

# Litlog

Göttinger eMagazin für Literatur - Kultur - Wissenschaft

## »We Gotta Start Somewhere«

Thorge Beilfuss · Thursday, April 4th, 2019

**Anthony Wilson created an audiovisual retreat from an increasingly chaotic world. He invites the listener to join him in his safe place. Unfortunately, it is easy to get lost on the way. At Literarisches Zentrum, Wilson offers insights into his composition process.**

*By Thorge Beilfuß*

*Songs and Photographs* by Grammy-nominated jazz composer and guitarist Anthony Wilson is exactly what it says on the cover. At least that much is true at first glance. Seeing this collection of songs and photographs, the latter meticulously arranged in high-quality print, one would assume that both elements connect in a certain way. If you had thought as much, I regret to say that it is a bit more complicated than that. But to get to the core of the issue we need to back up a little.

The Literarisches Zentrum is packed with people awaiting Wilson, who is presenting his newest work this evening. People longing for a purely musical evening will be disappointed: Wilson's appearance is part of the event series *Liederabend*. That means before the audience can enjoy Wilson's pristine guitar play, the scheduled talk about the album has to commence. This is not necessarily a bad thing. The possibility to engage on a personal level with an artist's work can further the appreciation of said artist and work. But the exchange has to flow freely. Gerhard Kaiser is leading through the evening. Wilson is accompanied by Nina Holland, who arranged and published the illustrations for her own publishing house Little Steidl. The three talk about the conception of the album, the creative process behind it, and genre in general. »Talk« might be the wrong word.

 *Anthony Wilson, Nina Holland and Gerhard Kaiser*

To the dubious benefit of the mostly bilingual audience, Kaiser questions Wilson in German. The ensuing translation debacle thwarts any and all natural colloquial flow. That is a shame, since Kaiser's inquiries elicit charming anecdotes and fascinating insights into Wilson's creative process. But instead of a free exchange unhindered by forced breaks, the conversation happens twice. The discussion grinds to a hold since moments to inquire further have to be passed over so that Kaiser can relate shortened translations of Wilson's answers. Altogether, this results in a rather frustrating experience until Wilson picks up the guitar to break up the conversation's monotonous

rhythm.

»*The Song Is the Destination*«

With *Songs and Photographs* Wilson wants to move away from the established conventions of jazz production. In that sense it is a departure from *Frogtown*, his preceding album, which was utilizing more experimental tunes. The new

## Book/Record



Anthony Wilson

[Songs and Photographs](#)

Goat Hill Recordings and Little Steidl: L.A. and Göttingen 2018

48 pages, 10 songs, 87,00€

## Zentrum