

Dangerous Tones, Episode 4

Farlige toner

The podcast is the story of 100 years of jazz in Denmark. The music has influenced society, but society has also influenced jazz. So this is not just a history of music, but also a story about society. For three seasons, listeners are led through the most important highlights in the history of jazz, with stories about the people, events and controversies that were critical to its ongoing development. For many decades, jazz was originally seen as dangerous, as a genre that challenged accepted norms and conventions, both within music and in society. There are five episodes in each of the series' three seasons that span from just after the first world war when jazz arrived in Denmark up until today.

Season one's first episode finds us in 1919, where three second cousins from Copenhagen are sent records and a saxophone from another cousin in Chicago. They become Denmark's first jazz musicians, playing to audiences in the nightclubs of Copenhagen. However, they run into opposition from the national radio station Statsradiofonien - Later known as Danmarks Radio - which saw jazz as an unacceptably inferior type of music.

In episode two, we hear the story of two historical visits by black American jazz musicians. Visits that had an enormous impact on the Danish scene. One was Sam Wooding & His Chocolate Kiddies big band who were met with anger and racial condemnation when they came in 1925. The other was Louis Armstrong, who in 1933, was received as a hero.

In episode three, we hear about a couple of the few women who were involved in the first days of jazz. The American singer and dancer Josephine Baker, who often guested Copenhagen with her performances challenging preconceptions of both gender and race.

In the fifth and final episode of the first season, we hear about the virtuoso all-rounder Svend Asmussen, who captivated Danes with his violin playing, but who was also arrested by the Germans, and sent to prison in Berlin.

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