

Christoph Jacke:

Who is interested in the music in music clips?

For a multi-perspective, pop culture-scientific viewing of music clips

Madonna, the superstar of music television, has turned 50, the traditional music television is having big problems to further fulfil its original function and mutates into a musicless adolescent advert channel, new media technologies are de-valuing pop-music: there are enough reasons in 2008 to again fundamentally come at hands with the role of the music(video)clip for the media society. "Video Killed the Radio Star" the Buggles sang at the beginning of the American music television channel MTV in 1981. Since then there have been a lot of discussions, if the music video means the end of pop music radio, if the music television has substituted the record shop around the corner and the music cinema, if the DVD has ousted the videotape and, first of all, if the new technologies such as MP3, iPod and the internet do unite all the previous media and thus make them superfluous, or: „Internet Killed all the Other Stars“. The same concerns the visualisation of pop music. The good old record sleeve, the music (video) clip or the self-presentation of a band via its internet-homepage or the online platform MySpace: It seems that we obviously need pictures for the sound in order to make ourselves an extensive image of pop music.

In my paper I will observe and discuss which importance music clips have in the everyday life of contemporary media, in which new ways the visualisation of pop music is still ongoing and first of all, how they can be described and analyzed in dense and contextualising way. Starting points for an inventory of current methods of examination are certain ways of viewing music clips which have been developed in different disciplines over the last 30 years and especially their overlapping and the particular viewing settings of the mass-communicative process "music clip" and the notion "music clip", where synergetic effects and overlapping are extended and specified towards a multi-perspective viewing setting. Out of own experiences in research and especially interdisciplinary teaching this is based first of all on skills coming from Media-, Communication-, Musical Science and – overarching – Cultural Studies. Hereby, the setting will be enriched with examples from the histories of the visualisation of pop music in order to show the diversity of the object of interest as well as of the possible analytic approaches.