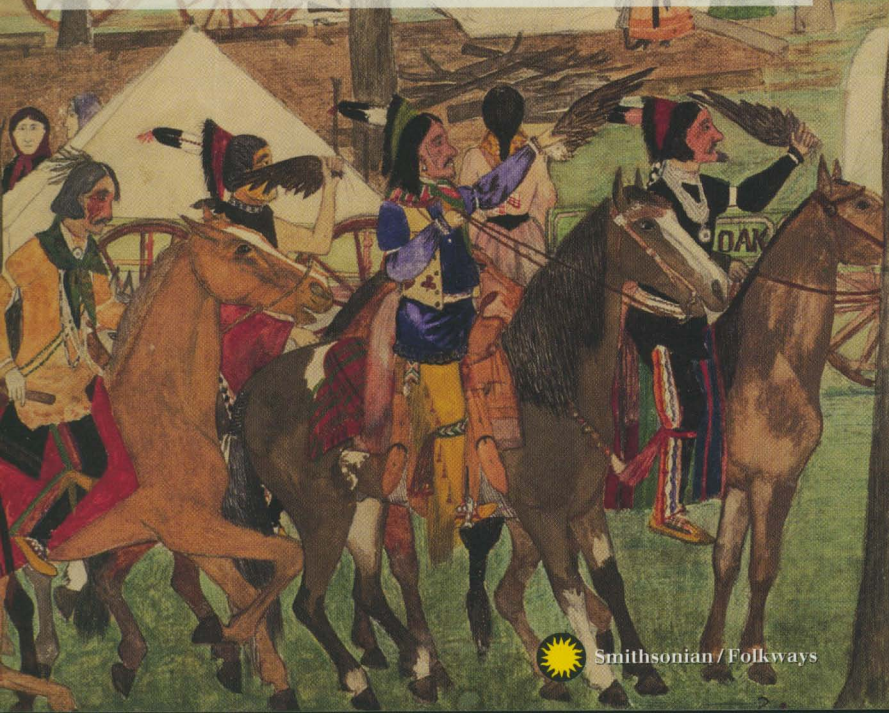


CREATION'S JOURNEY

NATIVE AMERICAN MUSIC

PRESENTED BY THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN



Smithsonian / Folkways

CREATION'S JOURNEY: Native American Music

Presented by the National Museum of the American Indian

- 1 **Prairie Chicken Dance**
(Blackfoot Crossing Singers) 1:57
- 2 **Scalp Dance/Victory Dance**
(Comanche) 4:05
- 3 **Two Step: Inform Your Grandma**
(D. J. Nez, Navajo) 1:59
- 4 **Crown Dance**
(White Mountain Apache) 2:52
- 5 **Butterfly Dance**
(Tewa) 10:15
- 6 **New Women's Shuffle Dance**
(Young Nation, Seneca) 6:22
- 7 **Constitution Breakdown**
(Lee Cremo Trio, Micmac) 2:08
- 8 **Sheehan's Reel/Pigeon on the Gate**
(Lee Cremo Trio, Micmac) 2:24
- 9 **A Beautiful Life**
(Kingfisher Trio, Cherokee) 2:04
- 10 **On the Jericho Road**
(Kingfisher Trio, Cherokee) 2:52
- 11 **Helana**
(Yup'ik) 1:28
- 12 **Hello Song**
(Yup'ik) 2:40
- 13 **Ladies Dance**
(kwakiutl) 5:59
- 14 **Peace Dance**
(kwakiutl) 2:17
- 15 **Sata Kallta**
(Comunidad Aymara de Laqaya, Aymara) 4:26
- 16 **Axawiri Imilla**
(Comunidad Aymara de Laqaya, Aymara) 6:52
- 17 **Son de la Danza de los Mixes**
(Zapotec) 4:52

ADDITIONAL NOTES ENCLOSED



Ceremonial, social, and contemporary music of Native Americans, who present ancient, living traditions along with innovations and crossovers to Euro-American musics.

These 1992 and 1995 recordings of music from the United States, Canada, Mexico, and Bolivia were selected by noted ethnomusicologist Charlotte Heth (Cherokee).

"This music is an elegant expression of the vibrant cultural life and diverse creativity of native peoples throughout the Americas."

—Rick West (Southern Cheyenne),
Director, NMAI



**Smithsonian
Folkways**

Smithsonian/Folkways Recordings
Center for Folklife Programs & Cultural Studies
955 L'Enfant Plaza, Suite 2600
Smithsonian Institution
Washington, DC 20560

Creation's Journey: Native American Music

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FOREWORD

No cultural or artistic expression is more central to Native American life than music and dance. Children are taught to respect the ways of their people through songs and dances. Indeed, Iroquois tradition maintains that children who can't dance well were born of mothers who didn't dance when they were pregnant. Perhaps no form of native creativity is more enduring than music—the songs of the Aymara contain echoes of the beautiful Andean flute and ocarina music described by Spanish chroniclers, while the haunting synthesis of Baptist hymns and the Cherokee language captures one native group's response to the challenge of contact with European culture. Nor is any art more diverse—Native American music encompasses social and ceremonial dances, oral histories and personal stories passed on in song, and traditional and Christian religious music. Finally, no art is more immediate than music.

I take great pleasure, as director of the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of the American Indian, in helping bring to a wider audience the musicians and singers on *Creation's Journey: Native American Music Presented by the National Museum of the American Indian*. Dedicated to the preservation, study, and exhibition of the histories and lifeways of the indigenous peoples of the Western Hemisphere, the museum is committed to fostering living native cultures—by reaffirming traditions and beliefs, encouraging contemporary artistic expression, and empowering the Indian voice.

*

The museum will ultimately comprise three facilities, each born of consultations between museum staff and native peoples. The George Gustav Heye Center at the Alexander Hamilton U.S. Custom House, opened in October 1994, serves as an exhibition and education facility in New York City. The National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C., is scheduled to open in 2001 on the National Mall. A tribute to the heritage and continuing contribution of Native American peoples, the museum will be a center for ceremonies, performances,

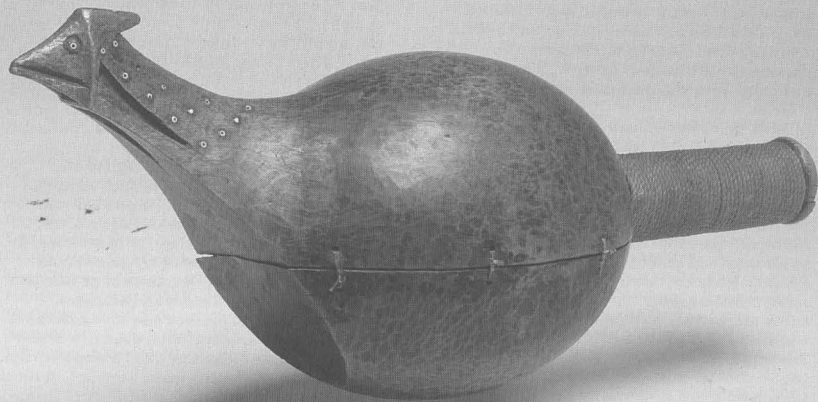
and educational programs, as well as an exhibition space for Indian art and material culture. The Cultural Resources Center in Suitland, Maryland, scheduled to open in 1997, will welcome scholars and non-scholars, Indians and non-Indians, who wish to study the museum's collections. Of equal importance are extensive outreach programs that will provide access to the museum's cultural and educational resources to audiences who may never have an opportunity to visit the East Coast facilities.

We are pleased to have had the opportunity to work with Smithsonian/Folkways on this first recording produced by the National Museum of the American Indian. Likewise, we are delighted to have had the guidance of Charlotte Heth, who chose the material on this recording and provided all text on the music. Dr. Heth, former chairperson of the Department of Ethnomusicology and Systematic Musicology at the University of California, Los Angeles, former director of the American Indian Program at Cornell University, and former director of the American Indian Studies Center at UCLA, has just joined the staff of NMAI as Assistant Director for Public Programs. She was also the general editor of the museum's first major publication, *Native American Dance: Ceremonies and Social Traditions* (1992, Fulcrum Publishing).

This recording and its companion book *Creation's Journey: Native American Identity and Belief* (1994, Smithsonian Institution Press) complement the exhibition *Creation's Journey: Masterworks of Native American Identity and Belief*, on view at the Heye Center until February 1997. Yet the music presented here also stands alone as an eloquent expression of the vibrant cultural life and diverse creativity of native peoples throughout the Americas.

W. Richard West, Jr.
Director

(Southern Cheyenne and member of the Cheyenne and Arapaho Tribes of Oklahoma)



CREATION'S JOURNEY:

Native American Music

Presented by the National Museum of the American Indian

(Recorded in New York City and Washington, D.C., 1992 and 1995)

This album offers ceremonial, social, and contemporary music of Native Americans from the United States, Canada, Mexico, and Bolivia. The singers and instrumentalists present ancient, living traditions along with innovations and crossovers to Euro-American musics.

In 1992, the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian presented a Native American dance program to complement a special preview exhibition called *Pathways of Tradition: Indian Insights into Indian Worlds*, at the George Gustav Heye Center in the Alexander Hamilton U.S. Custom House, the museum's New York exhibition facility. Participants in the dance program included many musical groups representing a host of tribes and nations. Several of those groups, recorded live at the Custom House or at Giant Recording Studios in New York, can be heard on this recording. Other outstanding artists agreed to record for this album during visits to Washington, D.C.

Many of these musicians (who are often bilingual and bicultural) continue to cherish their songs, dances, and rituals. Woven into the fabric of everyday life, Native American songs and dances not only reinforce ancient beliefs and confirm contemporary identities, but also serve as entertainment.

The voice is the most important instrument in American Indian music, embracing many kinds of performances—solos, call and response, unison chorus, and multi-part songs, some with instrumental accompaniment. The singers typically perform in their native languages, but often include “vocables” (non-translatable syllables, such as *he, ya, ho, we*, etc.) to carry the melody and fill out the poetic and musical lines. Solo flute pieces and instrumental ensembles complete the repertoires. Some Indian groups use simple, short songs with many repetitions while others prefer lengthy song cycles. The choices of scales, rhythms, meters, and vocal styles vary according to area, tribe, ceremony, and genre, and sometimes even reflect individual preference.

The musicians choose from a variety of instruments—mainly rattles, drums, scrapers, flutes, whistles, and strings. Singers and dancers use hand-held vessel rattles or clappers, and the rattles on their arms and legs, or attach them to their clothing. Performers play many drum types, from small water drums to large bass and box drums of many shapes and varieties. Frequently, several persons play the same drum simultaneously or play similar drums in concert. Other instruments like rasps and bullroarers are less common. Flutes, whistles, panpipes, musical bows, fiddles, guitars, and other plucked strings are more common in Central and South America than in North America.

*

NORTH AMERICAN PLAINS

1. **Prairie Chicken Dance** / Blackfoot Crossing Singers / Blackfeet (Chorus: Fred Breaker, Radford Blackrider, Joe Weaselchild, Eldon Weaselchild, Herman Yellow Old Woman, Larry Whyte)

The Blackfoot Crossing Singers from the Siksika (Blackfeet) Nation in Alberta, Canada, perform old songs and songs that were composed both by relatives and by members of their drum group. Their song style is typical of Northern Plains music with the lead singer starting high, his chorus echoing him, and all singing together to the end of each repetition. The melodies typically descend in terraced fashion throughout the piece.

According to Eldon Weaselchild, the Prairie Chicken Dance is a song that was passed on from generation to generation. It was given to a high-ranking warrior by the spirit of a prairie chicken. The dancer mimics the mating movements of a prairie chicken. The shifts and variations in the drum beats accentuate these changes.

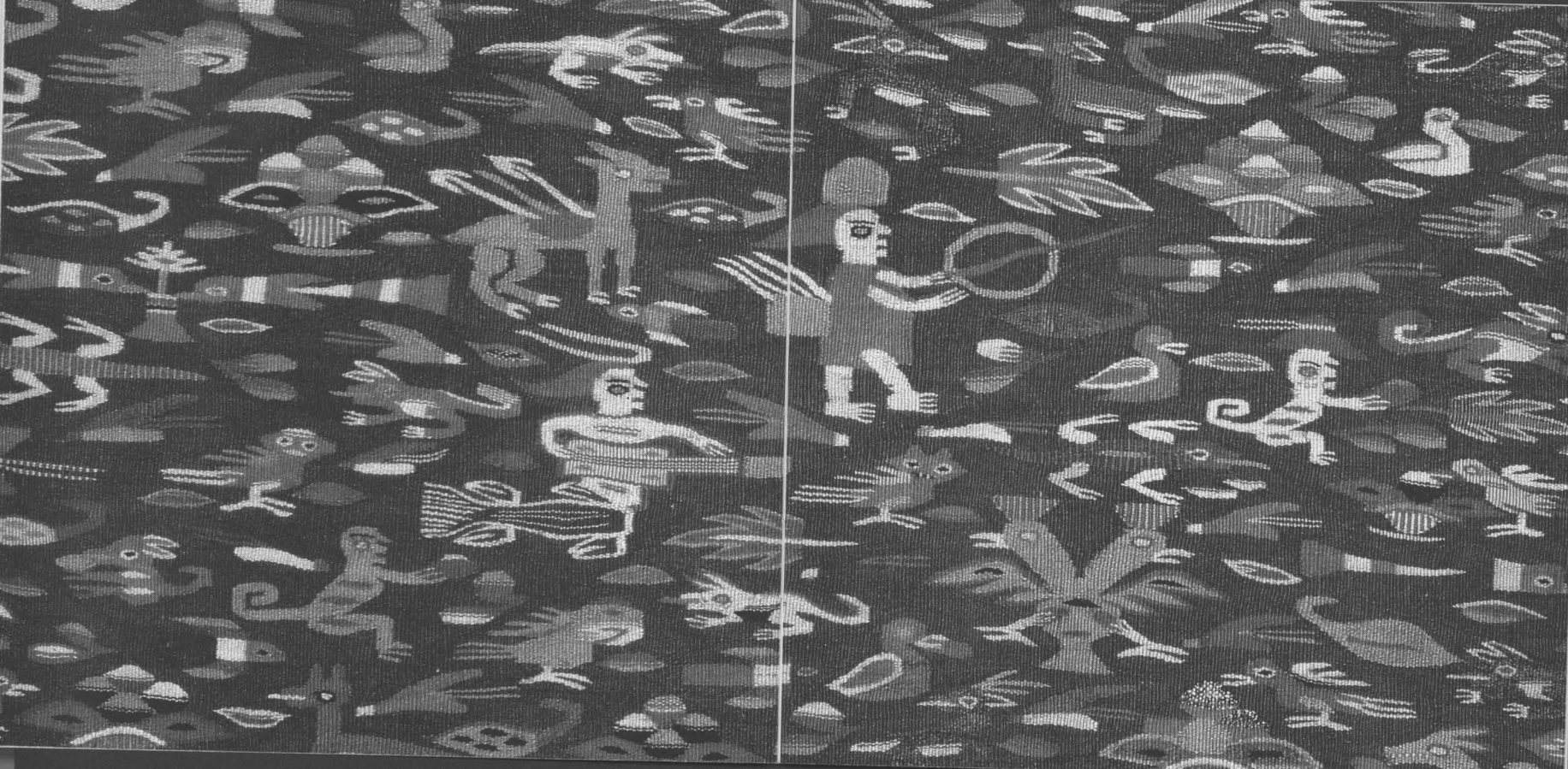
2. **Scalp Dance/Victory Dance** / Comanche (Singers: Darrell Cable, Sr., Gerald Chasenah, Otto Mahsetky, Elrod Monoessy, Jr., Edmond Nevaquaya, Sammy Pewo, Jr., Moses Starr, Jr., Edward J. Tahhawah, Elton Yellowfish. Other participants: Emma Ahhaity, Deloris Ann Aitson, Myra Aitson, Wallace Coffey, Tony Griffith, Jeanette Jenkins, John Keel, Lorraine McCurtain, John Parker, Billy Pewo, Charles Pocowatchit, Lynnie Yellowfish, Barry Yellowfish, LaVonna Weller, Darrell Wildcat)

In the setting of a powwow or gathering of tribes, music and dance highlight the activities. Each event is marked by many social dances, honoring dances, and specialty dances. While the forms resemble those of the Northern Plains, the Southern Plains vocal style heard here is different—the singers typically use a lower register, no falsetto, and are more relaxed. Even so, the songs ordinarily start in the tenor range and descend throughout.

The Scalp Dance, presented here by Comanche people from Oklahoma, showcases women who wear war bonnets and dance with war lances to celebrate victory. Counting coup (striking a warrior) in hand-to-hand combat and scalping an enemy under extremely dangerous circumstances were proofs of bravery. The scalp was a trophy, proof of success to be used in the Victory Dance. In a public setting like this one, the voices of the women are loud, both in singing and in articulating ululation (high-pitched wordless cries). The varied drum patterns signal changes in the dance movements.

Of the Scalp Dance, Elton Yellowfish writes, “This dance is to recognize the spoils of war, namely human scalps taken during hand-to-hand combat with the enemy. Upon return to the home campsite, the women would take the lance which had the scalp tied to it. The women usually were relatives of the returning warriors. . . . They would take the lance and dance with it, holding it high so all could see the trophy. It was a good sign and caused a successful feeling among the women that their sons or husbands returned alive. As they danced, they would let out a shrilling yell as an expression of victory. The Scalp Dance usually lasted for a brief period of time, perhaps an hour. The songs were specially designed for the Scalp Dance. Words in the songs told of the battle or described the character of a warrior.”

“The Victory Dance,” writes Yellowfish, “was performed by both men and women. They danced side-by-side in a circle counterclockwise. The same lance and scalp were used as symbols of victory. The Victory Dance songs told stories of battle encounters, including a description of



the enemy. It was a happy occasion for everyone to dance the Victory Dance, which usually lasted for several hours. The dance was performed in full regalia. Both dances and songs are not usually performed within the present-day powwow activities. They are indicative of the songs and dances of yesteryear. Today, these dances are performed upon special request and on special occasions."

SOUTHWESTERN UNITED STATES

3. Two-Step: Inform Your Grandma

D. J. Nez / Navajo

The Two-Step is one example of a social dance song associated with the Navajo *Ndaa'* or Enemy Way Chant (*Anaa'ji'*). A healing ceremony, to purify Navajos who have encountered the ghosts of non-Navajos, the Enemy Way is performed many times between spring and fall, and features nighttime public social dancing. In recent years, returning veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces have been purified through this dance.

The Two-Step, or *joo'ashi'* (literally, "two walking"), involves male/female partners dancing within a larger group circle. The entire group reverses directions between songs. The Two-Step showcases many new compositions. This piece, "Inform Your Grandma," was composed by Mr. Nez.

Dan Jim "D.J." Nez, a well-known singer from Mariano Lake, New Mexico, accompanies himself on a small water drum.

4. Crown Dance (*Gaan Yiyaayu*) / White Mountain Apache (Singer: Ramsey Burnette.

Other participants: Lyndon Guy, Mathias Hoffman, Samson Hoffman, Christopher Perry, Corrine Perry, Edgar Perry)

The Crown Dance is an important event among the White Mountain Apache of Arizona. The dance invokes the power of the *gaan*, potent spiritual beings who once lived among the White Mountain Apache and whose spirits now dwell in the mountains. Dancers, wearing elaborate headdresses or crowns, have the power to drive away evil, grant blessings, and heal the sick. Although Crown dancing today takes place largely in conjunction with the Sunrise Ceremony, a very sacred White Mountain Apache ceremony that helps to prepare an adolescent girl for adulthood, the music and dance can be presented publicly with certain aspects modified or omitted.

The music resembles, to some extent, the Navajo selection, with some major differences. Although we have alternation of vocables and Apache words in the text, the words are treated differently. They are declaimed in a recitative style on one or two pitches only, for emphasis. In a traditional setting the singer would use a water drum (instead of the rawhide drum heard here) and would have other singers to help him.

5. Butterfly Dance / Tewa (Drummers/singers: Peter Garcia, Carpio Trujillo, San Juan Pueblo, New Mexico. Other participants: Lori Adams, Tanya Lopez, Cecilio Martinez, Jenille Masarenas, Jeff Montoya, Daniel Moya, Robert Oroscio, George Rivera, Reyecita Viarrial, Pojoaque Pueblo, New Mexico).

The Butterfly Dance is an example of a song that has changed little throughout time. It is performed

in the spring by a couple; the woman wears an outfit with feather wings and antennae resembling those of a butterfly, while the man wears white pants, shirt, otter-skin frontlet, rain sash, and ankle bells. He carries a war club made of white obsidian that he brandishes during the faster portions of the dance. The entrance, called the *wasa*, allows the couple to enter the plaza in a zigzag pattern, the woman following the man. The dance proper features faster, more vigorous movements and steps by the dancers.

EASTERN UNITED STATES AND CANADA

6. New Women's Shuffle Dance (*Askaanyea Guynawsay*) / Young Nation / Seneca (Leader: Gary Parker. Chorus: Darrin Jimerson, Mike Henry, Scott Logan, Aaron Jacobs, Jr.)

As a matriarchal society, the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) revere women because of their life-giving gift, bestowed by the Creator. As an expression of respect, exclusively female songs and dances are dedicated to women's sustaining role in society.

There are two types of Women's Shuffle Dance songs—the older ceremonial songs and the later, newly composed social dance songs. The repertoire is extensive, as newer women's dance songs are composed and added, increasing the number of songs shared and exchanged throughout Haudenosaunee communities.

This piece, which consists of several songs, begins with the water drum, cow-horn rattles, and a solo singer. Then the chorus joins in, and all sing in unison through several repetitions to

the end of the song. The second, third, and fourth songs spin out in the same way as the first. The vocal style is relaxed, with some tension on the highest pitches. Women dance by shuffling their feet on the ground to keep in touch with the earth.

Young Nation, from the Tonawanda Band of Senecas, New York, participate in private Longhouse ceremonies as well as taking part in the powwow circuit.

7. Constitution Breakdown / Lee Cremo Trio / Micmac (Lee Cremo, fiddle; Vincent Joe, piano; Wilfred Paul, guitar)

Centuries ago, settlers, primarily from Scotland, brought their music to Cape Breton Island in Nova Scotia. Today, Scottish/Irish traditional music remains very popular and widespread. The fiddle is the dominant lead instrument, with backup rhythm played on piano and, sometimes, guitar. Lee Cremo, Vincent Joe, and Wilfred Paul, all Micmac Indians from Cape Breton, have been playing traditional Celtic music all their lives, and are highly regarded by their non-native musician counterparts. Because the Micmac have been playing this music for so long, they now regard it as their own.

"Constitution Breakdown," a composition of Lee Cremo's, is a fast fiddle melody that alternates between leaps and adjacent tones to create a lively piece, with the fiddler adding ornaments and double stops throughout. In 4/4 time, this polka is the kind of tune commonly heard at dances and house parties.

8. **Sheehan's Reel/Pigeon on the Gate** / Lee Cremo Trio / Micmac (Lee Cremo, fiddle; Vincent Joe, piano; Wilfred Paul, guitar)

This medley has the same ensemble quality as the previous selection, and is also in 4/4 time. Featuring the variety and complexity characteristic of Irish reels, with modulations and several shifts into minor keys, this piece displays the virtuosity of the players. Both of these reels are standards in the repertoires of Irish musicians on either side of the Atlantic.

CHEROKEE CHRISTIAN SONGS

9. **A Beautiful Life** / Kingfisher Trio / Cherokee (Jack Kingfisher, guitar; Betty Kingfisher, Wesley Kingfisher)

Members of the Johnson Prairie Indian Baptist Church near Tahlequah, Oklahoma, the Kingfisher Trio synthesize Baptist hymns and the Cherokee language in their singing.

The Christianization of many members of the Cherokee Nation has created a new kind of Indian music—hymns and gospel songs. While both Cherokees and missionaries adapted some of the songs directly from Protestant models, others are unique. All are sung in Cherokee, and the translations of the Cherokee texts often do not match their English counterparts. The first Cherokee hymnbook was printed in the Sequoyah syllabary (commonly referred to as the Cherokee Alphabet) in 1829 without tunes and has been revised throughout the years. Some tunes have been passed down through oral tradition since the 1820s. In addition to the published hymn texts, there are new songs

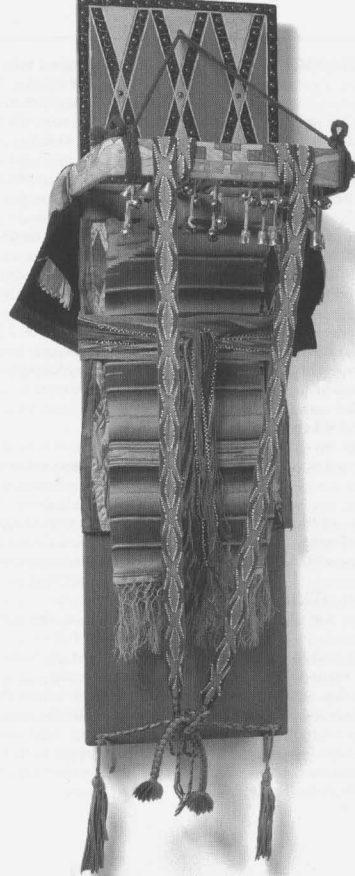
being composed constantly for Cherokee “sings,” particularly by family groups.

The vocal quality, for the most part, is nasal, as are the vowels of the Cherokee language. Characteristically, the hymns also feature some glottal stops along with many sliding attacks and releases. The vocal line is broken up with chorus echoes and responses. Guitar accompaniment here reinforces the harmony.

As with many metric hymns, the words can be sung to several tunes. These words appear also with “Jesus My All.” Translated as “God's son, to Heaven he went, on whom I depend. Where he went, I will follow. The narrow road where Christians have gone, where God's throne is, now, I'm surely going.” The woman's response emphasizes the word “heaven” (*galunlati*). The verse and chorus here are sung twice.

10. **On the Jericho Road** / Kingfisher Trio / Cherokee (Jack Kingfisher, guitar; Betty Kingfisher, Wesley Kingfisher)

A direct translation from the English into Cherokee by Joe O'Field, “On the Jericho Road” (original composed by Donald S. McCrossan, ©1955 by the Stamps-Baxter Music Co.) tells of how Christ, while walking along the Jericho Road, ministered to the people on his travels there. “Jericho” becomes *Jeligo* in Cherokee. Again, the singers repeat the same verse and chorus.



NORTHWEST COAST AND ARCTIC
(U.S. and Canada)

11. Helana / Yup'ik (Eskimo) (Elena Charles, Nicholas R. Charles, Jr., Joe Chief, Jr.)

Elena Charles, her son Nicholas Charles, and dancer Joe Chief, Jr., are from Bethel, Alaska.

According to Elena Charles, before the white man came, there was an Eskimo war. This very old song was made by her great-great grandparents' grandpa when they were going to go to war. He was afraid he might not come back, and he composed this chorus—but he did make it back. The second chorus describes another episode when he swam a wide river to meet his fellow warriors on the other side. His tears were rolling down when he was going to swim across, but he made it, and when he went back to his own village, he made up this song. "Those are the words from our old ancestors," Elena says.

Mrs. Charles sings solo with one of the men accompanying her on the large frame drum. Her voice is relaxed in a low, one-octave range.

12. Hello Song / Yup'ik (Eskimo) (Elena Charles, Nicholas R. Charles, Jr., Joe Chief, Jr.)

Elena Charles explains: "This is a kind of new song. A couple of years ago my husband [Nicholas R. Charles, Sr.] made this song. We used to always go for Eskimo dancing in other places, and after we came back, he made this song. It says, 'Hello, somebody says hello to me and somebody shakes hands with me, recognizes me.' And then the chorus—'Early

morning when I take a walk I see one of my buddies, my cousin, and he recognizes me and shakes hands with me.' And then another chorus in which he says it's early morning when he took a walk and saw his old girlfriend, and she recognized him and said hello to him, and shook hands with him. After that I don't think it was true. That's what the song is about. That's all."

The frame drums underscore the unison ensemble singing in this piece. The singers alternate singing with recitative, and play a variety of drum rhythms with many stops and starts.

13. Ladies Dance / Kwakiutl (Barbara Cranmer, Andrea Cranmer, Vera Dick, Henry Nelson, Ethel Scow, Henry Seaweed, Kevin Cranmer, William Cranmer, Norine Charlie, Eva Dick, Emma Tamlin, William Wasden, Jr.)

This selection is performed by Kwakiutl people from Alert Bay in British Columbia (Canada), all of whom represent the Umista Cultural Society. Bill Cranmer, Board Chairman of the society, explains that the Ladies Dance is part of the T'seka or Red Cedar Bark Ceremony. There are many different songs for the Ladies dances and other dances that are part of the T'seka.

In this dance, the women move in time with the music and follow the words with their hands. The song starts with a leader and several drummers playing a large drum. A chorus answers, and then the leader and chorus alternate throughout, with their parts sometimes overlapping. The drum remains a constant but plays different patterns as needed. Often the drummers play a tremolo to emphasize the leader's part.

14. Peace Dance / Kwakiutl (Barbara Cranmer, Andrea Cranmer, Vera Dick, Henry Nelson, Ethel Scow, Henry Seaweed, Kevin Cranmer, William Cranmer, Norine Charlie, Eva Dick, Emma Tamlin, William Wasden, Jr.)

Bill Cranmer explains that "the Peace Dance Song is one of the many songs sung during the Peace Dance Ceremonies, which are quite separate and distinct from the Red Cedar Bark Ceremonies [see previous selection]. These songs are handed down from generation to generation, although there are some new songs composed for special occasions."

Although similar to the previous selection, this piece adds rattles to the ensemble, and shouts are interspersed.

MEXICO AND SOUTH AMERICA

15. Sata Kallta / Comunidad Aymara de Laqaya / Aymara (Musical Director: Tomás Huanca Laura. Singers: Josefa Fernández Callizaya, Ana Maria Quispe Fernández, Bonifacia Quispe Fernández, Rosa Quispe Uruchi, Encarnación Uruchi Cabrera, Juana Estela Uruchi Limachi; *Aquinaldo Pinkullo* [bamboo flutes]: Damian Aruquipa Laruta, Pedro Quispe Fernández, José Uruchi Limachi; *Tinya* [snare drum]: Genaro Limachi Uruchi)

Sata Kallta is a song about planting potatoes, the staple of the Aymara people of Bolivia. The women sing this song as the potato fields are being planted in the springtime. They sing that the men plow the fields while the women plant the seeds. They jokingly tease the men that the furrows are not straight. They describe when it

is time to sow the fields and ask for a fruitful crop. The song is like a prayer to Mother Nature to bring good weather and an abundant potato harvest.

Musically, the drum rhythms underlay the entire song, with the men's flutes and women's voices alternating on the melody. The unison voices are tense, loud, and fall into a narrow range.

16. Axawiri Imilla / Comunidad Aymara de Laqaya / Aymara (Musical Director: Tomás Huanca Laura. Singers: Damian Aruquipa Laruta, Josefa Fernández Callizaya, José Limachi Pinedo, Genaro Limachi Uruchi, Rufino Mendoza Uruchi, Ana Maria Quispe Fernández, Pedro Quispe Fernández, Bonifacia Quispe Fernández, Rosa Quispe Uruchi, Encarnación Uruchi Cabrera, José Uruchi Limachi, Juana Estela Uruchi Limachi)

This a capella song, performed in a call-and-response fashion, is called *Axawiri Imilla* (*Axawiri* is a type of potato; *Imilla* is a young woman). It is sung during the Qhachwa or Night Ceremony, which is held during the late spring-early summer (December-January) when the potato fields are maturing. Young men and women go into the potato fields in the evening and sing Qhachwiri (songs of the Qhachwa Ceremony) all night, asking Mother Nature to bring good weather and abundant crops. In the song, the women represent the potato, while the men represent the frost and hail that can destroy the potato crops. These two opposing forces fight for control, but eventually they join together in song—saying, let's bring these strengths together to promote a good harvest. The Qhachwa Ceremony also has social importance because it



is an opportunity for the single men and women of the community to meet and fall in love.

17. **Son de la Danza de los Mixes / Zapotec** (Filemon Beltrán Morales, Sofronio Cruz Modesto, Edilberto Gabriel Gomez, Pedro Guzman Morales, Liborio Lopez Montes, Anatolio Lopez Sanchez, Aureliano Morales Lopez, Armando Morales Montes, Mario Ríos Guzman, Gil Ríos Morales, Heriberto Ríos Morales, Manuel Ríos Morales, Venustiano Robles Morales)

In the province of Oaxaca, in Mexico's Northern Sierras, the Zapotec are one of sixteen different ethnic groups; the Mixes are neighbors of the Zapotec. This musical piece, called a *son*, is played as an accompaniment to the Danza de los Mixes, or Mixes Dance, one of the many traditional dances performed by the Zapotecs during their ceremonial fiestas. Each dance has its own *son*, which determines the rhythm and type of movement performed. The music reflects the humorous way the Zapotecs depict the Mixes. The brass band instruments are not out of tune—their sound is deliberate and reflects the Zapotec tuning style.

Unlike many of the other pieces on this album, the dancing here is to instrumental music. Because the ensemble moves with the dancers, we hear many changes in sound levels throughout this selection, with the musicians leading us and the dancers gently in and out of the piece. The main section of the *son* is loud and joyous. Played in 6/8 time, the form has alternating AABB sections with minor variations throughout. The instruments featured here include bass drum, snare drum, cymbals, tuba, French horn, two trombones, two saxophones, two trumpets, and two clarinets.

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Aymara musicians and Blackfoot Crossing were recorded in January 1993 at Giant Recording Studios, New York City: Michel Sauvage, engineer; Chuck Coco, assistant engineer; D.J. Nez, Kingfisher Trio, Lee Cremo Trio, Young Nation, and Yup'ik group were recorded in March 1993 at Omega Recording Studios, Rockville, Maryland: Billy Brady, engineer; Dave Goodermuth, assistant engineer. All other groups were recorded in 1992 during live performances at NMAI's George Gustav Heye Center in New York City: George Aravelo, engineer.

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Photo Captions

Cover: *Procession before War Dance*, ca. 1910.

Ernest L. Spybuck (1883–1949), Absentee Shawnee. Watercolor on paperboard, 44.2 x 63.9 cm. (2.5735)

Ernest Spybuck described the scene he re-created in this painting: "Before the Shawnees have a war-dance, the dancers hold a ceremony out some distance from the dance-ground, in which they have the sacred bundle open and dance around near it, just after they have painted themselves and dressed for the dance. At this time they talk to the bundle, and then they can get good luck in war. . . . No woman is allowed in this ceremony. Then they get on their horses and ride around before they dance."

Page 5: Makah rattle in the form of a bird, 19th c. Washington. Carved alder (?) wood, length 32 cm. (9.9907).

A rattle virtually identical to this one has been identified by a native elder as Kokhmin ("Makes Noise"), used for all kinds of dancing.

Pages 8–9: Inka manta (detail), late 18th c. (?). Lake Titicaca, Bolivia. Wool, 118.9 x 109.5 cm. (5.3773)

This manta is a native interpretation of the Noah's Ark story, illustrated with animals of the Andean region and surrounding lowlands. The mermaids

may refer to a local myth about a village at the bottom of Lake Titicaca where mermaids sing and play *charangos* (native guitars).

Page 15: Wah-zah-zhe *w'on-dop-she* (Osage cradleboard), early 20th c. Oklahoma. Wood, wool cloth, cord, ribbon, beads, metal studs, bells, 108 x 35 x 34 cm. (25.6985)

The sound of bells and metal tinklers, used by many native cultures in their dances, is part of a child's world from the earliest days.

Page 16: Kwakiutl button blanket, late 19th/early 20th c. Vancouver Island, British Columbia. Wool broadcloth, mother-of-pearl buttons, red wool flannel, 182 x 139.7 cm. (11.5129)

Swaying to drumbeats and songs, Northwest Coast dancers can make the images on their button blankets seem alive. This blanket depicts Gwa'ka'lee'ka'la, the Tree of Life.

Pages 20–21: Aztec *teponaztli* (wooden drum), carved with glyph for 1493. Azotla, Mexico. Length 43.8 cm. (16.3373)

Aztec ceremonies and feasts were accompanied by dances and music, including the sound of two-tone drums.

Illustrations of NMAI objects are from *Creation's Journey: Native American Identity and Belief* (1994, Smithsonian Institution Press).



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