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Music in movement: scenes and subcultures in Swedish progressive rock in the 1970’s

This paper is a presentation of my doctoral dissertation in musicology. It consists of two case studies of local practices, scenes and subcultures in the Swedish progressive rock movement in the 1970’s: Musikforum in Uppsala and Sprängkullen in Gothenburg. After giving a background and context, the paper analyses the activists involved (in terms of gender, age, class, ethnicity and political views), the relations between amateur and professional musicians, the music produced in the two local settings, and their relations towards the Swedish progressive rock movement at large, political movements, state and municipal authorities, established music institutions, the music industry and the media. The results of the analysis indicate interesting similarities as well as diversities. Uppsala Musikforum was more inclined towards jazz and folk music while Sprängkullen in Gothenburg was more radical politically with an inclination towards heavier rock music. However, the divergence is not as pronounced as generally has been thought, and there were in fact striking parallels between the history and the records from these two places. – The study is thus a contribution to understand how aesthetics and politics interacted in the historical development of local music scenes.

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