

Understanding musical scores

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NAOMI:

Let's talk a little bit about variation one. Now, here, the piano has the melody, but there's some really interesting things happening all around that tune. Felipe, tell me a little bit about what you're doing in the base part.

FELIPE:

The variation one, the whole variation one in the base part is played in pizzicato, which means to pluck the string. In fact, the word in Italian, pizzicato means to pinch so producing a sound like--

[PLUCKING BASS STRINGS]

NAOMI:

That's a wonderful sound. Would you like to demonstrate the beginning of that section for us?

FELIPE:

Sure.

[PLUCKING BASS STRINGS]

NAOMI:

Thank you. That's the kind of foundation for the rest of the group to work with. Kimmie, your viola part sits in the middle as a filler for the harmonies. And now, there's a lovely conversation over the top of that between the cello and the violin. How do you coordinate that between you?

CELLO PLAYER:

There's so many factors that you have to try and match. So for instance, if Chevonne puts more emphasis on the first note, then I have to try and match that. Or if she plays one slightly louder, then I should try and either do the same or do something completely different so that it's like a conversation.

NAOMI:

So you're listening to each other all the time and responding to each other?

CELLO PLAYER:

Yeah.

[VIOLIN & CELLO PLAYING]

NAOMI:

And then Chevonne, you've got some really interesting things that happen after that.

CHEVONNE:

Yeah. He adds then. In my rests, he adds in some ornamentation-- very high, almost bird calls or something-- over the top. So there's--

[VIOLIN PLAYING]

NAOMI:

And all of that, Ben has to relate back to the piano, which is playing the tune.

[MUSIC PLAYING]