

TRANSCRIPT: The Music Box, Season 6, Episode 1

“Music Doctors!”

Voices: Kiana Del, Fiona Palensky, Stori Crawford, Brailyn Fears, Alex Cooper, Malaysia Reed, Nazari Reed

Length: 10:50

Description: Today’s episode is quite the operation. We’ll put on our lab coats and be doctors, examining all the elements of our first patient — jazz! Join us as we explore blue notes, call and response, and syncopation.

[90.5 WUOL station song plays]

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[background music begins]

Stori: From Louisville Public Media... This is the Music Box! Sponsored by PNC and the Norton Foundation. This episode was recorded in collaboration with Louisville Central Community Center

Kiana: Welcome to the Music Box! I’m Kiana,

Fiona: and I’m Fiona!

Kiana: And it’s time for a whole new journey!

Stori: Kiana... I’m feelin’ a little rusty... where have we been again?

Kiana: Good question! We took a time machine ride into the world of America’s Black composers, went even further into the land of Arpeggio, learned about tone, song form, dynamics and met some new composer friends along the way!

Brailyn: Oh yeeaaaah! I remember! Where are we going now?

Fiona: Today, I’ll be leading you in conducting...*[background music fades]* the examination! *[medical beeping begins]*

Brailyn: Examination? Are you even a doctor?

Fiona: Not a medical one, but for today's check up, we'll be diagnosing ~music~ [*trumpet sounds triumphantly*] Come along as we examine blue note gumbo, spangalang, and the longest word in the English Dictionary on this episode of *Grey's Musicology* [*Grey's Anatomy theme plays, then is interrupted by record scratch*]

Kiana: Umm.. you, you mean The Music Box?

Fiona: Right!!!! The Music Box! And here comes today's patient, Jazz! [*cacophonous sad instrument sounds begin*] They don't sound so good.

Kiana: Uh.. Jazz... What can we do for ya?

[*trumpet coughing*]

Kiana: Okay, okay I gotcha, sounds like you've lost your groove! Everyone pull out your stethoscopes and let's take a listen to what's got Jazz in a funk... First, let's check on the heart

[*slow heartbeat sound on bass drum with lots of space*]

Kiana: Dr. Fiona... that doesn't sound right at all

Fiona: You're right Dr. Kiana. [*background music resumes*] Sounds like Jazz is missing its *rhythmic complexity*. In other words, their heartbeat sounds too simple and boring!

Stori: Oh jeez, how are we gonna fix that???

Fiona: Doctor Kiana, hand me 5 measures of syncopation serum, stat!

Kiana: I'm on it!

Brailyn: Syncopation? Hmm I think I've heard of that. That's when there's an accent on a beat that isn't usually accented.

Fiona: You got it! Stethoscopes ready... Now, let's listen...

[*syncopated heartbeat, spangalang on bass drum*]

Kiana: Now you got your *spangalang langin*! You're sounding like yourself, Jazz! [*stomach grumbling with trumpet sound*] Huh... let's check on that stomach next! Stethoscopes ready...

[*trumpet playing C major pentatonic scale*]

Stori: Um... Doc? Is THAT what Jazz's belly really sounds like?

Kiana: Not usually. I think Jazz is hungry for some soul food!

Brailyn: Like cornbread? That always makes my soul happy!

Kiana: *[laughs, background music fades in]* Mine too! But Jazz doesn't eat the same food we do. I think what Jazz needs for their soul is some *blue notes!* When we first listened to jazz's stomach, the scale was missing some notes.*[background music fades out]* Listen again... *[trumpet playing C major pentatonic scale]* What's missing are the notes in between... We all learn the same notes when we start out in music, but we season with blue notes when we want to better express ourselves! Hmm... I know exactly what Jazz needs! Doctor Fiona, whip up some gumbo stat! Make sure it has looooots of blue note seasoning!

Fiona: You got it! *[stove turning on, water bubbling in a pot]* Bottoms up! *[high-pitched slurp sound, satisfied exhale]*

Kiana: Let's listen...*[trumpet playing blues scale]* Now *that* sounds more like Jazz!

Brailyn: I hear it! *[background music fades in]* That blue note gumbo sounds deeeelicious! But...why are they even *called* blue notes? Can I call them purple notes? That's my favorite color.

Kiana: That's a good point! We call them *blue notes* because of the Blues! Blues music started in Mississippi after the American Civil War, and was one of the only ways that formerly enslaved Black Americans could express their feelings outwardly. We'll learn more about blues later, for now I want to make sure Jazz is feeling their best first. *[trumpet coughing, throat clearing]*

Fiona: Yeesh! I think we better check on those lungs next. Jazz, do you think you could take a deep breath for me?

[inhale, the opening sequence from Bobby Timmons' "Moanin'" plays followed by a cough]

Fiona: Just as I suspected. Jazz is missing one of their *most* important elements, communication! In music terms, we call it call and response. When someone makes "the call," we all can make a "response." There are two main types of responses that we can make. The first one repeats what the caller just said. Let's try some. *[Fiona keeping time by clapping]* Repeat after me... Guinea pigs are cool

Group: Guinea pigs are cool

Fiona: Can I have some french fries?

Group: Can I have some french fries?

Fiona: Antidisestablishmentarianism!

Group: Antidisestablishmentarianism!

Fiona: Pneumonoultramicroscopicsilicovolcanoconiosis!

Group: Pneumonoultramicroscopicsilicovolcanoconiosis!

Fiona: *[laughs]* Good job everyone! Now the second type of call and response agrees with or acknowledges the call. Let's try one of those. *[Fiona sings a call, Kiana responds]* Great job! Now back to jazz...

Brailyn: Wait wait wait, didn't you say we needed to know more about the blues?

Kiana: Good thinking! *[background music fades in]* Jazz comes from the blues tradition. We learned earlier that blues was created as one of the only ways enslaved people could communicate and create together. The roots of call and response are like that too! It originated in church services, another time when enslaved Black Americans could gather and support each other. When the preacher would say something, the congregation would agree in response.

Stori: *[gasps]* I know! Jazz needs a response, stat! How about this - *[sings "oh yeah" to the tune of Moanin']*

Kiana: Perfect! Let's try it out. Jazz?

[Moanin' plays with students singing "oh yeah" over it in response]

Fiona: *[music continues]* Whew! Sounds like Jazz is feeling all better. Thanks to you all, we fixed the elements of Jazz: syncopation, blues notes, and call and response. I wonder who our patient will be next time on "Grey's Musicology"...*[Moanin' stops with whoosh sound, hospital beeping begins and gets faster and more intense, Fiona's voice yelling dramatically over it "oh NO! We're losing him! Where's Mozart when you need him?!" record scratch sound]*

Kiana: Fiona... *[sighs]* "The Music Box."

Fiona: Right, right, next time on the Music Box! *[Moanin' begins again and continues]*

Kiana: As we were saying... Thank you for joining us on the Music Box! I hope you enjoyed our journey through music exploration as much as I did. Don't forget to check out all of the additional lessons and resources found by clicking on the details of this episode!

Fiona: Stick around after the credits for a Musical Minute with Colleen Phelps! I'm Fiona

Kiana: And I'm Kiana

Kiana and Fiona together: And you've unwrapped another wonderful gift from the Music Box!

Nazari The Music Box is a production of Louisville Public Media, with support from PNC, the Norton Foundation, and the sustaining members of Louisville Public Media. This episode was recorded in collaboration with Louisville Central Community Center. This episode was written by Kiana Del and Fiona Palensky. Technical direction and sound design by me, Alex Cooper!

Malaysia: Our executive producer is Daniel Gilliam. Special thanks to Kirsten Pfalzgraf, Laura Ellis, Gabrielle Jones, and Angela Wilson

Alex: Additional voices include Stori Crawford, Brailyn Fears, Malaysia Reed, Nazari Reed, Colleen Phelps, and me! Alex Cooper

Malaysia: You can get additional teaching materials and all our episodes at musicboxpod.org.

[Moanin' continues]

Colleen: It's Colleen the percussionist, *[music fades]* here again with a percussion game for you! Strike, shake, or scrape. I'm going to play one of my many instruments, and you guess how I play it! Do I strike it, like hitting a drum, shake it, or scrape across it? Here goes! *[thunder tube sounds]* That's a tricky one... listen again! *[thunder tube sounds]* This instrument is called a "thunder tube!" It's a spring coming down from a very, very small drum, and YES I shake it! If I strike it, this is what it sounds like...

[thunder tube is hit twice and rings out] if I scrape it, this is what it sounds like *[thunder tube is scraped and rattles]* but I like when I shake it, and it sounds like a thunderstorm! *[thunder tube is shaken and rings out]*

[podcast ends, underwriting begins]

Alex: Support comes from the eyecare institute and Butchertown Clinical Trials, where they strive for

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