

American Indian Music Traditions and Contributions

by
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Biographical Sketch of the Author

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CONTENTS	PAGE
INTRODUCTION.....	1
SONGS	2
Origins of Songs	5
Singing Style.....	7
Intonation	8
Words and Music	9
MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS	11
Percussion	11
Wind Instruments	20
Stringed Instruments.....	23
RHYTHM.....	24
NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN MUSICAL STYLES	25
North American Indian Music Today.....	30
LATIN AMERICAN INDIAN MUSICAL STYLES.....	33
Latin American Folk Music Today	36
CONCLUSION	38
APPENDIX A CHRONOLOGY	39
APPENDIX B CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN INDIAN MUSICIANS	46
REFERENCES.....	50
Bibliography	50
Footnotes.....	52
Index.....	53

INTRODUCTION

There has been a tendency over the years to think of traditional American Indian cultures as representing a stage through which European cultures passed several millennia ago. Although there may be some parallels, it is much more valuable, when studying cultures, to accept each on its own characteristics. Where comparisons are made, they should be done only as an aid to understanding analogous parts of culture.

This concept is particularly important when studying American Indian music. It is tempting to think of European-American music as evolving and dynamic and all other musics as static. We often hear of the 'stone age' music of tribal peoples or the 'great age of music' of China and India. But all musics have a history and all of them change, though at various rates and not always in the same direction. It would be a great mistake to assume that Europeans, in the days when they lived in tribes, had a music similar to that of American Indians. Musics do not uniformly change from simple to complex.¹

In the world of the American Indian, music has always played a significant role. It was once a means of communing with the spiritual realm, and of bringing the aid of supernatural power into everyday life. For many people today, music still plays this role. However, in addition to that, it has become an essential expression of American Indian identity.

"The importance of American Indian music is found not in its impact on modern scholarship and composition but in the traditions and values it expresses to and for the Indian people. This oral tradition has survived solely because the music was too important to be allowed to die."²

The following essay then is an attempt to present the essence of American Indian music in a meaningful and useful manner. When comparisons are drawn between

American Indian and European-American culture, it is done solely with the intent to enhance understanding of the principle involved, rather than to make cultural evaluations.

Music is a fundamental component of American Indian culture. It is the soft crooning of a mother's lullaby; or the deep yearning of the lover's flute. Music brings rain, it ensures good crops, it tells stories and legends, it expresses reverence and gives thanks. As one writer expresses, music is, “[t]he spontaneous and sincere expression of the soul of a people.”³

As with all aspects of Indian culture, an obvious characteristic of the music is the great variety to be found throughout Indian America. Songs from one region may be very different from songs from another. A song from the Northern Plains, for example, may be very different from a song from the Southwestern Desert, which in turn may be very different from a song from Central or South America.

Another obvious characteristic of Indian music is that it sounds very different from the music to which European-American ears are accustomed. So much so, in fact, that on first hearing the music, non-Indian people often remark that they can hear no pattern or melody to it. However, the opposite is actually the case. All Indian music has a very definite style and order.

SONGS

In traditional Indian society music plays many of the same roles that it does in other cultures. It is used for worship, for work, for entertainment, for expressing grief and for gaining strength. However, there is a difference in the attitude about music.

European-American culture tends to think in terms of divisions and categories. Thus, it recognizes religious music, popular music, folk music, rhythm and blues, etc. as distinctive genres. Indian culture, however, tends to take a more holistic view. Religion is inseparable from Indian life. Indian music, in turn, is inseparable from life or religion.

A song is not simply something to help set a mood or facilitate work, rather it is an integral part of the activity, and has power itself. A traditional corn grinding song may also be a prayer for rain to ensure continued corn crops. A song can bring protection, or it can bring the power of healing.

This concept is so important that some songs and ceremonies, such as Navajo blessing chants, must be performed precisely. Any deviation or errors in the words or music negate the power of the song and the whole process must be either abandoned or begun again from the beginning. So, a song accompanying a religious ceremony not only sets the mood for the worshippers, but carries power in and of itself.

Songs are also used to help teach a person his or her role in society. Many lullabies, for example, were used not as simply a means to put the children to sleep, but also to help prepare them for life. The songs were meant to help the children become healthy, happy, contributing members of their society. The lyrics to one lullaby from the Northwest are, "My little son, you will put a sealing spear into your canoe, without knowing what use you may make of it when you are a man."⁴ The words of another Northwest lullaby for a little girl are, "This little girl will pick black salmon berries when the women go to get berries."⁵ By hearing these songs over and over, the children gradually learn some of what is expected of them as adults.

Teaching children through the use of songs is also seen in the girl's puberty ceremony of the Mescalero Apache of New Mexico. The song associated with this ceremony contains these words, "Be strong, for you are the mother of a People."

Songs have long been used in association with stories. For many tribes creation stories have been told through song. Some songs from the Great Basin area, thought to be some of the oldest in style, tell through the songs extended stories detailing creation myths. Thus, for these tribes, much of what they considered to be their history was preserved and transferred through song.

Some stories have songs associated with them. The Coyote stories of the

Southwest are well known as teaching stories, much the same as Aesop's fables or Kipling's "Just So" stories. In these stories, just as in Aesop's fables, the animals take on human characteristics, such as speech. Appropriate behavior is taught, especially to the children, through the experiences of the characters in the story.

One such story is intended to teach respect for others. In this story Coyote is out walking one day, when he hears a beautiful song which seems to be coming from a bush. Upon closer inspection, Coyote finds that it is Locust who is sitting on the bush and singing. Coyote begs Locust to teach him the song so that he may take it home to sing for his children. Afraid of Coyote's well known and volatile temper, Locust agrees.

After learning the song, Coyote leaves, singing the song softly to himself. Not paying attention, Coyote trips over a rock in the trail and falls to the ground. While he is dusting himself off, Coyote realizes that he has forgotten the song, and so he returns to the bush. Finding Locust still there, he pleads with Locust to teach him the song again. Locust complies, and again Coyote starts for home. Again he is distracted by something and forgets the song. Once more he returns to Locust and is given the song for a third time.

This time, after Coyote leaves, Locust grows weary of foolish Coyote's carelessness. He climbs out of his skin and flies away, leaving only a hard shell into which he has placed a small stone. When Coyote returns, as Locust expected, he cannot get Locust's shell to sing for him. Becoming very angry, Coyote bites the shell, with painful results, as he breaks a tooth on the stone. While returning home, the frustrated Coyote hears Locust flying away singing a song. The words of this song tell Coyote that he should respect the gifts given by others, for now, as a result of his carelessness and temper, he ends up with nothing but a sore tooth. Of course, when stories such as these are told, the songs are sung by the story teller at the appropriate place in the story.

Origins of Songs

In the Indian world songs are often personal or tribal property. One may not use someone else's songs without first having been given those songs, or at least the right to use them. This is accomplished usually by giving a gift to the song's owner.

As personal property, songs can be given as gifts. One Taos man, for example, has made a song for his wife and each of his children, which he has given them as their own personal song.

Today, as it was in the past, many Indian song makers say that the inspiration for their songs is acquired through dreams or visions. It is said that often a songmaker will hear a song in a dream, and will wake up singing it.⁶

In the non-Indian world songs are often classified by title, composer, or by the performers. (Thus we have the *Toccata and Fugue in D Minor*, Beethoven's piano concertos, or Beatle songs.) Indian songs are recognized more by function, tribe, or by place of origin. Very few songs have what could be called a title. Therefore, a song may be recognized as a Hopi Buffalo Dance song, another as a Montana Grass Dance song. One well known song is recognized as "*Crow Fair*" from the celebration of the same name held every year at Crow Agency, Montana, where the song was first heard.

Today some songs which have been given English words are known by a portion of the text. One popular Plains Social Song is often referred to as "*One-Eyed Ford*." The English lyrics are, "When the dance is over Sweetheart, I will take you home in my one-eyed Ford."

Since Indian songs generally don't have titles as such, and since many songs may be of a given type, such as Grass Dance or Round Dance songs, a singer may indicate which song he has in mind, especially when the song is to be sung by a group, by singing a portion of the melody. This is particularly true of the Plains style songs used so often at Pow-wow celebrations today.

Certain ceremonies have a prescribed set of associated songs. In such cases the singers learn which songs are used for each ceremony. They also know then, the

specific order in which the songs must be sung to ensure that the ceremony is successful.

The fact that music has traditionally held such an important position in Indian life has led to another characteristic that distinguishes it from European-American music, at least for most of the North American tribes north of Mexico. Before the intrusion of European cultures, there was no body of professional musicians, just as there were no professional artisans. It has been said that:

“Indians generally do not formalize work, art, or religion. They weave them into their daily lives so smoothly that no word exists to convey the idea that they may be separated from the whole pattern of living.”⁷

Exceptions to this general pattern did evolve in many of the cultures of Mesoamerica and the Andes.

However, in general each individual used music as part of his or her daily routine, just as any other life skill. Indeed many daily activities had associated songs. These include morning prayer songs, lullabies and corn grinding songs. The Pueblo people of the Southwest, noted in the Indian world for their agriculture, had planting and harvesting songs. Other tribes had songs associated with hunting. Still others had songs that aided in fishing or whaling. Often these were personal or family songs known to only a few individuals, others were songs known widely by most members of a tribe. Of course, if an individual was particularly successful, say with hunting, others sought the secret of his success. By this means personal songs sometimes became tribal songs. Thus, certain individuals became known for their particular song gifts.

Not all people were, of course, equally gifted. Certain ones became better known as singers because of their ability to express the feelings of the song, or because of the particular quality of their music. Some people were known for their ability to bring songs to their cultures. This was always considered a spiritual gift, rather than an artistic gift. Whatever the case, Indian music was, “[n]ot the luxury of the cultured few, but the

unconscious striving of the many to make beautiful the things of daily living.”⁸

Singing Style

Most singing coaches of European-American music teach their pupils what, in recent years, has come to be called ‘head singing’. This type of singing is characterized by an elevated soft palate and a relatively relaxed throat. When properly supported by the diaphragm and chest, this produces a certain resonating in the mouth and head. Many operatic and popular singers use this singing style.

Much of Indian singing is done down in the throat. This means that it is done with a certain amount of tension in the throat and vocal chords. This is particularly true of the Northern Plains singers. Some others, such as the Yuman and some California groups, sing with a more relaxed style.

Intonation

The general European-American culture’s organization of sounds into music is based mainly on the use of the octave scale. There are major and minor scales. These are based on set tone values called pitches and set intervals between tones. Thus, we have the familiar do, re, mi, fa, so, la, ti, do. Tones fitting in between these tones, the half-tones, are known as accidentals. The keynote, or pitch of ‘do’ on the scale, tells how high or low the scale will be. This gives the key of the song.

A characteristic of American Indian music is that it does not always keep the standard tones as played on a piano. John Bierhorst, a writer and compiler of information about Indian culture explains:

“[j]ust as in the music of the birds, Indian music does not always keep to the fixed tones that can be played on the piano. Some notes are actually quarter tones - in between the half tones on the piano. Here and there a note may be made up of several tones, like a syllable of ordinary speech.”⁹

A common perception of Indian music is that it is all in a minor key. Actually, there is a great variety in both major and minor keys with the major dominating. Much of the

Indian music uses a pentatonic scale, and a common characteristic of many songs is a melodic progression of descending thirds.

Melodies of Indian songs may have a large tonal range, like many of the Plains songs, or may be quite simple having only a few tones. Also, for many songs there is an obvious keynote. For others, as for some songs of the Tono O'odham of Arizona, the melody is so free in form that finding a keynote is difficult.¹⁰

The use of harmony, or polyphony, is rare among North American Indian songs. Most songs are sung in unison by men or women, or both, depending on the tribe and song. Among the Plains peoples the women will sometimes sing the melody line an octave higher in pitch than the men. The only example of singing in true harmony is among some of the tribes of the Northwest Coast, where some of the songs are sung in parallel thirds, fourths or fifths.¹¹

Words and Music

The strength of Indian songs lies in the songs themselves. Therefore the words used in a song are much less important than the music. In many Indian songs, again with variations from tribe to tribe, most of the song is made up of vocables. These are sounds, such as 'Heya-hey,' made the same way every time, but which do not have exact meanings in the same sense that words do. Because of this, Indian songs have been referred to as chants. To the Indian, however they are songs. The vocables express meaning in roughly the same way that 'tra, la, la, la, la' in European-American music might be used to express joy. There are conventions which must be followed in singing established songs. In other words. the singer does not simply make up the song as he goes along.

When lyrics are used in Indian music, they are usually quite brief and occupy a set place in the song. For the most part, it was not necessary to use many words because a few words would suggest a widely known idea or event. One such Lakota song consists mostly of the phrase, which translated means, "Friend, where were you?"

repeated over and over. It is said that this song was sung by those who participated in the 1876 Battle of the Little Big Horn after their return to those who remained on the reservation. The implied meaning of the song being, "Where were you when we were fighting for our people and way of life?"

Although Indian songs tend to contain few words, they are very expressive of the feelings of the singer. A Tsimshian love song from the Northwest says, "Something like an arrow runs through my heart when I remember my sweetheart." A Lakota song for a newborn baby boy has these words, "Father, Great Spirit, behold this boy! Your ways he will see."

Another reason that Indian songs have few words has to do with the fact that they are often used in obtaining help from the supernatural. For the most part, it is said that those who inhabit the spiritual realm need not have things explained to them. For example, one Kwakiutl fisherman's prayer song says simply, "Old man, put your hands on the sea and press down."¹²

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

As with other aspects of Indian culture, there is a great variety in musical instruments, although these can be separated into only two major divisions; percussion and wind. However, what is lacked in type is more than compensated for in variety. Stringed instruments are used in very few traditional Indian musical cultures, but have been adopted by many since Contact.

This section principally covers the types of musical instruments used in North America. The distinctive Indian instruments in much of what is now called Latin America are mentioned below in the section on the native music of that part of the Americas.

Percussion

Percussion instruments are by far the most common type of American Indian musical instrument. Many singers will not sing without using a drum or a rattle, or at

least tapping a hand to keep rhythm.

Drums come in many varieties. However, the term 'tom-tom' is never used by traditionalist Indians to refer to drums.

Hand drums are probably the most common type of drum in North America. These are made by stretching a wet hide over a frame. The frame is usually about an inch and a half to three inches wide and made of cedar or some other wood that can be soaked and bent. The drum itself may be as small as twelve inches, or as large as twenty-four inches in diameter. Some Inuit ('Eskimo') hand drums may even be as large as three or four feet across.

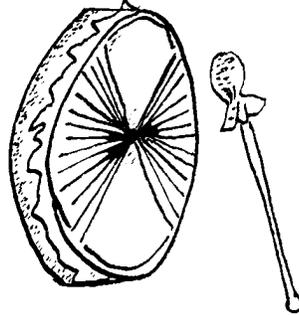
In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, it became popular in some places to use the wooden boxes in which cheese 'rounds' were shipped to make drum frames. A common custom today is to use sections cut from European-style band drums (often snare drums) to make the frames. Also today, as has been done for centuries, the heads of hand drums are often painted with designs of significance to the drum maker or owner.

Large Drums for group singing are also widely used. These drums are usually two-headed drums, again with the heads made of rawhide laced together with rawhide thongs. The frames may be sections of a hollowed out log, or as has become common today, be cut down from the frame of a modern bass drum, with the heads removed and replaced with rawhide. Such large drums are commonly used at pow-wows today. They were once hung on stakes pounded into the ground, or on frames so that the singers could sit around the drum. Today these large drums are either hung on frames or set in the center of the seated singers, each of whom may put a toe under the drum to lift it off the ground, depending on how much resonance is desired.

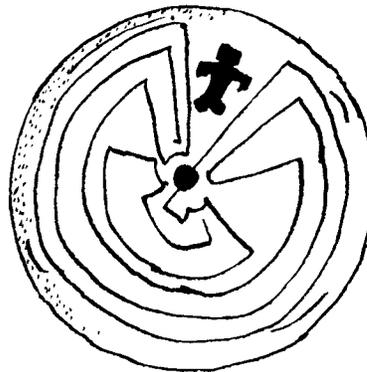


Plains hand drum,
obverse (front) side
showing painted
rawhide head.

Plains hand drum,
reverse (back) side
showing hoop
frame, lacing and
beater.



Drawn by author.

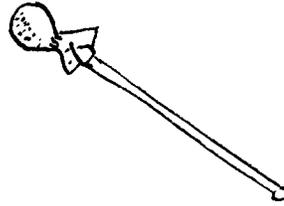
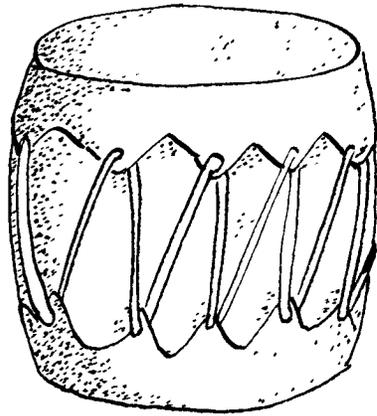


Plains hand drum and beater
showing a drumhead painted
in symbols representing a
spiritual journey important to
its owner.

Drawn by the author.



Among the Pueblos of the Southwest, many of the ceremonial and social songs are sung by a 'chorus' of male singers. This may consist of as many as fifty men and boys, several of whom have and play drums. These are two-headed, 12-18 inches in diameter and two to three feet tall, and are made from sections cut from cottonwood logs. Drums such as these being fairly large, produce a deep thumping sound.

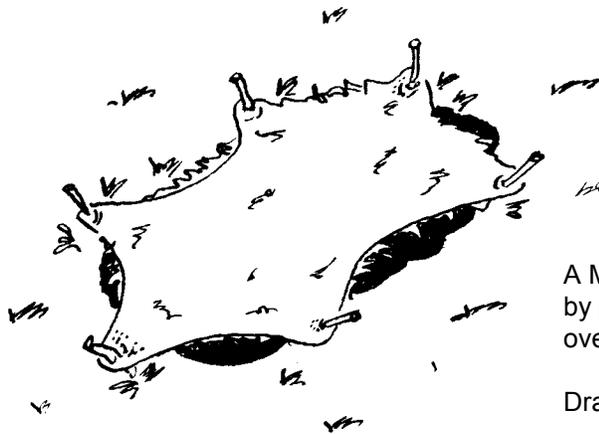


A large, double-headed Pueblo drum.

Drawn by the author.

Drums have also been made by placing a rolled up hide on the ground and striking it with a stick. Such drums are still used in various ceremonies among the Rio Grande Pueblos in New Mexico. The Ute people of Utah used a drum made by simply stretching the hide between a circle of singers. Each would hold the edge of the hide in one hand and strike it with a stick held in the other hand.

One unusual drum was made by the Miwok of California. A green hide was stretched over a shallow hole in the ground and pegged on opposite sides. When this dried it made a resonant drum on which a dancer danced to produce the rhythm.¹³ An illustration appears below.



A Miwok dance drum made by pegging a large rawhide over a hole in the ground.

Drawn by the author.

The Tono O'odham ('Papago') use a **basket drum** called a tamo. For this drum,

a basket of medium size is used. It is inverted on the ground and the singers strike it with their hands.

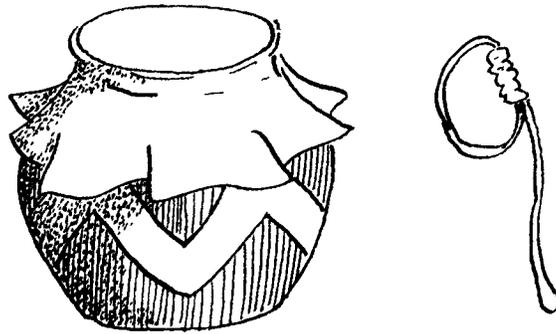
In the Northwest Coastal area some drums were actually wooden boxes made of cedar. These were open at one end and at the bottom. Some songs were accompanied by the beating of short sticks on partially hollowed out logs or planks. Among the Nootka of the Northwest Coast, certain songs were accompanied by the striking of sticks on planks. In some songs this was combined with the use of a hand drum. Some songs of the Makah Day celebration in the Northwest were accompanied by the pounding on the floor of heavy spears held by the singers.¹⁴

Also in the Northwest and in California, we find the use of '**foot drums**,' which consisted of large wooden boxes suspended from the ceiling of a longhouse. The players would sit on the boxes and keep time by thumping their heels against the side of the box.¹⁵ The Maidu of California, made a type of foot drum by inverting partially hollowed out logs over shallow pits. The players in this case made the sound by stomping on the logs.

It is theorized by some that large pits sometimes found in the floors of kivas (large, circular ceremonial rooms, partly underground) of Anasazi pueblos may have been used for a similar purpose. Earl Morris proposed, after his restoration of the Great Kiva at Aztec Ruins in northern New Mexico, that two large pits found inside may have once been covered with boards and danced upon. The sound of the dancers' feet on the boards reverberating in the pits, would have provided the rhythm to accompany the song. This is, however, mostly speculation and there is little in the way of direct evidence to support Morris' theory.

Another type of drum used in many parts of the Indian world is the **water drum**. These are made by stretching a piece of hide over an iron kettle, the mouth of a clay pot, or over the end of a log hollowed out so that one end is closed. Drums such as these can be tuned somewhat by splashing some of the water against the head to vary the tone, or by varying the amount of water inside the drum. Today the water drum is

fundamental to the ceremonies of the Native American Church.



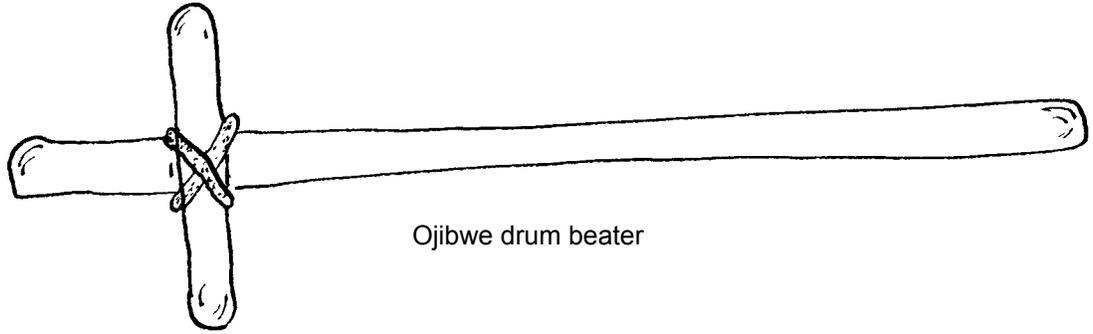
A clay water drum and beater from Acoma Pueblo.

Drawn by the author.

Among the unusual types of drums is the gourd drum used by the Yaqui of northern Mexico during their Deer Dance. A half of a gourd is floated, open side down, in a tub of water. The drummer holds the gourd steady, lightly touching it with one hand, while striking it with a stick held in the other hand.

Another unique drum was that of the Seri of western Mexico. It consisted of a sea turtle shell placed over a hole in the sand.

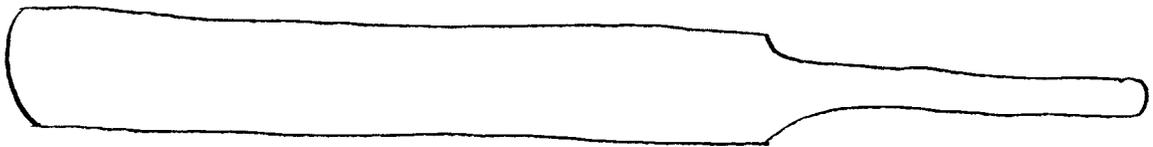
Drumsticks, or beaters, come in nearly as many varieties as do drums. Drumsticks are usually a fairly long straight stick with some sort of head at one end. The head may be hard or soft, depending on its use or the preference of the one using it. The stick may be of any type of wood, or as is common today, it may be made from a wooden dowel or section of fiberglass rod. Sometimes the stick is made of a long piece of willow or other pliable wood that has been looped at one end. The loop is used as the striking end. In pre-Contact Mexico and Central America, the striking end of some drumsticks were tipped with cured rubber. An illustration on the next page



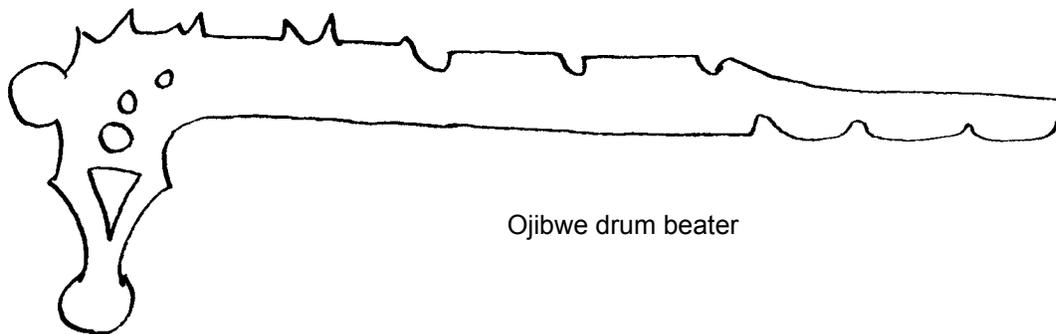
Ojibwe drum beater



Two Leni-Lenape ('Delaware') drum beaters



Iroquois drum beater



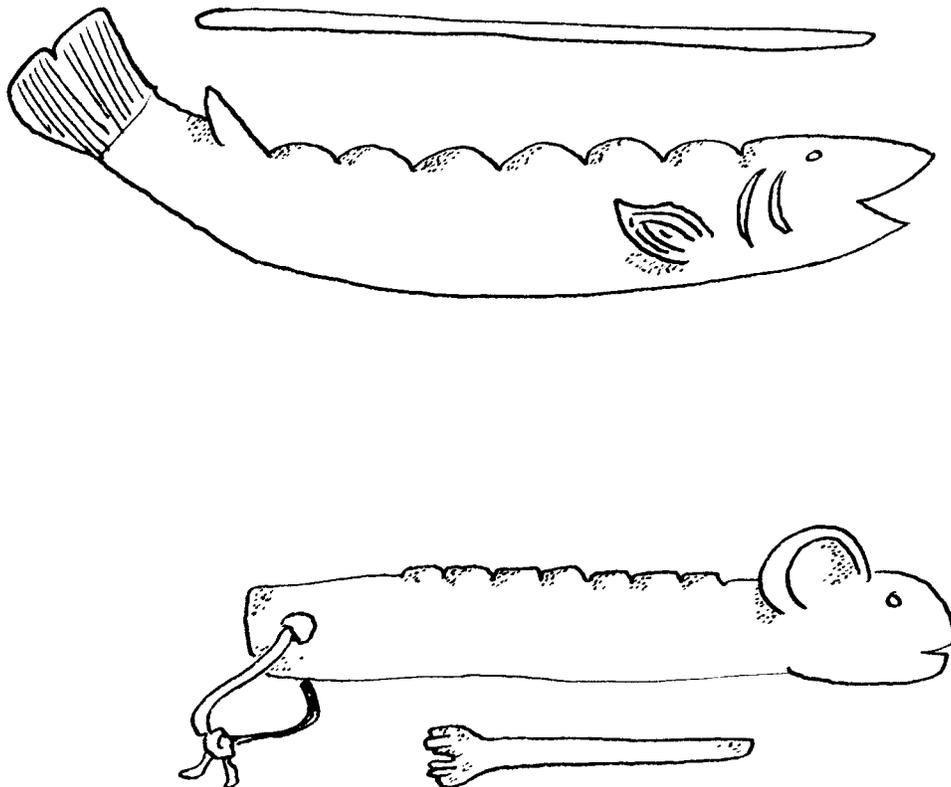
Ojibwe drum beater

Several Northeastern styles of traditional drum beaters.

Drawn by author.

shows some variants on the traditional type of beater used in much of the Northeastern Woodlands.

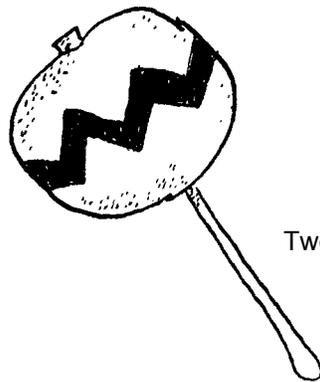
Another rhythm instrument is the **rasp** or **guiro**, sometimes called by the Spanish name 'morache'. This instrument consists of a long notched stick over which is rubbed another shorter stick in a rhythmic pattern or motion. One end of the notched stick is often placed, for resonance, on a drum or box or, as in the case of the Yaqui of Mexico, on a large hollow gourd. Sometimes the notched stick is carved into the shape of an animal or a fish, or an animal effigy is carved on one end. Another common use of this type of instrument is in the Ute Bear Dance. The growling sound of the rasp in this case may be an imitation of the growling of the bear.



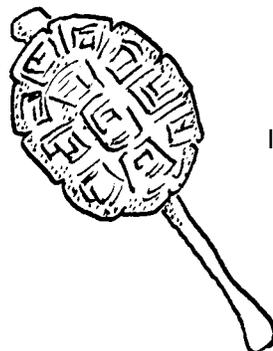
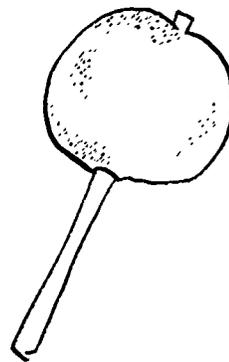
Two styles of Northern Ute Bear Dance rasps or moraches.

Drawn by author.

Rattles are of two types, those made of some kind of container in which pebbles or shot is placed; and those made by hanging shells or animal hooves from a stick. Of the first type, there are many varieties. The containers may be made of rawhide, a gourd, a tortoise shell, a cylinder of birch bark, a section of horn, or, as is common today, a metal can. For the second type, any kind of nut shell or animal hoof, (such as deer hooves, bird beaks or elk teeth) can be used. Those are hung by a string from a stick. When the stick is shaken, the shells rattle together. Dancers from many tribes often wore such rattles to add to the rhythm of the music. These were sometimes replaced in later years with metal bells or cones obtained from traders. Illustrations below show gourd and turtle shell rattles.



Two Pueblo gourd rattles



Iroquois Turtle Shell rattle

Drawn by author.

Wind Instruments

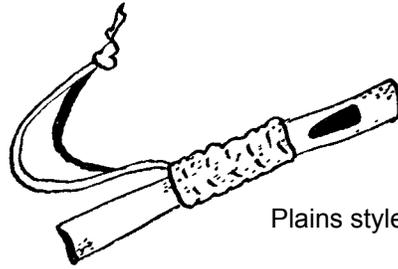
Wind instruments used in most of North America are of two major types: flutes and whistles. A number of tribes developed horns of various materials; however, these were less common than flutes and whistles.

The most common type of American Indian flute is really a flageolet. Also called **flûtes à bec** or block flutes, these are similar in type and mechanism to the Baroque recorder.

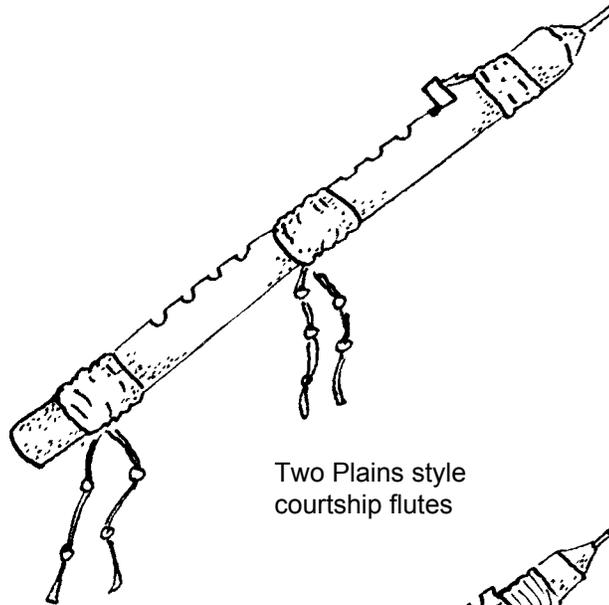
In former times flutes were often made of cedar. The wood was split open, hollowed in the center, and then put back together. The seams were often sealed with pine pitch and the two halves tied together with leather thongs. The number of holes varied depending on the tribe and preference of the individual maker. Most Great Plains flutes had between 5 and 7 holes. Spacing was often done by allowing one knuckle length between holes. Given the variability of materials, craftsmanship and anatomic measurements, it was difficult to find any two flutes that had exactly the same sound or played in the same key. In later times, even sections cut from old gun barrels were used to make flutes.

The Pueblo peoples of the Southwest had true flutes that were end blown. These were made of cane and some had bells made of half gourds attached to the bottom so that they resembled clarinets. Unlike on the Plains, where it was strictly a solo instrument, among the Hopi several flutes were played in unison with singers as part of certain ceremonies. The Tono O'odham had cane flutes which had only three holes, limiting the music to a four note range.

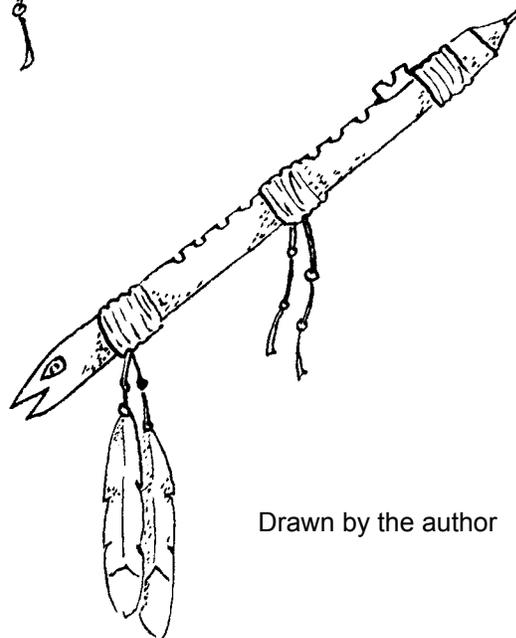
Used by many tribes for courtship, the yearning sounds of the flute have become identified as being 'Indian music' through their recent and increased use in the cinema and television. It is said that such lover's flutes were also sometimes used by scouts to signal the approach of an enemy.



Plains style Eagle bone whistle



Two Plains style courtship flutes



Drawn by the author

Whistles are made from the bones of various birds, or from the small branches of trees with soft pith. These can be long or short and are used mostly in ceremonies, such as the Sun Dance. In pre-reservation days, warriors sometimes blew whistles

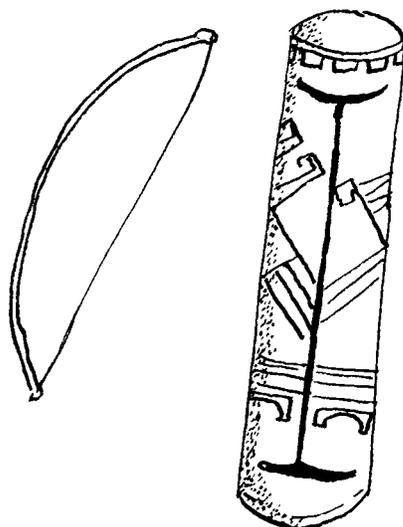
while charging into battle.

Whistles consisting of two or more pipes blown together are relatively rare among the North American cultures; such panpipes are more common in South America. Among the Pomo of California such an instrument is still used today in some of their dances. In some tribes such whistles produced identical notes, while among others such whistles were of different tones producing a simple harmony.

Horns of various types were quite common at one time in Central and South America; however, their use was quite uncommon in North America. Among some tribes, birch bark horns were used by hunters to call game. Conch-shell horns were known to many tribes along the shores of the Gulf of Mexico and in the Southeast.

Stringed Instruments

There are two types of traditional **stringed instruments** in the Indian world north of Mexico, although the use of such instruments is rare. One of these is what is known as the 'Apache fiddle.' Although its creation probably came after European contact, it is a distinctly unique instrument. In other words, although the idea of using a string stretched over a sound box may have come from European instruments, the design of the instrument itself and the music played on it were of indigenous origin.



An 'Apache fiddle'.
The bow is drawn over
the edge of the slit to
set up a resonance in
the instrument

Drawn by the author.

The other stringed instrument, found in California, is a mouth bow. It is essentially a hunter's bow, played much like a mouth harp or 'Jew's Harp.' Held straight out with one end in the player's mouth, the string is tapped by the index finger. Different tones are made by changing the tension on the bow or by changing the shape of the mouth. It is said that this very quiet instrument was used primarily by lovers.¹⁶

RHYTHM

Philosophy, of whatever culture, tends to insist on a certain order to life. Art, architecture, landscaping and even music also have their rules of symmetry, proportion and rhythm that make them pleasing. This is true of Indian music, although the rules are much different from those of European-American music. Non-Indian observers have often remarked that Indian music has a certain 'wildness' about it. This should not be surprising when we remember American Indians' close association with the natural world. It was the song of the rustling leaves, the songs of the birds and the musical splashing of streams as they danced over rocks, that provided the inspiration for Indian music.

For this reason, Indian music often does not fit the standard European-American 3/4 or 4/4 time signatures. When some of these songs are written in European notation, a different time signature must be used for nearly every measure. "Putting these songs into notation is like putting them into a straitjacket."¹⁷

These songs usually tend to be non-dance songs, such as healing songs and some lullabies. Songs connected with dances tend to have more of what might be called body rhythm, that regular foot-tapping kind of beat.¹⁸

The rhythm commonly associated with Indian music is the four beat pattern with a heavily accented first beat (BOOM, boom, boom, boom, etc.). This, although ubiquitous in movies and television, is decidedly not Indian.

Rhythms in the songs of the Great Plains tribes generally are of two types. One type is characterized by a uniformly pulsating beat. This is the type normally used for war dances. The other type used, in what are called Round Dances, is characterized by a loud beat preceded by an unaccented beat.

An interesting point about the Plains style is that the drum's rhythm is often somewhat independent of the rhythm of the melody. The two rhythms generally start out and end together, but they do not always remain together throughout the song. This is another aspect of Indian music that may cause European-American ears to hear it as wild or rough.

NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN MUSICAL STYLES

Although there is a great diversity of musical styles in the Indian world, these can generally be grouped into a few divisions which follow roughly the major cultural areas. For example, although there are subtle differences between the music of the Crow and the Lakota peoples, they are more alike than they are different. Therefore, for the sake of study, they can be grouped together in the 'Great Plains style'.

The concept of musical distribution in the Indian world was first suggested by George Herzog in 1928. Helen Roberts later refined the concept in 1936. Since that time, most authors and researchers in the field of Indian music have adapted the idea, to some extent, to suit their own observations. The divisions used in this paper are the author's own, although they vary little from those used by others.

These divisions are by no means exact or all inclusive. Naturally, where cultural areas meet and overlap, there is a sharing of characteristics. However, the use of general divisions will help in the understanding of the variety in cultures of the Indian world.

It should be noted that these are not divisions that American Indians make, but rather are classifications used by ethnologists and musicologists, to aid in the study of

the music.

1. **Eastern Woodlands.** A major characteristic of the music of this region is the use of antiphonal or responsorial singing. Here short melodic phrases are sung by a solo leader and repeated by a chorus. This type of song is evident in the Iroquois Eagle Dance and numerous Creek Stomp Dance songs of the Southeast. Vocal technique is tense and the melodies usually follow a descending stair-step or terraced pattern.

2. **Great Plains.** This area is actually composed of two divisions, North and South.

Songs of the Northern Plains are characterized by a two part song form, sometimes referred to as incomplete repetition, or **AABCBC**. This consists of a major unit or stanza made up of two parts, each with a descending, stair-step melodic pattern (**BC**). The second part of the stanza is a repeat of the first part with the exception of a short 'lead' phrase (**A**) at the very beginning of the stanza. This lead is sung first by the song leader and then in unison by the chorus. The song is made longer by repeating the stanza, which is today called a 'round' or a 'push up.' The rhythm of the drum is uniform in pulse with accented beats in the second half of the stanza. The group leader can signal an increase in tempo by using several accented beats near the beginning of a stanza.

This type of song is often referred to as a Grass Dance or war dance song. These are sung with liberal use of falsetto and with marked vocal tension. These are also characterized by melodic ranges of more than an octave.

The songs of the Southern Plains are similar in form, but have a few distinguishing characteristics. Like the Northern songs, they use a two part song form. However, they do not have as large a melodic range and are usually pitched lower.

Round Dance songs, a social dance, are another type of song common to this region. Both in the North and South, these songs are distinguished by a double

beat pattern. In the North this appears as an accented beat preceded by an unaccented beat. This is accomplished by beating the drum with a rebound type beat. In the South the pattern is similar, however, the drumming emphasis is on the downswing of the stick.

3. **Southwest.** This area can be divided into the Pueblo and Athabaskan styles.

Pueblo songs share some characteristics with the music of the Plains. They also tend to have a great amount of vocal tension in singing and a two part song form. Pueblo songs also tend to follow a descending melodic pattern. However, in the Pueblo songs, this is often preceded by a low pitched introduction.

A point that distinguishes them from the Plains songs is that the meter of the drum is more closely related to the meter of the melody. So, changes in the melody are approximately matched by changes in the rhythm of the drum.

Body rhythms in the dances of this area also tend to follow the melodic rhythm. As one Hopi dancer put it, it's easy to do the dances, "You just do what the song tells you to do."

Navajo songs, which are of the Athabaskan type, share this characteristic of frequent sudden changes in melodic meter. However, the Navajo songs tend to have a more pronounced use of falsetto, larger melodic range and intervals.

4. **Great Basin.** This area includes tribes of the Utah and Nevada high mountain deserts, as well as those in southeastern Oregon, southern Idaho and the parts of Wyoming and Colorado west of the Continental Divide. Many songs from this area are similar in style to those of the Plains peoples and indicate a great deal of contact between the two. However, songs of the Great Basin peoples tend to be in paired phrases with a relatively small melodic range. Singing is done with a more relaxed vocal tension than on the Plains.

5. **California-Yuman.** Tribes of this area include the Yuman speaking peoples of the Southwestern U.S. and the peoples of central California. Songs of this area tend to be composed of two distinct phrases. These are repeated or alternated without

a predetermined pattern. For these songs a relatively relaxed vocal style is used.

One unique feature of this region is what Herzog refers to as the 'rise'.¹⁹ This refers to the fact that one section of the song is slightly higher in pitch than the rest of the song. Some songs of the Northwest peoples and some songs of the Southern Choctaw also demonstrate this characteristic.

6. Northwest Coast. These tribes include those along the coast of Oregon, Washington and British Columbia, as well as the Salish people of interior British Columbia. As with their material culture, their musical culture is rich and rather complex. Songs are characterized by a relatively small melodic range of tones and a prominent use of small intervals. Unlike Great Plains songs, which have a predominance of tones above the keynote, songs from this area generally have the melody partly above and partly below the keynote.

A completely unique feature of this region is the use of polyphonic singing, or singing in parts. In many songs this is done by the use of a high drone by the group, while one person sings the melody. In other cases this is true harmony, in which different voices sing pitches in parallel thirds, fourths and fifths. This characteristic is not very common in this region, and is practically non-existent elsewhere.

7. Arctic. Characteristic of the Inuit songs of the High Arctic is a relatively simple melodic structure and almost a talking style of singing. In addition to this, there are more words in the songs than in songs from other regions. In fact, some songs are used to present both sides of an argument, the determination of the winner being left up to the listeners.²⁰

North American Indian Music Today

To be sure, the Indian world today is much different than it was one hundred years ago. That, in turn, was much different than one hundred years before that. This is not surprising because in order to maintain its identity, a culture must be able to adapt and

change. The strength of the Indian cultures has been their ability to maintain their identity through traditions and yet adapt new concepts to express that heritage. This does not consist of simply a straightforward adoption of European-American culture, but a rather deliberate adaptation of portions of European-American culture to suit Indian preferences and modes of expression.

In today's Indian world, there are songs and dances that have been used for generations. Many of these are parts of the ceremonies that are still performed much as they have always been done, and for the same reasons. In other songs and dances we see an evolution through the years. These songs and dances have changed gradually from their original style, but have maintained much of the original form and function. They have become the contemporary expressions of the Indian identity.

Many non-Indians, when considering the Indian world, make no distinction between what is meant by the terms 'traditional' and 'authentic'. However, in the Indian world there is a significant difference. 'Traditional' means that which has been handed down from the past. There are still many of those things. 'Authentic' is anything that has grown out of the Indian sensibility which expresses our Indian identity. This does not usually include things produced to meet the aesthetic and economic demands of the white man's marketplace. Rather, authentic expressions are created to satisfy the needs of Indian people.

During the 19th century and well into the 20th century, a great amount of pressure was placed on Indian societies in most of North America to give up traditional culture and assimilate into European-American culture. U.S. and Canadian government policy even prohibited participation in traditional ceremonies. Article no. 4 of the Regulations of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, effective April 1, 1904, stated:

"The Sundance and all other similar dances shall be considered Indian offenses, and any Indian found guilty of being a participant in any one or more of these offenses shall be... punished by withholding from him his rations or by incarceration."²¹

Many federal Indian Agents on the reservations had already imposed such restrictions a generation earlier. Canada had adopted similar policies in its Indian Act of 1876. In Mexico, Central America and most of South America, powerful assimilative pressures were directed against Indian cultures from the 16th century onward.

It wasn't until 1934, when John Collier became Commissioner of Indian Affairs, that this policy was formally discontinued in the U.S. At this time there were a great number of Indian children in government off-reservation boarding schools. Here they had been forbidden for several generations to even speak their own languages, much less to sing or dance any of their traditional songs or dances.

A great many lifestyle changes were happening to the Indian people at this time. Traditional means of making a living, such as hunting and fishing, were changing for many people as access to land and resources were increasingly denied to American Indians. Often when these lifestyles were discontinued, so were many of the associated songs and dances. Indian populations were also near a low point in numbers during this era, and there were relatively fewer opportunities for young Indian people to learn the traditions from the remaining elders. As a result of all these pressures, during the early part of the 20th century Indians were often referred to as the 'vanishing race' or as 'vanishing Americans'.

However, American Indians have not vanished. We have held tenaciously to an identity separate from, though surrounded by, European-American culture. Interestingly, many people believe that it is music and dance that has kept the culture vibrant. A common thought expressed by Indian elders to the young people is, "As long as you continue to sing our songs and do our dances, you will always remember who you are."

Many songs and dances have been retained and some have been revived by those who still remember them. During the revival, these songs and dances have often

been taught across tribal lines. This was facilitated as Indians from different cultures became associated in the boarding schools, the military, and in national cultural and professional organizations in the 20th century. Out of this has grown a new Indian identity. Sometimes referred to as the 'pan-Indian movement', the main focus of this identity is the pow-wow celebration. Based on Northern and Southern Plains styles of music and dance, people of nearly all tribes now are participating in and identifying with this new expression of American Indian culture.

For the American Indian people, the pow-wow has become a celebration of our Indian identity. "It symbolizes the present life of Indians as a separate population which nevertheless participates in the mainstream culture."²²

The pow-wow celebration is therefore representative of a number of characteristics of American Indian culture today. In one sense, it has come to fill the social role that is or was also part of the mid-summer religious ceremonies held by many tribes. It is an outlet for young men and women to be recognized for their skills. This role was once played by the display of hunting, fishing or warrior skills. Now young people show off their dancing or singing skills. The pow-wow also shows that the shared aspects of our identity as Native Americans is important to people from all tribes.

With its pan-Indian influence, the pow-wow has had some interesting effects on music performance. One such effect can be seen on the use of text in songs. Perhaps as a consequence of the same songs being known to singers from all over the country, there are now a greater number of songs using only vocables than in traditional times.

Another effect that the pow-wow has had on Indian music is in the way music is viewed. Once it was thought of as a means of conveying supernatural power. Now, to that is added the idea of music as entertainment.

LATIN AMERICAN INDIAN MUSICAL STYLES

Although there are some similarities between the musical traditions and cultures of

the Mesoamerican and South American Indians and their counterparts in North America, there are also some great differences. Traditionally, cultures in both continents viewed music as an integral part of life. Also, in both areas there is a tendency to use terrace shaped melodic contours and pentatonic scales.

However, what is now the Latin American area produced in pre-Contact times several Indian cultures whose social and political organization was somewhat more complex than most of the cultures of North America. Principally, these were the Aztec, Inca (and pre-Incan cultures including the Mochica, Nazca, Chimu and Wari), and the Maya. Although, as compared to the cultures of North America, little of their musical culture has remained, there is much evidence to suggest that they had particularly elaborate musical practices and styles.

Among the pre-Contact cultures of Latin America there was a pronounced tendency towards urban lifestyles and the associated diversity and specialization of societal roles. This tendency, and the fact that so much of the music was religious in nature, resulted in a professional class of musicians not seen in North America. These musicians were trained in schools especially for that purpose and often performed only that service during their lifetimes.

Musicians were rigidly trained and performances had to be completely accurate. Errors were often severely punished. Playing in ensembles was a common practice, as was the use of responsorial singing and polyphony.

Although, as in North America, their musical instruments were of two principal types, wind and percussion, there was a particularly large variety.

The most prominent instruments of the Mexican cultures were the Teponaztli, an often intricately carved two-tone slit log drum; the Tlapitzalli, a true flute with four finger holes and made of clay, reed or bone; the Huehuetl, a kettle drum; a conch shell trumpet; and numerous rattles and rasps. The Maya also had a tortoise shell drum which was beaten with the palm of the hand. According to one early Spanish observer, this instrument produced "a sad and lugubrious sound."²³

To these the Peruvian cultures added the Quena, a reed flute with varying numbers of holes, and also ocarinas and panpipes. The Quena and panpipe have become inseparably associated even today with music from the Andean region around Lake Titicaca. The sound is reminiscent of the song of the wind as it blows through the Andean peaks. Also in use throughout Latin America were metal instruments created by the master metalsmiths of the region, mostly bells, timbrels and trumpets.

The Mochica cultures of pre-Incan Peru were famous for their earthenware pottery. A common instrument among these people was a trumpet pot with a long curving neck. Also common to the Mochica is the whistling pot, a double chambered pot which whistles when water is poured between the two chambers.

For the most part, pre-Contact music in Latin America was of a religious nature. It was an important element of the ceremonial ritual and prayer that was so much a part of daily life in these cultures. The Maya believed music to be of divine origin. Their God of music was Kai Yum ('Singing Lord'), who was an assistant to Cacoeh, a creation God.

The Aztec included amongst their list of deities Huehuecoyotl ('Old Coyote'), as the God of Music. He appears on what is known as the Aztec calendar stone as the Guardian of the Fourth Day of the sacred twenty day cycle fundamental to the complex Aztec calendric system. So important was the use of music in the daily ceremonies at the temple in Tenochtitlan, the capitol city of the Aztec, that one of the most ominous signs of the fall of the city to the conquistadors was the silence. The drums and shell horns, used as part of the constant temple rituals, were still.

In the Peru of Inca times, ancestor veneration was an important part of their way of life. During periodic rituals the mummies of the departed emperors were paraded around the central plaza of Cuzco. These were accompanied, as in life, with the necessary attendants and appropriate ceremony. Other dances had to do with honoring the living royalty, as well as dances of war and agriculture. All of these were done with songs and trumpet, flute, drum and rattle accompaniment.

Latin American Folk Music Today

Today's folk music in Latin America is as complex and varied as the areas it represents. In the Andean regions of Ecuador and Peru, and on the Altiplano of Bolivia, the music has changed little since pre-Contact times. The greatest change here has been the addition of stringed instruments such as the guitar, harp and violin to the stock of Indian instruments.

To these are added novel instruments of indigenous origin, but of European inspiration. One such instrument is the ubiquitous charango. A stringed instrument somewhat resembling a ukulele but with five sets of paired strings, it has in its most fundamental form a sound box made from an armadillo shell.

The tunes that make up the music of this region today are essentially European in style, but show a great deal of repetition and a tendency toward tetratonic and pentatonic scales, characteristics held over from pre-Contact times.

In the Caribbean and in Brazil, there are significant African and Portuguese elements and little Indian influence in the contemporary music. In Argentina there is a marked Iberian influence in both the music and dance. Other areas are greatly influenced by other European immigrant groups living in South America, such as Germans, Eastern Europeans and Italians. These, for the most part have preserved many of the styles they brought from Europe and have not, to a large extent, created new material.

The folk music of Mexico is mostly of the Spanish tradition. While some Mexican Indians have retained, to some extent, their native styles, there has been more Spanish influence here than in the Andean region. The greatest influence of the Indian tradition on the music of Central America is the importance of instruments. At the time of the conquest, the Spaniards found a large body of sophisticated instruments in use in Mexico and Central America. To these, the Indians were quick to adopt many instruments of European origin. As a result of this syncretic blending of traditions, today

many traditional folk ensembles, such as Mariachis, are often composed of large numbers of musicians playing a variety of instruments.

Throughout Central America, south of Mexico, there is added to the European and Indian combination of styles a decided African influence. For example, in Guatemala the most popular dance is the *Son Chapin*, which is markedly European in character, while the national instrument of Guatemala is the marimba, of African origin. Also, in Honduras and Nicaragua, there are Black Carib settlements. These are descendants of Arawak and Carib Indians and African slaves. Their musical culture is a derivative of both West African and tropical forest Indian cultures.

CONCLUSION

The world of the American Indian today is still tied to its music. It is the music that helps the people maintain a much cherished separate identity. It is a link to the past and an assurance that the future will still incorporate a unique American Indian identity. The words to the opening prayer song of the Lakota Sun Dance, as collected over seventy-five years ago by Frances Densmore, seem to suggest this sentiment:

“Grandfather, a voice I am going to send. Hear me. All over the universe, a voice I am going to send. Hear me Grandfather. I will live! I have said it.”²⁴

APPENDIX A CHRONOLOGY

A Chronology of American Indian Music

Dates in **boldface** indicate events primarily due to American Indian initiatives; dates in plain type indicate events primarily due to initiatives by others.

- 200-900** The Classic Maya period produces an elaborate ceremonial culture, which includes schools for dancers and musicians. Children begin training as early as twelve years of age. Master teachers known as Hol Pop hold a highly respected position in society.
- 450-500** Flutes, tubas, horns, pentatonic panpipes and drums are widely used among the Mochica and Chimu cultures in Peru.
- 700** Flutes are used in Anasazi culture, as evidenced by the widespread Kokopelli, humped back flute player, motif in petroglyphs and pottery.
- 1000** Use of copper bells by the Hohokam culture of central Arizona.
- 1048** Professional musicians in Mixtec culture perform in commemoration of a great battle, as seen in the Becker Codex.
- 1496 Columbus commissions Ramon Pane to describe Taino Arawak life on Hispaniola. Pane includes a description of a two-key, slit drum called Mayohavau.
- ca. 1500** A famous Aztec musician is Tlacahuepan, brother of slain emperor Moctezuma Xocoyotzin.
- 1510 First mention in European literature of an Indian song type called Areito. Referring originally to a type of call and response song from Hispaniola, this becomes the term used for any Western Hemisphere dance song.
- 1536 Cabeza de Vaca is the first European to report the use of music in American Indian healing ceremonies. He obtains a gourd rattle and a copper bell in the Southwestern U.S., which he later uses as a symbol of authority in his dealings with the Zuni people of New Mexico.
- 1540 In a letter to Emperor Charles V, Coronado refers to seeing flutes with finger holes, while exploring the Southwestern U.S.
- Castañeda reports seeing Pueblo women grinding corn to the music of a flute.

- 1543 De la Vega reports use of canoe rowing songs by the Natchez of the lower Mississippi River valley.
- 1623-24 Gabriel Sagaro writes about the songs and dances of the Huron of Ontario, Canada.
- 1640 Earliest known American Christmas carol, "*'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime*". Written for the Huron Indians in their own language by Father Jean de Brebeauf, it is set to the tune of an old French carol.
- 1748 A young George Washington records in his diary Indian dancing accompanied by water drum and gourd rattles.
- 1786 Laperouse reports hearing polyphonic singing among Alaska Natives.
- 1791 "*Death of an Indian Chief*," music by Hans Gram, based on 'Ouabi', an Indian tale, becomes the first orchestral score printed in the new United States.
- 1794 The earliest known American opera "*Tammany: or the Indian Chief*," by James Hewitt is performed in New York. The plot is based on the story of the Leni-Lenape ('Delaware') sachem who was supposed to have met William Penn. Only one song, "*Alknomook: The Death Song of a Cherokee Indian*" has survived. This song is said to have been based on a Cherokee melody. While based on an Indian theme, the opera is said to have been very political and particularly anti-Federalist in nature.
- 1809 Gaspare Spontini performs his opera "*Fernand Cortez*" in Paris under the sponsorship of Empress Josephine; it is one of his major successes.
- 1837 "*The Indian Hunter*," one of the earliest popular songs about Indians is written by Henry Russell.
- 1845** **Indian Melodies**, a book of European-American-style hymns by Thomas Commuck, a Narragansett Indian, is published under the sponsorship of the Methodist Episcopal Church.
- 1850s The Hutchinsons, a popular family singing group well known for their temperance and abolitionist protest songs, include "*The Indian Hunter*" in their programs as a plea for justice for American Indians.
- 1856 Tyler's Indian Exhibition tours US performing songs and dances of several Indian tribes.
- 1876 In its Indian Act of 1876, the federal government of Canada prohibits public performance of Indian dances, songs and ceremonies such as the Sun Dance and the Potlatch.
- 1882 Bella Coola Indians from the Pacific Coast of British Columbia perform

songs and dances in Berlin, Germany. Carl Stumpf copies down their songs and later studies the music and writes articles about it, comparing it to familiar, contemporary European music. His work is perhaps the first such study of folk music. Later the term 'ethnomusicology' is used to describe this new discipline.

Theodore Baker's **On the Music of the North American Indians** is published in Europe, based almost completely on contacts Baker made at Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania. This is the first extensive study of Indian music.

- 1883 Alice Fletcher visits the Omaha tribe. She records and transcribes traditional Indian songs, thus becoming one of the earliest field researchers to make a serious attempt to record Indian music.
- 1883-1916 Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show first opens in Omaha, Nebraska. Sitting Bull tours with the show in 1885. In 1887, the show first goes to Europe. Though mostly a riding and shooting exhibition, the show does include Indian dancing and music.
- 1890 J. Walter Fewkes is the first person to make phonographic field recordings of American Indian music while doing research among the Passamaquoddy in Maine and the Zuni in New Mexico. Benjamin Ives Gillman later studies and transcribes these recordings, becoming the first 'armchair' ethnomusicologist.
- 1892 Edward MacDowell completes his orchestral work "*Indian Suite*," based on American Indian songs. He is credited with being one of the first U.S. composers to break with classical European styles in search of a new classical idiom.
- 1897-1927 Edward S. Curtis visits more than eighty tribes, taking over 40,000 photographs of Indian life and gathering information on ceremonies, songs and musical instruments. These are published in the 20-volume series **The North American Indian** during the first three decades of the 20th Century. In 1914, Curtis produces a film, "*In the Land of the Head Hunters*," based on the life and culture of the Kwakiutl people of Vancouver Island in British Columbia. The movie is filmed with the cooperation of the Kwakiutl and the help of George Hunt, Curtis' mixed-blood Tsimshian assistant, a long-time resident among the Kwakiutl. The film includes several traditional dances, songs and rituals; the music is authentic, appropriately transcribed and performed live as an accompaniment to this silent picture. The film is a major success in the theater houses of New York and Washington D.C. during 1915.
- 1898 Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, African-English composer, produces his trilogy of pieces on Longfellow's poem "Hiawatha". "*Hiawatha's Wedding Feast*" (1898), "*The Death of Minnehaha*" (1899), and "*Hiawatha's Departure*" (1900) are written for solo voice, chorus and orchestra. These works are

well received in the U.S. during tours in the first decade of the 20th century.

- 1901 Upon failing to find a publisher for his **American Indian Melodies**, Arthur Farwell establishes the Wawan Press. The name is taken from a ceremony of the Omaha tribe. Wa-wan Press provides an outlet for numerous American composers, many of whom use traditional American themes, until 1912, when its plates are turned over to G. Schirmer. Farwell collects and uses many American Indian, Hispanic-American and African-American melodies in his compositions.
- 1904 Article No. 4, of the regulations of the Bureau of Indian Affairs, classifies the Sun Dance and other Indian dances as criminal offenses. It lists incarceration among the punishments for this offense. This policy is not rescinded by Congress until 1934.
- 1905 Vincent Bryan and Gus Edwards' "*Tammany*," (not related to the 1794 opera), is composed and performed for the National Democratic Club in New York. Having little or no authentic Indian influence, it is a take off on contemporary songs with American Indian themes in vogue in Tin Pan Alley. This song is a spoof on certain practices used in the Democratic party.
- Frances Densmore makes her first field trip to the Ojibwe ('Chippewa') of Minnesota, in order to collect songs. In 1907, she is named as a collaborator with the Bureau of American Ethnology of the Smithsonian Institution, a position which she holds until her death in 1957. Recognizing the importance of studying music in its cultural context, Densmore collects volumes of ethnographic material along with the songs. From the hundreds of her recordings on file in the Library of Congress, seven LP records have been issued.
- 1906-7 Egbert Vanalstyne and Harry Williams have popular songs in Tin-Pan Alley, "*Navajo*," "*Cheyenne*," and "*San Antonio*."
- 1907 **The Indians' Book** by Natalie Curtis is first published. This volume contains faithful transcriptions of 200 songs collected from 18 tribes, together with related ethnographic information. Her numerous articles serve to introduce the study of American ethnic music to a wide audience.
- 1909 Charles Cadman publishes **Four American Indian Songs**, from his experience on the Omaha and Winnebago reservations. "*At Dawning*" and "*From the Land of Sky Blue Water*" become very popular with American audiences. [These melodies are often used even today to suggest a natural or Indian motif in movies, television, commercials and animation.]
- 1910 Alberto Williams, known as the 'Father of Argentine Music', incorporates ancient Inca musical styles (consisting of whole tone pentatonic scales),

into his contemporary compositions.

Charles Cadman organizes a series of lecture recitals called “American Indian Music Talks.” In cooperation with soprano Tsianino Redfeather, an Omaha descendant of Tecumseh, Cadman takes his lectures throughout North America and Europe.

- 1915 Charles Skilton’s “*The Suite Primeval*” for orchestra, incorporates songs from the Winnebago tribe and 43 Sioux bands.
- 1918-19 “*Shanewis, (The Robin Woman)*” by Charles Cadman, becomes the first American opera to be produced by the Metropolitan Opera during two consecutive years.
- 1924 Opening of the musical “*Rose-Marie*.” The plot revolves around the love story between a white trapper and an Indian woman, and injects a new racial element into the stock comic opera motif of love between social unequals. The music, though containing little that is genuinely Indian, becomes very popular. “*Indian Love Call*,” is the opera’s most well known song.
- 1934 Provisions of the Indian Reorganization Act (also known as the ‘Wheeler-Howard Bill’) repeal the regulations of the Bureau of Indian Affairs prohibiting traditional American Indian ceremonial, music and dance performances in the United States.
- 1946 Discovery of the ruins of the ancient Mayan city of Bonampak, in Chiapas, Mexico. This site is unique because of its remarkably well preserved murals, dating from about AD 900, near the end of the Classic Era of Maya culture. These depict numerous activities from daily life, including a depiction of a ceremony complete with musicians playing trumpets, drums and rattles.
- 1951 Canada amends its Indian Act of 1876, ending its prohibition of Indian dance and ceremonies.
- 1965 American Indian dancers from the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe, New Mexico, perform for President Lyndon Johnson at the White House. This is the first time Indian music and dance is presented at the White House.
- 1970s The rock band Red Bone becomes popular. Composed of members with varied American Indian heritage, they incorporate Native themes into their songs.
- 1971 Cher (Cherokee) has two rock/pop albums that earn ‘Gold Record’ sales, “*Gypsies, Tramps and Thieves*” and “*Half Breed*”.
- 1980, 1982 Founded by Jim Buller (Cree), the Indigenous Peoples Theatre

Celebration is held in Peterborough, Ontario, Canada.

- 1982** Radio station WOJB begins broadcasting. Owned by the Tribal Governing Board of the LacCourte Oreilles Chippewa Reservation, it becomes the first American Indian radio station east of the Mississippi, and the first Public Radio Station in Northern Wisconsin. It is run by forty-nine volunteers from the reservation and its musical and information programming is based on the goal of cultural outreach.
- 1985** John Kim Bell (Mohawk), an accomplished conductor, establishes the Canadian Native Arts Foundation.
- 1988** First performance of "*In the Land of Spirits*," the first full length modern ballet based on an Indian legend. According to its producer, John Kim Bell, it refutes the stereotype that Native performance art belongs only in the realm of anthropology.
- 1989** A group known as Jayacs, Indian performers from Otovalo, Ecuador, participate in a program called Music Under New York. The group performs in the New York subway system at various stations during the day. They are not paid by the city, but are allowed to keep all donations and can sell their recordings.
- White Eagle, a Lakota operatic tenor, sings as soloist backed by the Mormon Tabernacle Choir at the Inaugural Gala for President George Bush.
- 1992** John Trudell, Santee Dakota, one of the national coordinators of the American Indian Movement during the 1970s and a noted Indian poet, releases the album "*AKA Grafitti Man*". Most of the pieces are in a fusion of rock, traditional American Indian and 'talking blues' styles.

APPENDIX B CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN INDIAN MUSICIANS

Louis Ballard (Quapaw - Cherokee), composer who makes extensive use of Indian themes in his work. His works include:

“*Four Moon*” - ballet (1967) presented at the State of Oklahoma sixtieth anniversary celebration.

“*Why Duck Has a Short Tail*” - symphony based on a Navajo folk tale.

“*Portrait of Will Rogers*” - cantata

Nominated for Pulitzer Prize in 1972.

Tom Bee, rock artist and producer. Best known for his album “*Color Me Red*”.

John Kim Bell (Mohawk), graduated in Music from Ohio State University in 1975. First Native American symphony conductor.

First American Indian to conduct the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, London.

Founder of the Canadian Native Arts Foundation (1985).

Cher (Cherokee), rock and pop singer.

Gained recognition as part of singing duo “Sonny and Cher,” in the late 1960s.

In 1971, her solo albums “*Gypsies, Tramps and Thieves*” and “*Half Breed*” went gold.

She has numerous albums and movie credits, including an Academy Award.

Jesse Ed Davis, rock guitarist. A noted studio artist with many credits on Indian and non-Indian rock albums, his work before his death included a prominent collaboration as songwriter, instrumentalist and singer on John Trudell’s “*AKA Grafitti Man*”.

Bonnie Jo Hunt (Lakota), opera singer.

At one time sang with the San Francisco Opera.

Head of Artists of Indian America.

Kashtin is the name of the rock duo of Claude McKenzie and Florent Vollant (both Innu). The group is known for its popular songs and some original compositions in Montagnais, the language of the Innu people of eastern Canada.

Carlos Nakai (Navajo - Ute) flutist and composer who blends traditional music with contemporary elements. His albums include:

“*Changes*”

“*Cycles*”

“*Journeys*”

“*Earth Spirit*”

“*Canyon Trilogy*”

“*Desert Dance*”

"Sundance Season"

"Spirit Horses"

and, with Peter Kater:

"Natives"

and, with William Eaton:

"Carry the Gift"

"Winter Dreams"

and, as a member of the group Jackalope:

"Jackalope Vol. 1"

"Weavings Vol. 2"

Jim Pepper (Creek-Kaw) jazz saxophonist. Pioneer in the area of jazz-rock fusion. Top 40 hit in late 1960s with *"Wichitai-to,"* an old Comanche song given a modern jazz rendition. Well known composer and performer on the European jazz circuit before his death in 1992. Recordings include:

"Pepper's Pow-Wow"

"The Path"

"Comin' and Goin'"

"Dakota"

"Bear Tracks"

Paul Ortega (Apache) guitarist. Combines traditional songs with contemporary guitar.

John Rainer, Jr. (Taos - Creek) flutist and arranger. Received Masters degree in Music from Brigham Young University. Known for traditional flute renditions. Arranger of traditional music for choral setting.

Red Bone was a 1970s mixed-tribal rock band, promoted as the first Indian rock band.

Albums include:

"Red Bone" (1970)

"Wovoka" (1973)

"Message from a Drum" (1975)

"Bead Dreams through Turquoise Eyes" (1975)

"Come and Get Your Red Bone / Best of" (1975)

"Cycles" (1977)

Buddy Redbow (Lakota) performs rock-traditional fusion. Recordings include:

"Journey to the Spirit World"

"Black Hills Dreamer."

Buffy Saint-Marie (Cree) folk singer, composer and poet. She was born in Canada and raised by adoptive parents of Micmac heritage.

Often incorporates use of traditional musical bow in performances.

Recognized from frequent appearances on Sesame Street.

Recipient of an Academy Award.

Founder of Niheman, a foundation for American Indian scholarships; also Native North American Women's Association; and Creative Native, Inc.

Her recordings include:

"My Country, 'Tis of Thy People are Dying"

"Universal Soldier"

"Seeds of Brotherhood"

"Now That the Buffalo's Gone"

Billy Thundercloud and the Chief Tones (Tsimshian) country-western group, consisting of Billy Thundercloud, Jack Wolf, Richard Grey Owl and Barry Little Star. Recorded for 20th Century Fox in the mid-1970s. Hit recordings include:

"What Time of Day" (1975)

"Pledging My Love" (1975)

"Indian Nation" (1976)

"Try a Little Tenderness" (1976)

Tom Ware (Kiowa-Comanche) flutist and singer. Numerous recordings of traditional Indian flute and social songs.

Consultant and musician for the movie *"Son of the Morning Star."*

Formed band known as Tommy Ware's All Indian Jazz Band.

Floyd Westerman (Lakota) folk singer and actor. Known for his work as spokesman for the Indian cause.

Recorded album *"Custer Died For Your Sins"* (1970).

Appeared on numerous college campuses during 1960s and 1970s.

Most recently recognized for his acting role as 'Ten Bears' in the movie *"Dances With Wolves."*

White Eagle (Lakota) pop and opera singer.

Performed with the pop-gospel group ReGeneration, the Mile High Opera Workshop, the Cleveland Opera and the Pennsylvania Opera Theater.

Performed in 1989 with Mormon Tabernacle Choir at the presidential Inaugural Gala for President George Bush.

Arlene Nofchissey Williams (Navajo) folk singer and song writer. Combines Indian themes in both text and melody for contemporary songs.

Collaborated with Chief Dan George on album *"Proud Earth,"* which was nominated for a Grammy. Her albums also include:

"Go My Son"

"Encircle."

XIT (mixed tribal) rock band from the 1970s. Expresses Indian themes with rock music.

Albums include:

"Plight of the Redman"

"Silent Warrior"

"Entrance"

"Back Trackin'"

"Relocation"

"Drums Across the Atlantic."

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Index

- Academy Award 39, 40
 accent 21, 22, 23, 24
 adaptation 26
AKA Grafitti Man 38, 39
 Alaska Native 34
 American Indian Movement 38
 Anasazi 13, 33
 Andes 6, 30, 31, 32
 Apache 40
 Apache fiddle 20
 appropriateness 4, 31
 Arawak 32, 33
 Arctic 25
 areito 33
 Argentina 31
 Arizona 8, 33
 arranger 40
 Artists of Indian America 39
 assimilation 26, 27
 Athabaskan 24
 Aztec 29, 30, 33
 Aztec calendar stone 30
 Aztec Ruins site 13
Back Trackin' 41
 Ballard, Louis 39
 ballet 38, 39
 Battle of the Little Big Horn 9
Bead Dreams through Turquoise Eyes 40
 Bear Dance 16
Bear Tracks 40
 beat 21, 22, 23, 24
 Becker Codex 33
 Bee, Tom 39
 Bell, John Kim 38, 39
 Bella Coola 34
 Billy Thundercloud and the Chief Tones 41
 Black Carib 32
Black Hills Dreamer 40
 block flutes 18
 boarding schools 27, 28
 Bolivia 31
 Bonampak 37
 Brazil 31
 Brigham Young University 40
 British Columbia 25, 34, 35
 Buffalo Dance 5
 Buller, Jim 37
 Bureau of American Ethnology 36
 Bureau of Indian Affairs 26, 36, 37
 Cacoch 30
 California 7, 12, 13, 20, 21, 24
 Canada 27, 34, 37, 39, 40
 Canadian Native Arts Foundation 38
 cantata 39
Canyon Trilogy 39
 Carib 32
 Caribbean 31
 Carlisle 35
Carry the Gift 40
 Central America 2, 14, 20, 27, 32
Changes 39
 charango 31
 Cher 37, 39
 Cherokee 37, 39
 Cheyenne 36
 Chiapas 37
 children 3, 4, 5, 27, 33
 Chimu 29, 33
 Chippewa, see Ojibwe 37
 Choctaw 25
 chorus 11, 23, 35, 40
Color Me Red 39
 Colorado 24
 Comanche 40, 41
Come and Get Your Red Bone / Best of 40
Comin' and Goin' 40
 Commuck, Thomas 34
 composer 39, 40
 conductor 39
 corn grinding song 3, 6
 country-western 41
 Coyote 4, 30
 Creative Native, Inc. 40
 Cree 37, 40
 Creek 23, 40
 Crow 5, 22
Crow Fair 5
Custer Died For Your Sins 41
 Cuzco 31
Cycles 39, 40
 Dakota 40
Dances With Wolves 41
 Davis, Jesse Ed 39
 Deer Dance 14
Desert Dance 39
 diversity 2, 9, 22, 29
 dream 5
Drums Across the Atlantic 41
 drumsticks 14
 Eagle Dance 23
Earth Spirit 39
 Ecuador 31, 38
Encircle 41
 ensembles 29, 32
Entrance 41
 ethnomusicology 35
 evolution 26
 falsetto 23, 24
 flageolet 18
 flûtes à bec 18
 flutist 39, 40, 41
 folk 40, 41
Four Moon 39
 George, Dan 41
Go My Son 41

- gold record 37
 gospel 41
 Grammy 41
 Grass Dance 5, 23
 Great Basin 3, 24
 Great Plains 2, 5, 7, 8, 18, 22, 23, 24, 25, 28
 Grey Owl, Richard 41
 Guatemala 32
 guitarist 39, 40
 Gulf of Mexico 20
Gypsies, Tramps and Thieves 39
Half Breed 39
 half-tones 7
 harmony 8, 20, 25
 Hispaniola 33
 Hohokam 33
 Hol Pop 33
 Honduras 32
 Hopi 5, 18, 24
 Huehucoyotl 30
 Huehuetl 30
 Hunt, Bonnie Jo 39
 Hunt, George 35
 Huron 34
 Idaho 24
 identity 1, 26, 27, 28, 32
In the Land of Spirits 38
In the Land of the Head Hunters 35
 Inca 29, 30, 31, 36
 incomplete repetition 23
 Indian Act of 1876 27, 34, 37
Indian Melodies 34
Indian Nation 41
 Indian Reorganization Act 37
 Indigenous Peoples Theatre Celebration 37
 Innu 39
 Institute of American Indian Arts 37
 instruments (American Indian)
 percussion 9
 bells 17, 30, 33
 drums 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16, 22, 23, 24, 29, 31, 33, 34, 37
 rasps 16, 30
 rattles 10, 17, 30, 31, 33, 34, 37
 timbrels 30
 stringed 9, 20, 31
 bow 21, 40
 wind 9
 flutes 2, 18, 29, 31, 33, 40, 41
 horns 18, 20, 30, 31, 33, 37
 ocarinas 30
 whistles 18, 19, 20, 30, 33
 intervals 7, 24, 25
 Inuit 10, 25
 Iroquois 23
 Jackalope 40
Jackalope Vol. 1 40
 Jayacs 38
 jazz 40
Journey to the Spirit World 40
Journeys 39
 Kai Yum 30
 Kashtin 39
 Kaw 40
 key 7, 8, 18, 33
 keynote 7, 8, 25
 Kiowa 41
 Kwakiutl 9, 35
 Lake Titicaca 30
 Lakota 9, 22, 32, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41
 Leni-Lenape ('Delaware') 34
 Library of Congress 36
 Little Star, Barry 41
 Locust 4
 lullaby 2, 3, 6, 21
 lyrics 3, 5, 9
 Maidu 13
 Maine 35
 Makah 13
 Maya 29, 30, 33, 37
 Mayohavau 33
 McKenzie, Claude 39
 melody 2, 5, 8, 22, 23, 24, 25, 29, 34, 35, 36, 41
 Mescalero Apache 3
 Mesoamerica 6, 29
Message from a Drum 40
 metal instruments 30
 meter 24
 Mexico 14, 16, 27, 31, 32, 37
 Micmac 40
 Minnesota 36
 Mississippi River 33
 Miwok 12
 Mixtec 33
 Mochica 29, 30, 33
 Moctezuma Xocoyotzin 33
 Mohawk 38, 39
 Montagnais 39
 Montana 5
 Music Under New York 38
My Country, 'Tis of Thy People are Dying 40
 Nakai, Carlos 39
 Narragansett 34
 Natchez 33
 Native American Church 14
 Native North American Women's Association 40
Natives 39
 Navajo 3, 24, 36, 39, 41
 Nazca 29
 Nevada 24
 New Mexico 3, 12, 13, 33, 35, 37
 Nicaragua 32
 Niheman 40
 Nootka 13
 Northwest 3, 8, 9, 13, 25
 notation 21
Now That the Buffalo's Gone 41
 Ohio State University 39

- Ojibwe 36, 37
 Oklahoma 39
 Omaha 35, 36, 37
One-Eyed Ford 5
 Ontario 34, 37
 opera 39, 41
 Oregon 24, 25
 Ortega, Paul 40
 Ouabi 34
 pan-Indian movement 28
 Passamaquoddy 35
 pattern 2, 6, 16, 21, 23, 24, 25
 Pennsylvania 35
Pepper's Pow-Wow 40
 Pepper, Jim 40
 Peru 30, 31, 33
 phrase 9, 23, 24
 pitch 7, 8, 23, 24, 25
Pledging My Love 41
Plight of the Redman 41
 polyphony, see harmony 8, 25, 29, 34
 Pomo 20
 pop 37, 39, 41
Portrait of Will Rogers 39
 potlatch 34
 powwow 6, 10, 28
 professional musicians 6, 29, 33
 property 5
Proud Earth 41
 Pueblo 6, 11, 12, 18, 24, 33
 Pulitzer Prize 39
 Quapaw 39
 Quena 30
 radio station 37
 Rainer, John (jr.) 40
 recorder 18
 Red Bone 37, 40
 Redbow, Buddy 40
 Redfeather, Tsianino 36
 relationship 21
 religion 3, 6, 9, 11, 12, 14, 18, 19, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37
Relocation 41
 responsorial singing 23, 29, 33
 rhythm 10, 12, 13, 17, 21, 22, 23, 24
 rise 25
 rock 37, 38, 39, 40, 41
 Round Dance 5, 22, 23
 rubber 14
 Saint-Marie, Buffy 40
 Salish 25
 Santee Dakota 38
 saxophonist 40
 scales 7, 8, 29, 31, 36
Seeds of Brotherhood 40
 Seri 14
Silent Warrior 41
 singing style 7
 Sitting Bull 35
 social song 5, 23
Son Chapin 32
Son of the Morning Star 41
 song 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 13, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 39, 40, 41
 South America 2, 20, 27, 29, 31
 Southeast 20, 23
 Southwest 2, 4, 6, 11, 18, 24, 33
Spirit Horses 39
 stanza 23
 Stomp Dance 23
 stories 2, 3, 4
 Sun Dance 19, 27, 32, 34, 36
Sundance Season 39
 symphony 39
 Taino, see Arawak 33
 tamoa 12
 Taos 5, 40
 Tecumseh 37
 Tenochtitlan 30
 Teponaztli 29
The Indians' Book 36
The North American Indian 35
The Path 40
 Thundercloud, Billy 41
 time signatures 21
 Tlacahuepan 33
 Tlapitzalli 29
 Tommy Ware's All Indian Jazz Band 41
 tones 7, 8, 20, 21, 25
 Tono O'odham 8, 12, 18
 Top 40 40
 'traditional' and 'authentic' 26
 Trudell, John 38, 39
Try a Little Tenderness 41
 Tsimshian 9, 35, 41
Universal Soldier 40
 Utah 12, 24
 Ute 12, 16, 39
 Vancouver Island 35
 vision 5
 vocables 8, 28
 Vollant, Florent 39
 Ware, Tom 41
 Wari 29
 Washington 25
Weavings Vol. 2 40
 Westerman, Floyd 41
What Time of Day 41
 whistling pot 30
 White Eagle 38, 41
Why Duck Has a Short Tail 39
Wichitai-to 40
 Williams, Arlene Nofchissey 41
 Winnebago 36, 37
Winter Dreams 40
 Wolf, Jack 41

women 3, 8, 28, 33, 37
Woodlands 23
Wovoka 40
Wyoming 24
XIT 41
Yaqui 14, 16
Yuman 7, 24
Zuni 33, 35