Native American music

Native American music, music of the indigenous peoples of the Western Hemisphere. The Americas contain hundreds of native communities, each with its own distinctive history, language, and musical culture. These communities—although united in placing music at the centre of public life—have developed extraordinarily diverse and multifaceted performance traditions. This article provides a general introduction to Native American musics with treatments of the roles of music in culture, musical styles and genres, musical instruments, music history, and the study of American Indian musics.

Native American powwow drum and beaters.

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MUSIC IN NATIVE AMERICAN CULTURE

Generalizations about the relationship between music and culture in Native American communities are gleaned from musical concepts and values, the structure of musical events, and the role of language in song texts.

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Musical concepts and values encompass ideas about the origins and sources of music, as well as musical ownership, creativity, transmission, and aesthetics. Each community's musical concepts and values develop over time through complex social and cultural processes. These concepts and values reflect broader ways of thinking and therefore offer important insight into general patterns of culture. Native peoples differ in the degree to which they discuss musical concepts. But even for the peoples who do not verbalize musical ideas, underlying conceptual structures exist and may be perceived by observing musical practice. Despite the great diversity of American Indian peoples, general features of Native American musical concepts and values may be summarized.

Native Americans trace the ultimate origin of their traditional music to the time of creation, when specific songs or musical repertories were given to the first people by the Creator and by spirit beings in the mythic past. Sacred narratives describe the origins of specific musical instruments, songs, dances, and ceremonies. Some ritual repertories received at the time of creation are considered complete, so that by definition human beings cannot compose new music for them. But many occasions are suitable for new music; this music may be received in a variety of ways. For example, shamans and other individuals may experience dreams or visions in which spirit beings teach them new songs, dances, and rituals. (*See also* shamanism.) Many Indian communities learn new songs and repertories from their neighbours and have a long history of adopting musical practices from outsiders. Yet in every case, the music is a gift that comes from beyond the individual or community.

Some Native Americans consider songs to be property and have developed formal systems of musical ownership, inheritance, and performance rights. On the northwest coast of North America, the right to perform ancestral songs and dances is an inherited privilege, although the owner of a song can give it away. Peoples of northwestern Mexico believe that certain songs belong to the shaman who received them in a dream, but after his death those songs enter the community's collective repertory. Other communities believe that specific pieces of music belong to an ensemble or to the entire community and should not be performed by outsiders without specific permission. Music has intrinsic value to individuals, ensembles, and communities, and performance rights are granted according to principles established by the group through long practice.

New music is provided each year for specific occasions in some communities. An individual may have a vision or dream in which he or she learns a new song; the song may be presented to the community or retained for personal use. More often, however, musical creativity is a collective process. For example, members of native Andean panpipe ensembles compose new pieces through a collaborative process that emphasizes participation and social cohesion. Certain musical genres, such as lullabies or songs for personal enjoyment, are improvised. Where new ceremonial songs are not composed because the repertories are considered complete, individual song leaders exercise musical creativity by improvising variations on traditional melodies or lyrics within accepted parameters. The creation and performance of music are dynamic processes.

Musical transmission involves the processes of teaching and learning that preserve songs and repertories from one generation to the next. Native Americans transmit music primarily through oral tradition. Some genres, such as social dance songs, are learned informally through imitation and participation. Other genres require more formal teaching methods. For example, the Suyá people of Brazil teach boys how to sing certain songs as part of their initiation; the boys learn and practice songs under adult supervision in a special forest camp a short distance from the village. Songs for curing rituals are often learned as part of a larger complex of knowledge requiring an apprenticeship; the student receives direct instruction from an experienced practitioner over the course of several years. Some communities have developed indigenous systems of music notation, but these are used by experienced singers as memory aids, not as teaching tools. In the 21st century, it is common for Native Americans to supplement oral tradition with the use of audio and video recordings for teaching, learning, and preserving traditional repertories.

Aesthetics, or perceptions of beauty, are among the most difficult concepts to identify in any musical culture. Native Americans tend to evaluate performances according to the feelings of connectedness they generate rather than according to specifically musical qualities. Some communities judge the success of a performance by how many people participate, because attendance demonstrates cultural vitality and active social networks. Where musical performance is meant to transcend the human realm, success is measured by apparent communication with spirit beings. Where music and dance represent a test of physical strength and mental stamina, success is appraised by the performer’s ability to complete the task with dignity and self-discipline, demonstrating commitment to family and community. Regardless of the specific criteria used to evaluate performance, musical designs that employ repetition, balance, and circularity are appreciated by American

Indians because they resonate with social values that are deeply embedded in native cultures.

MUSICAL EVENTS

Native American performances integrate music, dance, spirituality, and social communion in multilayered events. (*See* Native American dance for further discussion of dance and dance-centred events.) Several activities may take place simultaneously, and different musicians or ensembles sometimes perform unrelated genres in close proximity. Each performance occasion has its own musical styles and genres. Although the organization of Native American performances may seem informal to outside observers, in actuality each event requires extensive planning, and preparations may extend over months or even years. Preparations include musical composition, rehearsal, instrument making or repair, and the assembling of dance regalia. The hosts or sponsors of an event must prepare the dance ground, which symbolizes concepts of sacred geography and social order in its layout. The hosts also prepare and serve food to participants and guests, and they may distribute gifts to specific individuals. In addition, participants prepare themselves spiritually in a process that may involve fasting, prayers, and other methods of purification. Native American ceremonials may last several days, but the different musical components are interconnected in various ways.

The roles of musicians, dancers, and other participants in a Native American performance are often complex and may not be apparent to an outsider. Everyone who attends the performance will participate in some way, either through active involvement in music and dance or by witnessing the event. Performances may be specific to one community or may involve several communities or even different tribes and nations. In addition, unseen spirit beings are usually thought to take part. Lead singers and dancers may be political as well as spiritual leaders, who have an important voice in decision making and are influential in the community. Musicians performing in collective ceremonies do not expect to receive applause or verbal response from the audience; their role is to serve the community. Native men and women have complementary musical roles and responsibilities. Among native Andeans, men play instruments while women sing; in the Southeastern United States, men sing while women shake leg rattles. Some South American Indians hold separate events for men and women.

Humour is essential to many native ceremonial events. Some ceremonies include ritual clowns, with their own songs for entering and exiting the dance arena; their antics serve the dual purpose of keeping people lighthearted while reinforcing social values by demonstrating incorrect behaviour. Certain song genres may feature humorous lyrics that poke fun at people or describe comical situations.

MUSIC AND LANGUAGE

Traditional music plays an important role in perpetuating Native American languages, some of which are no longer spoken in daily life. American Indian song texts constitute a genre of poetry in terms of structure, style, and expression. Native Americans often perform songs as part of traditional storytelling; these songs may illuminate a character's thoughts and feelings. Song texts may employ the traditional language, although words are modified by adding or eliding syllables to accommodate the music. Song texts usually refer to local flora and fauna, specific features of the landscape, natural resources such as water, or aspects of the community. Sometimes archaic words appear in ceremonial songs, and many communities use words or phrases from foreign languages; these practices tend to obscure the meaning of the text, distinguishing it from everyday language. In certain regions, Native Americans developed lingua francas in order to facilitate trade and social interaction; in these areas, song texts may feature words from a lingua franca. Many Native American songs employ vocables, syllables that do not have referential meaning. These may be used to frame words or may be inserted among them; in some cases, they constitute the entire song text. Vocables are a fixed part of a song and help define patterns of repetition and variation in the music; when used in collective dance songs, they create a sense of spirituality and social cohesion.

NATIVE AMERICAN MUSICAL STYLES AND GENRES

ASPECTS OF STYLE

The following discussion of styles and genres by region addresses a number of characteristics of music and how they are produced. It is possible to speak of musical regions because, although each Native American group has distinctive musical styles and genres, certain musical similarities exist between those who are roughly neighbours. However, musical boundaries continually shift and change as people from different cultures

exchange musical ideas, repertories, and instruments.

Generally, in each regional category a description of the music encompasses vocal style, melody, rhythm, phrase structure, use of text, typical instruments, and occasions for music. Vocal style may be said to be tense (requiring greater muscular effort) or relaxed to varying degrees, depending on the use of the throat, tongue, mouth, and breath. Higher notes for a particular voice type often sound more tense than notes in the middle of a singer's vocal range. The sound may be nasal or not. Men especially may use falsetto voice, for a higher timbre than is available using full voice. Vibrato is a rapid, slight variation in pitch that may be ornamental and is often part of the aesthetic of musical performance. When people sing together, they may perform the same melodies in very nearly the same way (blended unison) or without attempting to sing exactly together (unblended unison). Choral singing may also entail the simultaneous performance of separate musical lines (polyphony). Scales may be described by the number of discrete pitches used, as well as by the intervals between those pitches. Melodies form contours as they move higher or lower in pitch, proceeding by relatively large or small intervals. Rhythm encompasses the underlying musical pulses and how they are organized (i.e., metre)—often into groups of two or three (i.e., duple or triple metre)—as well as how the melody relates to that structure with its varying durations of notes and syncopations that contradict the regularity of the beats. Melodic and rhythmic units organize into larger phrases and then into phrase patterns that involve repetition, variation, and contrast. Meaningful text and vocables may be sung in varying combinations.

Each region uses characteristic musical instruments, sometimes without voices, and each uses music in identifiable ways—e.g., private and public, social and ritual, or as pure song and as accompaniment to dance.

NORTH AMERICA

North American Indians (i.e., those in present-day Canada and the United States) emphasize singing, accompanied by percussion instruments such as rattles or drums, rather than purely instrumental music. North American musical genres include lullabies, songs given to individuals by their guardian spirits, curing songs, songs performed during stories, songs to accompany games, ceremonial and social dance songs, and songs to accompany work or daily activities. Music, dance, and spirituality are tightly interwoven in a worldview that

perceives little separation between sacred and secular. Six musical style areas—which differ somewhat from anthropologists' designations—exist in Native North America: Eastern Woodlands (including Northeast and Southeast Indians), Plains, Great Basin, Southwest, Northwest Coast, and Arctic.

EASTERN WOODLANDS

Traditionally dressed Iroquois man chanting and dancing outside a reconstructed traditional …

Nathan Benn/Corbis

In terms of musical characteristics, the Eastern Woodlands area stretches from New Brunswick, Canada, south to the Gulf of Mexico and from the Mississippi River east to the Atlantic Ocean. The large area was the traditional home of a diverse array of peoples, including the Iroquois, Huron, and Ojibwa to the north and the Choctaw, Chickasaw, Creek, Cherokee, and Seminole to the south. Eastern Woodlands singers use a relatively relaxed vocal style and emphasize the middle part of their range. In some songs singers use special vocal techniques, including rapid vibrato and yodeling, which enhance the expressive quality of the music. Most scales involve four, five, or six tones, usually with notes at roughly equidistant intervals. Melodies tend to undulate and often feature a descending inflection; rhythmic characteristics include frequent changes of metre and the use of syncopation.

The most distinctive style element of Eastern Woodlands music is the use of call and response in many dance songs; the leader sings a short melody as a solo and is answered by the dancers in unison. The alternation between leader and dancers creates an antiphonal texture that is otherwise rare among North American Indians. (*See also* antiphonal singing.) Eastern Woodlands songs feature strophic forms, in which the music repeats; sectional forms, in which the music changes in blocks; and iterative forms, in which there may be short sections with repetition. Song texts employ vocables or words framed by vocables. Musical instruments from this region include rattles, drums, and a few flutes used primarily for ritual purposes. Eastern Woodlands peoples perform traditional musics to accompany ceremonial dances, such as the Green Corn ceremony of the Southeast or Iroquois Longhouse events of the Northeast. In addition, traditional songs accompany individual curing rituals, recreational social dances, and public folkloric dance demonstrations.

PLAINS

A Cheyenne River Sioux troupe in traditional dress singing and dancing at the Native Nations …

Pablo Martinez Monsivais/AP Images

The Plains area extends from Texas north to south-central Canada and from the Rocky Mountains east to the Mississippi River. Peoples from this area include the Blackfoot and Sioux of the northern plains, the Kiowa and Comanche of the southern plains, and the Ho-Chunk (Winnebago), Sauk, and Fox of the prairie. The most distinctive stylistic feature of this area is the tense, nasal vocal quality cultivated by Plains singers. Musicians from the northern Plains emphasize the high part of their range, while southern Plains singers use a somewhat lower range. Most scales employ four or five tones with equidistant intervals. Plains songs feature a cascading melodic contour that starts high and descends by steps, ending on the lowest pitch at the end of the strophe. In powwow dance songs (*see* below), the tempo used by the singers differs slightly from the tempo of the drumbeat, which adds rhythmic complexity to the music.

Singers perform in unblended unison, and most songs use a kind of strophic form that is repeated four times. Song texts may be composed entirely of vocables or may include a combination of words and vocables. Instruments from this region include the single-headed hand drum, the large bass drum used simultaneously by multiple performers to accompany powwow songs, and the end-blown flute or flageolet, played as a solo instrument for courtship music. Music is performed for collective ceremonies such as the Sun Dance, men's warrior society dances, rituals associated with sacred objects such as medicine bundles, and recreational events such as hand games (e.g., guessing which hand holds an object).

GREAT BASIN

Tribes such as the Shoshone, Paiute, Washo, and Ute live in the Great Basin area, which reaches from the Colorado River Basin north to the Fraser River in British Columbia, Canada, and from the Rocky Mountains west to the Sierra Nevada and Cascade Range. Musicians from this region emphasize the middle part of the vocal range and sing with a relaxed and open quality; special vocal techniques include subtle aspirations at the start and end of

musical phrases. Scales feature four or five tones with mostly equidistant intervals. Melodic contours undulate, sometimes with a descending inflection, and singers achieve rhythmic complexity through special breathing techniques they use to vary durational values.

Singers perform collective dance songs in moderately blended unison, and some dance songs are unaccompanied, which is unusual among Indians in North America. The most distinctive style element of Great Basin music is the form used in seasonal round dances, in which each line of text and music repeats and alternates with one or two other lines; scholars refer to this form as paired-phrase structure (e.g., AA BB AA BB and so on). Great Basin song texts combine words and vocables, employing intricate and subtle imagery that refers to the local environment and natural forces. In the past, shamans from this area accompanied certain curing rituals with a musical bow; other distinctive musical instruments include notched rasps played with a basket resonator, strung rattles made of deer hooves, and striking sticks used to accompany hand-game songs. Important performance contexts include life-cycle events such as the Washo Girl's Puberty ceremony, seasonal first fruits celebrations such as the Ute Bear Dance, and storytelling.

SOUTHWEST

The Southwest region, which includes New Mexico, Arizona, and southern California, is home to traditionally sedentary Pueblo Indians, such as the Hopi and Zuni, as well as to tribes that were traditionally transhumant (seasonally moving), such as the Navajo and Apache. Pueblo singers prefer an open, relaxed vocal style emphasizing the lower range and perform communal dance songs in blended unison. Pueblo scales employ five, six, or seven tones with equidistant intervals, and their ceremonial dance songs feature a five-part form with lengthy and detailed poetry. Pueblo melodic contours often involve an upward leap at the beginning of a phrase, followed by an undulating descent, and Pueblo songs feature some of the most complex rhythmic structures in North America, including patterned pauses and frequently changing metres. Their most distinctive musical instrument is a large, brightly painted double-headed barrel drum made from cottonwood.

Pueblo musical contexts include seasonal agricultural ceremonies such as Kachina (Katsina) dances, Catholic feast day dances, and other community celebrations. Navajo and Apache singers use a tense, nasal vocal quality covering a wide range, and Navajo singers use falsetto voice in certain genres. They sing in unblended unison, and their songs use strophic forms as

well as complex sectional forms with many short interwoven melodic motifs. Navajo and Apache songs employ a wide range of melodic contours, which involve dramatic leaps and cascading descents in certain genres. Some of these groups' songs feature rapid tempos and use a variety of durational values. Most of the song texts combine words with vocables. Navajo and Apache instruments include many kinds of drums and what is known as the Apache violin, a traditional one- or two-stringed solo instrument. Important contexts for Navajo and Apache musics include life-cycle ceremonials, such as the Girl's Puberty ceremony, and elaborate curing ceremonies that include many components and last for several days.

NORTHWEST COAST

The Northwest Coast area covers a thin strip about 100 miles (160 km) wide between the Pacific Ocean and the coastal mountains of the United States and Canada, extending from northern California to the Alaska panhandle. Some peoples of this area are the Haida, Kwakiutl, Tsimshian, and Bella Coola. Northwest Coast singers prefer a moderately relaxed and open vocal style that emphasizes the lower range, but they also use a variety of ornaments and special vocal techniques for expressive purposes. Scales range from four to six tones and sometimes include half-step intervals, which is a distinctive style element in music of this area. Most melodies feature stepwise motion and undulate with a descending inflection. Rhythmic structures in this area are highly complex; there are frequent changes of metre, various durational values, and intentional tempo displacements between the singers and the drum.

Singers perform in moderately blended unison, although some part-singing may also be traditional in this region. The songs employ strophic and sectional forms with intricately detailed phrase designs. Some Northwest Coast songs alternate a stanza of poetic text with a vocable refrain, while other genres, such as songs performed in the course of storytelling, consist primarily of vocables. Peoples of the Northwest Coast use a wide variety of musical instruments, many of which are beautifully carved and painted to represent mythical beings. Performance contexts include potlatch feasts, initiation rituals, seasonal dance ceremonies, shamanic rituals, and gambling events.

ARCTIC

Eskimo man with a large handheld drum made of walrus stomach or bladder, Nunivak Island, 1929.

Edward S. Curtis/Library of Congress

Many independent but related communities occupy the Arctic region, which reaches from Alaska across northern Canada to Greenland. Inuit or Eskimo peoples such as the Netsilik, Copper, Iglulik, and Baffin Islanders inhabit the Arctic area. In this region, singers use a moderately tense and nasal vocal style, emphasizing the middle range and ornamenting the melody with grace notes, vocal pulsations, and special breathing techniques. Songs feature four- or five-note scales, and melodies employ a relatively narrow range. Rhythmic structures include intentional tempo displacement between the voice and drum as well as the use of ties (notes that hold over several beats), cross-rhythms (complex combinations of values, especially simultaneous two- and three-note groupings), syncopations, and frequently changing metres.

Most choral songs are performed in moderately blended unison, although part-singing in parallel intervals is also performed in some Inuit communities. Songs from this area tend to be relatively short but display a variety of strophic and through-composed (i.e., not based on a repeated pattern) forms. In addition, some songs contain recitative-like sections in which passages of text are recited rhythmically on a single pitch. Song texts combine vocables with words, and many genres are humorous. Distinctive musical instruments of this area include dance gloves, which are decorated with small objects that rattle as the dancer moves, and the box drum, which is a rectangular wooden box open at the top and bottom and suspended from a ceiling pole or tripod during performance. Performance contexts include shamanic rituals, storytelling, song contests, traditional games, and sacred dances performed at events such as the Bladder Festival or the Messenger Feast.

MEXICO AND CENTRAL AMERICA

Many native peoples in Mexico and Central America retain Indian identities and languages and also practice Roman Catholicism and speak Spanish. Musical instruments, genres, and styles borrowed from European culture have been adapted to native tastes and incorporated into traditional repertories. (For a broader perspective on music in Mexico, Central America, and South America, *see also* Latin American music.) Mexican and Central American Indians emphasize instrumental music more than singing, and much of the

traditional music from this region is performed by ensembles that incorporate several different instruments. Music, dance, and religious ceremonies are intertwined in Mexico and Central America, and music accompanies both collective and solo dances. Native Mexican and Central American musics may be divided into four main geographic areas: Northwestern Mexico, Central Mexico, the Maya area, and the Atlantic Coast.

NORTHWESTERN MEXICO

Yaqui Deer dancer from Sonora, Mexico, wearing strung-cocoon rattles on his legs and deer-hoof …

Miguel Salgado

The states of Sonora and Chihuahua in northwestern Mexico are home to indigenous peoples such as the Seri, Yaqui, Tarahumara, and some Yumans. In general, singers from Northwestern Mexico use a moderately relaxed vocal sound emphasizing the natural vocal range and using little melodic ornamentation. Most scales have five tones with equidistant intervals, and melodies have a range of one octave or less. Melodies tend to descend and may involve relatively large leaps, but in one exception, a ceremonial genre performed by the Tarahumara, the melody begins low and ascends, an unusual melodic contour in American Indian music. Musical rhythms in this region often adhere to natural speech rhythms, which creates a declamatory effect.

Singers perform in unison, using strophic and sectional forms in which the repetition of short melodic motifs is an important design element. Song lyrics contain both words and vocables; the texts describe aspects of the natural world such as local plants, animals, insects, and rain, and they employ phrase repetition. Some distinctive instruments from this area include the strung cocoon leg rattles worn by Yaqui deer dancers (*see below*), the plank drum or stamping board used by Seri dancers to accompany the Girl's Puberty ceremony, and the Seri sistrum, or disk, rattle. Musical bows were used in the past by several groups from this area. Native peoples of Northwestern Mexico perform music in the context of curing rituals, dance ceremonies such as the Deer Dance, and various social occasions. In addition, traditional music and dance are closely tied to the Christian ceremonial cycle.

CENTRAL MEXICO

Central Mexico is a large and culturally complex region extending from western Oaxaca eastward, including parts of Guerrero, Michoacán, Puebla, Querétaro, Guanajuato, and San Luis Potosí. The native peoples living in this area include the Nahua (including the Aztec), Mixtec, Otomí, and Tarasco. These groups emphasize instrumental music, although singing is a part of religious observances. Most traditional music from this region maintains a steady metre with a rhythmic emphasis on strong beats.

Historical evidence suggests that the Nahua have an ancient tradition of polyphony. Part-singing and call and response continue to play a role in religious songs from Central Mexico, and instrumental ensembles employ chordal harmony. Dance music from this area features sectional forms with several short musical phrases in succession. The Mixtec perform certain song genres in their native languages, while other Central Mexican groups sing in Spanish. The most widely known musical instruments from this area are the log drum (*teponaztli*) and single-headed drum (*huéhuetl*); these instruments have been played since pre-Columbian times. Central Mexicans also play Spanish instruments such as the violin, guitar, and harp. In addition, the Mixtec have adopted certain percussion instruments introduced by African peoples; these include the *cajón de tapeo*, a wooden box struck with the hands, and a double-headed tension drum. Central Mexicans have maintained strong connections between music and dance since pre-Columbian times. Traditional music is performed in contexts such as religious festivals related to the Christian calendar, initiation rites, life-cycle events, dance dramas commemorating the Spanish conquest, and patriotic holidays.

MAYA AREA

The Maya area encompasses the Mexican states of Chiapas, Tabasco, Campeche, Yucatán, and Quintana Roo, as well as Belize, Guatemala, and parts of El Salvador and Honduras. Despite cultural and historical continuity, this area exhibits considerable diversity; for example, dozens of Maya languages are spoken, and the music of the Maya from the highlands of Chiapas and Guatemala differs from that of the lowland inhabitants of Mexico, Belize, and Guatemala. In some public rituals, men perform solo songs emphasizing the high part of their range and frequently use falsetto as well as a wide vibrato. Shamans perform in a declamatory style with the melody centred on one tone and the rhythm derived from natural speech.

Shamanic and ritual songs are performed as solos or in unison, but there is a history of polyphonic music in this area, and instrumental ensembles perform in harmony. The music employs various sectional forms, some of which derive from 16th-century Spanish styles. The content and form of song texts vary by genre, but shamanic songs are improvised couplets in which the second phrase repeats or varies the first. The Maya play many indigenous instruments such as flutes, gourd rattles, and drums; European instruments such as the harp, guitar, and violin (and indigenous instruments inspired by them); and African instruments such as the marimba. Maya performance contexts include shamanic rituals for curing, house blessing, and protection of crops and livestock, as well as calendric observances honouring ancestral deities. In addition, Maya music plays a central role in Christian festivals such as celebrations honouring a village's patron saint.

ATLANTIC COAST

The Atlantic Coast area stretches from Honduras to Panama and includes peoples such as the Miskito, Bribri, Cabécar, and Kuna. Linguistic studies indicate that the ancestors of these peoples migrated to the area from South America. The Miskito have absorbed considerable musical influences from both Africans and Europeans. Singing style varies by community and genre; Kuna men perform curing songs with vocal tension; Bribri men sing ritual songs with a nasal quality; and Miskito men may perform secular songs with a relaxed voice. Some songs from this area feature a descending melodic contour, and both duple and triple metres occur.

Choral textures differ by genre and include monophony in shamanic songs, call and response in collective dance songs, and parallel harmony (i.e., the same melodic contour at different pitch levels) in secular songs. In addition, the Kuna perform a genre of flute music in interlocking style, dividing the notes of the melody between two players. Few details about musical form are available, but it appears that iterative, strophic, and through-composed forms exist in the music of this area. Song texts feature repetition of phrases or individual words and incorporate vocables as well as archaic words. Some distinctive musical instruments include a Bribri rubbed instrument made from an armadillo shell, Kuna flutes strung around a dancer's neck as a kind of rattle, and a Miskito mirliton—a bat's wing stretched between reeds and surrounded with beeswax—that a singer places in his mouth in order to alter his vocal quality during funeral rites. Performance contexts include healing, initiation rites such as the Kuna Girl's Puberty ceremony, funerals, collective ritual dances, lullabies, and social gatherings.

SOUTH AMERICA

Music and dance are intertwined among South American Indians, and music is central to native South American healing practices. While each community has its own preferred vocal sound, many South American Indians use special techniques to alter or mask the natural voice. Repetition is an important design element in South American Indian musics and may involve the repeat of small motifs within a melodic phrase as well as the repetition of an entire section within a piece. South American Indian musics fall into four main geographic areas: Andean Highlands, Tropical Forest, Southern Cone, and circum-Caribbean.

ANDEAN HIGHLANDS

The Andean Highlands extend from northern Ecuador through Peru and Bolivia to central Chile, encompassing the territory once associated with the Inca empire. Many separate and distinct Indian communities inhabit this area, but Quechua (known as Quichua in Ecuador) and Aymara are the two main languages spoken by native Andeans. The musical styles and genres of this region are very diverse, but generally, vocal music is more important among Quechua speakers, while instrumental music is more central to Aymara speakers. Men are the instrumentalists, while women are the preferred singers; women sing in a nasal voice and emphasize the high part of their range, often using falsetto. Native Andeans use scales with three, four, five, six, or seven tones, many with equidistant intervals. Melodic lines tend to have a descending contour, and duple metres with syncopated rhythms prevail. The texture of most native Andean music is monophonic (i.e., having a single melodic line), although some wind ensembles perform in parallel octaves, fourths, or fifths. In addition, panpipe ensembles perform in interlocking style, creating a dense sound quality that is appreciated by native Andeans. Music from this region employs sectional forms, in which each short section is immediately repeated; because the music usually accompanies dancing, the entire piece may be repeated several times. The content and style of song texts vary by genre and community, but many reveal a strong sense of place through references to the local environment. The most distinctive musical instrument from this region is the panpipe, which is played in ensembles of as many as 50 players, accompanied by four or more large double-headed drums. Unlike elsewhere in South America, music is not central to curing rituals among native Andeans; performance contexts include life-cycle ceremonies, Catholic and indigenous festivals, and fertility rituals associated with agriculture and herding.

TROPICAL FOREST

The Tropical Forest area includes the Amazon and Orinoco river basins, encompassing most of Brazil as well as parts of Paraguay, Bolivia, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, Guyana, Suriname, and French Guiana. Tropical Forest peoples include the Suyá, Kalapalo, and Kamayurá of Brazil, the Warao of Venezuela, and the Shuar (Jívaro) of Ecuador. In general, musical roles are sharply divided by gender; women do not perform in collective rituals and in some communities are not allowed to see ritual flutes. Each community has its own preferred vocal quality, and some peoples vary their vocal styles according to musical genre. Suyá men, for example, sing shout songs in a high, tense voice, but they use a deep, resonant vocal style to perform unison songs. Some Tropical Forest shamans mask their voices in curing rituals to symbolize the presence of spirit beings. Voice masking may involve cupping the hands over the mouth, singing into a small clay pot, or inhaling resin vapors to change the vocal quality.

Many shamanic songs employ only one or two central tones, while other genres from this region feature four-, five-, or six-tone scales, some with intervals of unequal sizes. Melodic contours vary by genre, but they often have a descending inflection; rhythmic structures range from strongly metred collective dance songs to free-rhythm individual songs. Most communal songs are performed by men in unison, but some genres, such as Suyá shout songs, involve a kind of polyphony created when several men sing their own songs simultaneously. Songs feature strophic and through-composed forms, set with both vocables and lyrics that refer to animals and spirits of the forest as well as mythical beings.

Many kinds of rattles accompany Tropical Forest musics, including an unusually large calabash rattle made by the Warao that requires the use of both hands; there are also many flutes, some of which are used to perform melodies in interlocking style. Performance contexts include shamanic curing rituals, dance ceremonies associated with rites of passage or seasonal observances, and house purification. Some groups, such as the Warao, also perform recreational music, work songs, and lullabies.

SOUTHERN CONE

Coiled *trutruka*, a type of natural trumpet, used by the …

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The Southern Cone area encompasses Chile, Argentina, and Uruguay as well as parts of Bolivia and Paraguay, incorporating several distinctive subregions. These include the Patagonian Andes, the traditional home of the Mapuche people; the north-central Chaco region inhabited by peoples such as the Toba, Maká, and Guaraní; and the Misiones region of northeastern Argentina (and part of Paraguay), home to the Mbyá. Only the Mapuche have been extensively studied by music researchers.The most studied genre among this people is known as *tayil* and is performed only by women. *Tayil* recall a man's ancestral lineage and are essential to the healing rituals led by female shamans. The style of *tayil* varies from one singer to the next, because each lineage has its own method of vocal production, melodic contour, and song texts. Women perform *tayil* using few lip movements and with their teeth clenched as a means of distinguishing this genre from other kinds of songs. Mapuche scales feature three or five tones; melodies generally descend, and duple metres predominate. A kind of polyphony occurs during *tayil* performances, since each woman sings her own melody at her own speed and pitch level. Each *tayil* contains four musical phrases, addressing different aspects of a man's lineage. The song texts recount the attributes and powers of a specific lineage and its sacred history. The most distinctive Mapuche musical instruments are the *kultrún* drum, played by female shamans, and the *trutruka*, a long bamboo trumpet played by men for ceremonial events. Instruments from the Chaco region include gourd rattles used in shamanic curing rituals, water drums, and bamboo stamping tubes played by Maká women. In the Misiones region, the Mbyá people use a guitar and striking-sticks to accompany their annual first fruits celebration. Performance contexts include shamanic rituals, harvest ceremonies, and life-cycle events.

CIRCUM-CARIBBEAN

The circum-Caribbean area includes the zone along the Caribbean coast of Colombia, Venezuela, Guyana, Suriname, and French Guiana; some native peoples of this area include the Arawak, Palikur, Kalina, Waiwai, Patamona, and Wapishana. The little information available on their musics suggests that they differ in significant ways from other South American Indians. In particular, women from the circum-Caribbean area perform in collective rituals alongside men, sing their own repertories of ceremonial songs, and play

musical instruments. Kalina mourning rituals involve a kind of polyphony in which the men sing a unison song in a low vocal range accompanied by a large double-headed drum at the same time that the women sing different songs in a high range while shaking large woven rattles. A distinctive musical instrument from this area is the *turé*, a kind of single-reed wind instrument played by Palikur men. Performance contexts include manioc-beer-drinking rituals, shamanic rituals, funeral rites, lullabies, love songs, and laments.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS IN THE AMERICAS

Musical instruments are important throughout the Americas. A few indigenous instruments can be made in an hour or two by virtually anyone in the community from materials readily available in the natural environment. Other instruments require weeks or even months to make by a specially trained craftsman using materials prepared by different individuals. Many musical instruments carry symbolic significance, which appears in the ways instruments are used, decorated, named, or handled before and after use. The names of instruments may reflect ideas about social relationships; for example, Anishnabe water drums come in two sizes, called “grandfather” and “little boy.” Decorations often have spiritual significance or refer to sacred narratives. Some instruments are thought to be sentient and require respectful treatment. Each tribe has its own approach to instrument classification based on traditional ways of organizing knowledge. To compare musical instruments across cultures, scholars have developed a system of classifying them into four categories: idiophones, membranophones, aerophones, and chordophones. (A fifth category, electrophones, is often added to characterize electric and electronic instruments.) These designations derive from the method through which each instrument produces sound and are based upon physical descriptions.

IDIOPHONES

Tripod vessel with rattles, fine orange ceramic with plumbate glaze, Mayan culture, coastal …

Photograph by Beesnest McClain. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, gift of Constance McCormick Fearing, M.86.311.35

Idiophones produce musical sound by vibrating when the body of the instrument itself is struck, stamped, shaken, scraped, rubbed, or plucked. By far the largest category of musical instruments in Native American musics, idiophones appear in many shapes and sizes and are made of extraordinarily diverse materials, from beetle wings to sections of plastic pipe. Concussion instruments, which consist of two similar elements that are clapped together, include the Seri split-cane clapper, striking sticks (Choctaw, Mi'kmaq [Micmac], and Mbyá), and separated scissor blades (native Andeans). Struck instruments with a solid body include plank or foot drums (Seri, Pomo, and Maidu) and marimbas (Maya). Some examples of struck instruments with a hollow body are turtle shells struck with a stick or antler (Mixtec and Maya), box drums (Arctic and Mixtec), basket drums (Pueblo), and gourds cut in half and inverted, sometimes placed in a tub of water (Yaqui). A well-known Native American struck idiophone is the log drum or *teponaztli*, which consists of a hollow tree trunk with a carved H-shaped slit that creates two tongues, each of which produces a separate tone. The *teponaztli* may be placed horizontally and played with mallets or carried on a person's back to be played by someone walking behind. Stamped instruments consist of a vessel that is stamped against the ground; in South America, the Maká and Mbyá make stamping tubes from bamboo.

Kwakiutl man in traditional dress, holding a ceremonial staff and a shaman's rattle; photograph by …

Edward S. Curtis Collection/Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. (neg. no. LC-USZ62-52212)

Native Americans use many shaken instruments, including container rattles, strung rattles, and jingle rattles. Container rattles consist of a receptacle with small objects inside, such as pebbles, clay pellets, beads, seeds, dried corn kernels or beans, fruit pits, or buckshot. Containers are made from natural materials, including dried gourds, calabashes, turtle shells, cocoons, wood, bark, sections of animal horn, hide pouches, coconut shells, and woven fibres. Native Americans also make container rattles from manufactured materials, such as tin cans or hollow metal tubes. Container rattles can be made with or without wooden handles; some are clustered and attached to leggings worn by dancers. Native peoples from the southeastern United States make leg rattles from turtle shells or evaporated milk cans filled with small pebbles and attached in rows to a piece of leather. Female dancers use these rattles to provide rhythmic accompaniment for ceremonial dances. Similarly, peoples from northwestern Mexico make leg rattles from the cocoons of the saturniid moth; the cocoons are dried, filled with seeds or bits of broken seashells, sewn shut, and strung on a cord. Male dancers, as for the Yaqui deer dance, wrap these rattles in a spiral around their legs from knee to ankle. In addition to container rattles, Native Americans make rattles from small objects strung together in clusters; these objects include deer hooves, seashells, seeds, seed pods, nuts, fruit pits, brass shotgun shells, and bottle caps. The Warao of Venezuela make strung rattles from beetle wings. Strung rattles may be played by hand, suspended down a dancer's back, or worn by a dancer on the knees, ankles, or wrists. Jingle rattles are made from metal or wooden disks that slide up and down on a post or stem; the Seri, Mapuche, and Mataco people play different kinds of jingle rattles. In addition, many American Indian dancers attach bells or other tinkling objects to their dance regalia; these objects are set into motion when the dancer moves, adding another layer of sound to the performance.

Other idiophones include scrapers, friction idiophones, and plucked idiophones. Scrapers or rasps are serrated objects that are scraped with a stick or other implement. Rasps are used

as musical instruments throughout the Americas and are made from various materials, including notched sticks, dried alligator skin, armadillo shells, gourds, food graters, and sections of corrugated tin. The Mixtec made rasps from bone, using a human skull as a resonator. Unlike rasps, friction idiophones consist of a solid or hollow body with a smooth surface rubbed with a stick or other implement. The Aztec *áyotl* was a tortoise shell rubbed on its ventral side with a stick. Plucked idiophones consist of a flexible tongue or lamella that is fixed to a frame and plucked with the finger or thumb; while these are not widespread among American Indians, one example is the jew's harp, which the Mapuche play.

Native Americans often decorate idiophones with intricate and colourful patterns or images. Peoples from the Northwest Coast are known for their skillfully carved wooden container rattles, some of which represent mythological beings. Peoples from the Tropical Forest area of South America decorate rattle handles with brightly coloured parrot feathers, which are symbolic because of the special attributes of birds (e.g., they move between earth and sky realms as they fly, helping bring prayers to the spirit realm). Some idiophones have special meaning to native peoples. For certain peoples of the Eastern Woodlands, the sound of a gourd rattle symbolizes the sound of Creation, while for some of the peoples of the Tropical Forest and Southern Cone areas, the sound of the gourd rattle facilitates communication between shamans and spirit beings. Among tribes of the Northwest Coast, rattles represent voices from the spirit world. The log drum is sacred to the Maya, who store it in a special chapel with offerings of incense and candles.

MEMBRANOPHONES

Membranophones are instruments that have a skin or membrane stretched over a frame; musical sound is produced by striking or rubbing the membrane or by setting the membrane into motion with sound waves (as with a kazoo). Drums are the largest subcategory of membranophones. Native Americans make drums in many sizes from a wide variety of natural and manufactured materials. Three basic kinds of drums exist among indigenous groups in the Americas: single-headed drums, double-headed drums, and kettledrums. Single-headed drums consist of one drum head stretched across a frame. Shallow hand drums of this type are widespread in North America; for example, Plains peoples use a single-headed drum to accompany hand games, personal songs, or curing songs. The drum frame is made from a strip of wood about 5 cm (2 inches) deep that has been soaked and bent into a circle about 33 to 50 cm (13 to 20 inches) in diameter. The

drum head, made of deer hide, is stretched across the frame and fastened with thongs or thumb tacks. Thongs are also stretched across the open side of the drum to form a handle; the singer usually holds the drum in his left hand and strikes the head with a stick held in his right hand. Some Plains hand drums have snares, or short sticks attached to the head by a thong, which create a buzzing sound when the drum is struck. Inuit peoples also use single-headed hand drums to accompany ceremonial dances. The Inuit drum may be as much as almost a metre (39 inches) in diameter and has a wooden handle attached to the frame; the head is made from caribou hide, and the drum is played by striking the edge of the rim rather than the head itself. The *huéhuetl*, a single-headed drum with a cylindrical wooden shell, originated in ancient times but is still used in Central Mexico.

Double-headed drums come in many sizes and shapes. Pueblo peoples accompany certain ceremonial dances with a cylindrical drum about 75 cm (30 inches) high and 38 cm (15 inches) in diameter. Made from cottonwood, the shell is scraped to a thickness of about 15 mm (about 0.5 inch); the heads are stretched across each open end and laced together with strips of hide. Two small wooden objects are placed inside the drum shell—a ball symbolizing the earth and a cylinder representing the universe. These objects bounce when the drum is played, adding complexity to its sound. An Ojibwa double-headed dance drum is made from a wooden washtub or barrel. The bottom of the tub is partly cut out to enhance the drum's resonance. The drum measures about 65 cm (25 inches) in diameter at the top and about 56 cm (22 inches) at the bottom and is about 33 cm (13 inches) tall. The drum is suspended from stakes while it is played in order to help it resonate, and it is decorated with a cloth skirt, a beaded belt and tabs, fur strips, and additional pendants and tassels. The Warao of Venezuela make a double-headed drum with a frame shaped like an hourglass, with heads made from skin of the howler monkey. Some Native Americans attach snares to double-headed drums; the Mississippi Choctaw use a double-headed snare drum to accompany processions and to generate enthusiasm during ball game performances. In addition, native Andeans sometimes use indigenous snare drums to accompany panpipe ensembles.

Kettledrums can be made from wooden, ceramic, or metal containers covered with hide or with rubber from an inner tube; sometimes this kind of drum is partially filled with water, which affects the instrument's tone quality. Kettledrums are widespread throughout the Americas; they usually accompany ceremonial dances or shamanic rituals. The Mapuche people of Argentina make a ceremonial drum called the *kultrún* from a wooden bowl covered by a skin fastened with human hair or animal sinew. The shaman places various

objects inside the body of the *kultrún*, such as small rocks, feathers, or healing herbs, and paints the drum head with designs that hold personal significance. Only female shamans play the *kultrún*, because they are considered able to transcend the human realm to communicate with spirit beings and ancestors. Eastern Woodlands musicians make kettledrums from small wood or ceramic pots covered with a hide and partially filled with water; the drummer may place a lump of charcoal, healing herbs, a potsherd, or other materials inside the pot to symbolize natural elements and forces.

Among Native Americans, ceremonial drums are treated with great care and respect. North American powwow drums are placed on a blanket or stand during performance and are covered when not in use. They are smudged with tobacco in a special sunrise ceremony before the public powwow events, and neither drugs nor alcohol may be used near the drums. In addition, paraphernalia such as drumsticks, stands, or medicine bags may belong to a particular drum. The Ojibwa dance drum is regarded as a living being, and great care is taken with its construction and decoration. For the Mapuche, the life of a *kultrún* comes to an end with the death of its owner, and it is either buried with her or destroyed. The sound of the drum conveys symbolic meaning for many Native Americans. A rapid drumbeat in certain songs from the Northwest Coast signifies the transformation of a Thunderbird into a human state.

AEROPHONES

Girl playing a traditional panpipe (*rondador*) in Ecuador.

Robert Frerck—Stone/Getty Images

Couple in the form of a whistle, ceramic with postfire applied pigment, Mayan culture,

Aerophones require an airstream to produce sound; they may be whirled through the air (bull-roarer) or blown into by a player (flutes, whistles, reed instruments, and horns). Bull-roarers, made of a wooden slab tied to a string or rawhide thong, are whirled in the air to create sound; they are significant in some native healing and conjuring practices. Arctic peoples used bull-roarers as part of a ritual to harden snow, making travel easier, while the O'odham people of the southwestern United States used a bull-roarer in earlier times to imitate the sound of rain in rituals calling for rain.

Flutes and whistles are tubular or globular vessels with an edge against which the player blows. Native American flutes and whistles come in many shapes and sizes and are made from various materials, including wood, bone, cane, clay, and bamboo. The number and position of finger holes, specific design of the mouth hole, and number of pipes involved are all features that differentiate various kinds of flutes. In the Americas, end-blown or vertical flutes are most common; these are played by blowing air directly over the rim of the mouth hole. The mouth hole may be plain (cut straight across), notched, or connected to an internal duct. Panpipes exemplify end-blown flutes with a plain mouth hole. Played throughout Central and South America, panpipes involve a set of tubes with graduated lengths; the tubes are bound together in a row. Panpipes are usually made in two rows and are intended to be played as a pair by two performers using interlocking style. Duct flutes are also widespread; these have an internal block that forces the airstream against the beveled edge of an air hole. (The recorder is a European duct flute.) Indigenous duct flutes are played throughout the Americas, but the

Jaina, …

Photograph by Beesnest McClain. Los Angeles County Museum of Art, gift of Constance McCormick Fearing, M.86.311.4

best-known example is the Plains courting flute, made popular by contemporary performers such as Carlos Nakai. The Pame people of Central Mexico have an unusual kind of duct flute called a *mitote* in which a mirliton covers the air hole, altering the instrument's tone colour. In addition to end-blown flutes, some Native Americans also play side-blown or horizontal flutes, which have a lateral mouth hole; the Peruvian *pitu* is an example. The Waiãpi people of French Guiana have a side-blown flute that is played nasally, although nose flutes are otherwise rare in the Americas. Whistles are essentially a simple form of end-blown flute that produce one or two pitches; these are used throughout the Americas for ritual purposes.

In reed instruments, the stream of air passes over a lamella made from a thin strip of cane or wood, causing it to vibrate. Among Native Americans, reed instruments are used primarily among South American Indians, particularly in the Tropical Forest and circum-Caribbean areas. The Yekuana people of southern Venezuela play an end-blown free-reed bamboo instrument called the *tekeyë*, which has a lamella inside the pipe. Although the player's lips do not touch the lamella, it vibrates when he blows into the pipe. The *tekeyë* is played in pairs; one is considered male, and the other is considered female. The Warao play another kind of end-blown reed instrument known as the *isimoi*, played in pairs during the Warao harvest festival. In addition to these clarinet-like instruments, some South American Indians play ribbon-type reed instruments made from a coiled blade of grass or a folded leaf.

Horns produce musical sound when the player vibrates his lips against the mouth hole. Most Native American horns are end-blown, have a cylindrical bore, and are made from bamboo, wood, bark, bone, clay, or calabash. The Waiãpi people of the Tropical Forest area have an end-blown horn called the *nhimia poku* that can be played as a solo instrument or in ensembles, depending upon the ritual context. End-blown conch-shell horns with a spiral bore are fairly widespread among Native Americans, who use them primarily for signaling purposes; the Cayuga of the Eastern Woodlands area play a conch-shell horn to announce Longhouse ceremonial events. Native Andeans play another kind of spiral-shaped horn called the *wakrapuku*, which is made from sections of cattle horn or pieces of sheet metal; the instrument is played in pairs during an annual fertility ritual. The Mapuche play an end-blown horn called the *trutruka*, made from a bamboo tube wrapped in horse intestine and capped with a cow horn resonator at the distal end. The *trutruka* is played by Mapuche men in the context of annual harvest rituals; similar horns are used for signaling elsewhere in the

Andes.

In sacred traditions throughout the Americas, wind is associated with spirit beings as well as with breath, the essence of life. For this reason, Native American aerophones are imbued with special meaning and are strongly associated with shamanism and sacred ceremonies. North American Indian flutes may be incised with symbolic designs or decorated with feathers and carved fetishes. Many native peoples use wind instruments to communicate with spirits; for example, peoples of the Northwest Coast use a small wooden whistle to signal the presence of spirit beings at ceremonials. In addition, wind instruments represent the personification of specific spirit beings for some groups; music played on the Yekuana *tekeyë* represents the songs and dialogue of mythological animals.

CHORDOPHONES

Chordophones have one or more stretchable strings attached to a frame or sound box; sound is produced by plucking, rubbing, striking, or bowing the string. The musical bow is a kind of chordophone indigenous to the Americas. Musical bows consist of a string stretched between the two ends of a curved stick; the string may be struck, plucked, or rubbed to create musical sound. This instrument rarely appears in contemporary Native American musics, but it has existed among peoples of the Southwest, Great Basin, Northwestern Mexico, Atlantic Coast, Tropical Forest, and Southern Cone areas. Musical bows continue to be played by some native peoples from Mexico and South America. Peoples of the Chaco region in the Southern Cone have a musical bow called the *cajuavé*, which the player holds between his teeth and strikes with a small stick, using his mouth as a resonator. The *cajuavé* is played as a solo instrument by men. The Aché (Guayakí) people of the Tropical Forest also have a musical bow for which they use a clay pot or metal bucket as a resonator. Another indigenous chordophone played by the Aché is the *terokará*, a zither with five to seven parallel strings stretched horizontally over a board; the performer places one end of the board inside a clay or metal resonator.

After contact with Europeans, American Indians developed many other chordophones based on construction and playing techniques of European prototypes. However, native peoples modified and adapted these instruments to suit their own aesthetic values, musical styles, and performance contexts; thus, over the centuries, these instruments have become indigenous. Some chordophones developed by Native Americans in the early postcontact

period include the harp, guitar, and fiddle. Harps consist of strings stretched perpendicularly between a straight or curved neck and a sound box; the player plucks the strings. Harps are widespread among native peoples of Latin America, where they have become a central component of indigenous musics. The Quichua of highland Ecuador play such harps at weddings, children's wakes, and private masses. Guitars are also used in indigenous music throughout Latin America; they feature one or more strings stretched parallel between a sound box and a straight neck. Guitars appear in a wide range of shapes and sizes; some Andeans play a small guitar called the *charango*, which has 8 to 15 strings and can be made from an armadillo shell. Fiddles, as a class of chordophones, are similar to guitars except that the strings are bowed rather than plucked. Many Native communities have developed indigenous fiddles, which they may prefer to call violins. The Apache of the Southwest make a one- or two-string instrument called *tsii'edo'a'tl* (which they term a violin in English) from the hollow stalk of an agave plant; the instrument can be played in social and ceremonial contexts as well as for personal enjoyment.

Over time, American Indians have altered and adapted the materials used in constructing musical instruments. In the early 20th century, some Eastern Woodlands peoples made water drums from maple syrup buckets, while others used wooden kegs. Peoples from the Northwest Coast have used metal gun barrels to create end-blown flutes, while the Wayana of South America have made flutes and horns from plastic pipe. By the late 20th century, many North American Indians used sections of plastic pipe as drum frames. In addition, for centuries American Indians have adopted and adapted the musical instruments and repertories of Europeans. These kinds of musical interaction and exchange illustrate the dynamic nature of native musical traditions and cultural processes.

MUSIC HISTORY OF THE NATIVE AMERICANS

The early history of American Indian musics may be gleaned from native methods of recounting history, traditional narratives, archaeology, iconography, and linguistics. Methods of recounting history existed among peoples such as the Inca and the Aztec. The Inca had a genre of historical songs, while the Aztec carved symbolic pictures onto some instruments indicating how, when, where, and by whom they were played. Traditional narratives as well as linguistics reveal that Native Americans have extensive histories of regional interaction; over time, this has enriched and broadened their musical lives. Reciprocal participation in collective ceremonies has been a part of life among peoples of the Eastern Woodlands for centuries, with the result that a complex network of musical exchange has developed,

extending from Florida to Ontario, Canada. Archaeology reveals extensive information about the history of musical instruments, and the study of ancient sculpture, paintings, and other visual materials suggests something about instrumental performance techniques and ceremonial contexts. The archaeological record indicates, for example, that the *teponaztli* and *huéhuetl* have been played in Central Mexico since the pre-Columbian era.

COLONIAL MIXTURES

Descriptions of native musics written by early European travelers and missionaries provide additional information on indigenous music history, but these accounts must be read with a critical eye, because they often explain as much about the writers' prejudices as they do about music. For example, the Spaniard Bernal Díaz del Castillo, who documented Aztec music at the time of contact with Europeans, clearly expressed his bias against the music. Some of the most important literature on indigenous music history has been provided by writers who were themselves American Indians. An early Andean Indian chronicler, Felipe Guamán Poma de Ayala, published a book in 1612–15 that describes Andean Indian life and customs, including music. Francis La Flesche, of mixed Omaha, Ponca, and French ancestry, was the first North American Indian to become an anthropologist; he was the author or coauthor of several early 20th-century publications on indigenous music that continue to be relevant a century later.

From the 1500s through the 1700s, Native Americans borrowed and adapted many European musical instruments and genres through creative processes of musical interaction. Soon after contact, Europeans began teaching American Indians to read, perform, and compose European music and to build European instruments. The Spanish conquistador Hernán Cortés landed on the shores of Mexico in 1519; within a decade Mexican Indians were learning European music at mission schools—to the extent that by the 1550s there were more Indian church musicians than the churches could use. Contact with European musics has had a lasting impact on Native Americans. The Maya people of Chiapas play on some musical instruments and in some genres that were imported from Spain in the 1500s but that have survived only among the Maya. Spanish colonists taught Pueblo peoples of the Southwest to perform the *matachines* dance, a pantomime accompanied by violin and guitar; the Pueblos blended this dance with their own spiritual practices, and it now occupies a central role in their traditional ceremonialism. The colonists also transported Africans to the Western Hemisphere, and the Africans in turn influenced American Indians. Africans introduced new drums and other instruments to indigenous

peoples from the southeastern United States to Suriname. The disastrous consequence of contact was that millions of native peoples died from European epidemics, enslavement, warfare, and outright massacre; in some cases, as in the Caribbean, entire cultures became extinct.

Europeans and Native Americans in Central Mexico, the Andes, and some other parts of Latin America began to intermarry soon after contact, combining elements of Iberian and indigenous lifeways to develop new mestizo cultures. Mestizo peoples created their own musical styles based on regional blends of European and native instruments, styles, and performance contexts. Although the boundary between native peoples and mestizos can be fluid, mestizos generally came to use different musical instruments from those of indigenous peoples, and they have often specialized in chordophones such as their own varieties of mandolins and guitars. Present-day mestizos accompany public processions and feast-day dances with brass bands, employ Spanish song lyrics, and wear European-derived clothing. In Central Mexico, mestizos further distinguish their music through the use of improvisation and syncopation, which are not heard in the native styles of that area.

INDIGENOUS TRENDS FROM 1800

New indigenous musical trends emerged in the 1800s as native communities began to develop their own hymn repertories, fiddle traditions, and marching bands. American Indians began publishing their own hymnals for use in Christian worship during the first half of the 19th century. Some of these books—such as *Indian Melodies*, published in 1845 by the Narragansett composer Thomas Commuck—present hymn tunes composed in European notation by Native American musicians with texts in English. Other sources provide hymn texts in an Indian language, sometimes in a newly created writing system. The Cherokee published a hymnal using the syllabary completed in 1821 by Sequoyah. This kind of hymnal does not include musical notation; rather, the congregants learn the melodies through oral tradition. In the 21st century, Christian hymns in Indian languages constitute an important repertory of traditional music throughout the Americas, and indigenous peoples also perform hymns and gospel songs in English. Indian-language hymns tend to be sung from memory without instrumental accompaniment, whereas hymns in English feature piano or organ accompaniment. Native Americans began playing European fiddle music by the 1800s, and those repertories are considered traditional in the 21st century. The Mi'kmaq fiddler Lee Cremo is well known among the First Nations of Canada, while the Coushatta fiddler Deo Langley won a regional Cajun music contest in Louisiana during the 1980s. By

the 1860s, O'odham fiddlers were playing music for the mazurka, schottische, and polka at public dances in Tucson, Ariz.; they developed a repertory known as *waila* that has become an important traditional music. A similar history unfolded among Indian marching bands, which began performing in the mid-1800s for parades, fairs, and exhibitions, attracting both native and nonnative audiences.

Other musical innovations of the 1800s were associated with the development of new belief systems such as the Indian Shaker Church, the Ghost Dance, and the Native American Church. The Indian Shaker Church developed in about 1882 among the Squaxin people of the Northwest Coast under the leadership of John Slocum and Mary Slocum, who combined indigenous healing practices with a church-centred form of worship. Their sacred music includes Indian-language hymns accompanied by foot stomping and handbells. Two successive incarnations of the Ghost Dance were fostered by Great Basin prophets who experienced millenarian visions involving the imminent return of the dead (hence "ghost"), the retreat of settlers, and the restoration of Indian lands, food supplies, and ways of life. These ends, it was believed, would be hastened by the dances and songs revealed to the prophets and also by strict observance of a moral code that emphasized harmony, hard work, and sobriety and that forbade war against Indians or Euro-Americans. The Ghost Dance involved collective singing and dancing without instrumental accompaniment; the songs followed the general musical style associated with the area, using paired-phrase structure, moderate tempos, narrow melodic ranges, and blended unison. In 1890 the U.S. government banned the Ghost Dance, but some adherents continued to perform it in private into the late 20th century. The Native American Church, based on native spiritual traditions from northern Mexico, was introduced to the Apache in the 1700s, expanded throughout North America during the 1800s, and became an organized religion during the 1900s. This syncretic belief system combines rituals and beliefs of traditional indigenous religions with Christianity; prayer meetings involve the ingestion of peyote, a traditional medicine that has hallucinogenic properties. The songs performed during prayer meetings have a distinctive style unlike any other North American Indian music. These songs are accompanied by a water drum and rattle; they feature a kind of strophic form, a fast tempo, and a somewhat tense and nasal vocal quality. Since they represent a form of prayer, the songs are performed in a quiet and reflective manner.

The most significant innovation in Native American music during the 1900s was the development of the powwow, a collective celebration involving music and dance performed throughout North America. The term *powwow* derives from a word in the Algonquian

language referring to healing rituals. In the early 20th century, the term was used in reference to traditional gatherings, and it later became associated with a specific kind of event based on aspects of Plains cultures. Powwows differ from one another in terms of length (one or more days), details of organization, and sponsorship, but each event generally begins with the Grand Entry of the colour guard and dancers into the arena, followed by a welcome speech. Then most powwows include performances in various categories of dance, such as Men's Traditional, Women's Traditional, Men's Fancy Dance, Women's Fancy Shawl, Grass Dance (male), and Jingle Dress Dance (female); the exact number and names of dances differ somewhat across North America. Many powwows involve dance competitions, with prizes awarded in each category. Powwow songs often reflect the style of music from the Plains area; the singers accompany themselves on a large bass drum, and the ensemble as a whole is known as a Drum. Each Drum includes three or more singers. Like many other aspects of 21st-century Native American life, powwows generally promote indigenous culture, spirituality, and social unity. Most powwows are open to the public; they offer an excellent opportunity for non-Indians to experience Native American music and dance.

Other significant 20th-century developments were the rise of Native American popular music and the nearly simultaneous renaissance of indigenous musics. Some Native Americans became involved in popular music early on; the native Mexican (Otomí) violinist Juventino Rosas published a set of waltzes in 1891 that were popular internationally, including the tune ""Sobre las olas"" ("Over the Waves"). Yet not until the 1960s did Native American popular music come of age. Native American musicians participate in many genres, including jazz, rock and roll, blues, country, folk, gospel, rap, hip-hop, new age, *norteño*, and reggae. Their lyrics express native issues and concerns in both English and native languages, and the music is appreciated by Indians and non-Indians alike. Some of the best-known Native North American popular musicians are Buffy Sainte-Marie (Cree), Philippe McKenzie (Innu [Montagnais]), Joanne Shenandoah (Oneida), Joy Harjo (Creek), Geraldine Barney (Navajo), Robert Mirabal (Taos Pueblo), and Jim Pepper (Kaw and Creek). Some well-known Native North American groups include Redbone, XIT, and Ulali. Marlui Miranda, a Native American popular musician from Brazil, achieved international renown during the 1990s. Movements to revive and restore Native American musical repertories had begun by the 1950s and were common throughout the hemisphere by the 1990s.

PARTICIPATION IN ART MUSIC

American Indians have been active for centuries as composers of European art music. One

of the first Native American composers to use European genres and notation was the late 16th-century composer Diego Lobato, an Inca who in 1574 became chapelmaster at the Quito Cathedral (now in Ecuador); he wrote motets (i.e., choral settings of sacred texts) and other works, but his scores have not survived. Two hymns with Nahuatl texts written in Mexico during the 1500s appear to have been composed by a native musician. Mexican Indians who composed European art music during the 1600s included Juan de Lienas of Mexico City and Juan Matías, who served as the chapelmaster at Oaxaca (now in Mexico) from about 1655 through 1667. The first published Native North American composer of European art music was Thomas Commuck, whose hymnal, as mentioned above, appeared in 1845. Native North American composers of the 20th century have produced symphonies, ballets, chamber music, choral music, film scores, and more; these include Carl Fischer (Cherokee), Jack Kilpatrick (Cherokee), Louis Ballard (Cherokee-Quapaw), and Brent Michael Davids (Mohican). Blas Galindo (Huichol) and Teodoro Valcárcel (Andean) were also prolific composers of the 20th century.

European and European American composers have long been influenced by American Indian musics. The first European composer to quote an Indian melody in a piece of art music appears to have been the French missionary Gabriel Sagard-Théodat, who in 1636 published a Mi'kmaq song arranged in four-part harmony. Similarly, the Spanish composer Sebastián de Aguirre included an indigenous Mexican dance called ""Tocotín"" in a book published in Mexico about 1650 on how to play the cittern (a type of guitar). In the 1700s, European composers such as Carl Heinrich Graun, James Hewitt, and Louis-Emmanuel Jadin produced operas based on aspects of native peoples, without incorporating indigenous melodies or style elements. Serious efforts to develop American musical nationalism began during the late 1800s, when composers such as Aniceto Ortega (Mexico), Edward MacDowell (United States), and Arturo Berutti (Argentina) began to quote indigenous melodies in their operas, symphonic music, and short piano pieces. Interest in American musical nationalism peaked in the first half of the 20th century, when composers throughout the Western Hemisphere, including Arthur Farwell (United States) and Carlos Chávez (Mexico), participated in the Indianist movement, using indigenous melodies, rhythms, and musical instruments. Interest in Indianism had declined by the mid-20th century, although a few composers continued to reference native peoples in their music.

THE STUDY OF AMERICAN INDIAN MUSICS

The study of American Indian musics began in the late 1800s with the emergence of a

scholarly discipline called comparative musicology, which later became known as ethnomusicology. The first ethnomusicological study was a book on Native American music published in 1882 by Theodore Baker. His research methods included interviewing Indian musicians, observing performances of indigenous music and dance, and transcribing the melodies in European staff notation. In 1890 scholars began to document native musics through sound recordings, which have remained central to ethnomusicological research. After more than a century of study, thousands of sound recordings, musical transcriptions, and publications exist on American Indian musics. At first, native music research focused on documenting musical cultures that were thought to be vanishing. But these musics did not disappear, and 21st-century research thus emphasizes documenting current musical practices, repatriating archival materials, and supporting community-based preservation and transmission initiatives. Some major archives for American Indian musics include the Archive of Folk Culture of the Library of Congress (Washington, D.C.), the Institute of Ethnomusicology (formerly the Archives of Andean Traditional Music) of the Catholic University of Peru (Lima), the Archives of Traditional Music at Indiana University (Bloomington), the Foundation for Ethnomusicology and Folklore (Caracas), the National Institute of Musicology (Buenos Aires), and the Phonograph Archive (Berlin).

Authenticity is an issue in the understanding and appreciation of American Indian music. Indigenous people define authenticity according to their own musical concepts and values, which sometimes differ from the criteria applied by outsiders. Some non-Indians think that musical instruments constructed from manufactured materials, such as plastic pipes, lack authenticity and are therefore inferior to instruments made from natural materials. However, Native American musicians define authenticity through construction methods, sound quality, and use rather than by outward appearance. Similarly, non-Indians sometimes devalue certain kinds of native performance, including ceremonial dances recontextualized for public folkloric demonstrations or newer styles such as hymns or fiddle music. Yet for Native Americans, these performance styles and contexts provide opportunities to reaffirm core cultural values, to celebrate identity, and to maintain connections to the past. Music and tradition in Indian communities are continually renewed through creative processes and play an integral role in the ongoing reproduction of culture.

> *Victoria Lindsay Levine*

"Native American music". *Encyclopædia Britannica. Encyclopædia Britannica Online.* Encyclopædia Britannica Inc., 2017. Web. 22 Feb. 2017 <https://www.britannica.com/art/Native-American-music>.