at the Café des Arts in 1967, and the home of Kevin Ayers, dates are imprecise, in Montolieu, France, until his death are included as well as Gong's communal farmhouse in Sens.

The site is maintained by Watkins and includes over fifty examples of locations. Information contributed by those wishing to add to this eminently virtual construction is sometimes speculative and unchecked. Hugh Hopper's address in Martyr's Field Road in Canterbury points out that he lived there 'in the 1980s (and early 90s?)' inviting confirmation or otherwise. There is a mixture of individual artist information and a sense of the different playing venues as the mythscape is created in the form of a wholly media-based exchange of information which seeks to link music, time and place.[274] The visual appeal of the mapping encourages an emotional connection and sense of reality as well as providing the basis for real-time engagement with the sites, particularly those in East Kent. The audience is limited to followers of the podcast, however; visitors to Canterbury have no comparable physical or virtual focus.

[272] Accessed via *canterburywithoutborders.blogspot.co.uk*
[273] According to interviews with both Steve Hillage and Geoff Richardson.
[274] Ian Inglis draws attention to the importance of informal exchange of ideas via specialist media in order for a scene to form. (Inglis 2011, p391)

*Canterbury Sans Frontieres*, podcast between March 2013 and the present, is, as might be expected, a far broader based collection of music from Canterbury and far beyond. Each episode is at least three hours in length and bands are frequently benchmarked with others. Progressive rock is taken to be a series of subgenres and, once more, the sense of creating archive, heritage and the quest for authenticity whilst retaining a recognition of the commercial becomes evident. The audience of the podcast is involved in what Andy Bennett sees as a globally diffuse community seeking to authenticate true examples of the myth, as he sees it, of the Canterbury sound (2004: 216). Matthew Watkins has a sense of the take up of *Canterbury Sans Frontieres*:

> People contact me and I think they're mostly people of a certain age who were around at that time, Americans, you know, who flocked to see Hatfield when they reunited in 2006. They're mostly all men of a certain age but there's also a thing you can embed on blogs where you can get little red dots on a map of the world showing where people are logging on from. It's incredibly well distributed around the planet, a concentration on Italy and Japan. Some of the earlier [podcasts] have got thousands of listeners. When l launch an episode now, within a couple of weeks there's been 150 or something but it will slowly trickle up…It's cult in the sense that it's very small but it's not viral. (Interview , November 22 2015)

Some of the music is broadcast with a kind of self-assured and inbuilt claim of authenticity: Episode 10 contains recordings 'from a series of concerts at a secret woodland location near Canterbury.' There is a greater sense of the history of the sound than was present in the earlier podcasts. This ranges from an exposition of John Coltrane's influence on both the music of Hugh Hopper and also Steve Hillage's electronic dance band System 7 to an allusion to a perceived genius loci in the city in Episode 17 via the work of Orlando Gibbons

who died in Canterbury in 1625.[275] The links between the music of contemporary Canterbury, music which forms part of the Canterbury brand and other work serving as a benchmark, a means of reference, are far more developed in these more recent podcasts. This is particularly evident in Episode 31 of *Canterbury Sans Frontieres,* which ranges fourteen different interpretations of Soft Machine's 'We Did It Again' with their San Francisco contemporaries Jefferson Airplane.

Performances by local artists which have been given as part of Canterbury's Free Range[276] evenings are archived and podcast, thereby creating a local heritage based on both community involvement and online presence. It is a form of preservationism as outlined by Bennett (Bennett 2009 p475) and extends the Canterbury artistic community to a worldwide audience. The podcast allows for comments to be added but these are comparatively few in number overall and there is no sense of either the phatic or the dialogic in their content. There is, however, the occasional opportunity for guest mixes to be included in the podcasts. [277] These extend from a listener in Jakarta presenting, in Episode 40, 'Canterbury in Indonesia', no mainstream or lesser-known bands are included, to local Canterbury electronic musician Koloto presenting her own original set in Episode 45. Equally, contemporary bands recorded at local Canterbury venues find a place in the podcasts. Lapis Lazuli, a Canterbury group whose music mixes progressive rock, funk and jazz, and shows clear influences of both Soft Machine and Gong, feature in Episode 22 playing a set from their new album[278] at Canterbury's Penny Theatre, a small venue which continues to host live music in the city.

[275] System 7 released a post- psychedelic piece, 'Coltrane', in 1994.
[276] Free Range is hosted in a local Canterbury coffee house on a monthly basis. It provides a forum for musicians, poets and film makers to perform separately and to improvise together. It retains something of the spirit of the Beehive as a performance space and is organised by Matthew Watkins' alter ego, Professor Raphael Appleblossom, a sense of Canterbury whimsy.
[277] My own is to be heard in Episode 30, *canterburywithoutborders.blogspot.com.*
[278] *Alien/Abra Cadaver* Smugglers Records April 2014.

The choice of recorded, and recorded live, material which is included in *Canterbury Sans Frontieres* podcasts reflects both a sense of a perceived Canterbury sound with comments which suggest a defining keyboard style, for example, in Episode 21, and also a heritage which exists alongside other sub-genres of progressive rock. There is a sense of history and a shared past which is preserved and shared in both *Canterbury Soundwaves* and *Canterbury Sans Frontieres* but the latter extends the brand and suggests that the audience may be a community of aficionados for whom the sound of Canterbury is a beginning rather than a destination and who seek a sense of authenticity via a range of different musicians. Benchmarks are used in the construction of the shared past and contemporary Canterbury music scene.

There is a clear sense of a musical heritage being claimed and overdocumented from within these podcasts. Early examples tend to dwell on music with a particular Canterbury association; later broadcasts set benchmarks for comparison and encourage a translocal and transnational sense of scene whilst retaining a sense of the authenticity of a Canterbury sound. Contemporary bands and artists are considered to be part of the Canterbury aesthetic and the podcasts, by their nature, preserve the discourse and render it widely available for comment if listeners choose to do so. The podcasts also allow live performances to form part of the archived musical heritage and enable the musicians involved to establish commercial recognition beyond the city. The music has both an affective and a physical location with a city which is represented in a clear and specific way.

The development of online media evidences the way in which fan phenomena have moved on at a particularly rapid rate (Duffett 2012: 240). Evidence that has been drawn in this chapter from fan magazines, online social media and podcasts indicate a development from mediated

communication to the construction of a fan narrative in real time. Through this, isolated individuals are able, in relative anonymity, to gather around and contribute to the signifier of Canterbury's musical and, to a lesser extent, geographical heritage. It has been shown that fans are able to engage in a discourse of the city which enhances the mythscape in terms of memories of performances and curated collections of historic material.

### 4.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, it is evident that printed and online media have contributed to the discourse of the city. More recent media, in particular the fanzine and online community, have enabled the viewpoints of different fans, in widely-dispersed locations, to reconstruct information into a mythscape.

This chapter has taken a starting point from Andy Bennett and considered the extent to which modern fans, in particular, have been involved in creating an alternative history of the perceived Canterbury music scene. There is little evidence that the music fans of the 1960s sought to create a readily-defined fan community. Atton's work on progressive rock fanzines has provided a theoretical perspective on fan magazines, especially *Facelift*, and the magazine's role in extending the community since the 1990s is shown to be important. A sense of heritage is constantly defined and redefined as a dynamic online community, however, is involved in 'scene writing' (Bennett 2002: 92) on a large scale.

There is also evidence in this chapter of a quest for authenticity which draws upon participants' emotional connection to the music and its origins. This perceived authenticity is occasionally mixed with a commodified sense of exchange as the Canterbury brand is exercised to draw attention to new bands and music. Further, the dialogic nature of Facebook,

in addition to the locally-produced monthly podcasts, enables music to be 'benchmarked' with other work, an idea to be found in the podcasts as a broad selection of musical examples from around the world and a broad variety of genres complements work with an explicit Canterbury connection. The issue of whether an online community is maintained beyond the phatic towards content-based communication is important. This is a marked and useful coincidence of the transnational and virtual scene which speaks to a shared sense of the city by participants whose local experience may vary from considerable to completely non-existent.

Curated memories and recordings which continue to be circulated and shared via online media, including podcasts, have allowed an ongoing connection which was not evident in the 1960s to the city and its apparent scene. The dialogic nature of some of the more modern media allows instant comparison with music without a Canterbury origin. Participation in the virtual scene may, in fact, be generationally based but online anonymity does not make this clear. The importance of an effective relationship, an emotional connection with the city, is defined by a sense of musical heritage rather than a series of locations as may previously have been the case. This connection is maintained as online participants construct the narrative and seek authenticity, responding to others in real time.

Canterbury remains a nexus. As Bennett pointed out, it provided and continues to provide the anchoring role for the constructed myths which define the scene (Bennett 2002: 88). The idea of 'Canterburyism', however, Andy Bennett's conceptual link between the music and the city (2002: 96), whilst it may continue to remain set in certain holding forms, the *Canterburied Sounds* collection, for example, is rarely articulated and evidence of the construction of a historical local scene is limited.

# Chapter 5

# Conclusion

In this examination and exposition of the work of Canterbury musicians working in the field of popular music in some cases over fifty years ago there has been much discussion of the nature of a scene. The term scene is frequently used as a synonym for sound, itself a fluid and indeterminate concept in many cases; it also frequently takes on a more straightforward meaning, an idea to which many of my interviewees subscribed, which mixes stakeholders such as musicians, fans, venues, record shops, studios and, above all, 'zones of exchange'[279] to uphold it. This is a summary of my findings and my concluding remarks.

Drawing from my research in Canterbury, it has become evident from the comments and recollections of members of the bands and their audiences that the construction of a dynamic and transformative scene was never their aim. There is no sense that a local Canterbury scene which took any kind of active role in defining its own progress with the aid of commodification was consciously created in the 1960s.

Venues in East Kent hosted local rock groups at events which were attended by young audiences and which were frequently reviewed in the local and student press. Canterbury musicians drew upon many influences including the psychedelic, classical, avant-garde, jazz

[279] Of the type, in particular, detailed by Connell and Gibson whose discussion of sub-cultural spaces in respect of the Grateful Dead provides a concise view of what an active scene might contain (Connell and Gibson 2003: 228).

and eastern influences but for some of them a middle-class education at a local grammar school provided introductions and motivation. Canterbury musicians, especially The Wilde Flowers and Soft Machine identify themselves against a background of 1960s psychedelia.

However, whilst Canterbury is demonstrably not a further paradigm example of the forms of musical community detailed by Shank (1994), Finnegan (2007) or Cohen (1991), there was, in Canterbury, a shared and powerful sense of movement from a smaller musical community to a large city, embracing the translocal, in order to gain fame, a record deal and recognition.[280] The movement lacked the infrastructure and scale of Liverpool, for example, as Sara Cohen documents it.

There is a populist view of the Canterbury scene, in which the term Canterbury Sound has greater currency that locates it in the extended mythscape of the City's identity. Canterbury is, in itself, a far smaller geographical area than those with which it has been compared. This view may range from simply citing Canterbury as a city which has been fortunate to host talented and sometimes like-minded musicians but not possessed of a sound, to a complete narrative which combines place, local identity, the church and a complex harmonic and rhythmic sound developed by musicians growing up in East Kent.[281] My suggestion overall is that any sense of scene of the 1960s was extremely limited for the stakeholders at the time who, like many musicians in smaller musical centres, saw the lure of larger, more developed and readily-identifiable scenes, in big cities, and sought to be part of the practices developing in larger cultural centres such as London, Paris and San Francisco.

[280] Recall, in particular, Liverpool bands moving to London (Cohen 1991: 129) and the musicians of Austin, Texas travelling to San Francisco in order to gain recognition whilst retaining a sense of opposition in their music (Shank 1994: 50).

[281] Andy Bennett upholds this view following an interview with Caravan's Richard Sinclair (in Cohen et al ed 2015: 16).

Equally, however, the higher-profile bands who left Canterbury in the 1960s both ascribed a musical identity to the City as their progress was charted by local media and also absorbed translocal and international influences which have led to the past and present construction of the music and the current view of scene which is maintained by virtual means above all.

Broadly, my work leads me to believe that the concept of musical scene lies along a continuum. I have explored a range of commentators all of whom have a theoretical viewpoint and introduce, to varying degrees, a range of examples to support this. Continued publication of books and articles, the work of Andy Bennett and Aymeric Leroy in particular as well as my own, suggests that academic interest also seek to legitimise continued engagement with Canterbury music.

I believe that the most developed and inclusive scenes occur where there is an active link between musicians, audiences, infrastructure, zones of exchange and commercial possibilities. There is a sense of ownership of a scene with a particularly strong creative force. This may be most powerful when set against the mainstream[282] and lead to a deterministic relationship between site and sound. I believe this is rare. Brian Eno coined a useful term in this regard:

> I came up with this word, which l still use, which is the word 'scenius'. So, genius is the talent of an individual, scenius is the talent of the whole community, And l think you know in history you see many examples of great sceniuses like that point in the Renaissance when Rafael, Michelangelo and da Vinci were all alive at the same time and in the same cities. Or British pop culture, actually, British pop culture at various times has been that kind of scenius

[282] For example, the activities in Austin, Texas, the progressive folk and punk scenes, and the Haight Ashbury area of San Francisco in the mid-1960s.

> where all sorts of talent and opportunity come together. (Eno, John Peel Lecture September 27 2015 BBC Radio Academy)

The state of scenius seems most compatible with a large city community, Liverpool for example in the 1960s. In order to make sense of its achievement, the participants' active awareness of the scene and the creativity involved need to be understood. This was a city doing scene, the continuum's most dynamic state. Some aspects of Canterbury progressive rock pertain, to some extent, to a sense of dynamism and innovative musical activity. The Wilde Flowers' early experimentation, now seen retrospectively and dismissed in favour of dance music, and particularly in the early days of the Beehive Club and Brighton band contest, perhaps exhibited a creativity rooted in the avant-garde.

Evidence for this dynamism is, perhaps, rather limited. Soft Machine's work, derived as it was from free jazz, the classical multi-movement suite and the tape loop technology of Terry Riley and developed musically with the devotees of pataphysics in Paris perhaps exemplifies more convincingly the combination of talent and opportunity that Brian Eno suggests above. There was no developed community sense in Canterbury in the 1960s and Soft Machine played rarely in what was held to be their home city returning occasionally to play at the technology college and the new University of Kent. The mediascape has constructed a sense in which the soundscape continues to be linked with a view of the city in a virtual way.

To this we need to add the association of genre and its use in establishing a definition of musical identity. Simon Frith provides a clear and useful exposition of the work of Franco Fabbri which concludes that genre too is a fluid and dynamic construct sometimes in

response to 'technological and demographic change' (Frith 1996: 93). As a way of categorizing popular music, the function of genre lies in creating and celebrating links between styles, producers and consumers.[283]

Fans and commentators, stakeholders and members of today's virtual scene which has sustained and developed interest in the music of Canterbury bands via fanzines, online exchanges and podcasts, add to this by further projecting views of origin and sound. Therefore generic characteristics begin to be identified by those involved, often retrospectively. This, to an extent, is the way the Canterbury Sound has been constructed and identified, not at the time of its beginnings in the 1960s when the active creation of a scene was barely evident, but via a mythscape which ascribes generic sonic features to the City's music with the benefit of considerable hindsight.

This is a view of scene evolved with the assistance of outsiders, one which remains on the continuum as dynamic but does not absorb the energy of a musical community relying, instead, on the influence of the virtual, translocal and the construction of nostalgia. Modern stakeholders often adopt a preservationist standpoint choosing to maintain a link with the Canterbury brand in order to create lines of communication and sometimes market new music. The legacy of Canterbury musicians, as exemplified in the conference of October 2017, is strong and a motivating force for contemporary audiences and performers.[284]

It has become clear from my research that Canterbury as a location remains passive to the musicians who created its virtual musical identity. It was Phil Howitt's *Facelift* magazine

[283] David Brackett examines this in detail in Hesmondhalgh and Negus ed 2002:67.
[284] John Harle, a major stakeholder in modern Canterbury music making and contributor to my research, acknowledges what he sees as the 'extravagant surrealist poetry' of songs like Caravan's 'Golf Girl' that influenced his musical approach to a new work*, Zoom*, performed with the latest lineup of Soft Machine in 2018.

established in 1989 and Brian Hopper's curation of *Canterburied Sounds* some five years later which began a process of branding ignored through the 1980s but embraced by online connections for the last twenty-five years. This is a point along the continuum of scene far removed from the active, sometimes oppositional, examples which found homes in Liverpool, London, Paris and San Francisco. It is a scene curated by those who subscribe to a mythscape, but who had no direct involvement in the original creative process and who mainly ignore the more mainstream music making by the beat groups and cover bands which continue to elude the perceived Canterbury genre.

Throughout this thesis I have sought to add to the discourse of popular music and the significance of its location with particular reference to the creation of music in and around the City of Canterbury between 1965 and the early 1970s. I have examined the context for the music and, in particular, I have taken a long look at the bands, audiences and venues which formed what some consider to be a Canterbury scene. The apparent diversity of music in the City at this time has become evident and I have further examined how notions of scene have been built into a mythscape via an increasingly sophisticated evolving contemporary media. To this has been added academic scene theory and a consideration of the extent to which this enables an informed judgement to be made about the live and recorded music which was produced by Canterbury musicians. I have suggested that it has become clear that the myth of the Canterbury sound is dynamic and constantly rewritten and redistributed through the internet.

I established my research within a question of whether the Canterbury Scene remains to evolve further or has retreated into a carefully-constructed myth. I have argued that new bands such as Lapis Lazuli seek to channel the dense jazz rock of Soft Machine, that

SoupSongs recreate the canon of Robert Wyatt and that the work of Canterbury musicians is constantly benchmarked against contemporary and more recent players in Matthew Watkins' monthly podcasts. Above all, I have argued the fluidity of local sounds and scenes, following, in particular, Connell and Gibson (2003:99), and the importance of nostalgia in their construction. A view of authenticity is generated yet constantly challenged by the online community, a group which reflects the translocal and international dimensions of the scene and the movement throughout the UK, Europe and the World by the original bands.

Canterbury saxophonist Tim Garland is an example of a modern-day musician for whom the Canterbury Brand is a reality. He describes his piece dedicated to Bill Bruford:

> It's quite interesting. It's got an 'English' sound, not so much jazz-fusion, but jazz-rock. I'm from Canterbury so I guess it must be in my blood, that Canterbury jazz-rocky sound. (*Jazzwise* April 2016: 24)

I reject, on the whole, the idea of a genius loci in Canterbury; it is a view maintained by very few of my respondents. Caravan bassist Richard Sinclair has frequently propounded the notion of a sound with its roots in the tonalities of church music[285] and a long European tradition. I prefer to look at the Canterbury Sound as music made by musicians in Canterbury, the genre being ascribed far later in a mythology created by people not involved in the creative process at the time. I suggest, however, that the mythology will continue to evolve and enthral in the near and more distant future.

[285] See, especially, the interview in Cohen et al (2015: 16). Sinclair currently resides in Spain and was unavailable for contact.

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***Facelift: The Canterbury Scene and Beyond***

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# Appendices

## 1) Interviews with Matthew Watkins and Brian Hopper indicating open codes generated.

**Interview Matthew Watkins – Nov 22 2015, Harbledown**

AP – I was reading a thing last week about fanzines and how they were a repository for knowledge about bands

MW – In the 1980s?

AP – The article was published around 2001-2002 and what it was about was Facelift, you can get old copies online

MW – whenever I publish a new episode of my podcast I send it to … ? . With the web the fanzines became redundant. Editions were scanned and are available online or are transcribed

AP – You can get them on eBay actually but there's also a large number of them online. You can't get all the articles

MW – There was a Kevin Ayers fanzine around at the same time. It was exciting, I was very much familiar with the fanzine world in the late 80s. All through the punk kind of anti-consumerist, it was a convergence of things and a really exciting time. The coming of the internet completely killed off fanzines. There has been a revival of young people who find the idea of photocopying things and posting them exciting. There is a revival of cassettes as well. Now any kid in the world who's interested in Soft Machine can listen to their entire body of work without leaving their bedroom in the course of 12 hours or something and then they know about that. I meet these young musicians, for example Lapis, and I'm always shocked how clued up about the bands they are. You mention Captain Beefheart or something and they know the music inside out. You don't have to play for it which is the positive side of this. It's not very good for musicians but in terms of music of historical interest it's great. The equivalent of the fanzines now is the mp3 blogs where music enthusiasts who have a specific interest in a very particular subgenre will take out-of-print vinyl, upload it, scan all the artwork and write detailed notes about the whole thing. It's not just this reckless file sharing, it saying that you can't get this stuff anymore or you have to pay £100 for this LP on e-Bay,so let's just make it known. In some of these cases they've become cult figures. They've been able to go back out and tour again, there's an audience for them that there wasn't before. I'm quite sympathetic to that and a lot of the obscure Canterbury stuff like some Hugh Hopper and Alan Gowan collaboration. I'm going to download that because I could spend a fortune on some vinyl but I'm not benefiting either of them, they're no longer with us, or their estate, so I justify my own downloading and I then use my podcast, my platform to raise awareness of this music and I'm just basically moving it from one part of the internet to another. It's already freely available if you know where to look. I'm just going to say listen to this and find the best track on the album.

AP – Do you know who the audience is for your podcasts? (**MEDIASCAPE)**

MW – People contact me and I think they're mostly people of a certain age who were around at that time, Americans, you know, who flocked to see Hatfield when they reunited in 2006. I've seen videos

of that and they're mostly all men of a certain age but also thers's a thing you can embed on blogs where you get little red dots on a map of the world showing where people are logging in from. It's incredibly well-distributed around the planet, a concentration on Italy and Japan. The episodes keep clocking up, that's the nice thing about podcasts. You don't have to listen to them like a radio programme live. |Some of the earlier ones have got thousands of listeners. When I launch an episode now within a couple of weeks there's been 150 or something but it will slowly trickle up. Its in the dozens, its cult in the sense that it's very small but it's not viral. **(MEDIASCAPE)**

AP – That's interesting, It's very hard to find out whether the people who are listening to it are actually communicating with one another.

MW –That's right, the only forms I know for that are there are two Yahoo forums *Whatever She Brings We* Sing which covers more than just Canterbury stuff although it's quite Canterbury-heavy and then there's *What's Rattlin….*Both have gone very quiet lately because people are using the |Facebook group instead and I first heard about you from Sam who was wanting to publicise that Canterbury Sound gig and he said do you know how to join this Canterbury Sound Facebook group because it seemed impossible. Its one of these groups you need to get invited to join. (**MEDIASCAPE, FACEBOOK)**

AP – Do we know who hosts it?

MW – I don't. I don't like Facebook or anything about it. I've gradually set up a sort of pseudonymous account which I use to contact people occasionally when there's no other way of reaching or finding out about events that are only advertised that way. I really hate the way its monopolising the web, this kind of corporate thing, but, no, I've not even looked at it because I had this kind of bitter feeling but I'm guessing there are circles of people communicating through that. Yes, relatively small numbers with those two e-mail lists, *What's Rattlin* and the other one you see the same names coming up bit then you'll see things like that article I sent you about SM in the South of France**.(TRANSNATIONAL**) It's like someone has gone to all that trouble to research this thing, you know, these people are really committed to scholarship. It reminds me a little bit of that obsessive fanzine culture.Again, as the music receded fast it takes on a certain import. It seems to matter to piece these things together. There's not really any way you can get clear information about who are these people.

AP – And even if you get the name you don't know where they are, who they are. They can call themselves what they want….

MW – If you look up bits and Canterbury-related tracks on YouTube where everything is uploaded either as a track or a full album and then you scroll through the comments you'll get everything from people saying what is this band it sounds great, or what is this rubbish? To people saying "Oh, I remember seeing SM in 67 or with Jimi Hendrix in 68" so you can theoretically send messages to people if they've got a YouTube account. (**HERITAGE, NOSTALGIA,SCENE**)

AP – If they've got a Gmail account……

MW- So if you wanted to you could probably harvest a few dozen or a few hundred people who have publicly declared their love of music through YouTube and then send out a list of questions just to get some kind of demographic on it. I've never really thought about that.I mean another part of my audience is young local people. I go through Syd Arthur, Boot Lagoon, (**HERITAGE**) people who come out to those gigs. They all sort of know me because I'm kind of around. I've interviewed their friends'

bands and helped out with liner notes. I interview bands at festival sometimes and end up compering stages so I've become this kind of visible person.

AP – Which is really interesting..

MW – I never set out to do that but I'm the person you get sent to…Sam kind of sees me as some kind of archivist or expert, I don't see myself like that at all. I have a minor obsession with a particular kind of music, I see it more as a nexus. I mean I got asked to write…did you go down to that Cloudcuckooland exhibition at the Sidney Cooper Centre, the writing on the wall about Robert Wyatt, that was me, I got asked to write about that, I wouldn't have put myself forward. What occurred to me when writing about it was to see the Canterbury Scene, **(SCENE)** whatever, it is as a kind of cloud in that, and this is my mathematical brain kicking in, that if you took all the musicians ever, anyone who's ever recorded or gigged and you just write their name next to a little dot in space, any 2 musicians who played, recorded or gigged together, you draw a line and if they've played together a lot you make the line thicker you could actually write some code, you could work out he/she's on this record as well,so you basically build up this set of connections between pairs of musicians. The if you step back from it you'd see this whole tangled web, wherever there is a cluster of musicians who played together, (**CONNECTIONS**)Harlem in the 1950s, South London in the 1990s, or, you know, the Canterbury area in the 60s and 70s, you'd see a kind of dense clustering effect, you'd see lots and as we know with the Canterbury family tree, its all about that…so if you were looking at this totality of 20C music, you could look at that clump there and say that's the late 60s West Coast psychedelic scene or there's the Canterbury scene (**SCENE**) but if you showed this and tried to put a boundary around it you couldn't really, people like Bill Bruford..

AP – or Mike Oldfield or Karl Jenkins

MW – People think that they're nor proper Canterbury musicians **(AUTHENTICITY**)and you say yes they are. It doesn't matter, If you're looking at the sky and you say that cloud looks like a seahorse, you don't say is it that bit or this bit, there's obviously something there like an eddie in a stream, you know where's the edge of that eddie, there isn't one but you can't deny that the eddie's there

AP – It has a presence. It stays there and people respect it for what it is. There are a couple of things about the Canterbury Scene, 1 is about its existence in terms of physical landscape which is actually very limited..

MW – Yeah, other than the kind of Tanglewood…

AP – There are maps of places where the bands performed. It's the Kudos Restaurant, the Beehive (**VENUES)**

MW – The Beehive. I made that map

AP – And it's really interesting, really useful but there's no centre, no sense of geographical location. If there was a centre, it would be London because the bands wanted to play and move to London. SM went off to the UFO Club and ended up touring with Hendrix so actually got out of the City. Tne other 2 things that are interesting. The online communities tend to construct a view of Canterbury that doesn't really exist (**LOCAL, TRANSLOCAL, VIRTUAL)**

MW – It's got nothing to do with it. People are disappointed when they find out that stuff wasn't really happening. It's a sort of romanticisation of the past..there's an essay that switched me on to it that you might have seen about music scenes, it's in quite a serious music book, it looked at the Seattle grunge scene.. **(NOSTALGIA)**

AP – It's the Andy Bennett book?

MW – And it looks into the Canterbury Scene and it basically deconstructs it and looks at different musicians who were linked to it and different attitudes, Robert Wyatt who has denied that there was anything and speaks about the City in quite negative terms of his own experience being unhappy at Simon Langton and Richard Sinclair who at any opportunity will stick a picture of the Cathedral on his album cover in order to sort of consolidate this connection. In a way you can kind of see that as an economic thing because you're playing it up to your economic and fanbase's expectations. **SCENE,SOUND**)

AP – Yes, you are. You're also constructing something that wasn't there.

MW – Wasn't there, yes. It's fascinating in its own way. It's a little bit akin to this idea of lineage, when Led Zeppelin reformed they couldn't have John Bonham because he's dead and there's countless excellent professional drummers who could play those drum parts very well, They couldn't just get anyone, they had to get his son. People wanted that, just as in the Commonwealth you couldn't just pick anyone to be the new king, people want continuity. (**NOSTALGIA)**

AP – I was stewarding the Canterbury Festival a few weeks ago and Kenny Ball's jazzband played which is fronted by his son who is called Keith but has renamed himself Kenny and they played Kenny Ball tunes. If you like trad jazz, it was very, very good but ,as you say, there needs to be a kind of cultural icon that people can relate to.

MW – I think it is something like that, they like a feeling of lineage and continuity and rootedness in (**AUTHENTICITY, SOUNDSCAPE)** place as well. I remember going to a Syd Arthur concert at The Farmhouse, just across the road from the Beehive Club and a friend of mine had brought a friend of his who was about your age. I'd say, and he was really impressed. They played a really good set when they were just starting to expand their sound. Afterwards he said they're not just a really good band. It's almost as if they're channelling the genius loci and implicit in that is the fact that Canterbury has got this.

AP –Canterbury has got the whole Anglican, choral, cultural idea. Its kind of got music in the walls in many ways and some books will refer to that, they will talk about the influence of Anglican and choral music in the Canterbury Sound. I think you have to look at find it.

MW – Mike Ratledge was a choir boy; they would have been exposed to choral singing in the Cathedral but so would a lot of people in a lot of places. It's not the only place where there is a cathedral and religious, choral music. You really can't get anywhere if you pick this apart other than saying this is an interesting psychological phenomenon. Is there such a thing as a genius loci? It's better to leave that alone, I find. I'm part of a process. In a sense what I'm doing with my podcast is kind of complicating this or contributing to it in some ways. Here I am. I happen to live here and I'm broadcasting from a caravan under a chestnut tree and I'm playing music which is the Canterbury Sound even though it might have been recorded in London mixed up with bands from here bow so people might say you're just muddying the waters but on the other hand it sort of makes sense to me and I can do what I want. (**TRANSLOCAL)**

MW – But you are, as indeed I and a number of other people are, reconstructing the Canterbury Music Scene in a very interesting kind of way.

AP – I talk to people in Canterbury many of whom will say I knew someone who was really keen on those bands. There was a fanbase, people did actually go to the gigs.

MW = People were very proud of the fact that Caravan were from here SM and all the bands that spun off had school friends and girl friends who came down here and some of whom stuck around so there was a sense of 'these are our musicians' and I met Katrina at Robert Wyatt's biography (**NOSTALGIA**)launch at the South Bank, not only did she introduce me to Robert, and Brian Hopper was there, but there were these two lovely women Robert's age, Pam and Ali. Pam was his girl friend and they were old friends going right back to the early 60s and they'd got dressed up to go out for the night because it was their old friend Robert and I said "Are you Pam who made the yellow dress and the yellow suit" and her face lit up that someone had made that connection. She and I had this ;lovely chat and she and Ali were talking about gigs at the Beehive to see the Wilde Flowers. They remembered all of that but what really struck me was they really reminded me of the young hippie women who would go to see Syd Arthur, Boot Lagoon and Lapis Lazuli, the same (**HERITAGE)** archetypes just in older women's bodies. In terms of their spirit, I thought I've met you before, you remind me of Clare and Rosie who are in their mid 20s and you're getting on 70 something

AP – The idea of women in prog is a whole new PhD. When I was at school in the early 1970s it was very much a male grammar school thing.

MW – You very rarely meet women interested in prog. There's more now.

MW – I was putting together a tribute programme to Lindsay Cooper who had just died and I found some footage of her playing bass in 1976 and on the side bar in YouTube was Professor Georgina Born speaking at some academic conference about sexism, the arts and academia. She was so insightful. I was watching her with a feeling that it's great to see you are doing this. She just, having trained as a musician, left Henry Cow, did another degree and went back. She's an Oxford professor of music now. We've e-mailed, I let her know about the programme that I've done . Henry Cow were very much the ones who tackled that in the sense that for me the classic lineup was Frith, Cutler and Grieves with Georgina Born and Lindsay Cooper, 50/50 lineup and they weren't just the backing singers. They were integral in the band and there was a real sense of striving to write.

AP – What is the Henry Cow/Canterbury connection, it's a bit loose, isn't it?

MW - -It is, they formed in university in Cambridge in 68 as a kind of blues band, the influences for them at the time were Beefheart, Zappa and SM. You hear the early Henry Cow demos, very SM influenced in the early stuff. (**SOUNDSCAPE)** In the later HC stuff you can't really hear that. They kind of looked up to Robert Wyatt as a great inspiration. Their first album is dedicated to him and then with Virgin Records, Robert being signed to Virgin in the early 70s, there is a lot of awareness of one another's work. You get things like Lindsay Cooper playing bassoon on Hatfield and the North albums. Robert Wyatt got invited to tour with Henry Cow. There's some concert recordings where they're doing stuff off Rock Bottom.

AP – As far as I know, they never performed in Canterbury

MW – No, they never set foot here so there was no geographical link and yet people will say that Henry Cow are a Canterbury band

AP – There's one book "Rocking the Classics" which locates HC quite squarely in Canterbury. Chris Cutler is quoted quite a lot in academic books

MW – Have you read his book *File Under Popular*?

AP – I've read references to it.

MW – Absolutely essential reading, strident Marxist-influenced rhetoric from a younger Chris Cutler. I think he's slightly embarrassed by it now and I've emailed him a few times.

AP – Did you get replies?

MW – Oh yes, he's very interested in talking about it. I was reading it on the train going up to London to go to a gig, Steve Hillage's Underground Dance Co. I ended up going to this underground warehouse party which was much more anarchic and chaotic and druggie

AP – I'm glad they're still going on!

MW – I had Chris Cutler's words in my mind, he was talking about the commodification of music and so I experienced this evening of dance music through the prism of Chris Cutler's Marxist rhetoric. He probably doesn't know about this music, his awareness of popular music has faded, you can't keep up with everything. He was talking more about the influence of black American music, for example The Yardbirds, blues and the coming of various electronic effects, about the resonance, the use of a studio as an instrument. (**SOUND)**

AP – There's a lot about that in the literature, the commodification of music and taste publics and people write about bands, Yes is one, about the use of the studio in composing

MW – So, he touches on all of these things, you ought to get a copy

AP – What does he do now?

MW – He runs Recommended Records which is the label he set up. He and Daevid Allen had a group called Brainfill, originally Daevid, Hugh Hopper and Pip Pyle and then when Pip died it was Daevid, Hugh Hopper and Chris Cutler, he knew Daevid. I was surprised how much respect Chris had for Gong, actually, He was quite political and serious. You'd think he wouldn't like Gong because they were silly and druggie

AP – Silly titles

MW – He had a lot of respect for Gong, there was someone who teaches music in an East London university and then a group playing in Paris. He's still managed to gig, musically active. Then there was the HC reunion concert at the Barbican, the first 20 minutes was a HC reunion although they swore they'd never play again but did so in tribute to Lindsay Cooper

AP – Did she die young?

MW- No, she had MS, it got too bad in the early 90s and she couldn't play anything anymore. She'd been keeping it quiet for a few years and then from 91 til a few years ago she was just suffering and being looked after by Sally Cotter, the film maker, her long-term partner and a member of the feminist improvising group,if you were going to look at women in prog..

AP – It's a whole different PhD

MW – There's an interview with Annie which I did where we talk about playing with Robert Wyatt but we end up talking a lot about what it meant to be a woman in that world

AP – I have spoken to Annie on the phone

MW – She lives in Westgate on Sea. Generally the attitude towards women which you pick up on from that time is pretty cringe-inducing.

AP – Its either cringe-inducing or there isn't an attitude, there is no perceived attitude because I'm a product of the boys' grammar school system and you had to be seen carrying to be carrying the right album, it could be Yes, Focus or King Crimson and there was never a sense in which women had to be involved at all

MW – They were the girl friends who occasionally turned up but other than doing some backing vocals there wasn't a role for them which is what made Henry Cow such a revolutionary band. I put together an entire podcast just to try to address this. I never said that it was the women's special but I put together everything I could find that had some kind of major female contribution

AP – How easy did you find that?

MW - I found enough material for a three-hour podcast, out of 70 hours. There's very, very little. Fortunately…..

AP – Robert Wyatt himself had quite a female-sounding voice

MW – That's true

AP – There's quite a feminine timbre to the voice but never any sense in which women contributed musically or in terms of production

MW – Studio engineering it's even worse I'd say. Rock musicians have much more of an issue with sound engineers than they do with other musicians, some of them are kind of open to the fact that there might be a woman playing bass in a band but a woman involved in mixing a band is going to get a really hard time from the band,its not improved that much. I think it might improve in a generation

AP – I couldn't name you a female record producer

MW – All the Canterbury musicians now, all the bands are all boys. The one with most success, most hits on her soundcloud page, just been commissioned to write a film score, Lia O'Sullivan, operated under the name Kaloto, making purely computer-based music. She was playing bass in a band called Delta Sleep, she got pregnant, making this extraordinary music, sort of came out of the dance scene but its not danceable, very expansive and organic and she's creating more of a stir than Syd Arthur or anyone else. Her brother is the guitarist Neil from Lapis Lazuli with the frizzy hair. She's really quiet, she doesn't go out much. She's busy being creative. **(SOUND, SOUNDSCAPE)**

AP: Thank you very much for your time.

**Interview with Brian Hopper Monday March 14 2016, Heathfield**

AP: I'd like to begin with your earliest memories, if that's ok. How did it all start?

BH: As you know, quite a few of us went to Simon Langton Grammar School in Canterbury, ( **CULTURE**)Hugh and I grew up in Canterbury, Mike Ratledge and Richard Sinclair did. Dave Sinclair grew up in Herne Bay but he became associated later on. Kevin Ayers, although he didn't grown up in Canterbury he kind of came into the Canterbury area in the early 1960s so there's a pool of people if you like, particularly those of us who were at school together although Mike and I were a couple of years older than Hugh and Robert we always seemed to form similar associations. One of the gelling points, if you like, was Robert's parents' place in Lydden, Wellington House, which became quite a kind of legendary place and we all used to meet up there at weekends on quite a regular basis to listen to records and to play whatever was to hand. **(SOUND**). Robert wasn't really drumming at that stage although he did start to get interested in drumming and he got some lessons from one of the people who passed through Wellington House, an American drummer called George Nydorf who gave him some lessons which got him started. Of course, the other big influence, the person who studied there, was Daevid Allen and that was quite seminal because Daevid brought with him his huge collection of modern jazz records which we really delved into. Robert's half brother Mark Ellidge also was a very big jazz fan and had a good collection of records so between those two we got sort of subsumed in the whole jazz scene**. (SOUND**)A little bit later, probably not when we were at school, we used to go up to London to see people live, particularly the American musicians at Ronnie Scott's and places. That was a big part of our early lives. At that time we weren't playing any type of rock or pop, we were playing free jazz and Mike and I, being that bit older, we were sort of doing things on our own as well. Particularly at weekends we used to meet mainly at his house in Whitstable Road where he lived. His father was Headmaster at Frank Hooker School. We were experimenting at that time because he had a fairly early tape recorder, reel to reel, and we were experimenting with jazz loops. I was playing clarinet at that time and he was on piano. We did basic recordings and played around with some types of modern classical things, Debussy and Ravel and those sorts of people, and we were also keen on the more modernist composers as well such as Stockhausen and also modern poetry as well, we were very much into that. We were following that path. Robert and Hugh were the same age, they were sort of following another thing and then eventually we sort of got together so some of those early examples, free-form jazz recordings, are on the *Canterburied Tales*, (**HERITAGE)** you'll see some of them there. They didn't have titles at the time, they are references to things like Dalmore Road which was where Robert, or his parents, moved to in Dulwich. This was after Wellington House and we used to go and stay there at weekends and meet other people so there were a lot of influences coming and going.

AP: I read an account in a local newspaper of you playing at a Saturday Morning Cinema. Do you remember that?

BH: That's right, somewhere there's photographs of that. That was after we'd got going as The Wilde Flowers. We'd started to get a little bit of a name in Canterbury and one of the people who was associated with the old Odeon Cinema in Canterbury, on the site of what is now The Marlowe, used to hold a Saturday morning kids' club kind of thing. It was to promote a film for one of the big hits of the Dave Clarke Five for the cinema and we had this old Mini Moke and we drove around in Canterbury in that playing our instruments and that kind of thing as a sort of advertisement. There is a picture of us outside somewhere. That was just a one-off thing if you like. It was just an example of the fact that we were becoming a kind of known band in the area and it was a bit of publicity for us as well I guess. There is a picture somewhere of us all outside the Odeon Cinema sitting in this Mini Moke.

AP: That was the first documented evidence of The Wilde Flowers. It said that you were so good that you were going to be invited back the following week.

BH: I think we were but that was as far as it went! At that time we were playing regularly at The Beehive. We were basically one of the house bands there if you like. That was a regular Friday/Saturday night kind of thing and then we started doing gigs around school halls and other clubs around Canterbury and East Kent. **(VENUES)** Of course the other big one that we went into was Toffs at Folkestone, probably one of the places in the South East of England at that time because they used to have the big names. A lot of the Caribbean and West African kinds of bands. Again, we became one of the house bands down there so we supported a lot of these people and met a lot of them at the time. Of course, the other connection with Folkestone was Noel Redding. He played in a local band there and was from that area and Jim Leverton who now plays with Caravan. We got to know those kind of guys quite early on although it was quite a long time afterwards.

AP: What sort of music were you playing?

BH: We were doing a lot of covers, rhythm and blues as it was called at that time and all the covers of Rolling Stones and other blues things. A few more poppy things and then increasingly we just introduced our own stuff which was basically written by Hugh or myself. Robert wrote a few things, that was basically it, so we gradually introduced those. I would guess around a third of our repertoire when we were really going was original stuff, very unusual for that time.

AP: I've been following the progress of The Wilde Flowers through this column called *Beat Scene* in the local paper of the time and I think it was in mid-1967 you played a contest in Brighton.

BH: That's right. In fact we played several contests actually. I think Brighton was one of the early ones and that was when Robert had just decided to give up drumming in the band and become the vocalist, which was something he'd always wanted to do. That's when we got Richard Coughlan in, he died two years ago. As I say, we had gone into one or two of these beat contests as they were called. The Brighton one was quite interesting, Brighton was quite a lively place and music scene so there was just the four of us. I was on guitar, backing vocals, Hugh on bass, Richard Coughlan on drums and Robert was kind of up front with the vocals. **(SOUND**) We decided to do all our own original songs. We didn't do covers, which all the other bands in the contest were doing, which was probably a bit of a risk. We didn't actually win it but we got quite a good reaction from it and afterwards one or two promoters in the audience were very interested in Robert. They obviously picked up on his charisma and approached him. Nothing directly came out of it at that time but I think it gave us a bit of a fillip to know that we could do our own stuff, playing live to a completely new audience because we didn't usually get down as far as Brighton. Our normal gigs were confined to Kent really.

AP: The newspaper said you had a coachload of supporters.

BH: Well, we did actually. We had built up quite a following in the Canterbury area or in East Kent so there was quite a lot of people cheering us on. We did a pretty good performance. I seem to remember we really got into it, put everything into it. We did have a slightly different style. Our sounds and rhythms were different. A lot of our numbers had a slightly different slant. We did have our influences. I don't know whether you've ever heard the early British band called The Birds (with an i). They and the very first Small Faces, I think, were introducing quite interesting ideas into their songs in their live playing, sort of stop-go stuff, slightly changing rhythms and that type of thing, both of those bands did and that was one of the things we picked up on besides some of the ideas we were having. **(SOUND)** One of the people in that Birds band was Ronnie Wood. That was one of his

first bands and he was very spectacular in that. So then we had one or two personnel changes by that time because Kevin had left us. We had Graham Flight in there for a while who was quite a good blues harmonica player and blues singer. Much later he formed this band with one or two other Canterbury people called The Happy Accidents and eventually I joined them in the late 1990s and it was only about two years ago that we stopped.

AP: So you were playing regularly in and around Canterbury. When you were playing at The Beehive and other venues in the City.

BH: We played in lots of halls and schools we played in, clubs and some in Thanet. The Quarterdeck was one of the ones in Ramsgate. (**VENUES)**

AP: When you were playing these different venues did you have a sense that you were part of any kind of scene?

BH: I can't say we were at that time because there were a lot of local bands, we got to know a lot of them obviously, because we used to do joint gigs quite often with one or other of the local bands but they were all playing covers. None of them at that time anyway were playing anything original so I can't say there was a Canterbury scene. **(SCENE)**I think it was replicated over the whole country. Local bands were doing local cover gigs in whatever venues there were. It wasn't until it started to be recognised that we were doing something a little bit different from all the other bands that we got a bit of a following and people started to think of it as something which was a little bit unique to Canterbury and that probably set the germ of this idea of The Canterbury Sound, Scene, whatever you like to call it.

AP: Do you think there is a Sound?

BH: It's a very loose sort of thing. I wouldn't say..I think that you can look at some of the bands that might come under this umbrella and sort of see some associations. There were things like maybe quirky lyrics or fairly complex time signatures, unusual chord progressions and the influence of jazz, ethnic music, funk, you know, there's a whole lot of influences which have been combined and assimilated if you like, sounds which, you know, not many other bands were doing at the time and that's continued on. Now you get a lot of people or bands, so-called Canterbury-influenced, who have never had anything to do with Canterbury physically but they've been influenced by that approach to music. I think that's probably what you can say, you know. Other than that, I think it's a convenient label and, as Robert said, probably invented by music journalists to pigeon hole… (**SOUND, MYTHSCAPE**)

AP: I think you're right.

BH: And it's probably about as far as you can take it as far as the Canterbury thing is concerned. Ok it came out of Canterbury, the nucleus of this but really how much it related to Canterbury, it probably would have happened..I mean you could probably say the same thing happened in Cambridge with Pink Floyd, maybe there was a local scene there and Henry Cow from that area as well. One or two of them came from the Northampton area.

AP: There's a group I hadn't heard of until very recently called Ways and Means, do you remember them?

BH: Yes, they were a Canterbury band with Les Stancovich who worked for a while in a Canterbury music shop. He was actually quite a good guitarist.

AP: I know nothing else about Ways and Means apart from what I've read.

BH: They were doing covers of Beach Boys songs quite early on. That continued mid- to late-sixties. The other quite significant band that was around when we were was a band called The Four Methods, or just The Methods they became. The guitarist in that, Pip Hadlow, was really very original. He wasn't a lead guitarist in the sense of an Eric Clapton but he had this very complex rhythmic style, really his own thing and we really quite admired it. In fact, when one of our personnel changes happened we tried to get him into the band. He rehearsed with us a couple of times but he really felt his style didn't fit in with what we were doing, He was around in Whitstable, he probably still is, but he ran a guitar shop because he was a big Fender fan, that was one of the things he stood out for because he had a Fender Stratocaster and a Fender amp which was unique at that time and gave him that rather different sound. He ran the shop in Tankerton for several years until it folded up. (**SOUND, SCENE**)

AP: The Four Methods were widely advertised at the time.

BH: They were very popular at the time because they were a good band. They did covers but they did them well. They had a good singer whose name I can't remember now and with Pip Hadlow on guitar they were a very tight and professional-sounding band.

AP: It's interesting that what's written about the Canterbury Music Scene does not deal with these other bands.

BH: It's only occasional mentions and when I've been interviewed by people that drop in…I mean another band which we were closely associated with were the Rojeens who were from Thanet and they were a bit different because they did more blues but they had a Lowry organ, which Mike Ratledge played later on, guitar, bass and drums. They had a different sound because of this very distinct organ sound. We used to do quite a few gigs with them and John Larner, the guitarist, and his brothers joined me in a band I formed after The Wilde Flowers called Zobe. The name was a working title for a Mike Ratledge composition which eventually was used in the early Soft Machine days called Hibou, Anenome and Bear.We were originally going to be called Globe but then I thought let's have something a little bit more whacky and so I remembered this thing that Mike had written and which I played on in Soft Machine Volume 2. **(SOUND)**

AP: The crossover between Soft Machine and Wilde Flowers is very interesting.

BH: Yes, because of the personnel involved were common throughout and because of all the early developments. I mean one of the things which we did in The Wilde Flowers which certainly happened in Soft Machine was this continuous set idea. (**SOUND**) None of the other local bands did this, we just formed a set and we had little transition things between some of the numbers and we just played half an hour solid as Wilde Flowers and we thought it worked quite well. A lot of it was for dancing, particularly in The Beehive and places so we just kept everybody dancing on the floor. That's how that really developed and that was a device that Soft Machine took on. Their set was in two halves but two complete halves.

AP: Was The Wilde Flowers' repertoire covers or originals?

BH: Both but a lot of our stuff then which you'll hear if you listen to The Wilde Flowers cd was quite rhythmic and quite in the beat style. It was quite danceable most of it, l mean some of the more extended things we did because l was playing sax and also guitar and we had one or two sort of John Coltraine-influenced things which were still a bit more spaced out. I mean they still had a pulse to them but you couldn't really say they were sort of pop songs. Some did have words or vocals but we used to extend them with instrumental bits and things and we incorporated a few more of the

bluesy jazz things like Adderley Brothers type of things like *Sack of Woe* and *Worksong* those things we used to do as well which introduced a more jazzy,bluesy kind of thing to our set. **(SOUND)** We had quite a mixture of things.

AP: What was The Beehive like?

BH: It's still there as you know as a Chinese restaurant. In fact one of the BBC local documentary films that were made about the Canterbury Scene included me going there with them. We filmed outside and we went in and the owners didn't know what it was before but since then they've had lots of visitors. **(VENUE**)

AP: There is a Canterbury Trail…

BH: Someone told me that there's actually a mural on the side of the wall down there of Robert.

AP: There is certainly a mention inside Simon Langton

BH: So I believe. Sam Bailey who teaches there keeps saying he'll invite me along to talk to his students.

AP: One of the things I'm most interested in and will be working on later in the year is the whole virtual construction of the Scene and how the internet has taken over.

BH: People have contacted me and I think sometimes they're rather disappointed when they find very little evidence of a scene now. In a sense things like Free Range are a continuation, for example, and in terms of bands, bands like Syd Arthur because I think they do carry on the sort of philosophy if you like, the feeling of what we were trying to do at that time, fairly whimsical songs and different rhythmic patterns and that sort of thing. They approached me actually and I started listening to them and giving them some encouragement. I think that this is an example of the way things have carried on, as it were over the years. **(HERITAGE**)

AP: There's Syd Arthur, there's Boot Lagoon and one or two others who are very much influenced..

BH: Yes, well as I said at the time I think that gig we did at the University last September was probably as close as you're going to get to a Soft Machine performance or a recreation of what the Canterbury ethic was, if you like. In terms of the music and the sound, probably for some time other than listening to people like Syd Arthur and other local bands.

AP: There was a change of personnel in The Wilde Flowers, wasn't there?

BH: As The Wilde Flowers became Soft Machine we were doing places like Toffs in Folkestone, a lot more sort of soul covers and Tamla Motown. Pye was the lead vocalist at that time plus our bass player, John Lawrence, whose brother was a guitarist, Dave Lawrence who was a very good soul singer as well and the two of them, Pye with his rather high voice, a bit like Marvin Gaye, made us a six-piece because that's when Dave Sinclair joined us on keyboards and Hugh and I were playing saxes then and then Richard Coughlan on bass. We had quite a solid sort of funky soul band lineup then. We still did a few of our own numbers but not so many and that kind of continued for the best part of a year until late 1967 which is when it folded up. Hugh had decided he's had enough of doing that sort of thing and wanted to go off and do other things. That's when Caravan were formed, it was Dave Sinclair, Pye, Richard Coughlan as the nucleus plus Richard Sinclair at that time. He didn't stay very long at that time. He quite liked to do things like Beatles numbers and he wasn't really into doing the original stuff that we were doing.

AP: Did The Wilde Flowers ever play again after that?

BH: No, there were one or two moves to kind of get them together and in fact much longer after that I tried to get as many together as I could to try to do some recordings, some of the old numbers being played again with better recording quality and so forth but getting all those together was hard as they were all doing different things by then. This was in the 80s, I guess. I was then approached soon after that to see what archive stuff I've got and that's when that Wilde Flowers album came out. (**HERITAGE)**

AP: Did you ever play at the University?

BH: No, we never actually got a gig there, or did we, maybe very early we did, yes. It didn't develop to anything later on after that. We did support at the Canterbury Technical College and there was some very crude 8mm cine film made of it.

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## Appendix 2 – List of Interview Subjects

Dr Sam Bailey, academic and Canterbury musician – April 15 2016, Canterbury Coffee House

Nicholas Blow, son of Dave Sinclair, Caravan keyboardist – July 2016, Gulbenkian Theatre Bar, Canterbury

Peter Crampton, journalist, local author and friend of Hugh Hopper – April 20 2017, at his home in Canterbury

Jim Hampshire, proprietor of Canterbury Rock, long-established record shop-November 5 2015, shop in Canterbury

John Harle, virtuoso saxophonist, composer and producer, contemporary Canterbury musician- March 20 2017, at his home in Goodnestone near Canterbury

Pye Hastings, founder of Caravan-by email correspondence December 2016

Steve Hillage, guitarist, Gong, National Health, Egg, electronic musician System 7, ex-University of Kent student-March 17 2016, Caffe Nero, Ladbroke Grove, London

Brian Hopper, musician, member of The Wilde Flowers, Soft Machine, Zobe, Soupsongs, curator of *Canterburied Sounds* – March 14 2016, at his home in Heathfield, Sussex

Phil Howitt, creator and editor of *Facelift* – by email correspondence and later meeting, Christ Church College, Canterbury – October 26 2017

Dr Mike Howlett, bass player in Gong, academic at University of Westminster, producer of Orchestral Manoeuvres in the Dark, Tears for Fears-April 16 2016 at his home in North Acton, London

Trevor Link, long-term Canterbury resident and music fan-April 23 2016 at his home in Blean, Kent-April 18 2016

Dave Radford, Canterbury resident, record shop owner of 30 years' experience, composer and guitarist, leader of Canterbury progressive band Gizmo-April 17 2017, his home in Broad Oak Canterbury

Geoffrey Richardson, multi-instrumentalist and producer, member of Caravan since 1973-July 20 2016, at his home in Canterbury City Centre

Jack Ryder, guitarist, producer and composer, Canterbury resident, founder of Wang Chung, 80s band still touring, leader of The Quartet, Canterbury progressive band-September 18 2016, Café St Pierre, Canterbury

Dave Sinclair, keyboardist, Caravan, Matching Mole by email correspondence November 2016

Les Stancovich, guitarist with Ways and Means, 1960s Canterbury beat and covers band, solo musician-April 20 2016, his home in Herne Bay, Kent

Dr Matthew Watkins, academic, author, Canterbury resident, dj and podcast creator, authority on Canterbury music in last 50 years-November 22 2015, my home in Canterbury

Annie Whitehead, trombonist, producer, arranger, founder and leader of Soupsongs, specialist in the music of Robert Wyatt-May 17 2016, Gulbenkian Café Bar

Robert Wyatt, founding figure of Canterbury sound-April 4 2016, public interview with Gavin Esler, University of Kent

## Appendix 3 – Sites of Participant Observation

Lapis Lazuli – Gulbenkian Theatre Bar, Canterbury, February 18 2015

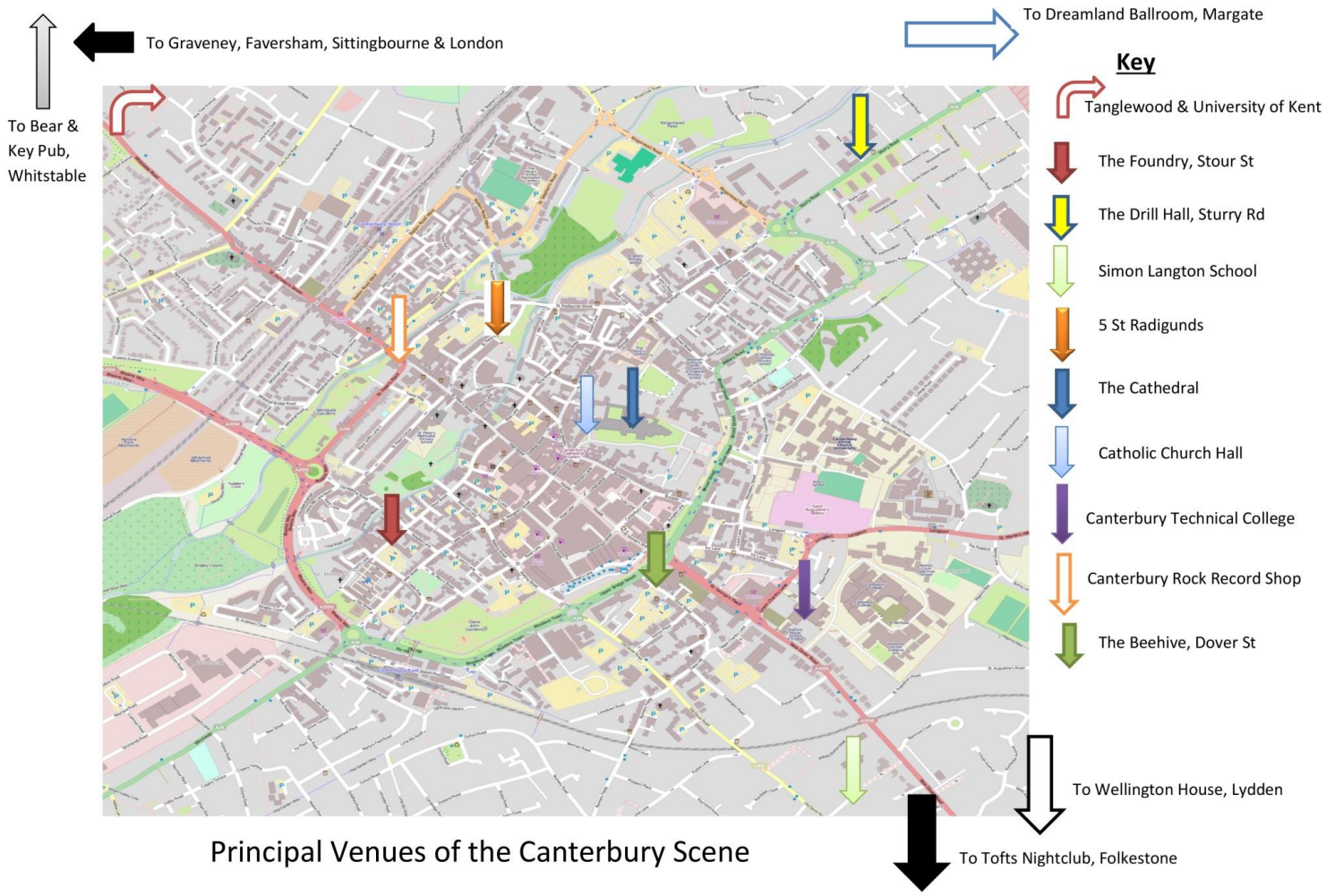
'Facelift' Live – Keynes College, University of Kent, September 15 2015

New Day Festival – Mount Ephraim, Faversham, including Caravan, Curved Air, August 3 2016

Syd Arthur – Colyer-Fergusson Building, University of Kent, November 19 2016

Canterbury Sound, Place, Music and Myth – Christ Church College, Canterbury, October 24 2017

Soft Machine – Pizza Express, May 18 2017.




Principal Venues of the Canterbury Scene