Clint & Vera’s Native Flute Handbook

Fifth Edition

Course materials for participants of Native Flute Schools, Retreats, Workshops, and Gatherings facilitated by Clint and Vera

by Clint Goss and Vera Shanov

December 5, 2016

Private electronic distribution

Not for sale or distribution

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Clint & Vera’s Music Workshops, Native Flute Schools, and Retreats 2017

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This handbook is based on a collection of articles we have developed over the past several years, assembled and edited specifically as an aid to participants attending our workshops, retreats, and gatherings (Flute Haven Native Flute School, Flute Harvest Native Flute Retreat, Native Rhythms Flute School, etc). Each chapter is typically based on a separate article, so each of the chapters can be read independently. They are also designed to be read straight through, providing a graded, building-block approach.

Many people have contributed to this material, especially my co-authors on some of the chapters: Lynn Miller, Eric Miller, and Mary Knysh. Kathleen Joyce-Grendahl, in her role as editor for the INTERNATIONAL NATIVE AMERICAN FLUTE ASSOCIATION newsletter Voice of the Wind and the WORLD FLUTE SOCIETY newsletter Overtones, provided editorial input on a number of the articles. Additional material and input has been provided by Randy Brody, Cornell Kinderknecht, R. Carlos Nakai, James Oshinsky, and many others. Individual co-authors and contributors are noted at the footer of each chapter.

A great deal of the material is based on my training at the MUSIC FOR PEOPLE organization (www.MusicForPeople.org), which is the primary basis for the facilitation techniques that Vera and I use in Native Flute workshops.

We hope you find this material useful!

**First Edition**

The first edition of this handbook – 190 pages in length – was individually printed, bound, and privately distributed to participants of our music workshops in 2014. This was rather laborious and environmentally unfriendly. However, since this first edition of the book contained some elements that were only distributable under fair-use settings, a digital version was not an option. The first edition was dated June 17, 2014.

**Second Edition**

In 2015, we removed copyright-restricted content so that a digital distribution was feasible. The document was overhauled to reduce the size of the PDF distribution (70 MB to under 6.7 MB), provide clickable links to web sites and a table of contents outline in Acrobat Reader, and to use fonts that are licensed for distribution. The content was also substantially updated to make corrections, add information on our workshop schedule, and include 14 new chapters based on articles written over the last year, which brought the PDF distribution size to 7.8 MB.

The second edition was released in PDF format on September 26, 2015 and comprised 252 pages. Note that this document still retains aspects of the printed version: offset left and right pages as well as blank pages to achieve the proper pagination for duplex printing.
**Third Edition**

This third edition was released February 16, 2016. It comprised 320 pages in the digital release. It was updated with articles written over the prior year as well as a new section on *Poetry and Readings*.

This edition was a limited “mid-year” release for advance review by the participants in Flute Haven’s Leadership program as well as for participants of the Japan Flute Life 2016 program. A fourth edition is planned for later in 2016.

**Fourth Edition**

The fourth edition was released on July 22, 2016. It comprised 332 pages in the digital release. It contained articles written over the previous six months as well as new entries in the *Poetry and Readings* section and a new chapter on *Flute-specific Poetry*.

**Fifth Edition**

This fifth edition was released December 5, 2016. It comprises 350 pages in the digital release. It is updated with articles written and presentations developed over the past year (in particular, an in-depth description of our Playing Nine Emotions sessions), several new poems, and an article by Malia Wollan reprinted from the New York Times.

**Accessing the Content**

Beginning with the *Second Edition* of this Native Flute Handbook, the electronic distribution can be read by version 6.0 or later of Adobe Acrobat Reader and related products. This standard was released in July of 2003, so most up-to-date computer systems should be able to access this content.

You can click on any of the hypertext links in this document to access related content, including web pages, audio recordings, and other related PDF documents.

The content of this handbook will likely change from time to time. Different editions of this handbook may contain substantially different content. For these reasons, rather than distributing copies of this electronic file, please access the latest version at:


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— Clint Goss and Vera Shanov
December 5, 2016

Citations

Although this handbook is designed to be practical rather than academic, some of the chapters cite references and external sources. An example of a citation in the body of the text is [Author 2014]. You can find the details of the citations in a chapter at the end of that chapter. Where possible, a related web site is listed.

Most of the cited works are also listed in the extensive reference section on Flutopedia. To browse the list of references on Flutopedia, see: http://www.Flutopedia.com/references.htm.

Typography

We wanted to make reading this handbook as easy and enjoyable as possible, so we put some research and effort into layout and selection of typefaces.

The body text of the first edition of this handbook was set in Adobe Garamond Pro, named for the 16th century French type designer Claude Garamond. This version of the typeface was designed for Adobe by Robert Slimbach. This font was not available for digital distribution, so Times New Roman is used for the body text as of the Second Edition.

Titles of publications and published material are written in italics, boldface is used for emphasis, and ORGANIZATIONS are shown in SMALLCAPS.

Other fonts used in this handbook are:

**Chianti BT** (typically in a bold-italic style) is used for most titles and headers. It was designed in 1991 by Dennis Pasternak of Bitstream to provide a humanist san-serif font of high readability.

**Gill Sans MT** is used for Internet addresses. The typeface was developed in the 1920s by Eric Gill. This version was crafted in the early 1990s by Monotype.

**Tekton Pro** was used in the First Edition for items written in a drum or spoken language, such as **“TaKaDiMi Sis Boom Bah”**. It was designed as an informal typeface for architectural graphics and building construction. It was designed in 1989 by David Siegel of Adobe, based on the hand-lettering of Francis D.K. Ching, a Seattle-based architect and noted author on design and drawing. This font was not available for digital distribution, so Chianti BT is used for these elements as of the Second Edition.

The fonts used for finger diagrams such as ❄️❄️❄️❄️❄️ and 😄😄😄😄😄 are the NAFTracks series of fonts. They are available on Flutopedia at http://www.Flutopedia.com/fonts.htm.
Part 1 –

Flute Playing
One-Breath Solos

This is a wonderful technique that you can use as a warm-up, if you are developing a new song, or if you would like to invite people at a flute circle to “musically” introduce themselves:

Take a reasonably full breath and exhale into the flute, playing a melody for the duration of your breath.

When you try the exercise for the first time, you might find that you tend to “run out of breath”. The goal is not to squeeze every last drop of breath out of your system, but to end the phrase when most of your breath is expired and you can comfortably relax and let your lungs naturally start to re-expand.

After a while, you get to sense the duration of your breath, and build complete phrases to fit within that duration. For me, this is the first lesson in “song composition” … the repeated, deep practice of playing within our breath-span.

The real challenge is, of course, to disconnect your brain. The more we try to think about what we’re going to play, the further we get from playing from the heart.

In flute circles or workshops, we usually develop this exercise as a group by building up from the very basics:

- Starting from taking full breaths and simply exhaling steadily,
- Moving on to making an “ocean” sound in the throat during the exhale,
- Then adding some soft vocalizations,
- Exhaling into the flute on a single, long steady tone.
- And finally, “moving the fingers” – playing a melody of any sort within the span of that one breath.

In addition to the value of simply playing one-breath solos, they also become building blocks for a lot of other exercises. They can be the basis for playing duets as call and response – each person is playing one-breath solos. If

This chapter was written by Clint Goss. A similar article appeared in *Clint & Vera’s Flute Newsletter*, October 2013. The section by Malia Wollan was added for the Fifth Edition.
you're working on structured songs in **AABA** song form – Simply play a one-breath solo, repeat it, play something else (the “**B**”) and then play the first one-breath solo again.

Finally, there's another benefit if you're in leading a flute circle: If you'd like everyone to play a short piece in turn, you could ask for a one-breath solo (or even “two one-breath solos”), putting an implicit time limit on the solos.

**How to Breathe**

This article by Malia Wollan appeared in the Sunday Magazine issue of the New York Times, July 24, 2016, page 24. The graphic that accompanied the article is by Radio.

I think it is an excellent take on a topic so central to all flute players.

“You don't need special lungs or special techniques,” says Giora Feidman, 80, an Argentine-born Israeli clarinet player and klezmer musician who first blew into his father's clarinet as a toddler. Feidman reckons the problem arises when people unlearn what they innately know. When you emerged from the womb, it's very likely you instinctively drew oxygen deep into your lungs. You probably did not hunch over, draw your shoulders up to your ears or otherwise restrict your airflow.

Breathing is a powerful involuntary mechanism. Still, you can breathe better by acting purposefully and observing some basic rules. Don't smoke. (“It really kills me to see that,” Feidman says.) Take as much as you want. (“Air doesn't cost money. There is no tax!”) Go to the swimming pool or the sea: In water, you have to calculate how much to inhale to swim or dive underwater. Similarly, if you're playing a particularly complex musical composition, like, say, the bass-clarinet part in Richard Wagner's “Tristan und Isolde,” you might have to take in an enormous quantity of air to make it to the end of a phrase.

Relax. Inhale deeply. Sit up straight.

Appreciate your lungs. “When you know how to breathe, the word ‘stress’ is not in the dictionary,” Feidman says. This sentiment is, in fact, borne out in scientific studies showing that focused breathing exercises can reduce the symptoms of such things as stress, anxiety, obsessive-compulsive disorder, depression, schizophrenia, insomnia and attention-deficit disorder. Playing a wind instrument is itself restorative. After enrolling in a wind-instrument program called Bronchial Boogie, asthmatic British children exhibited a 70 percent decrease in nighttime symptoms and a 58 percent decrease in daytime ones.

Breathing allows you to sing, and for Feidman the human body is, at its core, “an instrument of song.” (Children, he says, are born wordlessly imploring their mothers to sing to them.) To find the song inside you requires trusting and believing in yourself. “My clarinet teacher once said to me, ‘I cannot teach you, you must learn,’” Feidman says. “It is that way with breathing too.”
Long Tones

Here is a wonderful exercise that I learned on my flute path from Paul Butler, woodwind player extraordinaire: Long Tones. The practice is so simple and so perfect for Native Flutes:

- Pick any fingering. For novice players, I often suggest three holes closed, three holes open.
- Take a reasonably full breath.
- Breathe into the instrument for the full duration of your breath, working towards a smooth, even sound with no variation in volume.
- End the long tone when you are mostly, but not completely, out of breath. Try making a “round” ending to the note, so that it drops off smoothly and cleanly into silence.

The idea of long tone practice is simplicity: no vibrato, no fancy articulation or attacks, no change in volume. And at the end, try not to be gasping for air, but end the note while you still have a bit of air remaining and before there is any tension for you to begin the inhale.

If you have a choice of flutes to use for this exercise, pick a mid-range flute that is comfortable to hold in one hand. You might start this practice on a flute with a fair amount of back-pressure and progress to flutes with less back-pressure. (“Back-pressure” or “breath pressure” is how much pressure the player feels in their mouth from the flute).

While this exercise may sound simplistic, especially after you've been playing for a while, realize that many experienced and accomplished woodwind players use this as a core daily practice. It's also a great exercise to get out of the “trying to play lots of notes”

This chapter was written by Clint Goss. A similar article appeared in Clint & Vera’s Flute Newsletter, November 2013.
syndrome and help us return to the mode where this instrument shines – long held notes.

**Reflected Sound**

One of the main goals of the long tone exercise is listening to your sound. To hear your long tones better, you might try standing in front of a wall so that the sound from the flute is reflected back to your ears. If the foot of the flute is almost touching the wall, you will get quite a bit of sound off the wall. However …

**Be very careful not to hit the foot of the flute against the wall (or any other object) while you are playing!**

… flute players have knocked out their front teeth!

After you have some experience hearing yourself clearly, try moving back a step or two and keep your focus on the sound coming from the wall. This is an adaptation of an exercise used by public speakers.

Over time, gradually move further and further from the wall, while keeping your focus on the reflected sound. If you can do this in a large hall such as a gymnasium, and auditorium, or some other cavernous space with a flat back wall, you can really enjoy the game!

The goal is to develop your projection of sound and focus of listening so that it always encompasses the entire space in front of you.
The Scale Song

The first goal of many novice flute players is to play the primary scale of the Native American flute cleanly and reliably. Simply the exercise of playing:

```
1 3 4 5 7 8 7 5 4 3 1
```

or

```
2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20 18 16 14 12 10 8 6 4 2
```

… in many different styles can be deeply rewarding.

However, going beyond playing the primary scale and moving towards improvising melodies is often a stumbling block. For some, the suggestion to “just play any notes in that scale, in any order” is enough to get them started. But for other players, this can be a daunting challenge.

This chapter provides some ideas for small steps that can be taken (or taught to students) in a progressive exercise on the path from the primary scale to creating improvised melodies.

The Scale Song

The scale song is a straightforward technique developed by Dock Green Silverhawk (shown above at Native Rhythms 2010, photo by Clint Goss) for creating songs on the primary scale. The game is simple:

Progress through the scale and repeat any notes you would like in your melody, as many times as you wish. However, you still have to progress “forward” through the scale – there's no going backwards!

This chapter was written by Clint Goss. It is an adaptation of the Flutopedia web page From Scales to Songs at http://www.Flutopedia.com/from_scales_to_songs.htm.
Audio Samples
The on-line version of this material has a set of audio examples of each of the techniques. If you would like to hear them while reading this chapter, visit the Flutopedia web page From Scales to Songs at http://Flutopedia.com/from_scales_to_songs.htm

Changing Duration
When you first play a scale song, hold each of the notes in the scale for the same length of time. Changing the duration of the notes you play – some short notes intermixed with longer held notes – is one of the easiest ways to add variety and interest, and is the beginnings of playing with rhythm.

Try playing a scale song with varying note durations as well as added rests – pauses between notes – of various durations.

Adding Dynamics
The term dynamics in music means the volume of a note or a section of played music. There are terms in classical music for a full range of dynamics, from very soft (pianissimo) through very loud (fortissimo).

Changing dynamics can add dramatically to the music you play – adding power to your musical statements and drawing people in to listen to a quiet passage. Try playing a scale song with the addition of dynamics.

Changing Articulation
Beginning and novice players often play each note with the same attack at the beginning of each note. Of course, there are many articulations that can be used, including connecting all the notes (legato), various attacks (Haaa attack, Taaa attack, and Kaaa attack), and ornaments such as double tonguing and triple tonguing.

To begin working with these articulations, try the primary scale several times using one of these articulations for every note of the scale.

Once you're comfortable with these articulations, try using them in combinations in the same scale – some connected legato notes, some articulated notes with Taaa or Kaaa attacks, and maybe even a double or triple tongue ornament.

And finally, try adding a mix of these ornaments to the scale song technique described above.

Adding Rhythm
If you are following along with the progression of this exercise, you might notice that your playing is starting to sound like a “real” song.
However, if the duration of the notes is used haphazardly, there may be little sense of where the song is headed.

What's missing?

The changes in note duration in a typical song are organized into a rhythm that quickly becomes recognizable to the listener. Try playing a scale song that uses the durations of the notes in a more rhythmic style, with recognizable rhythmic motifs. You might try using a loose form of A/B/A style, with an opening that is repeated at the end, and a somewhat different style in the middle for the “B” part.

**Changing Scales**

Another thing you can change is the underlying scale you are playing. The Native American flute has many scales that can be played (see the Scales section of Flutopedia). Experimenting with scale songs over these different scales is a great way to learn the scales as well as getting comfortable with playing music in them.

First, pick one of the exotic scales on this instrument and learn to play it up and down. Then try playing some scales songs in that new scale. As you get comfortable, try bringing in the other elements described so far: duration, dynamics, and articulation.

**Woven Scales**

The restrictions of the scale song (only moving forward through the scale in steps) may seem too limiting. If you would like to experiment with reversing directions, you can simply change directions of scale steps any time you wish.

**Steps and Leaps**

The main restriction of scale songs is to move the melody in steps – each note in the melody is followed by a neighboring note. Adding leaps to your melodies can add dramatic power and interest.
Flute Haven 2017
Non-profit Native Flute School
Exton, PA
Sept 10–15: Weeklong program
Sept 8–15: Leadership program

- Improve your flute playing
- Jam with other instruments
- Learn to lead a flute circle
- Develop your performance skills
- Record your music
- Go deep into your musicality

11th Edition

Clint Goss • Lynn & Eric Miller • Ron Kravitz
Ron Volkman • Frank Henninger • Vera Shanov

www.FluteHaven.com
Standing on a grassy hillside in the Berkshires, I played the first notes on my first Native American Flute. Sun … breeze … birds … and that wonderful flute sound that captures us all …

*Heaven.*

After playing solo for a while, I went to a local flute circle gathering. The organizer provided a heartbeat rhythm on his buffalo drum, and we each played our flutes in turn. One pulse … one heartbeat … one intent … melody and rhythm together …

*Resonant Heaven.*

Later on, other musicians and instruments started showing up in my life. Guitar, piano, and cello players, all wanting to explore the combination of their sounds with the bag of Native Flutes I had now acquired. We sat down to jam and …

*Cacophony!*

More exactly: sometimes cacophony, sometimes heaven. Some flutes worked great with some instruments. Sometimes. We would play together in a small room and it might sound great. Playing the same combination of instruments in a larger space with more people listening … “not so good”.

What’s going on?? It wasn’t the key we were playing in … the experienced people I played with knew how to play their instruments in the minor key of whatever flute I played. It turned out to be the difference in tuning between my flute and their instrument. Some instruments such as guitars and cellos, could re-tune to my flute, but that was a huge hassle.

This chapter was written by Clint Goss. A similar article appeared in the November 2008 issue of *Voice of the Wind*, published by the INTERNATIONAL NATIVE AMERICAN FLUTE ASSOCIATION (INAFA). An on-line version is available on Flutopedia at [http://www.Flutopedia.com/art_right_in_tune.htm](http://www.Flutopedia.com/art_right_in_tune.htm).
Being a jam-loving player, I wanted to maximize the Heaven, minimize the Cacophony. I also wanted to minimize the amount of re-tuning my friends had to do with every new flute I pulled out of the ever-bigger flute case I kept showing up with.

My first instinct was “this flute is out of tune”, but that did not ring true. The same flute-and-piano combination would sometimes be Heaven and sometimes Cacophony. It was clear that the same flute would sometime be in tune with the piano and sometimes have a wildly discordant tuning.

Over the years, I have learned that the most important musical instrument, by far, is our own ear. Listening deeply to our sound is a musical practice that has grown to include how our sound relates to the other sounds around us.

Playing in tune is a lifelong endeavor for all musicians. It is part of the game of constantly listening to our sound and its pitch relationship to the other sounds around us. Simply having a flute that is “concert-tuned” or which happened to be in tune yesterday is no guarantee of its tuning today, in this musical setting, in these weather conditions.

There are two big kinds of “in tune” questions related to Native Flutes:

- Is the flute in tune with itself?
- Is the flute in tune with some outside standard, such as another instrument or pitch meter?

**Playing Solo**

For a flute to be in tune with itself means that the intervals between the notes have a pleasing vibrational relationship. A flute that is in tune with itself will generally sound good to the ear when played solo. Since NAFs were traditionally played solo, sounding pleasing to the ear was the only tuning requirement for a good flute.

As we will explore below, being in tune with itself is as much a matter of the way we play the flute as how the flute maker tuned the flute.

With the arrival of electronic pitch meters, flute players began looking to an outside source to tell them if a flute was in tune. This has several pitfalls:

1. We play differently when we are standing over a hovering meter, watching it waver to and fro. One of the biggest things that affect the pitch of a note on the NAF is breath pressure. When we play freely, a particular player will often emphasize higher or lower notes with more breath pressure. When we stand over a pitch meter, that emphasis tends to change dramatically, changing the tuning of each note.

2. Pitch meters are typically based on a system of tuning called Equal Temperament, which has some compromises and generally does not yield the best sounding instruments.

This second point is a big one. Many systems of tuning were developed, beginning with Pythagoras and the ancient Greeks, where the notes sounded in tune with each other. However, all these systems had the flaw that the frequency relationship between neighboring notes changed from one note to the next. This meant that you could not transpose a melody to another key without retuning the instrument. Many cumbersome solutions were tried, such as harpsichords with 5 sets of keyboards, each tuned to a different key.

Equal Temperament is a way of tuning the 12 notes in our scale that came into wide use over the last 500 years, beating out many other possibilities. The reason for its predominance is primarily that the intervals between adjacent notes have the same ratio between their frequencies. That meant that music could be
transposed from one key to another without retuning the instrument to the new key.

The compromise is that each of the intervals between notes in our 12-tone scale is out of tune from the perfectly sounding interval. In some cases the compromise is slight, but in other cases the note is as much as fifteen percent out of tune. The problem is particularly severe with the interval of the minor third, which is the first interval between the bottom two notes on typical Native Flutes.

For more information on this issue, as well as some graphic and sound samples of different tunings, see the Wikipedia entries for “Just Intonation”. Since each Native Flute tends to be played in one or a very few keys, it is an ideal instrument to be tuned to the more consonant “just intoned” tuning rather than equal temperament.

The bottom line, for me, is to go back to the question “how does the flute sound to me”. I play all the intervals and many songs on a flute, and try to subjectively determine how I like the tuning of the flute.

**The Cents of Tuning**

Most electronic pitch meters have a small microphone and a moving needle that shows the pitch of a steady tone. The needle typically points straight up when a tone is in tune, to the left when the tone is flat, and to the right when it is sharp.

It is customary to divide the range of pitches from one note to the next higher note into 100 “cents”. You can think of each cent as one percent of the way between a note and the next higher note.

**Playing With Others**

When we begin to play with other instruments or play over recorded backing tracks, a whole other world of tuning issues and questions opens up. When you hear a native flute against other instruments, even a 10 or 15 cent difference between the flute and the other instruments can be very noticeable, and a 30 cent difference will often be blaring.

If the flute is in tune with itself, that's a great starting point, because the whole flute tends to go sharp or flat in response to a number of factors:

1. **Breath Pressure**

If we increase breath pressure, the pitch of the notes gets sharper. The sound also gets louder. If you play a flute softly in front of a pitch meter and the meter registers the notes in tune, that flute will only stay in tune with the pitch meter if you continue to play softly. If you then start playing with a piano or a backing track, chances are you will need to blow harder to play louder and match volume with the other sounds. Your flute will get sharp and sound out of tune.

Another issue is that each player varies their breath pressure differently as they play up and down the scale. Some flutes are tuned so that they sound best when you blow harder on the higher notes. Others require a more even breath pressure across the scale. So, whether a flute is in tune with itself depends substantially on the playing style of the player. A flute that, for you, is in tune with itself may not be in tune for another player.

I have a gorgeous flute that is, for me, in tune with itself, but is typically very flat on the pitch meter when I play it at home. When I play with my riff-loving, groove jamming piano friend, I've really got to blow it to be heard … and then it often sounds perfectly in tune!

2. **Temperature**

Every instrument reacts differently to temperature. Most can be retuned with more or less difficulty, but most Native Flutes cannot.
Our notes are generated from vibrating columns of air. As that air gets warmer, it becomes less dense and sound travels faster. It turns out that the pitch of a note that we hear from a flute increases when sound travels faster.

Our flutes get sharper as the temperature inside the flute rises.

How much sharper? Standard physics formulas published by Owen Cramer ([Cramer 1993]) tell us that pitch rises about 17 cents with a 10°F rise in temperature. That amount of pitch change would be noticeable to most listeners when we play with other instruments.

Have you ever noticed a performer blow into the finger holes of the flute before they play a song? This creates a nice, whooshing, wind-texture, but it also has the effect of warming up the air inside the flute. The air temperature rises from room temperature inside the flute in the space of a three-minute song, and this is one way to pre-warm the flute before playing and keep it at a more even temperature.

3. Humidity

Increased humidity has the same effect on NAFs as increased temperature, since humid air is less dense than dry air. However, the effect is modest … I have been told that this amounts to an increase of 7 cents from 0% to 100% relative humidity.

4. Position of the Block

This is the one straightforward adjustment that NAF players have for pitch.

As the block (bird, totem, fetish) on top of the NAF is moved up the body (toward the mouth end of the flute), the flute gets sharper. Moving the block down the body makes the flute flatter. These movements of the block are similar to changing the overall length of the sound chamber.

However, moving the block more than a small fraction of an inch has dramatic effects on sound quality. Try moving your block up and down your flute while holding a single note. It can be done with one hand while covering some of the upper holes on the flute with the other hand. Listen deeply to the sound as it changes. When does it become more breathy? More reed-like?

Also, move the block down the body and see how it affects the flute’s tendency to overblow into the upper register. Each flute reacts differently to changes in the position of the block, and you need to experiment with each flute to find the sweet spot.

Another possibility is to actually change the block. Some flutes have blocks that are designed to be rotated 180° – one side has a flat face and the other side has a chimney (i.e. with side “wings”). This can produce a dramatic pitch change, as well as a change in the sound of the flute. See if you have any flutes where the block can be easily rotated and give it a try.

Yet another innovation, found in both traditional and modern NAFs, is a movable splitting edge. The splitting edge is the sharp edge at the foot-end of the sound hole that actually creates the vibrating air column when you breathe into the flute. The effect of moving the splitting edge is also dramatic.

And finally, there are flute designs that allow you to change the length of the flute. This usually takes the form of a two-part flute with a fitting that can be adjusted, as is common in orchestral instruments such as the silver flute or clarinet.

Back to the Player

All this talk of technical issues makes our head spin. As players, we want to just go out and play, play, play. Of course, our ears are the most important aspect of our playing. And it is our ears that tell us when we are in tune with other instruments.
A wonderful exercise is to learn to listen deeply to our sound, and to come to know the sound of “sharp” and “flat” in relation to another sound. This is most easily done when playing against a steady drone sound, such as a shruti box or a didgeridoo. You can also experiment with a double flute (a “drone flute”), moving the position of each block independently or trying to adjust breath pressure of one side verses the other.

Once you know by ear the sound of “sharp” and “flat”, this chapter has described a number of techniques to adjust your playing to be in tune with the sounds around. In addition, vibrato can be used to effectively mask some tuning issues between instruments if the span of your vibrato is greater than the error between the instruments. If you can do that, then you can taper off the vibrato and slide into pitch with the other instrument. Some find the vibrato of Native Flutes is wider than most other instruments, and this allows us to dance around the other instruments.

Of course, when we are playing solo, many of these tuning issues are academic. If the flute is in tune with itself, to our own ear, for our style of playing on that flute, that is really all that matters. Then you can go back and just … Play, Play, PLAY!

References

No Pain, We Gain

A surprising number of us play in pain. That's one of the big lessons from the Ergonomics Study we've carried out in 2014.

I finished up the detailed analysis and posted it in a paper oriented toward researchers. It's rather lengthy and dense (but does have a cool photo of Randy “Windtalker” Motz shown at the right). If you're interested, you can access the paper as a pdf file:


What does the Ergonomics Study mean for the flute community? Here's what I think are the big lessons:

- Physical discomfort was experienced by 47-64% of players at least some of the time.
- Over 10% of players reported “moderate” physical discomfort on an average basis.
- Females report significantly higher physical discomfort than males.
- Females also reported having played Native American flutes for less time than males, but have a faster rate of progress (based on self-assessment of “level”).
- It is likely that physical discomfort causes some players to abandon the instrument.
- Playing Native American flute does appear to cause players to be able to stretch their hands wider.

There is also a lot of information in the full paper about the characteristics and demographics of our flute community – check it out if you're interested in the full paper in PDF format at the link above.

Thoughts

The fact that so many of us play in pain strikes me as odd. In the world of orchestral wind instruments, injuries and playing in pain happen frequently. However, orchestral instruments have a dramatically different set of priorities than Native flutes.

This chapter was written by Clint Goss. A similar article appeared in the February 2015 edition of Clint & Vera’s Flute Newsletter.
“Musical instruments are hardly designed to be ‘friendly’; rather, they are designed to achieve the best fit with a highly skilled human physiology”


In the world of Native American flutes, we have the ideal situation for minimizing physical discomfort: a community of players focused on music for personal enjoyment, instruments that are comparatively malleable in their design, and a large population of flute makers who are well set up to address issues of comfort in their flute designs.

I believe that we, as a community, have a real opportunity to fix this problem! If we take the mantra that:

“No Pain, We Gain”

… we can work towards flutes that are comfortable, improve our playing, reduce repetitive strain injuries, and help to keep people playing Native American flutes for a longer time.

**Predicting Flute Comfort**

One of the goals of the study was to develop a system where a flute maker could craft a comfortable flute “long distance”. The idea was to find some straightforward measurements that would predict the limits of a comfortable flute. We used reported measurements, direct measurements of arm span, and photographs of the hands of flute players spread out on a paper grid that I designed for the study.

The results of that part of the study were disappointing. I pressed a *lot* of computer power into service to find any combination of measurements that predicted the comfort of a flute, and came up with a formula that was “pretty good” but not reliable for flute crafting. Awww well!

**Ergonomics on Flutopedia**

Flutopedia now has a page that describes some of the aspects of ergonomics. The page is not based on the research study, but on my own direct experience and the advice of others.

If you would like to improve you ergonomic fluting, this Flutopedia page on Ergonomics may help:

[http://www.flutopedia.com/ergo.htm](http://www.flutopedia.com/ergo.htm)
The Rhythm Connection

Rhythm is a wonderful tool in flute gatherings – enhancing the music, helping flute players find new melodies, and providing group cohesion. However, it can also be met with resistance. That resistance is often voiced by the phrase:

“I don’t have rhythm”

Vera and I have heard this at so many workshops and flute circles. Maybe you were told that as a child, maybe you were intimidated by someone with more rhythmic experience. But, wherever it came from, unless you have a traumatic brain injury or some extremely rare neurological condition … it simply is not true!

There are two sides to the rhythm connection:

Playing in Rhythm: playing a song that has rhythm in it, and

Playing with Rhythm: playing along with an external rhythm that other musicians have established.

Our experience tells us that players progress faster if they first work on Playing in Rhythm first before moving to Playing with Rhythm.

Playing in Rhythm

Walk around a space that has little or no furniture. Walk slowly, deliberately, with a relaxed pace. Now add flute playing.

Warning: Be VERY careful never to hit the bottom of your flute while it is in your mouth – you can knock your teeth out, or worse!

Learning how to walk and play at the same time is all most people need to introduce rhythm into their playing.

Another approach: with the hand that you use to play the lower holes of the flute, tap your chest. Slowly, evenly, softly. Do it for a minute or two. Now keep going and try playing your flute with your other hand (just the top three holes). Improvise a two-note or a three-note or (if you get fancy) a four-note melody on top of your tapping.

This chapter was written by Clint Goss. A similar article appeared in the January 2014 edition of Clint & Vera’s Flute Newsletter.
Finally, you can try the Nursery Rhyme method: Speak/Sing a nursery rhyme such as “Jack and Jill”. All nursery rhymes have simple, intrinsic rhythms. Now try playing just the rhythm portion of the nursery rhyme on your flute. You're not trying to play the notes of the nursery rhyme – just play any notes to the rhythm of the nursery rhyme and – bingo – your melody will gain an underlying rhythm.

**Playing with Rhythm**

Once you have gotten some experience playing in rhythm, it's time to try playing with an external rhythm. The easiest way is to work with a basic rhythm background track.

First find a rhythm background track that you like. The Recording Kiosk page on the Flute Haven site at [www.FluteHaven.com](http://www.FluteHaven.com) has a number of tracks you can use – either directly off the web site or for download. You might start with the Basic Beat, 4/4 time, 90 beats per minute and then work with the Cetacean track (which is a more fluid, live recording).

Here's a basic outline of how we coach people in workshops on playing with rhythm:

1. Simply listen to the rhythm track.
2. Begin moving your body to the rhythm.
3. Breathe along with the rhythm – slowly and evenly, in any way that works for you.
4. Now breathe into your flute. The fingers don't matter. You're playing long tones on any note you wish, breathing along with the rhythm.
5. Try changing notes on each long tone.
6. Gradually – very slowly – add some melodic interest to your playing.

The goal is always to keep on listening to the external rhythm. If you lose it – no problem! Just stop playing, center yourself on the rhythm, move and breathe with it, and go back to playing.

We can honestly say that we have never had a situation where a player was not able to make huge strides in playing rhythmically and playing with rhythm in a very short time.
When we first begin creating melodies, they are typically *stepwise* melodies: each note in the melody is one step higher or lower in the scale than the previous note. Stepwise melodies minimize finger movement, sound familiar to the ear, and seem to nicely fit the Native American flute, especially in a contemplative or meditative mood.

A *leap* involves a larger melodic jump, and can create a dramatically different feel. Leaps are a great melodic tool when you want to call attention, change the feel, or provide contrast to a stepwise melody.

W. A. Mathieu provides a fantastic description of steps and leaps on a track of his two-CD set *The Listening Book and the Musical Life*. You can listen to this three-minute track by visiting the Flutopedia page [http://www.Flutopedia.com/steps_and_leaps.htm](http://www.Flutopedia.com/steps_and_leaps.htm) (click the “Play” button on the first audio player). Here is a transcript of the spoken portions of the audio track:

> **Understanding melody begins with a distinction between steps and leaps. Our scales have seven tones – no one knows why. They are named in alphabetical order according to a seven letter alphabet.**

> **You step from a scale tone to an adjacent scale tone; You leap over a scale tone or over several ... [examples of a stepwise melody and a melody of mostly leaps]**

> **If you try to sing both of them, an axiom will emerge: steps are easy, leaps are hard. This means that a stepwise melody sounds logical and naturally contoured, as if one could easily draw a line**

> **“That's one small step for [a] man; one giant leap for mankind.”**
> —*Neil Armstrong 1930–2012*
through the dots made by the notes. A leap, on the other hand, is a special event, which the ear singles out.

A leap is a dramatic moment, a roughness to be made smooth by the surrounding stepwise motions, though not necessarily the less beautiful.

Corollary: Some leaps are harder than others. It is not especially difficult to hear an octave or a fifth. Sixths and sevenths are almost always more difficult.

Second Corollary: Leaps tend to get filled in. If you leap from C to F, the chances are great that the intervening E and D will soon appear.

My advice: Learn to improvise predominantly stepwise melodies, at first, passing time and gaining confidence in the stepwise flow. Bring in leaps gradually, as dramatic events, and notice how you back-fill what you leapt over. Appreciate how this simple distinction enables you to get around, to recognize the ridges and valleys of your own melodic country.

Songs and Leaps
To help players make a connection between songs that they know and leaps on the flute, I've developed two charts on the next two pages.

The first of the two charts shows some popular songs where the first two notes of the song demonstrate a leap interval. It also shows the fingerings for getting that interval on the flute, from the all-holes-closed notes.

All the Leaps on the Flute
The second of the two charts shows all the leaps on the flute (without “overblowing”). It shows all the pairs of fingerings that produce the same intervals. They aren't the same notes, but the pairs of notes are the same distance apart, in terms of musical semitones, or relative frequencies.

Using Leaps
As with many new skills on the flute, we begin by practicing the basic mechanics of the technique. Getting multiple fingers to lift and fall accurately can take a few minutes a day for a week or two.

While trying this out, keep your ears open to the difference in sound between the leaps and stepwise playing. What emotion do they create? Is there a difference between ascending and descending leaps? Can you incorporate leaps into your ornaments?
Nakai Tablature for Native American flute
Fingerings for six-hole pentatonic minor tuning

developed by Clint Goss

This page shows leaps (intervals) on pentatonic minor tuned Native American flutes from the fundamental (all holes closed), together with popular songs that demonstrate the interval with the first two notes.

The second page shows additional fingering combinations for each of the intervals.

**A** The interval between the first and third notes of “Somewhere Over the Rainbow” are a major seventh.

**B** There is no definite interval from the fundamental for the minor and major second, so these intervals are done from the next higher fingering.

Other song examples: Octave: I’m Sing (-ing in the rain); Major Sixth: It Came (upon the midnight clear); Perfect Fifth: (Scarborough Fair); Perfect Fourth: A-ma (-zing Grace) & We Wish (you a merry christmas); Major Third: Morn-ing (has broken); Minor Third down: Hey Jude

From www.Flutopedia.com

Updated January 28, 2014

Clint & Vera’s Native Flute Handbook
Deep listening exercise: bring up your favorite solo flute track and listen to it. Now listen a second time and, with eyes closed, listen to the *endings* of each long-tone note.

What do you hear? A smooth ending? Maybe an extended drop-off in volume (and pitch)?

Now play a long-tone melody on your flute, paying attention to how you are ending the notes. If you have several flutes, you can compare flutes that have more and less breath pressure (or back pressure – the pressure you feel in your mouth when you play).

If you have the ability to easily record your playing, that can be a real asset in this exercise, because it allows you to focus on listening to your playing as a separate activity.

If you're like most flute players, as they gain experience, you pay a lot more attention to the beginning (the “attack”) of your notes. You also focus on the body of the note (especially when bringing in vibrato) and kind of lose interest at the end of the note, especially because there's another note coming up to focus on.

So what do you hear? Does the ending of the note sound “shaky” and hesitant? Maybe with some burbles or whistles after the intended end of the note? Does it improve on flutes with higher breath pressure or get worse?

I had this problem for many years before I was taught a very cool trick to make smooth note endings: the “air bleed trick”. Try this:

Press your lips against the back of your hand and apply some breath pressure. Now relax your lips around the sides, letting some of the air bleed out. Continue to relax fully and let all the air pressure escape. Practice this for a while until it becomes normal and natural, and you are

This chapter was written by Clint Goss. A similar article appeared in *Clint & Vera’s Flute Newsletter*, December 2014.
just relaxing your lips in a controlled way to let the air escape.

Now try it on your flute: just play a simple long tone and relax your lips to let air bleed around the edges. Compared with the back of your hand, pulling off the air bleed on the flute may not be as easy because of the dramatically reduced breath pressure. However, in a few minutes, most players master the trick.

Now listen to the sound (or record yourself) when playing a long tone. Is it a smooth ending? I hope so!
The Major Minor

Try this experiment:

- play the lowest note on your flute – the note with all finger holes closed. Then …
- pick up the bottom-most finger. Then …
- pick up the next two fingers at the same time.

Those three notes make a chord. The sequence looks like this:

Get to know those three notes: Run them up and down, make a song out of them, and play with the intervals (that are really two small Leaps – see page 33).

Now repeat the whole exercise, but change the finger you pick up in the second step. You can choose lots of other fingers to pick up, but try picking up the second finger from the bottom in that second step. The sequence looks like this:

Now we have a different three note chord, only slightly different in pitch and fingering, but a world apart in feel, emotion, and cultural connection.

Again, get to know those three notes: Run them up and down, make a song out of them.

The difference between these two chords is the dramatic split between “major” and “minor”. If someone asks about this (maybe in your flute circle) this Major/Minor is a great way to demonstrate the difference without delving into music theory.

For more on exploring and explaining music theory, see the *Music Theory Questions* chapter starting on page 195.

This chapter was written by Clint Goss. A similar article appeared in Clint & Vera’s Flute Newsletter, January 2015.
I’m Sorry, So Sorry

What song is played the most on the Native American flute? It's a song that I used to play (a lot!), and we still hear all the time at workshops. It goes like this:

note – note – “Oops, Sorry” – note –
note – note – “I'm Sorry” – note – note –
“Oh I'm so sorry, let me start over”

Playing Native American flutes is an act of faith – faith that the acoustics of the flute will once again work as we hope, and that a sound will magically appear when we apply the forces of will and intent and breath. But playing from the heart also involves the practice of “freedom from attachment”.

If we can avoid becoming attached to a particular, expected sound and come to accept the sound that the flute produces, we can go on a grand adventure of improvisation – a duet between our inputs to the instrument and the sonic outcomes. If we can learn to accept any sound that comes out, work with it, make it part of our song … that can lead us to amazing and genuine improvisations.

Jazz musicians often joke that “once is a mistake, play it twice and it's a motif, play it three times and it's Jazz”. I suspect that this is just a way of making light of a much deeper practice of accepting and crafting any sound that comes out into the song-of-the-moment.

So, we encourage players to learn to play through their perceived mistakes, then learn to embrace them and work with them to incorporate them into their songs. However, we never had a name for the “Oops, Sorry” song …

This chapter was written by Clint Goss. A similar article appeared in Clint & Vera’s Flute Newsletter, January 2015.
Last week I wound up in a jam session with 8 dulcimer players. Pretty cool! They had all the improvisation forms down: call-and-response, solo-over-ostinato, descending patterns, vamps and 12-chord blues, trading 8's and 4's, etc. Then, maybe 40 minutes into the session, somebody hit (what they thought was) a klunker. “Oops, sorry” … and the entire group stopped and roared in laughter. Apparently, the group had long-ago established a “No Oops” policy … and when somebody slipped they would all stop and actually give a name to the song.

So now there’s a name for the song that embodies this mental hiccup, this attachment to an expected sound, this departure from the good energy and life lessons that the flute can give us:

“I'm Sorry, So Sorry”
Vibrato

Vibrato – that subtle variation in breath pressure that seems to carry so much of the emotion of our playing – is one of the most important effects we have as flute players.

Many of the techniques we use in our playing can be learned relatively quickly. With the right practice exercise, it might take only a few minutes a day for a week to “get it”. Our experience is that vibrato is not one of those techniques.

It took me a full year working at vibrato to get it, and it is still the area of my technique that gets the most focus.

Over the years, we have tried many workshop activities to help players “access their inner vibrato”. We have kept the ones that work best and now do three or four of these activities routinely for our participants.

Conducting Vibrato

Place your hand in front of you, palm facing your chest. When you listen to music, focus deep into the solo melody and listen to just the vibrato … and let the vibrato “conduct” directly into your hand. Allow your hand to vibrate back and forth – toward and away from your body – in exact beat to the vibrato.

To help in this exercise, here is a three-minute sampler of music with interesting and dramatic vibrato. It is an MP3 of excerpts from historical and recent recordings that demonstrates how vibrato has changed over time.

Vibrato Sampler MP3

http://www.flutopedia.com/mp3/Vibrato_01_VibratoSampler_mix01.mp3

Here is what went into this sampler:

1. 1939. Marian Anderson – God Bless America at the Lincoln Memorial.

Now try this “vibrato conducting” technique on some of your favorite flute music!

This chapter was written by Clint Goss. A similar article appeared in Clint & Vera’s Flute Newsletter, April and May 2015.
**Belly Breath**

Now that you have experience conducting the vibrato of others with your hand, try it on your own breath:

Place your hand over your belly button and *push your hand forward with your belly*. Allow the air to come in as you do this.

Continue the normal cycle of breath, but focus on your belly and the imagery of pulling in air by pushing your belly button forward.

Now, on the exhales, close your lips to provide some resistance – as when you are playing a flute. This is the “back pressure” that many Native flutes provide. Your exhales should extend in length, as when playing your flute.

Finally, on the long exhales, begin saying “**Ha Ha Ha Ha …**”. Focus on your hand as you do this – your hand should move in a rhythmic pattern. This should be similar to when you were conducting the vibrato of others.

**Depth**

One of the key aspects of vibrato is how much variation in pressure your belly provides. Experiment with making very slight and very dramatic variations in breath pressure as you say “**Ha Ha Ha Ha …**” during the exhales.

**Speed**

Another thing you can control is how fast the vibrato cycles. This can be done independently of Depth.

Experiment with a slow and soft vibrato, a slow and deep vibrato, a fast and soft vibrato, and a fast and deep vibrato.

**On the Floor**

If you find it comfortable, try this exercise laying down on the floor. Many people have an easier time of the belly fluctuations when they are laying down – you can feel your hand and belly moving more easily.

**On the Flute**

Now move your exhales to the flute. Keep one hand on your belly and close the top three finger holes on the flute.

Can you create a vibrato on your long-tone exhales?

Now think back to the exercise of conducting vibrato … can you recall how the vibrato changed over the span of one note?

Can you hold a steady long tone, then bring in a soft and fast vibrato, and then slow down the vibrato and increase its depth?
Rhythmic Chirping

Rhythm and melody make a fantastic combination. If you have ever played flute with a percussionist, at a drum circle, or over one of the many rhythm background tracks, you have probably experienced an added dimension that even a basic rhythm can provide.

But what if you are playing solo?

This chapter describes a straightforward technique for playing rhythm on your flute, at the same time you play melody. You can hear the technique played on a wide range of flute recordings, including some of the older ethnographic recordings. However, I have never heard a definitive name for the technique, so I just call it “Rhythmic Chirping” or “Rhythmic Grace Notes”. You'll see why in a minute.

The Rhythm

While seated, place three fingers – the ones you use to cover the upper three finger holes – on your thigh. Now say the word “Chirp”. When you say “Chirp”, pick up your middle finger very briefly and place it back down. Your middle finger should be off your body no longer than it takes to say “Chirp”. Work with that exercise until it feels natural to lift your middle finger for the smallest miniscule fraction of a second.

Now start tapping your opposite foot at a slow tempo. Lift your middle finger on each tap of your foot.

Your flute has rhythm!

Melody

After playing rhythmic chirps for a while, try closing the next lower hole while playing the rhythmic chirps on the upper holes. Then try closing another hole and finally all three lower holes.

Can you ascend on the bottom three notes while playing rhythmic chirps?

Can you change bottom notes every eight chirps? Every four chirps?

Can you progress to a basic melody on the low finger holes while continuing with the rhythmic chirping on the upper three holes?

With a bit of practice, some songs begin to emerge …

This chapter was written by Clint Goss. A similar article appeared in Clint & Vera’s Flute Newsletter, June 2015.
**Challenges**

On some flutes, you might find a tendency to squeak, overblow, or jump into the second register, especially if you are playing the lowest note. If that happens, try chirping using the top finger, or the top two fingers simultaneously.

What happens if you want to incorporate \( \text{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet} \) (or \( \text{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet} \) on five-hole flutes) into your melody? On most flutes, you can switch to rhythmic chirping just using the top hole.

Adding the melodic note \( \text{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet} \) (or \( \text{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet} \)) presents even more challenges. I usually switch to very fast notes in the second register, but this is hard to keep up for more than a few chirps.

**FluteCasts**

While developing this topic, we began to realize that this description would benefit from some audio and video examples. This began the development of the FluteCast series, distributed on YouTube.

You can go to:

https://youtu.be/OHE7lesgMlg

… or skip forward to the next chapter to check out the full series of FluteCast videos being developed.
Beginning in June 2015, we developed a series of “FluteCast” videos to demonstrate techniques and described topics related to playing Native American flutes. These videos are released monthly via our Flute Newsletters and published on YouTube. Each video closed captioned for accessibility in English, Japanese, Spanish, and Russian.

The images at the right show the currently published and planned FluteCast topics.

You can access all currently published FluteCast videos by visiting:

http://FluteCast.com/
We developed three FluteCast videos in January – March 2016 that formed an introduction with how to work with audio technology. We tried to develop the Microphones, Mixers, and Digital Effects videos to provide an introduction to the things that flute players need to know, while avoiding the unnecessary complexities that tend to come along with “gear”.

One key component of the whole recording / technology system that was overlooked in those FluteCast videos – and is often a second-thought among musicians – is headphones. This chapter fills that oversight, with some basic suggestions:

1. Own Your Own

Headphones allow us to hear recorded / reproduced sound in an environment that isolates us from other sounds and gives complete separation between the channels of a recording. However, to be really useful, you need to be familiar with how they sound on different types of music.

If you can arrange it, go to one of the retail music shops and try out a whole array of headphones. Take your own music player and plug it into the various headphone models.

Make sure you have each headphone adjusted properly. The cable is (by convention) on your left side. The support band connecting the ear-cups should be on the top of your head rather than the back. Also, the overall size can typically be adjusted so that the ear-cups fit comfortably over both ears with no pinching.

While testing out headphones, pay attention to:

**Fit.** How they feel is really important – think about spending hours wearing them.

**Sound isolation.** Do they block out ambient room sounds? There are "open-cell" headphone designs that intentionally allow in some of the ambient sound, and "closed-cell" headphones that are designed to block out as much ambient sound as possible.

**Durability.** Headphones take a lot of wear and tear, especially the cable.

**Sound quality.** Always a subjective call, but the primary concern (for me) is the detail of the sound. Consumer headphones that are designed

This chapter was written by Clint Goss. A similar article appeared in *Clint & Vera’s Flute Newsletter*, February 2016.
to "mellow out" the sound do not serve us as well as those that give a more accurate (and sometimes "harsh") reproduction of the sound.

2. Bring Your Own

If you go to a studio, bring your tried-and-true headphones. You will be a lot more comfortable and familiar with the sound than whatever is available at the studio.

If you have closed-cell headphones these have the added benefit of reducing the "bleed" from the headphones into the microphone if you are overdubbing a track.

3. Connections

Arm yourself with several connectors so that you can deal with any situation. At the minimum, be able to deal with a 1/4" stereo (three conductor) connector, a 1/8" stereo connector, and a pair of 1/4" mono (two conductor) connectors. This is usually accomplished by adapters that convert the input into whatever your headphones take as input.

4. Know the Characteristics

It is a great exercise to listen to music in your headphones, and then listen in all the other settings that you have available. Sit in your car and listen to the same track on headphones and then on your car stereo system. Do the same in your living room. Also try it with the near-field monitors that mixing engineers typically use.

One thing I began to hear while doing these exercises was a noticeable difference in the amount of reverb that I could hear. The headphones always sound more "dry" (less reverb) than a live-room listening setup.

This difference was borne out when I tried to mix tracks on headphones. My mixes always wound up having too much reverb when I listened to them in a live-room setting. The room itself always adds to the reverb, and that room reverb is absent in the headphones. Lesson learned!

5. In-Ear Monitors

Some musicians love in-ear monitors. I have never used them, but here is some advice from Sweetwater:

Some musicians have started to use in-ear monitors as their "headphones" in the studio. For custom in-ear monitors, you can go to your audiologist and get molds made of your ears to ensure a perfect fit. Custom in-ears can also provide great isolation and, depending on the model you buy, sound amazing. But there are also off-the-shelf in-ear options that sound great, give you the isolation you need, and don't require a trip to the doctor. In-ear monitors are also nice because you can use them while playing live, so they can serve double duty.
**Random Melodies**

Why would anyone want to play a random sequence of notes in their melodies? Isn't a “good song” made with a carefully planned sequence of pitches?

If you are skeptical (like I was at first), search for a video on YouTube.com titled *What Pi Sounds Like* by Michael Blake.

It is basically a melody based on some element of chance or randomness. In the video Michael has shown that it can become a very interesting song!

But aside from making an “interesting song”, there are a lot of uses for these types of random melodies. Here are some examples:

**Play the Trees**

If you're ever stuck for a melody, look at a group of trees. Pick the topmost trees silhouetted against the sky and follow the height of the tops of the trees – using higher notes for the taller trees and the lowest notes for the shortest trees – your first “random melody”.

How long should you hold each note? Whatever inspires you.

For variety, feel free to add dynamics (loud/soft), articulation (tonguing) versus connected notes, different rhythms, or even different scales. Some of these techniques are outlined on *The Scale Song* chapter on page 19.

**Play the People**

Giving a classroom presentation? Ask the people in the back row to stand up and play them (e.g. “play their heights”) like the exercise Play the Trees above.

**Alphabet Songs**

Once you're comfortable with turning random melodies into songs, try out some Alphabet Songs.

The video *What Pi Sounds Like* assigned pitches to digits, but most Alphabet Songs assign pitches to the letters of an alphabet. This opens up a whole set of possibilities, including creating personal songs from peoples’ names.

**History**

The idea of alphabet songs goes back to at least Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750), who used his own initials for the notes of the fugue.

This chapter was written by Clint Goss. A similar article appeared in *Clint & Vera’s Flute Newsletter*, May 2014, together with content from Flutopedia.
“Before Thy Throne I Now Appear” on his deathbed on July 28, 1750. However, it might be far older and date back to Greek philosophers.

R. Carlos Nakai has said that Doug Holly was the first to use alphabet songs for Native American flutes. On the R. Carlos Nakai album Journeys (1986), the melody for the first track – Life is for Living – is an alphabet song on its own title.

The alphabet song technique has also been referred to as the “Fibonacci Technique” by Robert Gatliff on his FluteTree.com web site. His Fibonacci Technique page lays out a mapping from the letters in the Latin alphabet onto the pentatonic minor scale, but does not include the octave note.

**Teaching song structure.** To teach common song structure patterns:

- Have people play select two phrases. Let's call them “A” and “B”. For example, I might use my first and last name – “Clint Goss” as my “A” and my middle name – “Francis” as my “B”.
- Have people play a alphabet song based on the “A” phrase.
- Repeat the “A” alphabet song.
- Play an alphabet song based on the “B” phrase.
- Finally, play the “A” phrase again.
- People have just gotten experience playing the classic “AABA” song structure.

**What can you use Alphabet Songs for?**

At first, alphabet songs seemed rather whimsical, because of their arbitrary or random nature. However, over the years, I found them useful in more and more situations. Here are some:

**Personal songs.** You can play a “person's song”, based on their name. This is useful in one-on-one situations as well as more public settings such as in classroom presentations and memorial services.

**Teaching scales.** In an educational setting, you can use the alphabet song exercise as a game. The side effect is that participants will learn the scale they are playing. In particular, they will learn to play leaps (see **Leaps** on page 33) and start to introduce them in their own melodies. For more advanced participants, you can teach alternate scales simply by playing alphabet songs based on that scale.

**Alphabet Song Charts**

Here is a chart that I use for playing alphabet songs in the pentatonic minor scale:

![Alphabet Song Chart](image)

Here's how it works: Take a phrase and, for each letter in your phrase, locate the letter on the chart. Then read across to find the finger pattern to use for that letter.

By the way, the colors in the charts on this page are from the Color of Sound calculator for the
pitches on an F# minor flute. They are the frequencies of those pitches, scaled up 40 octaves and converted to a frequency of light.

If I want to play “Clint Goss”, I would start by locating “C” on the chart:

... and my melody would begin on 🎯.

Continuing with “Clint Goss”, I would follow this path through the chart:

If we want an alphabet song chart that maps numeric characters onto the pentatonic minor scale, we have some choices. What I've done in my version is to use the degrees of the scale from music theory – a method that many people use to notate their music.

However, since we only use six pitches in the pentatonic minor scale, that leaves the digits 0, 2, 6, and 9 with no corresponding finger patterns. I give two choices in the chart below: copying four of the other digits or using some unusual notes outside of the pentatonic minor scale for the digits 2, 6, and 9.

Here is my version of the chart:

This lets you score alphabet songs based on numbers. Here are the first 28 digits of $\pi$ – 3.141592653589793238462643383 – in a pentatonic minor scale.

Play the melody down each column starting with the leftmost column:
**Other Scales**

One of the most beautiful and easiest scales to use for alphabet songs is the Bugle Scale. However, since most players are initially taught the pentatonic minor scale, I usually don't start with this scale:

![Bugle Scale](image)

Here are three more interesting scales to try:

![Spanish Gypsy Scale](image)

**Other Alphabets**

If you're really intent on playing world music, you might try playing alphabet songs based on other languages. Charts based on Cyrillic, Katakana, Hebrew, Arabic, Georgian, Greek, and Cherokee are available on [Flutopedia.com](http://Flutopedia.com).

![Cyrillic Alphabet](image)

**Printing Alphabet Charts**

If you would like to use alphabet songs in your flute circle or presentations, you can print out full-page versions of all of these charts. Visiting [Flutopedia.com](http://Flutopedia.com) and searching for “Alphabet Songs” will take you to a page that has all these charts available for printing.
The Heavenly Rut

All your flute playing sounds the same, the wandering melodies don't take you anywhere, and you're dreaming of new musical forms, styles, and horizons. You're in a “rut” … but we like to call it the “Heavenly Rut”. Wherever you think you are stuck, the music that comes out is probably just this side of heaven.

This chapter has a list of ideas we have used to help people build on their established flute playing and overall musicality, but expand into music that has a different sound.

A / B / A

Sometimes, people are looking to add a bit of structure to their songs. One of the most direct ways to add structure is to intentionally craft a song in the A/B/A form. This is basically a song where the beginning and end are noticeably similar, and the “B” section is “something different”.

The A/B/A form is very prevalent in most genres of music. Maybe it is because the repetition of the “A” section takes listeners back to a familiar motif. Or maybe it is because A/B/A echoes the pervasive “journey” storyline: starting from home, going to a faraway place, and ending back home.

Here are some straightforward ways to craft “something different” in the “B” section:

- Change the melody.
- Change the rhythm. This might be using a different rhythm in the “B” section, or it could even be to simply play non-rhythmically in the A section and to use a rhythm in the B section.
- Change tempo.

This chapter was written by Clint Goss. A similar article appeared in *Clint & Vera’s Flute Newsletter*, April 2014, together with content from Flutopedia.
• Change dynamics. You could do a loud / soft / loud version of A/B/A.
• Change the pitch range. You could play the A section on the lower notes, then move to the higher notes for the B section.
• Change articulation. Contrast playing all the notes connected with playing slightly disconnected notes with tonguing or even very short notes.
• Change emotion. Pick two different emotions and intentionally move between them in your sections.

Begin in a New Place

Most melodies and songs have one note that provides the “tonic” or “tonal center” for the melody. It is often the note on which the song begins and ends.

Very often, the tonal center for Native Flute music is the lowest (all holes closed) note on the flute. It is certainly a gorgeous note, but by no means the only starting point!

To add variety, try starting and ending your songs on a different note. Try to center the melody on that note: starting on the new note, returning to it at key points, and ending the melody on the new note.

Every note on the flute can serve as a tonal center – many work like crazy, others are workable, none are unmusical. You might spend a full week dedicated to songs with a single tonal center – getting to know it like a new friend, and finding out how all the other notes relate to that new tonal center.

You will find that using particular notes as a new tonal center dramatically changes the feel of your songs, and they seem to come from a new culture. Simply changing your tonal center to the first note up from the bottom note (iyor or iyor) will impart a major/Western feel to the music.

Come from Rhythm

Many songwriters say that the best way to find a new song is to start from a new rhythm.

Put on a rhythm CD or track, get the rhythm in your body (maybe even for five minutes before you start playing) and start jamming. Some of the more complex rhythms can word wonders.

• Stephen DeRuby has a rhythm CD
• Glen Velez “Rhythm of the Chakras” has some incredible rhythms.
• You can also download an array of backing tracks (search for the rhythm-only tracks) on the Flute Haven Recording Kiosk site at http://www.flutehaven.com/recording_kiosk.htm.

To really expand your rhythmic repertoire, try one of the odd meters such as 5/4.

Try a New Scale


• Start by practicing the scale up and down.
• Then progress to doing a woven scale (there is a demonstration of that on each of the scale pages on Flutopedia).
• Then experiment with playing some scale songs (see The Scale Song chapter on page 19, or see the on-line version on Flutopedia at http://Flutopedia.com/from_scales_to_songs.htm.

Finally, try some free improvisations in the new scale and see where it leads. You could spend a few weeks in the new scale to really get comfortable with improvisation with that new set of notes.
**Play with a New Instrument**

Explore playing with a guitar, piano, dulcimer, or any type of percussionist – especially ethnic percussionists. You could take your flute (preferably a high-pitched instrument) to a community drum circle. You could try going on-line to one of the live jam services (which I hesitate to name because they seem to come and go frequently).

**Play to the Clock**

For me, this was the best exercise to help me play structured songs.

The exercise is to improvise a composition that fits exactly in a one-minute timeframe. It must have a beginning, a middle section, and an ending. The goal is to take the listener on a (short) journey. You can do this in front of a big clock with a sweep second hand – starting and ending on the “12”. Try to bring it in and land it at exactly one minute.

In the words of W. A. Mathieu:

> We live a lifetime in each one-minute song, and then we get to do it again and again and again ...

**Blues Form**

The 12-bar Blues form is very familiar to most Western listeners. Here is an approach to structuring a song in this form:

Find a motif that you like that begins and ends on the lowest note: ♬♩♩♩♩ or ♬♩♩♩♩. Try for something about 10 or 15 seconds long. Play it until you are very comfortable with the motif. I'll call this the “root motif”.

Then follow this outline:

- Play the root motif.
- Repeat the root motif.
- Play a similar motif that begins and ends two notes up … on the ♬♩♩♩♩ or ♬♩♩♩♫ note. Try to make it the same length and in the same style as your root motif.
- Repeat the root motif.
- Play a motif that starts on ♬♩♩♩♩ or ♬♩♩♩♫, and make it half the length of the root motif.
- Play a motif that starts on ♬♩♩♩♩ or ♬♩♩♩♫, and is half the length of the root motif.
- Play the first half of the root motif.
- In place of the second half of the root motif, blues players often “go wild”. They may play something entirely different or even stop playing.

Cycle back to the start of this sequence, and you just might get the sense that you're following a song form you've heard many, many times.
Right in Tune, Revisited

After you've played solo flute for a bit, you might want to try your hand at playing with other instruments. If the other instrument has pitched sounds (such as a guitar or a piano), one of the things you will likely want to do before you start playing together is to get your flute in tune with that instrument.

Notice I said “get your flute in tune”. There are some players who think it’s the sole responsibility of the flute maker to get the flute in tune, but it's really a cooperative effort between the flute maker and the flute player. The maker has tuned the flute with certain goals – firstly to get the flute in tune with itself and to be in tune with other instruments under certain conditions (primarily temperature and breath pressure). Chances are, when you play, you are under different conditions and you won't be quite in tune.

From the player's perspective, the easiest thing to do is let the flute warm up by playing it for two or three minutes (or breathing a few times into the finger holes) and then bring the flute into tune with the pitch of the other instrument by using breath pressure. The more breath pressure you provide, the sharper the pitch of the flute gets (it also gets louder). As you reduce breath pressure, the flatter the pitch gets (it also gets softer).

Time to Play

OK, enough of the “head space” explanation. Here's the fun part … this is a wonderful practice and will really prepare you for quickly hearing the sound of another instrument and bringing your flute up to pitch.

- Pick up your favorite flute (one where you know the “key” of the flute) and …
- Head over to the Flutopedia Reference Drones page at the address: http://www.Flutopedia.com/reference_drones.htm

(optionally, you can go to www.Flutopedia.com and enter the text “Reference Drones” in the search box)

This chapter was written by Clint Goss. Similar articles appeared in Clint & Vera’s Flute Newsletter, December 2013 and January 2015, together with content from Flutopedia.
This page has recordings of “drone” sounds. They are all about a minute long and have an announcement of what note they are and how they are tuned. The audio players in the green column are “on pitch” and that's a good place to start:

- Choose the note (row) that matches the key of your flute.
- Click the Play button on the green player.

On your flute, play long tones on the bottom note. Experiment with how much breath pressure is needed to be exactly consonant (in tune) with the drone. Get comfortable with bringing your flute from very flat, through “in tune”, to very sharp in relation to the drone sound.

### The Sound of Consonance

How do you know when you are exactly consonant?

When two pitches are at slightly different frequencies, they set up a oscillation that our ears hear as a “wah wah wah ...” variation in the timbre of the sound. To hear this oscillation, try playing two reference drones at the same time (you can click on more than one audio player on the Flutopedia Reference Drones page).

Click on two players that have pitches which are very close together, such as the in-tune C and the slightly sharper C +25 cents. Can you hear the oscillation? Now try C and C +50 cents. This produces an oscillation of a different, faster speed.

When you bring your flute into perfect consonance with the drone, you can hear that oscillation. The speed of the “wah wah wah ...” starts out fast when you are far from the
pitch, slows down as you get closer to the pitch of the drone, and ceases when you are right on the drone pitch.

One thing you may find is that the breath pressure needed to get a flute in tune with a drone sound makes the flute louder or softer than you’d like. If you are playing flat relative to a crystal bowl at a meditation session, breathing harder into the flute will just make you too loud for the situation. Here are some suggestions (taken from the Frequently Asked Questions page on Flutopedia):

As you move the block toward the foot end of the flute, the flute typically gets flatter. Moving the block toward the head end typically makes the flute sharper. However, realize that the effect is more pronounced on the higher notes of the instrument (for example:  and  compared with the lower notes (for example:  and  ). Moving the block also affects the timbre of the instrument and the tendency to overblow.

The Effect of Temperature

As the temperature inside the sound chamber rises, the flute tends to get sharper. Lower temperatures correspond to flatter pitches. Several factors affect the temperature inside the sound chamber, including the ambient (room) temperature and the tendency for the air in the sound chamber to get warmer as you play for a while. The chart below shows readings I took with a small thermometer inside several places inside a flute. It shows a substantial increase in the temperature inside the slow air chamber of about 18°F over the first 90 seconds. However, the rise in air temperature inside the sound chamber was slower and more modest – about 7°F over the first 3 minutes of continuous playing, which would amount to a rise in pitch of about 12 cents.

Finally, there have been a lot of discussions and confusion about the effects of humidity and altitude.

Humidity has a very small effect on tuning. At 72°F, there is only a difference of 7 cents between the minimum of 0% relative humidity and the maximum of 100% relative humidity.

Altitude, in itself, has virtually no effect on tuning. The confusion was caused because temperature tends to change with altitude, but simply changing altitude does not affect temperature directly. See the Frequently Asked Questions page on Flutopedia for a discussion of why altitude does not affect tuning.

Swapping Blocks

In rare cases it might be possible to swap the blocks on two flutes and change the tuning.
This is generally only possible between blocks that have a flat bottom. Here are some general guidelines:

- Changing from a block with a flat, back-sloping face such as the upper block in the picture to a block with a flat face that is more vertical or forward-sloping will typically lower the overall pitch of the flute (make it flatter).
- Changing from a block with a flat, forward-sloping face such as the lower block in the picture to a block with a flat face that is more vertical or back-sloping will typically raise the overall pitch of the flute (make it sharper).
- Changing from a block with a flat face to a block that has wings will (with other things being equal) typically lower the overall pitch of the flute (make it flatter).
- Changing from a block with wings to one with a flat face will (with other things being equal) typically raise the overall pitch of the flute (make it sharper).

**Pitch Shifting Background Tracks**

I'm trapped in a corner. I'm sitting in a Yoga session, playing my flutes. In that setting, a soft background track to support the flute really makes a difference, and the sound system at the Yoga studio is great. So I plug my laptop in and put on a sparse, drone-like background and play a low flute that should be consonant. And what comes out? … *Complete dissonance.*

The yoga instructor's eyes go up and my flute goes silent.

Wrong backing track? No.

Wrong key flutes? No.

The problem is that the volume I have to play at for that situation is quite low. So … my flute is very flat compared to the background track.

The next yoga session is in two days, and I'm totally focused on fixing the problem. I could record some new background tracks that are 20–30 cents flat, but that would mean my entire database of music (60,000+ tracks!) would be off-limits. And what if I'm 50 cents or 80 cents flat? Then I stumbled across a simple solution: An audio player that has a pitch shift function!

Two days later I saunter back in, plug in my laptop with its new software, and quietly soar over all my favorite backing track set to anywhere from 20 to 60 cents flat. I find that I can even adjust the pitch while I'm playing: I can play the upper notes on the flute with one hand and adjust the player's pitch-shift setting with the other hand.

The application I'm using is *Best Practice version 1.03*. It is freely available, open source, and seems to have no commercial component. I downloaded the latest version from:

With the “anti-alias” option checked, I can pitch shift up to two semitones without problems and even use a different key flute if appropriate.

*Best Practice* works well for me, but it only runs on a PC. I am hoping to get recommendations for audio player applications that run on different environments, specifically, Apple products from iPhones and iPads through laptops. If you happen to know of (or locate) an application for other environments, I would love to hear your recommendation. I think it would need to be:

- Freely available;
- Non-commercial in nature;
- Work on MP3 and WAV/AIFF files and, optionally, on some database of music (such as an iTunes database).

If you know of (and have tested) other pitch-shifting audio player applications that meet these criteria, please email me and I'll spread the word.
Back to Back

We always stress that making a connection with another musician when you are playing duets or trios or quartets is very important. So why are the two musicians at the right – Deb Almy and Pam Hackworth-Dickey – playing back-to-back?

It's part of a technique that was developed by Rona Yellowrobe. You can use it as an exercise to emphasize the non-visual senses, put it to use in performance, or set it up as an activity in your next flute circle.

As described to me by Deb Almy, two players stand back-to-back with their backs touching as much as possible. Of course, it's best if the two players are about the same size and are “comfortable” with each other.

One player starts and the other comes in. You might want to do it with eyes closed to really emphasize the listening and physical connection to your partner's music.

The goal is to get players out of their head and make this a “play from the heart” exercise based as much as possible on sensory input. Rather than thinking about song forms and structures, trying to strategize about “what can I do next”, it's best to simply respond to each other's movements and sounds.

There is often a question of “who is leading”, but I've found that this quickly fades away to the point where neither player can tell who has the lead. As Deb says: “If this is truly working, you will feel when your partner takes a breath and, if you believe in this sort of thing as I do, you'll begin to play off of each other's energy.”

Playing Your Heartbeat

On another topic, I had a very interesting experience during a medical test I had to take last week. They hooked me up to a heart monitor … Beep Beep Beep … but unlike most medical tests I was standing up. Of course,

This chapter was written by Clint Goss. A similar article appeared in Clint & Vera’s Flute Newsletter, August 2014.
for a musician the fairly steady, 70ish beats-per-minute sound invites music-making!

When they left for a few minutes to set up the test, I began to improvise over the rhythm: vocal sounds, hand percussion, body beats, foot tapping. Must have looked pretty comical since I was in one of those “open air” hospital gowns and had wires coming out on all sides.

Aside from it being a whole lot of fun playing to your own heartbeat, an interesting thing happened: my heart rate went down. Now that is something we've seen during flute playing, but not something I would expect when making the physical motions of body percussion.

Love to hear if anyone else has had an experience such as this …
Active Listening

Music listening is part of our daily existence, part of our culture. It is often said that passive music listening is the “soundtrack of our lives”.

For those of us who have allowed our musicianship to wake up, listening is one of the most useful tools we have. However, rather than just letting the sounds of music osmose passively into our brains, it can be extremely valuable to convert our habitually passive music listening into an occasional active listening experience.

An excellent example of how you might create an active listening experience, either for yourself or for a group of players, is a lesson plan developed by Patricia Shehan Campbell that appeared in 1994. It was developed in response to the need by music teachers to increasingly incorporate music that originates from outside the Western European music tradition:


This chapter is partially based on the ideas from that lesson plan, augmented with our own experience facilitating active listening experiences.

Selecting the Music

Your first job is a fun one (of course, they're all fun): Select the ideal music for an Active Listening session.

And, to be clear, the Active Listening CD cover I composed above is not a real production CD! It's a “virtual” album that you compose of your favorite music that you think encourages the kind of conscious listening experience that will be most helpful.
You can select tracks that are extremely sparse and clear in their music. Solo Native flute tends to be ideal for this, or flute tracks that just have a simple drone or heartbeat rhythm accompaniment.

Another approach is to compose a playlist based on a theme – in workshops focused on developing vibrato, we have a playlist that demonstrates the kind of vibrato that female singers have used over the last seven decades. The short excerpts of their singing clearly demonstrates how vibrato has slowed down over the years, and how singers have begun to bring in vibrato gradually rather than at the beginning of the note.

**Background**

It sometimes helps to know the back-story or motivation behind a piece of music.

For example, the track *Origins* on the *Cycles* album by R. Carlos Nakai was created for a multimedia presentation at the Heard Museum in Phoenix. Nakai’s intention was to portray the sound experiences he felt in the open expanses of the Southwest and Northern Plains. He describes his inspiration this way: “My clan, Naashteezhí dine-e Taachiinii, allows me to be one of the people.” The piece is his musical reflection on his participation as part of the extended family of the Navajo people.

**Environment**

For an active listening session, it helps to have a good listening environment. While technology has provided us with access to more music, in more places, on smaller devices, and at less cost, the actual auditory experience has often suffered. Compressed digital files, inexpensive ear-buds, pervasive background noise, and frequent interruptions often frustrate attempts at active listening.

So wait till you have reasonable control of your listening environment and set aside the time to treat yourself to a true auditory experience. You don’t need to go overboard in the audiophile direction – just try to get a real CD-quality source or an MP3 with minimal compression (192Kbps or better), reduce the background noise as much as practical, and use reasonably high quality speakers or headphones.

**Listening**

When listening, it can help to actively engage the mind with some questions or exercises. Different activation techniques work with different listeners, so you can use a range of questions or exercises to promote active listening.

Here are some things you might try to listen to the musical aspect of the recording:

- Can you follow the rise or fall of the melody? Try drawing, painting, dancing, or conducting the rise and fall in the melody.
- Can you identify what ornaments – grace notes, trills, pops, mordents, or turns – are used to dress up the melody?
- Experienced musicians and listeners might find it very easy to follow the melody, so ask them to try to identify the intervals used in ornaments. This can be a very challenging exercise.
- Can you identify the phrases played within a single breath? Where is the performer breathing? Are they taking hidden gulps or sips of air at unusual places?
- Can you identify the various instruments in the recording?
- Listen for the use of vibrato and match the movement of an open, outstretched palm to the speed of the vibrato.
- Conduct, draw, paint, or dance the dynamics of the music – how loud or soft it gets. Are
there sudden changes in dynamics during ornaments?
• Can you identify the over-arching structure of the song? Many songs use a structure of A-B-A or alternating verse and chorus.
• Is the song in a duple meter (such as 1-2-1-2 … or 1-2-3-4 …), or a treble meter (1-2-3-1-2-3 …)?
• Is the song in a major key (bright, like most Western European music), a minor key, or some other unusual key?
• Does the music change key or change between major and minor?
• Is the song completely consonant, or does it use dissonance at any point?

Performance and Recording
• Was the song composed, improvised, or some combination?
• How was the song recorded? Live? In a studio?
• Are the performers playing together or were different tracks layered onto the music at different times?
• Is the tempo “perfect” (e.g. done to a “click track”), slightly loose (as in a live performance), or completely free with large changes in tempo?
• What effects are being added to the sounds of the instruments?

Reflection
• Is the song familiar? Does it sound like another song I know?
• What is the mood of the music? Is the performer trying to convey an emotion? Does that emotion change throughout the piece?
• How does the music make me feel?
• Does the music trigger any memories?
• Are there any smells (or smell-memories) that are evoked by the music?

Voice
Here are some activities you might try with your voice:
• Can you match your voice to the melody and hum or sing it?
• Can you follow the melody with your voice an octave higher or lower?
• Can you sing other harmonies against the melody?
• Can you hold a single drone note with your voice against the melodic line?

Deep Listening
These questions and activities are all designed to help us create a deeper connection with recorded music. Going beyond using recorded music, there are many other activities and
approaches we can use to create deep listening experiences in flute gatherings.

If you are facilitating workshop session or flute circles, see the Deep Listening chapter on page 133. It has a discussion of how you might structure activities to heighten listening.
Playing (from the Heart) Over Changes

Native flute players often like to hang out in one key. We might even be happy in one chord for a song, or a day, or even our whole playing career. G minor flute … G minor chord, singing our heart song through our flute, and the music is sublime.

We share this one-chord preference with a lot of other music genres and world music cultures – trance music, Kirtan singing, and many forms of East Indian music – many of which seem to focus on that sublime aspect.

At the other end of the spectrum are genres such as Bebop that are constantly, almost frenetically, moving through chord changes. They zig, zag, and zing through major, minor, seventh, diminished, suspended, and augmented chord progressions, dazzling our senses into harmonic ecstasy.

Most of our culture's music lies somewhere in between: moderately paced and (after a verse and chorus) fairly predictable chord changes. The songwriter’s mantra: “Three Chords and the Truth” has been at the center of many of our culture's most popular music.

When a Native flute player first encounters an accompanist – typically a guitar or keyboard player or a background track – we are often at a loss for how to handle playing over chord changes. From our listening experience we understand that melody somehow “tracks” those changes in harmony in a kind of symbiotic harmony-dance. But without any experience moving between chords on the flute, we have no idea how to handle “playing over changes”.

This chapter describes a very simple technique to achieve this symbiosis in harmony. It extends the idea of “playing from the heart” and “one-breath solos” (see page 15) to include chord changes, while avoiding the head-space music theory and charts that typically crop up in this area.

The next History section describes how this technique developed. Feel free to skip it and go right to The Technique section that follows …

History

I tried for about 10 years to facilitate “Playing over Changes” in flute workshops. Some sessions had moderate success. Most were abject disasters. Some of you reading this chapter were in those sessions, and I can almost see a smile on your face.

The general format was to work with a guitarist or keyboard player – Eric Miller, Dave Jorgensen, Adam Page, Peter Dubner, Ron Volkman, and many others – all outstanding accompanists and all very familiar with Native flutes. They would play a typical straightforward accompaniment chord

This chapter was written by Clint Goss. A similar article appeared in Clint & Vera’s Flute Newsletter, March 2015.
progression and we would all try to identify (eyes closed) when each change in chord occurred. That typically worked well.

I would then proceed to derail the whole session by launching into music theory. The One, the Four, the Five, the Relative Major, the Major one step down from the Minor, the Circle of Fifths, and on and on and on down the Rabbit Hole. My early failures at verbal descriptions of music theory gave way to charts, tables, diagrams, slide shows, and finally videos. There was even a slide chart.

These also failed miserably.

Then came Flute Haven 2013. We were near the end of yet another of these “going downhill” sessions. Amid the confused faces and head-scratching, long-timer participant Pat Kay (pictured above right at the closing of Flute Haven 2010) asked:

Clint – how do YOU play over chord changes?

I was dumbfounded. Why hadn't I thought of this? I had played a concert the evening before – entirely improvised – and had never thought about music theory. But I also had never verbalized how I do improvise over chord changes … so I just blurted out:

“I play any note I feel like and, if it sounds right, I hang out there. If it doesn't sound right, I move up or down one note.

Both notes – one note up or one note down – seem to almost always work harmonically.

So it doesn't matter which way you go.

And … I've learned to use ornaments and effects to make it sound like that's what I had intended all along.”

The group stared at me and someone asked “That's all you do?” I started to get a sinking feeling in my stomach until someone in the back said “Cool!”

And then … they all did it. Everyone seemed to get it. First time – first shot – all the way around the room, playing over a guitar who was now progressing through all kinds of wild chord changes. And it sounded great. We had come back to the home-place of this instrument – long tones, playing from the heart, ornaments, and listening.

**The Technique**

Here is a general outline for “Playing (from the Heart) Over Changes”. You can customize it for your own personal use, one-on-one teaching, or facilitated group sessions:

1. **Listening Exercise: Identifying Chord Changes**

You can do this with live or recorded music (such as the sample background tracks provided below). You can do this any time – even listening in your car. It's best to listen to music genres with occasional, clear chord changes such as most Country, Blues, 50's Rock, Western Pop, Acoustic Folk, and many others.

The exercise is simple: nod your head at each chord change. At first it is reactive –
recognizing that a change in harmony has happened. Then it becomes predictive – nodding right on the downbeat of an expected chord change.

2. Rhythm
Tap your foot slowly. Nod your head on every fourth foot-tap (every fourth “beat”). You can count “1 – 2 – 3 – 4 –“ to yourself, but this isn't really needed since we can feel a four-beat so easily.

3. Four-beat Long Tones
Play long tones with full breath (see the One Breath Solos chapter on page see page 15). Play the long tones while tapping your foot. Every four beats, change your note to another random note. You don't need to take a breath between notes. Play as many four-beat notes as you reasonably can in one breath.

4. One-beat + Three-beat Long Tones
Instead of holding the same note for all four beats, play your random note for only the first beat. Then, after the first beat, move either one note up or one note down, and hold that note for beats 2, 3, and 4.

5. Combinations
Combine four-beat long tones with One-beat + Three-beat long tones. You can start alternating and then work towards doing one or the other, randomly, almost without thought as to when you hold your initial note for four beats or move up or down after the first beat.

6. With Accompaniment
Now play over a simple accompaniment that is in the key of your flute. “Simple” usually means that it has few chord changes and they change regularly.

Background Tracks
Here are some example tracks. These were developed on an iPad in Garage Band (on headphones while on an Amtrak train!) and recorded on the Recording Kiosks (http://www.FluteHaven.com/recording_kiosk.htm) we now use at workshops. No processing or cleanup was done (since our computers were down at the time), so they are a bit “raw” at the start and finish.

They are MP3 files, so you can either play them by clicking on the links, or using Save–As to download the tracks. All tracks are licensed as CC–BY (Creative Commons – Attribution), so you can use them for any purpose (even commercial) but you need to credit Clint Goss:

Playing (from the Heart) Over Changes …
… in A Minor:

… in G Minor:

… in F# Minor:

First, get in sync with the rhythm. Then bring your flute up to tune with your breath pressure so that it is consonant (“in tune”) with the backing track. On some flutes, this might take substantial breath pressure, so you might need to play surprisingly loudly.

Now try the Combinations technique described above: Play a note and, if you like the combined sound, “hang out” there. If not, move up one note or down one note and “hang out” there.

At the beginning, “hanging out” can be just a long tone. With more experience, and especially with different music styles, you can play around with ornaments and even little melodies centered on the “hanging out” note.
Here is a track I did to demonstrate the technique. It's a bit rough since I was playing GarageBand and my flute at the same time and mixing it directly to the recording with no post-processing. The first 2 minutes are the “straight” technique and then I get a bit more experimental using some melody lines and ornamentation. By 3 minutes, it starts to feel (to me, at least) like a “real song”:


With experience, you will find that you will start hearing where the harmony is going. You will also start to bring in ornaments and transitions that create a complimentary melody over the chords. It will begin to sound like “everything is as it should be” … and all done with no sheet music, no music theory, and from the heart.
Alternate Scales

Most players learn one primary scale on their instruments. They then go off and work on creating melodies, improvising, playing from the heart, and generally expressing their creativity … all within that one primary scale.

Other scales – “alternate” scales using different fingerings – tend to get a bad reputation. They can feel like you are taking a step backwards since the new fingerings do not feel natural. And simply the word “scale” tends to evoke images of music theory or memories of endless practice sessions running mind-numbing scale progressions to satisfy some childhood music teacher.

Over the years, I have come to appreciate the creative opportunities that alternate scales have to offer. They can be a huge benefit if you:

- feel that your playing has gotten into a rut,
- want to evoke images of a different world music culture,
- want to play a particular melody that is outside of the primary scale,
- need to play in a different key, but don't have that key of flute (you can actually play most flutes in more than one key of pentatonic minor),
- need to play in a mode, such as major, that is not part of the primary scale, or
- simply want to increase your creative possibilities on the instrument.

Getting Started

The first thing you might explore is the simple rule: “pick up your fingers in a different order”. This rule has the advantage of keeping alternate scales in the realm of a listening game.

Starting from \(\text{\textbullet \textbullet \textbullet \textbullet \textbullet \textbullet}\), rather than picking up your ring finger for the next typical finger (giving you \(\text{\textbullet \textbullet \textbullet \textbullet \textbullet \textbullet}\)), try picking up your middle finger for \(\text{\textbullet \textbullet \textbullet \textbullet \textbullet \textbullet}\). After that, proceed up the scale in a normal order, which would give you the sequence:

![Finger Diagram]

You have a new scale! Now try a few slow runs up and down the scale to answer the most important question: Do I like it? If not, it's back to square one to find some other combinations of “pick up your fingers in a different order” that you like.

You could also try some other rules, like:

This chapter was written by Clint Goss. A similar article appeared in Clint & Vera’s Flute Newsletter, October and November 2014.
Learning the New Scale

Once you find a scale you like, it's time to learn the new finger pattern. This is where many players get sidetracked in their attempt at a new scale. Remember that it will take a little while for you to be comfortable in the new scale. You cannot expect to simply run it up and down a few times and expect to have learned the finger pattern. Remember how long it took you to become comfortable in the primary scale?

Here are a few techniques you can do to ingrain the new scale in your finger-memory:

- Run the scale repeatedly, from bottom to top and back down again.
- Try playing Scale Songs in the new scale (see page 19).
- Try a “woven scale” (see below).
- Try playing every other note on the way up, then the top note, then every other note on the way down. If the scale has an odd number of notes, you get to play all the notes in the scale in an unusual order.
- Now try working on leaps: sequences with large intervals between the notes. This is where I usually have problems …

If you start making mistakes, rather than getting frustrated, take as a message that you have tried to proceed too fast. This is a learning experience, not a contest, so go back and try what you are doing twice as slowly and deliberately. Or you might have to try it ridiculously slowly and deliberately. But in the end, remember the old adage:

“The slower you play it, the faster you learn it”

Woven Scales

Woven scales (also called “broken scales” or “scale ladders”) are a way of playing scales that involve changing directions rather than playing the scale in strict ascending or descending order. Woven scales make good finger dexterity exercises as well as providing a basic melody that is more melodically interesting that a straight scale.

The formula for playing a woven scale is simple:

Two forward, One back.

Woven Scale: Pentatonic Minor

Try starting from the bottom note of the scale, play the next two notes, then go back one note. Repeat this all the way up the scale. At the top of the scale, you might have to experiment a bit to figure out the best way to turn it around and proceed back down. The sequence might look like this (with the “one back” notes in red):

A Scale Catalog

Once you have experimented with finding your own alternate scales, you might like to pick a scale out of the scale catalog that I put together.

The complete Scale Catalog (all eight pages shown in this chapter plus a descriptive cover page) is available in a Scale Catalog PDF:

It has typical fingerings for contemporary six-hole Native American flutes (sometimes called a “mode 1/4 flute”).

This list of 58 scales is meant to be a tool for exploration of scales from world music traditions. Most players of Native American flutes use a very small number of alternate scales, so please do not feel compelled to try to learn the full set of scales provided.

The remainder of this chapter describes the scales on each of the pages in the Scale Catalog.

**Core Scales**

The first scale that most people teach is the pentatonic minor scale. However, I've found that a great alternative is the Bugle Scale. It is also a great scale to teach as a first alternate scale – after experimenting with the "pick up your fingers in a different order" approach.

Note that the root of the Bugle Scale is not \( \text{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet} \). If you improvise melodies in this scale, you will find yourself ending on \( \text{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet} \) – the root of this scale.

The great thing about the Bugle Scale is that it is a great lead-in to playing one of the core songs in the Native flute's repertoire: Amazing Grace.

Note that all the other scales on this first page that I am calling “Core Scales” also have a root that is above the fundamental \( \text{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet} \) note on the instrument.

Pentatonic Major can be a revelation for many novice and intermediate players, because it opens the door to playing in a major key. Simply keeping the same notes as Pentatonic Minor, but moving the root note of your playing (where you begin and end your phrases and melodies) changes the key to major.

**3-Note and 4-Note Scales**

These “sparse” scales follow the rule of dropping notes. They are typically easier to learn than the other scales because they have relatively few notes.

Note the fingerings in red: they are notes in the upper register of some (but not all) Native American flutes. I've added them to the charts to make them available if your flute happens to be able to play those notes.

**Exotic Pentatonic Scales**

These are often the best scales to begin with if you are exploring new scales. They provide a “sparse” feel that evokes Asian cultures.

The notes in orange are not recommended – I've added them to the scale catalog simply to show that these notes are in the scale, but playing them can be extremely difficult on most flutes. However, their corresponding notes in the second register, in particular the note typically played with the fingering \( \text{\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet\textbullet} \), can be excellent replacements.

**Variants of Pentatonic Minor**

These scales are all slight variations of the Pentatonic Minor scale. They differ by only one note from the core Pentatonic Minor scale.

It is fun to explore how making just a small change in a well-known scale can dramatically change the feel of the scale.

**Expanded Scales**

These scales increase the number of notes from the five notes of Pentatonic Minor. The seven scales on this page are among the most versatile, although they take the feel of melodies in a whole different direction from the typical melodies played on this instrument.

Upper Major and High Major are two versions of the Diatonic Major scale. On these two scales, you can play many songs from the Western European tradition of music, especially those that stay within one octave (such as many hymns).
**Diatonic Scales**
This page shows fingerings for a full set of seven diatonic scales.

Each one starts on ●●●●●●● and, if you can access three notes in the upper octave, gives you a full one octave in the scale.

**Other Pentatonic Scales**
And finally, the last two pages show an array of other 5-note scales from world cultures.
Core Scales for Native American Flutes

Typical fingerings for contemporary Native American flutes

Developed by Clint Goss

Bugle Scale

Pentatonic Minor

Pentatonic Major

Pentatonic Celtic

Mode Four Pentatonic Minor

Mode Four Hexatonic Minor

Chromatic

Summertime

Greensleeves *

Taps

Zuni Sunrise

Root note of the scale

Orange: half-hole fingerings. (Avoid)

Notes above the octave

All the notes - not usually used in songs.

Page A — Visit www.Flutopedia.com for more Native American Flute resources

Updated April 3, 2016
3-NOTE AND 4-NOTE SCALES FOR NATIVE AMERICAN FLUTES

Typical fingerings for contemporary Native American flutes

Developed by Clint Goss

- **Ute Tritonic**
- **Sansagari**
- **Major Triad**
- **Upper Minor Tetratonic**
- **Bi Yu**
- **Minor Tetratonic**
- **Lower Minor Tetratonic**

Notes above the octave

Root note of the scale

Pentatonic Minor with no minor third

Pentatonic Minor with no perfect fourth

Pentatonic Minor with no perfect fifth

Pentatonic Minor with no minor seventh

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Updated April 3, 2016
EXOTIC PENTATONIC SCALES FOR NATIVE AMERICAN FLUTES

Typical fingerings for contemporary Native American flutes
Developed by Clint Goss

- Miyako-Bushi
- Rotation of Hirajōshi
- Hirajōshi 1
- AKA: "Ake Bono" Sakura
- Hirajōshi 2
- Hirajōshi 3
- Iwato
- Root note of the scale
- Orange: half-hole fingerings (Avoid!)
- Notes above the octave
- Zilaf
- Ryukyu
- Khamaji
- Durga

Variants of Pentatonic Minor

Typical fingerings for contemporary Native American flutes

Developed by Clint Goss

Root note of the scale

Notes above the octave

** Indicates the note that differs from Pentatonic Minor

Page D — Visit www.Flutopedia.com for more Native American Flute resources

Updated April 3, 2016
### Expanded Scales for Native American Flutes

Typical fingerings for contemporary Native American flutes

Developed by Clint Goss

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Fingerings</th>
<th>Songs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Upper Major</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Upper Major Fingerings" /></td>
<td><strong>Oh Tannenbaum</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Amazing Grace (lower)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Simple Gifts</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Kayowajineh</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Major</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="High Major Fingerings" /></td>
<td><strong>Oh Come All Ye Faithful</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Amazing Grace (upper)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blues Six-Note</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Blues Six-Note Fingerings" /></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blues Seven-Note</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Blues Seven-Note Fingerings" /></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish Gypsy</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Spanish Gypsy Fingerings" /></td>
<td><strong>Streets of Cairo (AKA: The Snake Charmer Song)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Byzantine</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Byzantine Fingerings" /></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Neveseri</td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Neveseri Fingerings" /></td>
<td><strong>Greek folk music</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Legend:**
- **Root note of the scale**
- **Orange: half-hole fingerings**
- **Notes above the octave**

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Updated April 3, 2016
Diatonic Scales for Native American Flutes Rooted on

Typical fingerings for contemporary Native American flutes

Developed by Clint Goss

Diatonic Major
Joy to the World
Over the Rainbow
The First Noel
Shenandoah
Colors of the Wind

Dorian
Scarborough Fair
Eleanor Rigby

Phrygian

Lydian

Mixolydian

Aeolian

Locrian

Root note of the scale
Orange: half-hole fingerings (Avoid!)

Notes above the octave
DIATONIC SCALES FOR NATIVE AMERICAN FLUTES ROOTED ON

Typical fingerings for contemporary Native American flutes

Developed by Clint Goss

Diatonic Major

Dorian

Phrygian

Lydian

Mixolydian

Aeolian

Locrian

Root note of the scale
Orange: half-hole fingerings (Avoid)
Notes above the octave

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Updated April 3, 2016
OTHER PENTATONIC SCALES FOR NATIVE AMERICAN FLUTE

Typical fingerings for contemporary Native American flutes

Developed by Clint Goss

Mohanangi

Jayakauns

Kiravani

Marga Hindola

Multani

Chin

Varini

Mand

Page G — Visit www.Flutopedia.com for more Native American Flute resources
## Other Pentatonic Scales for Native American Flute

Typical fingerings for contemporary Native American flutes

Developed by Clint Goss

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Devranjdi</td>
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<td>Kuntvarali</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purukutika</td>
<td><img src="Purukutika.png" alt="Fingerings" /></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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A Scale Codex

The prior chapter I provided a list of all the scales I could find on the Native American flute (there were 58!) In an interesting aside, the very next melody I improvised after sending out that newsletter used a scale not on that list (!!) Amazing what scales this instrument holds!

After sending that list out and distributing it at our workshops, we’ve gotten a number of requests for more specific information on each scale: what are the intervals, what about written tablature, what are the notes on each key of flute, and how do they relate to chords and harmony.

So, I’ve cooked up the idea of a “Scale Codex”. Each page shows a single scale with lots of detail.

The complete Scale Codex is available in a Scale Codex PDF:


It has typical fingerings for contemporary six-hole Native American flutes (sometimes called a “mode 1/4 flute”). This comprehensive info about each scale is meant to be a tool for exploration of scales from world music traditions.

The remainder of this chapter describes the elements on each page of the Scale Codex, using the Pentatonic Minor scale as an example.

Pentatonic Minor

The image at the right shows the first page of the Scale Codex – for the Pentatonic Minor scale, typically considered the primary scale on most Native American flutes.

The top of the page shows the notes for the scale in Nakai tablature – the system used for most sheet music for these instruments. Below each note are the finger diagrams for the most typical fingering for each note. Note: Each flute is unique. Fingerings needed to get any particular pitch vary, sometimes dramatically, from flute to flute. While the fingerings for the Pentatonic Minor scale are fairly standardized, most of the other scales have notes that call for a wide variety of fingerings across the range of flutes.

Below the fingerings are the intervals (in Western classical music theory terms) from the root note of the scale.

One of the best ways to learn a scale is to sing it. The Scale Codex uses the vocables that are used in two common systems for “note singing”: the Western Solfege system and the East Indian Sargam system.

Next comes twelve rows that show the notes of the scale on each of the twelve keys of flutes. The key of flute is always the first column.

This chapter was written by Clint Goss. A similar article appeared in Clint & Vera’s Flute Newsletter, December 2014.
However, note that the root note of many scales is not the lowest note on the instrument!

Below the notes, each Scale Codex page has the intervals (number of semitones) between each note in the scale, and the cumulative number of semitones from the root note of the scale.

The “Perfect Ratio” row gives the ratio of the frequencies in relation to the root note. These frequencies are very close to (but not exactly) the tunings that we use in the Western classical music tradition – typically called “Equal Temperament”.

And finally, the bottom row shows the intervals as they are known in the Jazz world.
PENTATONIC MINOR SCALE

Six-hole flutes — Pentatonic Minor Tuning

Developed by Clint Goss

Common fingerings for most Native flutes

Interval | Root | Minor Third | Perfect Fourth | Perfect Fifth | Minor Seventh | Octave | Minor Tenth
---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---
Solfege | "La" | "Do" | "Re" | "Mi" | "Sol" | "La" | "Do"
Sargam | "Dha" | "Sa" | "Re" | "Ga" | "Pa" | "Dha" | "Sa"

"Key" of flute

C | D# - Eb | F | G | A# - Bb | C | D# - Eb
C# - Db | E | F# - Gb | G# - Ab | B | C# - Db | E
D | F | G | A | C | D | F
D# - Eb | F# - Gb | G# - Ab | A# - Bb | C# - Db | D# - Eb | F# - Gb
E | G | A | B | D | E | G
F | G# - Ab | A# - Bb | C | D# - Eb | F | G# - Ab
F# - Gb | A | B | C# - Db | E | F# - Gb | A
G | A# - Bb | C | D | F | G | A# - Bb
G# - Ab | B | C# - Db | D# - Eb | F# - Gb | G# - Ab | B
A | C | D | E | G | A | C
A# - Bb | C# - Db | D# - Eb | F | G# - Ab | A# - Bb | C# - Db
B | D | E | F# - Gb | A | B | D

Semitones between notes from root

1:1 | 6:5 | 4:3 | 3:2 | 9:5 or 16:9 | 2:1 | 11:5

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Updated November 16, 2014

* Only a small percentage of Native American flutes can reach this note, and the fingering varies widely.
One of the most useful tools we have as musicians is the ability to record and hear our own sound creations. The technology revolution has given us the ability to make high-quality recordings relatively conveniently and inexpensively.

Sometime during each of our Native Flute workshops, Vera and I offer this challenge to the group: commit to getting your music down on a CD. It’s the greatest gift you can give friends, family, and people who want to hear more of your music … a little CD package that essentially says: “This Is My Music”.

The benefits are enormous. Beyond having a heartfelt creation to offer as a gift or a calling card, the process of creating a CD can be so valuable for improving our musicality. We get to practice particular songs and focus on particular flutes, do some “deep listening” sessions during tracking and mixing, and experiment with graphic design to complete the package.

But despite these benefits, it can still be a daunting process to go from playing your flute to handing “This Is My Music” out to your friends. This chapter is an overview of some of the ways to get from music to recording.

One approach is to hire a producer who shares your vision, and place the project in his or her hands. The job of a producer is to coordinate and oversee every aspect of the project that is needed to bring the project to completion. This is the typical approach taken by larger record labels, and can work for musicians who have some significant finances behind the project.

If you don’t have a bountiful budget, there are many ways to approach the project, right down

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to recording and mixing your own project and burning CDs on your computer’s CD writer.

The first link in the recording of your sound is the microphone. One of the challenges of playing Native American flutes is that they are constructed so that we, as the player, are often in the worst location to hear our own sounds. The vibrations project from under the block and sound hole and finger holes out to our listeners better than they project back to our own ears. And one of the huge benefits of recording our sound is learning to work with this microphone.

Even if you intend to use a studio to record your music, it’s a good idea to learn to work with the microphone. A simple setup that routes the microphone back into your ears (via headphones) can let your hear the real sound of your flute for the first time. It might be as simple as connecting a microphone to your computer’s “Mic” port and ear buds to the speaker jack.

With this simple setup, you have added a lot of possibilities to your musical world. Not only can you hear your own flute playing clearly and get experience with how to use the microphone to control the volume and timbre of your sound, but you can record your playing as well as broadcast your music over the Internet. To record your own playing, you’ll need one of the many recording programs available. Audacity is a good (and free) choice, if you’re not daunted by the numerous features. For something simpler, just do a Web search for “simple recording software”.

If you’d like to get involved with other flute players, try some of the live, Internet-based audio chat rooms that function as high-tech open mic sessions. PalTalk is a free service that hosts a number of such sessions throughout the week (www.PalTalk.com). With the simple microphone and headphones setup, you can join in and blast your live playing to all corners of the Earth.

Selecting a microphone for playing flute is always a challenge. There are many kinds and brands of microphones, and they can be confusing. The good news is that many brands of high quality microphones that are ideal for flute playing are available relatively inexpensively. You might begin with a simple all-purpose dynamic microphone such as the Shure SM-57 instrument microphone, generally available for about $90. However, for more detailed recordings and a better overall sound, using a “large diaphragm condenser” microphone will get you noticeably better sound quality and recordings.

However, using a condenser microphone brings one added requirement: you have to supply power to condenser microphones. One easy way to accomplish this is to run your microphone into a small mixer and then run the output of the mixer into your computer on a USB or Firewire interface. Depending on your goals and finances, you can choose a mixer that has some added features (in addition to the “phantom power” needed for the condenser microphone):

- the ability to add effects such as reverb and delay,
- the ability to equalize the frequency of your sound by adjusting the balance of the high, middle, and low frequency components of the sound signal, and
- the possibility of mixing in other instruments and/or background tracks that you can play over.

Digital effects such as delay and reverb can add a whole new dimension to your flute playing, smoothing out any unwanted irregularities in your breath pressure and bringing you close to the sound that is typically heard on professionally mixed and mastered CDs. On the downside, digital effects can be over-used, making your sound muddy and distant. This is where deep listening over extended periods comes into play … finding just the right amount
of each effect to add to get the sound you want.
For my taste, the goal is to capture the ambiance
of the natural environment you want your
listeners to visualize. Each environment – a
cathedral or a canyon or a concert hall – has its
own sound reverberant profile that can be
emulated with digital effects.

Getting practice on your own or during PalTalk
sessions with how to set the EQ and effects can
be a huge benefit during recording and mixing
sessions.

Another possibility for recording is using one of
the new portable digital recorders rather than a
computer. These are inexpensive and can
produce a great sound, especially if you use
your external microphone and/or mixer. Vera
and I have travelled with an older Zoom H4 to
many great locations around the world and
captured the sounds of many musicians and sound
environments.

When you’re ready to record your music for
posterity, you might consider getting someone
else to handle the tasks of recording while you
just play. This frees you from the angst of
getting the best recording (or “tracking”) of
your sound.

After recording, the project generally proceeds
in stages toward completion: laying down other
tracks that will become part of a song, mixing
the tracks together (using mixing software such
as Audacity), audio mastering of all mix tracks
to polish the overall sound of the CD, pre-
mastering of the CD image to add the meta-data
that can be added to your project, graphic
design and printing of the package, and
duplication (using CD burner technology
typical of computer CD writers) or replication
(which is a larger-volume production process
using a glass master).

If the prospect of tackling all the tasks alone is
too daunting, you could consider recording
some of your tracks at home and hiring an audio
engineer to mix them and produce the CD.

Alternately, you could seek out a program that
at a flute school or festival that handles as many
of the tasks as you need.

Whether you hire a producer or undertake the
process yourself the important thing is that you
get “This Is My Music” produced and out into
the world.

Your audience awaits!
Widening the Circle

Every musician should have their own CD.

That may be a controversial statement, but … There … I said it.

The process of crafting your music into a permanent recording has so many benefits and generates so much positive energy that I have come to love it almost as much as playing. I’ve done it six times now, and look forward to the seventh.

When we are crafting a CD, we play more, focus on our musical ideas in a larger scope, interact with other musicians, perceive our music more from the listener’s perspective, and spend many wonderful hours listening deeply to our own musical sounds. All good things! And there is nothing that compares with handing another person a little disc of polycarbonate and saying “this is my music”.

One of the big questions that comes up before, during, and after producing your CD is: How do I promote my CD? When you produce a CD, widening the circle of your listeners is part of the process. This chapter has some suggestions for how to get your music out there in gradually wider circles of distribution. We start from the smallest, closest circles and widen outward from there … starting for a self-produced CD for small-circle distribution up to a serious attempt to be an Indie artist.

This Is My Music

Most debut CDs by musicians I know are what I call a “This Is My Music” CD. It is generally the music we love to play, regardless of marketing considerations like specific genres, target audience, and packaging.

For a CD of your own music designed for friends and family, as well as limited sales at your own gigs, most people begin this way:

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• Burn your music to a CD-R on your computer, design a label for the CD on a computer graphics program such as PhotoShop, and give it away or sell it.

• If you get tired of burning CDs one at a time off your computer, you could get a multi-disc CD burner (I have a Sandy Yang duplicator and it works well).

Alternately, you could use an outfit such as DiscMakers (www.DiscMakers.com) for “short-run” duplication. It will cost maybe $4–5 per CD in quantities of 300 and under.

This may be all you need! Personally, I believe all musicians should strive to have their own personal CD. Gifting your music to friends and family is a wonderful act … “This is my music” is your best calling card!

Getting more sales and exposure may be tempting, but it carries a tax in effort, organization, paperwork, and cost. Go as far as you wish, but keep tabs on the monetary and time cost.

“Niche” Sales On-line

At this level you're looking to distribute directly to people who are beyond your own circle of friends and family. They may be in a circle of ardent fans of either your particular “niche” style of music or fans of your group itself.

Consider moving to CD replication rather than CD-R duplication. Replication is typically done by an outside house such as DiscMakers (www.DiscMakers.com). Cost is typically around $2 per CD, but minimum quantity is realistically 1,000. The advantages of replication over CD-R duplication are many, but the big one is reliability. Replication uses a glass master/stamping process that is very reliable, as opposed to the reflective dye “burning” process of duplication.

Get a UPC bar code on your product. To do anything in the “real world” with your product you'll need a bar code. Typically the replication house will supply one, sometimes for free. Alternately, you can use CD Baby (see below) if you are still doing home production.

Sign up with CD Baby. This is the best thing you can do for yourself. They are incredibly useful and supportive in every dimension of what an Indie artist needs. For a $35 fee per CD, you get a dedicated web page for your music, listings in their often-perused catalog, distribution to a slew of digital download services (the big one being all the regions of iTunes), fulfillment of physical CDs (they warehouse your CD, take credit card sales online and fulfill them), fulfillment of digital download off their own web site, and provide a pile of advice.

For a flavor of CD Baby and for the really good advice they offer, check out their general advice for Indie artists at www.CDBaby.com.

CD Baby does make many things easy, but there are many many things that they do not do. The big thing is that they do not actually promote your music … that's squarely in your domain. They do give you advice however (“when you do a gig, take a picture of the audience from stage and put it up on your web site the next morning – and tell everyone in the audience what you are doing so they rush to your web site to see themselves”).

Get your songs into Gracenote/CDDB and FreeDB. These are the on-line databases that provide the title and artist information to your iTunes software when you import a CD into iTunes. To populate your information into the Gracenote/CDDB Media Database (www.gracenote.com), you can use the iTunes application itself and the Advanced->Submit command. For FreeDB (www.freedb.org), I use the AudioGrabber PC software.
**Covering the legal and royalty bases in anticipation of royalty income**

Sign up with a Performance Rights Organization (“PRO”). A PRO handles royalties derived from airplay and performance of your music, and pays those royalties back to the songwriters and publishers. There are three organizations in the U.S. (ASCAP, BMI, and SESAC) but most other countries have a single organization.

Establish a relationship with a publishing company, or create one of your own. The publishing company receives 50% of many classes of royalties, so having your own company allows you to retain that portion of any royalties. Note that in the US, there is a complication because of the multiple PROs. In practice, your publishing company needs to have an affiliation with the same PRO as the songwriter. To handle this, most publishing companies have separate divisions, each registered with a different PRO.

Register all your songs with the Harry Fox agency ([www.HarryFox.com](http://www.HarryFox.com)). This is done by the publishing company and is a convenient way to collect mechanical royalties, in the case where someone else wishes to record your songs.

Register your songs for copyright protection. Typically done in the US through the Library of Congress, using form SR within 3 months of publication.

Register your music with SoundScan at [www.Soundscan.com](http://www.Soundscan.com).

Register for an ISRC code prefix. ISRC codes are stamped onto CDs for track identification.

Register your songs with your PRO.

**For sales to a wider audience**

Consider professional cover design. Your cousin might be great with Photoshop, but a professional graphic artist will make a huge difference to your shelf-appeal.

Consider professional mastering of your tracks. After mixing of your music, a mastering engineer will often provide a substantial improvement to the sound quality of your CD by balancing the sound level and EQ across the tracks, removing low rumbles, and adding ISRC codes.

Get your CD(s) on Amazon.com. There is a straightforward program for vendors called “Amazon Advantage”.

Selling CDs directly to retail stores is typically done through distributors. There are many music distributors – I cataloged 206 when I was looking for distribution in mid-2007. Distributors tend to specialize in a segment of the retail market and/or geographic region. Examples include: CD “Bins” at truck stops, new age stores, museum shops, and “captive markets” such as airline style channels. For example, New Leaf and Music Design distribute to New Age shops, with New Leaf being primary for the US East Coast and Music Design for the US West Coast.

Consider submitting your music to Pandora ([www.Pandora.com](http://www.Pandora.com)) – a very widely used service.

Consider your own web site. In particular, if you have more than one CD and wish to accept orders that you fulfill yourself.

Submit your music to AllMusic at [www.AllMusic.com](http://www.AllMusic.com).

Consider various music awards such as the Independent Music Awards, International Acoustic Music Awards, and (of course) the Grammys!!

Consider using Pump Audio for promotion of your music to the video/film industry.
If you get to the point of being a serious, possibly full-time Indie artist or decide to become a record label and publishing company that represents and promotes other artists, there is an excellent book: *All You Need to Know About the Music Business* by Donald S. Passman.

However, it is not for the casual reader! (Unless you want to buy the book just to convince yourself that you'd rather spend your time on your music instead of descending into the legal and financial morass that surrounds the music biz).
It’s happened to us all … we go to a flute circle, festival, or workshop and get inspired. We listen and learn and play and play and play. Our playing improves and we come away from the event with new inspiration and with the conviction to practice more, write down our songs, and start recording our CD …

Then we return from the event. Work intrudes, projects pile up. Life happens. Four weeks later, we’ve barely picked up the flute. That intense feeling of wholeness we had when we were expressing our music is replaced by a hollow feeling of failure and inability to play. Our promise to practice an hour a day feels like a failed New Year’s resolution to lose weight.

After I had many of these roller-coaster cycles of “workshop love” and “homeplace draught”, I began to take aim at the problem. One solution, go to a flute festival every week, was deemed impractical by the very practical Vera, my wife of 26 years. I had to agree with her.

Then she pointed out that my playing wasn’t the problem, it was my practicing. Her advice: don’t play for a solid month. Instead, spend the time focusing on how to structure my life to fit the music in.

One month of not playing seemed severe. But I had to admit I probably would not have played much that month, and the exercise of restructuring my life to fit in the music began to be fun. I did not need to “set aside time” for this exercise, I could do it anywhere!

So I started thinking about it while driving to work. The first realization was that if I could think about restructuring my life toward music while driving, why couldn’t I just do music while driving? The next day I had a stack of CDs in the car, and within a week I had a huge list of CDs and iPod music that I had wanted to

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listen to … enough for a year’s worth of commuting.

W. A. Mathieu, the famous jazz pianist and music educator, advises musicians to spend \( \frac{1}{4} \) of their time listening to other people’s music, so I was already 25% of the way to my goal.

Then I happened to listen to a recording of the great jazz flutist Yusef Lateef, where he was scat singing at the same time as improvising on his flute. So I tried singing along with some simpler NAF melodies. At first it was difficult to even find the first note, but once I was able to match pitch with a few long-tones, singing became easier and easier.

Then something magic happened: I began playing flute without a flute! I could develop NAF melodies just by humming, and I found I could immediately play them on a flute along with my humming. I was running home after parking the car and playing for an hour while humming melodies.

Vera was not impressed with my “success”. I had not, after all, spent one full month thinking about music in my life, but had simply found one quick (but admittedly, awesome) way to focus on music. Knowing that she is usually right about these things, I returned in earnest to the mental task. I came up with many ideas and tried them over the years … here is a list of some of the successful ones:

**Create a safe space for your music**

This is a place and a time where you can be yourself musically – to do whatever strikes your fancy, including vocalizing, playing your flute loudly, doing physical warm-ups, and playing other people’s music. The physical space could be as little as a shelf with your favorite flute(s) and some sheet music.

The time aspect is often more challenging … creating a half hour where others in your life acknowledge that this is “your time”. Getting a switch where I could send my telephone calls directly to the answering machine without having it ring was a key step here.

**Sprinkle flutes around your living space**

If you happen to have more than one flute, try placing them in places that invite you to play. It just might encourage you to pick it up if the time is right. For me, playing flute 5 times a day for 5 minutes was much more valuable than playing for a straight half hour.

**Loop pedal**

I am lucky to have a loop pedal attached to my microphone and speaker setup. I found that if I lay down a simple rhythmic loop and leave it running, then I am drawn back to my music space over and over throughout the day to jam with that background.

**Keep the music going**

I organized my iPod by creating a playlist of background listening music, and play it a low volume all day. It’s so low that a person on the other end of a phone call will not hear it, but for me it’s there. This was a huge inducement to play.

**Create a goal**

Every time I had a concert scheduled, I practiced like mad. In the weeks leading up to a workshop that we would lead, my music came to the forefront. When I got serious about doing a CD, I played like mad. Eventually, I realized that if I had a series of nicely spaced events, that I would be encouraged to play all the time.

**Reading**

I found that the more I read about music, the more I wanted to play. After reading VOW I
would play for days. The great books on music and improvising spurred me on: *The Listening Book* by W. A. Mathieu, *Effortless Mastery* by Kenny Werner, and *The Music Lesson* by Victor L. Wooten all spurred periods of intense music making.

I used these tricks and techniques over time to nudge me into playing. But as I settled into playing more regularly, something amazing happened. I found that the positive feeling I got from playing each day exceeded the effort of getting started. Was I getting addicted to playing flute? *So be it!*
Cultural Insights

For those of us who did not grow up in a Native American culture, traditional music can sometimes be mystifying:

- Why are some songs secret?
- Why are improvised melodies preferred over composed songs?
- Why is there no music theory in traditional approaches to the Native American flute?
- And what do the phrases “All My Relations” and “Wakan Tanka” mean?

Along my journey with the Native American flute, I have come across some writings that have shed light on these core questions. They are written by people who did not grow up in a Native American culture, but I believe their insights are keen. Of course, these writings are not a substitute for talking with elders of the culture – but maybe they can augment such an experience.

I address each of these questions below, as best as I currently understand it from the writings that follow. I have slightly edited some of the writings to better fit the context.

I hope you find this useful!

Preamble

Although most Native American cultures share a common core of beliefs, the belief system of each culture is unique and specific to that culture. This also applies to social areas such as language, ceremonies, medicines, and traditions.

This chapter looks at beliefs and customs of specific cultures. While

This chapter was written by Clint Goss. It contains a major contribution from Barry Higgins, who provided numerous and detailed suggestions and additions, as well as the majority of the text for the Preamble section. A similar article appeared in Clint & Vera’s Flute Newsletter, June 2014. The images in this chapter are photographs and paintings by Eanger Irving Couse (1866–1936), the Taos Society of Artists, Taos, New Mexico. Photos courtesy of by Russell Wolf.
this can give us insight and understanding, these beliefs cannot typically be applied universally across Native American cultures. The popularized notion of an all-inclusive “pan-Indian” philosophy does not typically serve us, or the cultures involved, with an accurate and deep understanding. For example, medicinal herbs used by one tribal group for a specific function may be “taboo” to another group.

**Why Are Some Songs Secret?**

For Ancestral Pueblos, songs have the power to directly cause actions. Performing a song can possibly have dire consequences. Those consequences can happen even if the performer did not intend harm. Keeping these powerful songs a secret protects people – performers and listeners – who might be harmed.

The traditional concept that “speech and song are actions” is described by Emily Brown in her lecture titled *Musical Performance in Rituals of the Ancestral Puebloans of the American Southwest*. This is an edited excerpt from a video of that talk, provided by the SAR School for Advanced Research in Santa Fe, New Mexico:

*There is a belief that is widespread among the pueblos and it may be of some antiquity: Speech can be an action that has real-world consequences.*

*What this means is that some words, songs, or prayers are so powerful that they can be dangerous to people who are not supposed to hear them. Some songs are sung in a whisper so that people won’t hear and be harmed. Along with this goes the idea that the power of the song or prayer can be diluted if it is shared between too many people, and so some are kept secret for that reason.*

*Some songs are sung only in very private spaces, sung very quietly, or even sung in very archaic words or words in other languages, so that few if any people will understand what is said.*

**Why Are Improvised Melodies Preferred?**

There is a tradition in many indigenous North American cultures that melodies are not composed, but arise spontaneously when the player “has placed himself in a receptive attitude”. The goal is to connect with the unconscious and to be acutely aware of the mysterious.

This perspective on how songs arise is given by this excerpt from Frances Densmore’s 1953 paper “The Belief of the Indian in a
Connection between Song and the Supernatural”, Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 151, pages 217–223:

An important phase of Indian music is known as the dream song, which is common to many tribes. These songs are not composed but are said to come to the mind of the Indian when he has placed himself in a receptive attitude. To this extent the source of the song is not unlike the inspiration sometimes experienced by composers of our own race, but the use of the song is entirely different. Our composer regards the song as a possible source of applause or wealth while the Indian connects it with mysterious power. ...

To a white man the term “dream” is connected with unconsciousness, but the Indian term implies an acute awareness of something mysterious. Dreams and their songs may come to an Indian in natural sleep if his mind is conditioned to such an experience, but the first important dream comes to a young man in a fasting vigil. He is alone in some silent place, and his mind is passive, as he hopes for an impression to come to him from a mysterious source. The silence becomes vibrant, it becomes rhythmic, and a melody comes to his mind. This is his “dream song,” his most individual possession.

An aged man once recorded his dream song for the writer, then bowed his head and said tremulously that he thought he would not live long as he had parted with his most precious possession. The white musician composes songs addressed to his deity. The Indian waited and listened for the mysterious power pervading all nature to speak to him in song. The Indian realized that he was part of nature—not akin to it.

Even though songs might best be described as arising spontaneously, this does not diminish the fact that many songs were memorized, shared through oral traditions, or put to specific uses. Even in a culture without a formal written language or the structure of music theory, a system often did exist that could preserve and direct the use of music. This informal system might be considered analogous to the process of music composition and publication.

Music Theory and Traditional Cultures

George Herzog wrote about the role of music theory in the cultures he studied. This is an excerpt from his May 1938 article “Music in the Thinking of the American Indian”, Peabody Bulletin, Series 34, Number 1, pages 8–12:
Indians have no musical theory, in our sense of the word. That is, they do not have a system of ideas and definitions which attempts to formulate specific rules of composition, construction principles of music for the creator and the analytically minded listener. This may be for a number of reasons: partly perhaps because music and words form such an intimate union – instrumental music independent of singing is comparatively unimportant. Also, because music is so often part of a larger setting, a ritual, dance, story. In itself it may not control so much attention except as part of a more inclusive whole.

... the most important notions about music, at times rather elaborate, concern themselves chiefly with its ultimate origin and meaning. Its potency and place in the human scene are more significant matters to Indians in general than its technical character and mode of construction, or even its capacity for conveying personal expression and emotional meanings. A few quotations may be suggestive:

“When the Earth was newly created
Then the first time came the songs”
(Pima Indian Song)

“The land was put in order, when people came and began to dance.”
(Tarahumare Indians, Northern Mexico)

“Incantations, rituals and prayers were given to people by the gods before the emergence.”
(Zuni Indians)

**The Phrase “All Our Relations”**

Briefly: all the things – plants, animals (including humans), rocks, planets – that we are connected and co-dependent within our web of shared existence. It is a translation of the Lakota phrase “Mitakuye Oyasin”.

A description of this phrase is provided by Malea Powell of Michigan State University, published in the invitation to the 2011 Annual Convention of the Conference on College Composition and Communication, available at the National Council of Teachers of English web site at [http://www.NCTE.org/](http://www.NCTE.org/). Here is an excerpt:

_The phrase “all our relations” encapsulates an entire philosophy of_
humans in relation to other living things — plants, animals, rocks, Earth. “All our relations” emphasizes the intricately connected web of relationships that sustains our mutual ability to live out our shared existence on the Earth together.

All living things matter, all are important, all must be treated as relatives. Even harmful, frightening or negative relations are important and must be understood and honored if we are to survive together in the same spaces. “All our relations” is a phrase used both as invocation and conclusion. It forces us to consider the balance between the weight of each human's responsibility in maintaining the balance of the world and in understanding the smallness of each individual in relation to the larger web of meaning.

However, while it is valuable to understand the intent of this phrase, if you are not from a Sioux culture and want to actively use and quote the phrase, care is suggested. For a description of how the phrase has become a misused slogan in popular culture, see *Animals of the Soul* by Joseph Epes Brown, Element Books, Rockport, MA, Second Edition, 1997.

**The Phrase “Wakan Tanka”**

This phrase from the Lakota language, written in various sources as Wakȟáŋ Tháŋka and Wakaŋ’ taŋka, is often translated as “*Great Spirit*”. However, according to the controversial Lakota activist Russell Means, the meaning is closest to the English phrase “*Great Mystery*”.

This description is from Frances Densmore’s 1953 paper (cited earlier):

*Among the Sioux Indians the term “wa’kan” is used in referring to any mystery. The term “Great Spirit” is commonly used as the English equivalent of the Sioux word “Wakaŋ’ taŋka,,” which consists of two adjectives, wa’kaŋ, “mysterious” and taŋ’ka, “great.” ... In old times this word was not used in ordinary conversation, as it was held too sacred to be spoken except with reverence and at a proper time. That which remains unspoken must be considered in any study of Indian thought, together with the fact that a “sacred language” is sometimes used by which ideas can be conveyed between initiates without being understood by others.*

The phrase translated as “*Great Spirit*” varies across Native American cultures and language groups, together with subtle shades of meaning and intent. Here are just a few of the hundreds
of variants: Gici Niwaskw (Abenaki), Usen (Apache), Apistotoke (Blackfoot), Ababinili (Cickasaw), Orenda (Iroquois), Ketanitowet (Lenape), Kisu’lkw (Micmaq), Gitche Manitou (Ojibwe/Anishnaabe), Wakonda (Omaha, Ponca, Osage).

**Indian Music and Spontaneity**

And finally, one of my favorite quotes by the early anthropologist Alice C. Fletcher. This is from her *Indian Story and Song from North America*, published by Small, Maynard & Co., Boston, Massachusetts, 1900, from the preface,

pages viii-ix:

> Aside from its scientific value, this music possesses a charm of spontaneity that cannot fail to please those who would come near to nature and enjoy the expression of emotion untrammeled [sic] by the intellectual control of schools. These songs are like the wild flowers that have not yet come under the transforming hand of the gardener.
Your Brain on Flute

How do we respond, physically and mentally, when we breathe into our flutes? Could the positive effects that we feel from playing flutes indicate a potential use of Native American flutes in music therapy settings? As an alternative therapy for specific clinical conditions, could playing the Native American flute have a place alongside traditional breath-centered practices such as Yoga, Qigong, and Zazen?

Many research studies have explored the effects of *listening* to music (see [Cervellin 2011] for an overview). Far fewer studies have investigated the effects of *playing* music on our minds and bodies. After an exhaustive search of the literature, we could find only a few studies on the effects of playing Native American flutes, and those studies used self-report methods rather than objective measurements of basic brain and body metrics. So, during the Flute Haven Native Flute School, we carried out a research study to measure the effects of both listening and playing on the heart, nervous system, and brain.

It is common in a single research study to test a very limited set of hypotheses. This approach makes data analysis straightforward and increases the statistical significance of the results. However, our goal was to identify which directions might be fruitful for future research.

Our curiosity and quest for future directions caused us to look at a wide range of measures and test many hypotheses. This approach, combined with the relatively small number of participants (15 flute players) and several other limitations, places our research within the context of an “exploratory pilot study”. While we identified several interesting trends and future research directions, we consider the

This chapter was written by Clint Goss and Eric B. Miller and edited by Kathleen Joyce-Grendahl. A similar article appeared in the May 2014 issue of *Overtones*, pages 10–14, published by the World Flute Society.
results of this study as “preliminary” and suggest additional research to confirm the effects that we found.

The detailed results have been recently reported in several articles for the scientific community ([Miller 2014] and [Miller 2014a]). See those articles for a full description of how the study was done and the limitations associated with our results.

This chapter looks at the results of our research study from the perspective of flute players and facilitators of community music gatherings. What are the preliminary lessons learned? How can we use them as players and facilitators? In this chapter, we have kept the literature citations to a minimum, since they have been included in our two publications cited above. This chapter also includes some results that have not been reported earlier.

The Study Outline
We enlisted 15 volunteers to participate in the study from the Flute Haven Native Flute School. Each of them took about an hour off from the program of workshops and playing sessions, bringing two of their flutes a short distance to a lab that we set up for the study. Their flutes were:

- a “lower-pitched flute” – a mid-range E minor flute or lower, and
- a “higher-pitched flute” – a mid-range G minor flute or higher.

Participants were fitted with sensors on their scalp and the fingertip of one pinky to measure heart, skin, and brain activity. Participants then put on headphones and listened to an audio program, which guided them through a program of relaxation periods, listening to several kinds of music, and playing their flutes. Measurements taken during an initial period of silent relaxation served as a “baseline” to compare against measurements taken during later periods of listening and playing.

Throughout the study, we recorded the electrical activity of the brain in seven frequency bands, which provided an indicator of the overall emotional state of the participant. We also recorded the level of skin conductivity, which is an indicator of nervous system arousal and sometimes anxiety. This measure of arousal increases as small moisturized particles (sweat) on the skin are produced.

For heart metrics, we recorded precise pulse-beat measurements at the fingertips. These pulse-beat measurements allowed us to determine three cardiac measures: heart rate, volume of blood flow per heartbeat at the fingertip, and a key metric called “heart rate variability”, which is described below.

Summary of the Significant Results
The chart “Changes in Physiology when Playing Native American Flutes” on the next page summarizes significant results that we found during this study. The remainder of this section provides details and discusses those results. If you find the results in this section too detailed, feel free to skip forward to Practical Applications on page 115.

The effects described below are based on several types of comparisons:

- a comparison between the period of flute playing and a “baseline” period of silent relaxation;
- a “trend” indicating a comparison between the first half and the second half of the period of flute playing; or
- a comparison between the periods of playing lower-pitched flute and playing higher-pitched flute.

Items marked with † indicate that the result showed statistical significance and ‡ indicates a
result with strong statistical significance.\textsuperscript{1} However, we again stress that, since we tested many hypotheses in this study, the effects that we found need to be confirmed in subsequent research studies with larger populations of flute players.

**Heart Rate, Blood Flow, and Skin Conductivity**

The first time participants played their flutes during the study, we asked them to play their lower-pitched flute. As we might expect, compared with baseline silent relaxation, their heart rate increased\textsuperscript{†}, they had more skin conductivity\textsuperscript{‡}, and the frequency bands of electrical brain activity associated with muscle control increased\textsuperscript{†}. The trend while playing lower-pitched flutes was toward an increase in

\begin{itemize}
  \item The \textsuperscript{†} marking indicates a significant result with a paired, two-tailed Student’s t-test result of $p < 0.05$.
  \item The \textsuperscript{‡} marking indicates a highly significant result with a paired, two-tailed Student’s t-test of $p \leq 0.01$.
\end{itemize}

the volume of blood flow per heartbeat in the fingertips\textsuperscript{‡}.

During the second flute-playing period, we asked participants to play their higher-pitched flute. Again, skin conductivity increased during flute playing\textsuperscript{†} when compared with baseline silent relaxation, and the trend while playing was toward an increase in the volume of blood flow per heartbeat\textsuperscript{†}.

The heart rate of participants was lower during the second flute-playing period than during the first flute-playing period\textsuperscript{†}. This might be expected, again because higher-pitched flutes are smaller and also because there may have been less anxiety during the second flute-playing period. However, contrary to what we might expect, average heart rate when playing higher-pitched flutes was actually lower than
during the baseline period, when they were sitting in silent relaxation. This divergent response – heart rate decreasing while skin conductivity increased – begs further investigation.

**Heart Rate Variability**

When you inhale, your heart rate increases. As you exhale, your heart rate decreases. Similar variations in your heart rate occur on longer cycles of minutes, hours, and throughout the 24-hour sleep-wake cycle.

These normal variations in your heart rate are called “heart rate variability” or “HRV.” Higher HRV – i.e. a larger variation in heart rate – turns out to be a reliable indicator of health and general resilience to stress. A very steady heart rate – i.e. low HRV – is associated with a range of clinical conditions such as anxiety, hypertension, COPD, panic disorder, depression, and is also a predictor of sudden cardiac death.

With the goal of effectively treating those clinical conditions, various techniques have been explored to raise HRV. In particular, biofeedback training has been found to have various degrees of effectiveness in the treatment of asthma, PTSD, hypertension, anxiety, COPD, recurrent abdominal pain, music performance anxiety, and fibromyalgia. In the treatment of major depressive disorder, biofeedback training to raise HRV demonstrated effects that appeared to be stronger than drugs often prescribed for the condition.

Our study found that HRV increased an average of 84 percent when playing Native American flutes when compared with baseline silent relaxation. The increase in HRV compared to baseline silent relaxation was statistically highly significant when playing both lower-pitched flutes‡ and higher-pitched flutes‡. We found that subjects with less meditation experience correlated a greater increase in HRV. The increase in HRV did not correlate strongly with age, gender, or experience playing Native American flutes, although this could be due to the limited number of participants in our study.

Studies have established that adults typically breathe in cycles of about 3 to 5 seconds. During our study, we found that playing the Native American flute tends to increase the breath cycle to about 10 seconds. Other research has shown that HRV is highest at breath cycles of about 12 to 15 seconds – or about 4 to 5 breaths per minute. We believe that the increased length of the breath cycle that naturally occurs during flute playing is a major factor causing the increase in heart rate variability.

**Brain Activity**

Several frequency bands of brain activity showed interesting results during the periods of playing.

**Alpha.** Brainwaves in the range 8 to 12 Hz² – often called the Alpha band – are associated with a light meditative state, relaxation, and closing of the eyes. Alpha waves decrease with eye opening and mental exertion.

During our study, Alpha waves decreased in relation to the preceding silent relaxation period while playing both higher-pitched flutes‡ and lower-pitched flutes. The trend reversed during the playing period itself, with Alpha waves trending upward during playing for both higher-pitched flutes‡ and lower-pitched flutes. This suggests a pattern of decreasing Alpha waves during initial playing followed by increasing Alpha as playing continues. This pattern is consistent with participants closing their eyes, relaxing, and attaining a light meditative state.

\(^2 \text{Hz} = \text{Hertz} = \text{cycles per second}\)
but only after playing for a period of time – about 90 seconds in this case.

It is also interesting to note that the highest Alpha waves measured during our study were during the two silent relaxation periods that followed periods of listening to music. While it was not a goal of this study to explicitly examine the effects of silence, the enhancement of Alpha waves agrees with prior research that has demonstrated activation of the auditory cortex during periods of musical silence ([Kraemer 2005]), and the positive impact of silence in music on retention and recall ([Olsen 1995]).

The increase in Alpha band activity from baseline silent relaxation to flute playing correlated strongly with years of experience reported by the participants playing Native American flutes. We can surmise that, over time, players become more adept at quickly entering a light meditative state when they begin playing.

**Beta.** Brainwaves in the 15 to 25 Hz range – termed the Beta band – are usually associated with alert, active thinking or anxious concentration.

Our study showed different reactions in the Beta band for novice and experienced players. When compared with baseline silent relaxation, novice players showed significant decreases in Beta activity when playing both higher-pitched† and lower-pitched† flutes while experienced players showed slight increases in average Beta brainwave activity during the flute playing periods. We propose two conjectures:

- Less experienced players are not as habituated to the tones of the Native American flutes, where the more experienced players exhibit a reduced novelty effect; and
- More experienced players tend to make greater mental use of music theory rules to create melodies.

**Theta.** The 4 to 8 Hz range is termed the Theta band. Elevated Theta waves have been found in various studies during creative processes, deep meditation, drowsiness, inattention, and is associated with working memory.

We measured increasing trends in Theta band activity during the periods of playing higher-pitched‡ and lower-pitched flutes. We also found a significant increase in theta band activity in novice players, but not experienced players, between the silent relaxation periods at the very ends of the study† – i.e. between the initial baseline silent relaxation period and a similar period of silent relaxation after all the periods of playing and listening to music.

Our results provide some indications of movement during flute playing towards the attributes associated with increased Theta band activity. The overall experience of the study – listening, playing, and interim silent relaxation – did increase Theta activity in novice players. We suspect that these measured trends would be more robust if longer playing periods were used in future studies.

**Delta.** The 0.5 to 4 Hz range is termed the Delta band. These slow waves dominate brain activity in adults during slow-wave sleep, a phase of deep, non-rapid eye movement sleep.

When compared with the silent relaxation period preceding the two periods of playing flute, our study found that flute playing had the opposite effect on Delta than it did on Alpha band activity: While Alpha waves decreased, Delta wave increased for both lower-pitched‡ and higher-pitched flutes†. This increase in Delta showed no significant trends during the flute playing periods.

**Practical Applications**

Although this broad-based study was not designed to provide definitive answers to
specific questions, we can infer some potential guidelines from the results. This section combines the results of our study with information from prior research studies to suggest some practical applications for flute players and facilitators of community music gatherings. A number of assumptions are implicitly made in these suggestions, but we believe they are reasonable.

**Breathing Rate**

Playing the Native American flute appears to slow breathing rate from about 15 breaths per minute to about 6 breaths per minute. Encouraging players to slow their breath rate a bit further – to about 4 to 5 breaths per minute – may have some health benefits.

One approach we use in workshops is to have people play “one-breath solos” – first on their voices and then moving to their flutes. Depending on what a person plays, we might ask them to play the same solo slower, hold some of the notes longer, or play it two times in a single breath. These activities combine a memory exercise (repeating the same one-breath solo) with an exercise that slows their breath rate.

Another technique is to have players focus on their inhalation. This type of mental focus often causes players to breathe in more deeply and slows their overall breathing rate. Another technique, used by Cornell Kinderknecht, is to focus on “squeezing out some extra air” from the lungs to extend a phrase.

**Length of Playing Time**

The lengthy time it takes for flute playing to affect Alpha and Theta waves suggests that longer playing periods are preferable. Longer playing periods are common in community drum circles, but can be a challenge to facilitate in flute gatherings. Here are some ideas of things you can do with the group as a whole, or with segments of the group, while inviting individual flute players to solo:

- Have everyone chirp very short notes to a rhythm that you establish. If the notes are very short, the differences in pitch will not produce too much dissonance.
- Have everyone hold the same long tone as a drone. If people have different key flutes, you can ask them to hold these fingerings, which should all sound roughly the same pitch:
  - D flutes hold <circle 1>,<circle 1>,<circle 1>,<circle 1>,
  - E flutes hold <circle 2>,<circle 2>,
  - F# flutes hold <circle 3>,<circle 3>,
  - G flutes hold <circle 4>,<circle 4>,
  - A flutes hold <circle 5>,<circle 5>,
  - B flutes hold <circle 6>,<circle 6>,

- Establish a simple repeated pattern and have all flutes of a particular key play that pattern. You can engage others in the circle who are not playing the pattern by asking them to create texture sounds, such as the sound of the wind by breathing across the finger holes on their flute.

**Showcasing Players**

One technique in drum circle facilitation is to showcase a single player, either as a solo or playing above an established pattern. In practice, having that player be more experienced seems to have better results. Experienced players tend to be adept at more musical techniques, and our study suggested that experienced players can enter a light meditative state more quickly when they play. This suggests that players with more experience can quickly become attuned to the group and the situation, and they may also serve as a model for less experienced players on playing “in the moment”.

**Using Silence**

The effect of silence noted in the Brain Activity section on page 114 underscores the general belief among musicians in the power of silence. Jazz pianist Keith Jarrett famously said
that “Silence is the potential from which music can arise”.

Along these lines, experiment with the effect of adding slightly longer pauses when you play. Does it engage your audience? Do they “lean forward” just a bit?

If you are facilitating a group with a conducted improvisation, you might include an occasional “stop/cut”. This can be done by clearly conducting the entire group from full play to complete silence, then marking four or eight beats of silence before signaling them all to resume playing. You could emphasize this technique by inviting other people in the group to try their hand at conducting a stop/cut.

A common game in small ensembles is to “pass the solo.” With the group engaged in a steady-state repeated pattern, each player takes a turn soloing over the pattern. To incorporate silence, you could ask an ensemble to “pass the silence.” After a steady-state pattern is established by the group, players take turns stopping for a few bars. You could make it more challenging by asking them to re-join the music with a different part, and see how the pattern changes as the silence moves around the group.

**Disengage the Visual**

One of the most powerful techniques we have found for facilitating a deeper listening experience with a group of flute players is to have them close their eyes. This simple technique helps participants focus on the sound, raises Alpha brainwaves, and seems to reduce any level of anxiety associated with playing in front of other people.

We often use this technique when we want to emphasize an exercise, activity, or teaching point. Simply having the group close their eyes and repeat the activity can be a powerful aid to learning.

**Future Directions**

Our study is in an area of research that deals with some fundamental questions. What are the physical and mental effects of playing music? What are the implications for music therapy? Is playing music effective as an alternative therapy for specific clinical conditions? Our initial goals were to develop techniques for measuring the effects of Native American flute playing, to record basic metrics of the body and mind, and to identify fruitful directions for future research.

We believe, despite the limitations of our study (described in detail in [Miller 2014]), that these goals have been met. And, in particular, the results showing a significant increase in heart rate variability during flute playing indicates that our exploratory approach to measuring physiological metrics has proved fruitful.

The past several decades have been witness to a profound shift in the practice of Western medicine. In addition to new medicines and procedures for treating the sick, there is a growing focus on wellness care, alternative therapies, and the mind-body connection. Many of these alternative modalities come from traditional practices such as Yoga, Qigong, Tai Chi, various forms of meditation, a broad range of expressive arts, and from biofeedback training.

Many of these alternative modalities share a common focus on the breath. There is a growing body of evidence for the effectiveness of various breath practices on a variety of clinical conditions. Flute playing can also be seen as a breath practice. Is it possible that Native American flute playing could be effective for some clinical conditions? In answering this question, we have a number of indicators:

- Research has established that Biofeedback training to raise HRV is “probably efficacious” for asthma ([Wheat 2010], page 238);
• Our study demonstrated that playing Native American flute raises HRV;
• Throughout the course of this study, we have received many unsolicited accounts from asthma sufferers testifying to the value of playing Native American flutes for their condition;
• There is a body of research showing various benefits of wind instruments on parameters of lung function.

We believe that the confluence of these indicators suggest the possibility of a direct causal link between playing the Native American flute and the reduction of the symptoms of asthma.

We suggest that a compelling direction for future research would be a direct investigation of the effect of a music therapy program of Native American flute playing on asthma.

References


The Native American Flute and the Future

In 2012, Kathleen Joyce-Grendahl posed the following question – this chapter is my answer to that question:

What do you see in the future for the Native American flute? Possible items to consider are: trends in recording, solo and ensemble performance, flute making, musical and cultural education, scholarship, etc.

The Native American flute is a fantastic tool for the re-birth of musicality in people whose lives had been closed to musical self-expression. Of all the many roles that the Native American flute has served, this is my personal favorite. We see people who had some distant, dark failure in their musical development suddenly re-awaken to the possibilities of being a creative creature, of being able to “play”. And the Native American flute is an ideal tool for personal self-expression.

The renaissance of the instrument coincides with a groundswell of changes in education. Humanistic education is at the center of a shift from traditional, discipline-oriented teaching techniques to more student-centered, experiential approaches that incorporate life experience and promote personal expression. And music education has been an ideal subject area to pioneer the use of humanistic techniques. The teacher as guide rather than performer, the use of motivation and self-directed development, and the emphasis of an education approach that integrates many aspects of a person’s life and experience – these are all cornerstones of the various education approaches that are changing the way we learn.

Standing in front of a hundred bright, eager student-teachers in a college in the Middle East, Vera and I talked about these changes. And then

This chapter was written by Clint Goss. It is part of an article that appeared in the August 2012 issue of Voice of the Wind, published by the International Native American Flute Association (INAFA).
we put them into play. In a society that has no public performance of music, I pulled out a flute and the students became enchanted. Then we used some basic music facilitation techniques and everyone became part of the music – a hundred-student jam session where many had never before made collective music. Our interpreter, who was also their regular professor, was jumping up and down yelling “Yes, Yes, this is what we need!”

The ability of the instrument to enchant, and the fact that it’s so easy to play, make the Native American flute a fantastic tool for humanistic approaches to music education. Personally, I hope this role for the instrument will grow dramatically in the coming years and provide a much-needed shift in the way we approach music-making across our society.
Part 2 –

Flute Circle Facilitation
Flute Haven web site:
http://www.FluteHaven.com/

Flute Haven Leadership program:
http://www.FluteHaven.com/program_leadership.htm
What Is Our Job Title?

The role we play is often shaped by what we call ourselves: Leader, Teacher, Instructor, or Organizer. We can sidestep the question with humor by labeling ourselves as “Czar” or “Chief cook-and-bottle-washer”. Or, we can make a very firm statement, such as “Professor”.

Teaching in Western education traditions is done primarily through lecturing. Since the lecturing approach carries a large element of performance, and musicians are often comfortable with performing, many music educators naturally take to the role of “Lecturer” with a heavy dose of “Performer” to keep students engaged.

However, the real goal of humanistic teaching traditions is to move the “center-stage” focus, as much as possible, away from us and onto the participants. In education, and especially in music, we know that engagement of the participants is what creates enjoyment. This approach opens the door to real learning. It also shifts us from “Sage-on-the-stage” to “Guide-on-the-side”.

While Vera and I worked for a coffee plantation in Honduras, we were invited to lead workshops on improvisation at a local music school. That was such an amazing opportunity! We met with the Dean, who took us to our first session. A cavernous performance space was filled with about 35 students sitting in a large circle, all of whom had an instrument. There was an aura of excitement and expectation that something unusual was about to happen.
The situation could not have been a more perfect … with one exception …

The school had developed a six-page, typewritten introduction of “Profesores Doctor Goss y Shanov”, to be read, in its entirety, before the start of the session. We had a vision of all that great energy and excitement being doused by a recitation of our resumes. From across the circle, Vera flashed me our secret, one-eyebrow signal for “this might not go so well”. So I took a gamble and suggested to the Dean that I could lead off with a group music warm-up to get them “settled”. Before he could object, we launched into physical, then vocal, and then instrumental warm-ups.

We moved on to call-and-response and within ten minutes they were deeply engaged in group call-and-response games — without any leadership cues from “los profesores”. By the end of the session we progressed to ensemble groups improvising over blues progressions. And somehow, we forgot to work in those typewritten introductions!

In the discussion after our first session, the Dean exclaimed in a mix of English and Spanish: “It was all so facil — so easy!” And there it was — the root of our job title: Facilitators.
That’s OK, Clint

“That’s OK, Clint ... So ... Could you sit under that tree for a few minutes, listen to the sounds, and try to make your flute sound like the birds.”

This suggestion by Malcolm Shute is the reason I’m here now, 12 years later, making music, facilitating workshops, writing this column. But even more than the suggestion to sit under a tree and make bird sounds, it was the acceptance of where I was at that point in my music journey ... the simple statement: “That’s OK, Clint”.

I was six weeks into my flute journey at the time. The first three weeks had been spent agonizing over whether to drive four hours back up to Vermont to buy my first flute. The next three weeks were spent in head-space hell.

Information on how to play a Native American flute was not readily available at the time. No problem! I had played clarinet in high school and generally considered myself a “smart guy”.

My goal was to play Battle Hymn of the Republic on my beautiful new five-hole instrument. So, I dug out an ancient frequency meter from Vera’s father (he was an engineer) and I set about measuring the frequency of each of the possible combinations of open and closed holes on a five-hole flute (that’s $2^5 = 32$ possibilities). Add in a few measurements for half-holed fingerings and notes in the second register that seemed to work, add them to a spreadsheet with some tables and code to convert the frequency measurements into musical pitches, and … presto … my first achievement: a fingering chart (shown below).

The next step was to map those fingerings onto sheet music for Battle Hymn of the Republic.

This chapter was written by Clint Goss. A similar article appeared in the May 2014 issue of Overtones, pages 25–27, published by the WORLD FLUTE SOCIETY.
and begin practicing. And practicing. And more practicing. My fingers were going up and down like pistons and everything about my playing was mechanical, but this was the way you learned to play, right?

I would occasionally emerge from practicing in our basement and Vera would say “Hey, you know when you just play the thing, it sounds pretty good. But I don’t know about that Battle Hymn song…” But what did she know? She’s not Paul Simon, right?

Then I came across an announcement for a meeting of the Connecticut Flute Circle, hosted by Malcolm Shute. I showed up at a café in West Hartford with my flute, my spreadsheets, and my long-winded explanation and analysis. I’m guessing that, in any other endeavor or avocation, I would have been ridiculed into embarrassment, resulting in a swift retreat from ever wanting to play music ever again. But that’s not the culture of community music and of this instrument. “Support your fellow traveler, wherever they are in their journey” seems to be the best encapsulation of what happened that day.

So I came back from that tree a half hour later and Malcolm said “Play us something, Clint … anything”. I don’t know what I played, but the café was briefly silent when I finished. That pause, that momentary heart-space silence, taught me more about my own playing than any “how-to” coaching.

**Acceptance**

Putting the lessons of acceptance and no-judgment into action can be challenging. We live in a judgment-rich culture, complete with performance criteria, judges, ratings, and prizes. Actually accepting the sounds of beginning players becomes a game of figuring out what musical activity they can handle and what exercise will benefit their music the most.

Converting an impulse of “that sounds awful” into “hey, try this” requires of facilitators that we have a lot of “this”s to put into practice. One of the goals of the latter half of this handbook is to provide activities and exercises that you can call upon in a wide array of situations.
Warming Up

Imagine you are in the middle of facilitating the most perfect flute circle. Close your eyes for a moment and picture it, in as much detail as possible. Visualize the setting, with its lighting, furnishings, colors, and acoustics. And see the participants, who are engaged in the most perfect flute circle activity, joined in group cohesion, entrainment, and resonance.

It’s likely that the flute players in your flute circle or workshop arrive from different places, with a wide variety of instruments, musical experience, expectations, and confidence. Leading such a varied group of musicians to a place of group cohesion may sound like a big task, but there are some simple techniques and activities to channel the musical energy of almost any group into alignment.

The first time somebody let me lead a flute circle, I didn’t think about group energy. I didn’t think about much of anything, actually — I just launched into … a monologue. Clint’s history, what the instrument means to Clint, how Clint likes to play, etc., etc., etc., and before I knew it the time had expired without anyone breathing into their flutes. People smiled politely and we all ate pizza.

Thankfully, exactly one week later, I was treated to a session led by a true master of music facilitation. He morphed a room full of musicians from very disparate backgrounds (and lots of chatty energy) into a tight circle entrained to a common rhythm and singing in four-part harmony. In five minutes flat. The unity of the group held for the next hour as we toured musical rhythms, techniques, and song forms that were all new to me, but that somehow seemed completely easy and natural.

The magic of that first experience with cohesive community music-making burned a special pathway in my brain. I wanted more of it. I needed it. I also wanted to roll back the clock to the week before and replace my monologue with that cool stuff called music facilitation.

It was clear that a key component of the session had been the first five minutes of “warming up”. I later learned that effective ways to open a music session have been studied by music facilitators for decades. Here are the basic principles that seem to be at the core of all the schools of thought and research in music facilitation:

This chapter was written by Clint Goss. A similar article is scheduled to appear in the August 2014 issue of Overtones, published by the WORLD FLUTE SOCIETY.
The Warm-up Outline

Regardless of what instrument the participants play, the outline of a warm-up is the same: Body, then Voice, then Instrument.

Beginning with the body gets the participants out of “head-space”, activates muscle groups specific to music making, begins to incorporate rhythm, and brings in the benefits of mild exercise and oxygenation.

You might start with some stretches in a free-form way that allows people to stretch in their own way and to their own physical limits and capabilities. You could show some stretches that work for you and invite others to briefly demonstrate their favorite stretches.

You can take the physical warm-up in many directions. Think for a minute about how you might include balance, rhythm, breathing, dramatic and emotive body movements, echoing, listening, energy build-up and release. Here are some things you might try:

- “Air flute” – play the virtual flute in front of you – as fast or as wild as you want;
- “There’s a new instrument under your seat” – you have cleverly placed a shaker or other noisemaker under each seat.
- Exaggerated breathing. Rhythmic breaths, accompanied by emphasis on different parts of the breath cycle.
- Doing stretches while balancing on one or the other foot.
- Engaging in some repetitive motion, like making circles with your shoulders or tapping your chest while doing other stretches.
- Exaggerated facial motions.
• Movements loosely based on some movement practice, such as Tai Chi, Chi Gong, classical ballet, or ballroom or Latin dance.

• Simple body percussion exercises. You could do a straightforward 4-beat rhythm alternating foot tapping with hand clapping.

• Free dance, especially over a repetitive backing track, possibly with a participant playing a flute playing on top.

Another approach is to start from rhythm. Establish a slow, steady downbeat using a motion such as tapping the chest, snapping fingers, or slapping the thighs. Allow time for everyone to get comfortable with the motion, adding a low drum, breathing, body motion, or the voice to reinforce the down beats. You can then incorporate elements involving other body parts, playing double-time or half-time, accenting random beats, changing volume, improvisation between the downbeats, or any of the elements mentioned above.

You could also choose to do the entire warm-up rhythmically using a recorded backing track or a live group that is playing a basic repeating rhythm.

It is a good idea to make physical motions as bilateral as possible. “Switch Hands” is a great directive for any activity that tends to be one-sided, such as using a shaker.

It is also important to emphasize early in the session that people can participate in the warm-up any way they like. People can do the entire warm-up seated or even on the floor, allowing elders and people with physical disabilities to be included.

The Voice

Incorporating the voice is a key element in all musician warm-ups that we do. To avoid deep-set feeling of “I can’t sing” that some musicians carry, try to incorporate vocal exercises that do not require people to match a specific pitch or sing a particular melody, especially if they would be exposed or singing solo.

You could shadow any of the body/physical exercises mentioned above, especially those that involve rhythm. You could move from breathing in time to a rhythmic activity to “adding any sound on your voice”. You can then get more specific by introducing articulation (“short, sharp sounds”), pitch (“high sounds” or “lowwww sounds”), texture (“nasal” or “breathy”), or dynamics (“soft, like talking to a baby” or “shout across to the next mountain”). Here are some other vocal warm-up techniques:

Call and Response: Shout out your best version of a call such as “Dayyy Ohhh”, “Ding Dah TaKi Tah”, or (my personal favorite) “Wop Bah BaLoo Bop / Ba Lam Bam Boom”. These calls beg a response, and it seems that people from every culture, whether or not they speak your language, have the impulse to echo back such a call.

Babbling / gibberish: this is a great way to loosen people up with some silliness (of course, in a safe space where people won’t be observed or recorded). It literally involves babbling in any way that suits you … nonsense syllables at any volume, speed, pitch, or style. You can have everyone babble at once, form impromptu babbling groups, conduct the babbling group with simple hand motions for “louder” and
“softer”, or even get participants to briefly conduct the group.

**The Name Game:** This is great for a newly formed group. The game involves each person calling their own name, in whatever way or style that suits them. The job of the group is to call it back to the person in *exactly* the same way, emulating volume, texture, and even body motions. Of course, you model the game first, doing several calls of your own name (with group responses) in various styles, before asking others to give it a try.

**Instrument**
You might be thinking that all the above would take a long time before we get to playing flute. However, these exercises are quick and you might find that you have everyone reaching for their flutes after only a few minutes.

You can transition into instruments by having them echo something that was done on the voice. Vocal articulation (e.g. “*Ta Ta Ta* *Ka* *Tah*”) can move nicely onto short notes on the flute. Likewise with long tones, especially if everyone has the same key flute.

Unless it is a very large group, it is often a good thing to have everyone play something solo on their flute. We often ask that each participant in the circle play a “one-breath” or “two-breath solo”. This activity takes no explanation and carries an implicit time limit. To remove as much pressure as possible, reinforce that anything they play is fine, we’re just putting out our sounds, the game is not to be fancy, there is nobody to impress, and there is no judgment in the room. One note is just perfect.

And, of course, you model the activity yourself before asking others to give it a try.

**Large Sessions**
Bringing a large group into cohesion can be challenging. People are chatting with friends, tooting on flutes, sipping coffee, and communicating around the globe on all flavors of devices. The classic “OK EVERYBODY SHUT UP BECAUSE WE’RE STARTING NOW” can really dampen all that great energy. It’s much better to channel that energy into making music.

You might enlist the help of some participants by stationing them around the room on some large, low drums. Leading them in a steady, simple beat can gently break into people’s consciousness and steer it towards music-making.

Engaging the hands of participants can gently re-direct them from other activities. If you have a bag of small shakers, hand them out to participants. Attention across the room gradually shifts to the new instrument in their hand, as people start using their shakers in rhythm.

You could also focus people with some Call and Response, as described above. There is nothing like a loud “*Dayyy Ohhh*” to capture people’s attention.

**Matching the Energy**
Of course, you need to use the warm-up techniques and energy to suit the situation. If the intent of the gathering (flute circle or otherwise) is to memorialize a person, imagine those elements that can build group cohesion in
an appropriate way for the situation. You might start with a steady drum beat and ask people to join with open palms on their chest. You could then add some deep breathing and move into having people emphasize the texture wind-like sounds of their exhales. Then, over the top, a flute playing Amazing Grace …

Another grounding style of warm-up is to lead the group in a series of “OM” chants, beginning softly and then building the energy as people get warmed up and gain confidence.

And finally … these beautiful thoughts on warming up, from cellist Emily Metcalf (from Return to Child, by James Oshinsky, 2008):

Step into the sacred space where you make music and listen. Listen to the sounds that enter the space, listen to the chatter in your head, listen to your heart beating, and breathe. As you breathe, become aware of your body and how it wants to move.

Move. Begin to vocalize through your breath. This is a place to play freely in the moment of yourself. If you have a lot of scattered energy you may need to jump around and vocalize a lot before you find a focused place. If you are feeling subdued, you may move slowly and sing more quietly until your energy builds and a flow is created.

Your intention here is to feel as fully alive and present in the moment as you can with the readiness to explore all possibilities. You have already taken the most important step – you are showing up. Release expectation and return to child every day. How am I feeling right now? What do I want to express? You may not have answers for these questions, but your body and your voice will connect you.

Enjoy your capacity to move, the rhythm and phrasing of engaging with the space around you. Love your voice and the humanness that moves through you. Babble like a baby or in a foreign language you don’t know. Shout, whisper, sing about everything.
Deep Listening

Deep Listening is listening in every possible way, to everything that is possible to hear, no matter what you are doing. Such intense listening includes the sounds of daily life, of nature, or one's own thoughts as well as musical sounds. Deep Listening represents a heightened state of awareness and connects to all that there is.

– Pauline Oliveros, the Deep Listening Institute

It is often said by experienced musicians that the most important instrument we have is not made of wood or leather or metal – our most important instrument is our ears. Listening – real, deep listening – is a mindset, an approach to our sensory world, a “practice” in the same sense as Yoga or Tai Chi or Zazen.

The environment that many of us inhabit brings special challenges for the practice of deep listening. Noise pollution, commercial advertising, and “LOUD LOUD LOUD” music all conspire to drown out the subtle sounds, the softer textures, and the mild voices. And when the sound we hear is our own music-making, listening is often filtered through the past judgments of others – voices that can easily out-shout the true nature of the sounds we make.

As facilitators, I believe it is our job to lead the participants at our gatherings into deep listening experiences. Listening with open ears and clear minds, free from judgment, and a focus on the

This chapter was written by Clint Goss. A similar article is scheduled to appear in the November 2014 issue of Overtones, published by the WORLD FLUTE SOCIETY.
“sound of sound”. This chapter describes some of the activities I have found along the way that connect participants with sound and encourage deep listening experiences.

**Focus**

Take a sonic event and repeat it. It could be a participant’s one-breath solo, a short reading, a recording you play, or any of the activities in this chapter. On the second listening, ask participants to do something that causes them to naturally focus their listening:

- Ask them to close their eyes and note how the experience changes.
- Ask them to cup their hands behind their ears, exploring how the sound changes as they change the shape of their hands.
- Ask them to slowly rotate their head and be aware of how the stereo nature of the sound changes. This includes rotating completely 180° away from the source of the sound and comparing it with facing the sound source.
- Have them move slowly and noiselessly around the room and explore the room acoustics.

Periodically using these small, auxiliary exercises can carry forward into the daily lives of your participants.

**Ambient Sounds**

Sit in silence and listen. What do you hear? Stretch the ears out to the sonic horizon and try to pick out sounds.

What is the building saying? Can you hear birds? An airplane in the distance? A couple arguing?

Close your eyes and deepen the experience. What is the lowest frequency sound you can hear? Highest? Softest?

If you are in a classroom setting, with pen and paper handy, have them write down every sound they hear.

**Readings on Listening**

You could emphasize the listening experience with an inspirational reading, such as the quote at the beginning of this chapter. Here is another one I like: “The Sound Horizon”, from The Listening Book by W. A. Mathieu:

> Listening into the distance is like looking into the horizon. When we gaze at the horizon, our vision goes beyond our eyes and sees forever. When we listening into the distance, our ears reach beyond the farthest sounds and the infinite becomes sensible. We get a fix on our position in the boundless world.

> The alternative is like being stuck in traffic and never sensing beyond the stream of it. We begin to think like cars. It is like staying cooped up indoors with no windows. We need the big picture and the long radius. We need to check out the long range coordinates.

> Go out of your way, if you have to, to look steady and long at the place where Earth and Sky meet. Likewise, discover places where your ears can soar out to the edge of audibility. Find a lull in the evening, a valley, a distant remove, a quiet dawn, and listen into that boundary. You can disappear beyond it where you really live.
Your Own Body

Place your fingers (carefully) in your ears. What do you hear?

The sound of your own muscles vibrating. Make very small movements and note the change in sound. Now stay still, but tense your hand muscles. Can you hear them? Can you hear your heart beat? What is the sound of your breathing through your mouth versus your nose?

Silence

One of the casualties of our contemporary auditory world is silence. It is often a key ingredient lacking in music.

Explore bringing silence into music by demonstrating a comparison between continuous flute playing and the same melody with spaces of silence.

In the context of group conducting, include an occasional “stop / cut” where you silence everyone and then bring them back in on cue.

In a rhythmic activity, you could establish a continuous percussion rhythm and ask a flute to play over the top. Then modify the rhythm by silencing a significant portion of the rhythmic cycle and again ask the flute to play. What difference do you hear?

Hearing Your Own Flute

In a cruel twist of irony, we are often in the worst position to hear our own playing. Our instruments project our sound out and away from us, leaving our own ears in an acoustic dead spot. Here are a few facilitation techniques that can have a dramatic effect on how participants hear their own playing.

A simple sound system setup that has good quality headphones can be enlightening for a person who has never heard their own playing. It helps to have closed-cell headphones, which block out as much of the ambient sound as possible. If the system also has digital effects such as reverb or echo, your participants are in for a real treat. There are many types of sound systems, but one that simply has a microphone, mixer, and headphones is sufficient for this exercise.
However, it does not take a sound system to hear yourself better. Simply ask people to play with the foot of their flute up against a wall. *Warn them to be very careful whenever doing this – if they hit the foot of the flute against anything they can knock their teeth out (or worse).* Open their ears to the sound reflecting off the wall and they will hear their own flute playing much more clearly.

**Loop Pedal**

If you are savvy with audio gear and have a loop pedal at your disposal, it can serve as a great listening tool, especially if it has an “Undo” function.

Lay down a basic rhythm loop and invite people to experiment with adding various sounds over the top. Solicit reactions from the group, encouraging people to be open and non-judgmental. What works? How sparse does a layer have to be? How do the pitch ranges of various layers compete or complement each other? How do the elements of music – melody, harmony, rhythm, texture, and silence – work with each other to make a complete soundscape?

If possible, download the group’s creation and email it to people.

And, of course, play flute over the top!

**Pre-Whistle**

Using an extremely soft breath pressure, you can coax many flutes to make a soft, high-pitched whistle. This “pre-whistle” is the sound vibration at the sound hole without the entire column of air in the sound chamber vibrating.

You can position this exercise as a performance technique (“crank up the amplifier and add echo and fill the room with the sounds of birds”) or as part of a demonstration of how flute acoustics work. However, since the sound is so quiet and high-pitched, it quickly becomes a deep listening exercise.

**Resonance**

Enclosed spaces naturally enhance a vibration – if you find the right frequency (or pitch). The effect is stronger in rooms with right angles and hard, smooth surfaces such as tile bathrooms and stairwells.

Engage your group in a “sirening” exercise – a vocal emulation of an ambulance or fire-engine. You can easily do this during a vocal warm-up. After they experience rapidly sirening up and down, have them slow down the siren so that the pitch changes very slowly … maybe covering an octave in 10 or 20 seconds.

Then, before a break, suggest that they find an enclosed space that is likely to be resonant, and siren their voice to find the pitch that resonates in the space.

**Sympathetic Vibrations**

Sound has power. The flute translates your breath pressure into moving waves of air pressure. The power in those waves can move objects in the room, causing them to vibrate with the sound of the flute.

As with the resonance exercise above, ask them to try to find the resonant frequency of a large drum or the body of a guitar or cello by sirening.
Pitch Matching

Now move the sirening experience to the flute. Hold any long tone and hum into the flute. Siren the pitch of your hum from low to high and listen for the resonance between your humming and the vibration in the sound chamber of the flute. Explore raising your humming pitch very slightly and then bringing it back down into perfect resonance with the flute.

Aside from a deep listening exercise, this approach to matching pitch is one of the best (and least threatening) ways to encourage people to vocalize a given pitch.

Found Object Percussion

Lastly, here is an exercise that has to be used with caution. Invite participants to experiment with objects in the room, tapping and drumming out various sounds. Encourage people to tease out ultra-low vibrations, texture sounds, and sounds across the range of volumes.

After listening to each of the sounds individually, you can conduct a “found object ensemble” and add a flute over the top for good measure.
**Modeling**

Call on a student and you put them on the spot. Call on a student musician, especially one with little experience and loads of self-doubt, and you have a recipe for a lifelong vow of “I am never doing this again”. As facilitators, we could literally cause a participant to shut the door on their own musicality. Forever.

Fortunately, we have a lot of tools to avoid this class of disasters. Following humanistic tradition of “success for all”, we keep the things we ask of participants small and manageable. We repeatedly reinforce that there is no judgment and accept what sounds he or she is able to produce. We also frequently have everyone in the group try his or her hand at each technique.

But, before we ask anyone to try an exercise or technique in front of others, we model it ourselves. This principle of modeling is so important that, if I am ever about to forget it and accidentally ask a workshop participant to do something that I have not demonstrated, my sidekick in a session, typically Vera, is free to blurt out “… as Clint will now demonstrate first …”

Modeling a technique has huge benefits for the participants. It can:

- illustrate what is expected,
- release tension,
- entertain,
- demonstrate a wide range of options and interpretations, and even
- allow them to use another instrument – such as their voice or perhaps body percussion – to play their part.

However, one of the most significant advantages of modeling is that it demonstrates how little is truly needed. Modeling is not the

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This chapter was written by Clint Goss and edited by Kathleen Joyce-Grendahl. A similar article appeared in the May 2013 issue of *Overtones*, pages 15–17, published by the WORLD FLUTE SOCIETY.
time to show off your exquisite skill on the instrument; rather, it is an opportunity to demonstrate some very simple playing technique can be rendered so musically powerful by these song sticks that we carry.

This excerpt from Return to Child, ([Oshinsky 2008], page 76), describes some related aspects:

*The leader is a model of competence in musical and non-musical areas. This is equally true when you are modeling something on purpose, and when you are just being yourself, with no intention to be noticed. A leader is therefore always “on,” and cannot get away with saying, “do as I say, not as I do.” The best preparation for modeling is to live what you teach. Humanistic skills are more important than musical skills for fostering personal growth, so leaders who are less experienced in music, but more skilled in group dynamics need not be apologetic about their backgrounds ...*

Notice how modeling is carefully woven into the facilitation form described in the next chapter, duets and trios that move around a circle of players.

This is a wonderful facilitation technique for small groups. It goes by many names: traveling duets, traveling trios, and moving or roving ensembles.

Let’s say the flute circle has five participants and you are facilitating from position A. The idea is to have participants play in ensembles (duets, in this example) that continuously move around the circle. Each neighboring pair of participants gets to play a short duet.

You could suggest a particular song-form for the activity, but that assumes that people are familiar with the song-form from a previous activity. For this example, let’s leave the song-form unspecified, or tell folks, if they ask, that these are “free-form duets”.

A critical point in the whole exercise is how to convey the idea and the details of the traveling duet to participants in the circle. The essential concept is simple, but a verbal description is likely to raise a lot of questions, confusion, and “head-space angst”. Instead of a lengthy verbal description, you can model it:

- You invite participant E to play “any short solo”. I often use the phrase “one-breath solo” to convey an appropriate length.

This first portion of this chapter was written by Clint Goss and edited by Kathleen Joyce-Grendahl. A similar article appeared in the May 2013 issue of Overtones, pages 15–17, published by the World Flute Society. The second portion of this chapter, Duet Forms, is from a similar article that appeared in Clint & Vera’s Flute Newsletter, February 2014.
• You respond to E’s solo with a solo of a similar length and then pantomime to E to play another such solo.
• You can go back and forth for several rounds. The result is often that E–A duet becomes an impromptu call-and-response song form.
• Then, after one of your responses, you turn to B and begin a new call-and-response duet in the same fashion.
• When it is time for the B–C duet, B might need some coaching to start a new duet with C. However, at this point you can use physical conducting to coach them.
• After it gets around to C–D or D–E, participants will usually get the idea and be able to carry on themselves, with little intervention.

Notice how much territory is being covered here. Not only the idea of a moving duet, but the concept of the call-and-response song form – all done with very little verbal description. A major goal when facilitating musical activities is to minimize verbal description and maximize direct experience. With a combination of room setup, creative pantomime, conducting skills, and your own musicality, you can keep people out of “head-space” and maximize the group’s enjoyment. Then you can post-process the activity with “What we were doing is called ...”

The facilitation form of going around the circle is useful in many contexts. In the example above, it doubled as a teaching exercise for call-and-response. However, if someone does not “get” the call-and-response aspect, say a beginner who is simply struggling to cover some finger holes, then the form falls back to a “free-form duet” where any sounds they produce are encouraged.

In a more structured teaching situation, when you know the capabilities of the group, you could use this to teach any duet or trio song form: solo-over-drone, melody-and-rhythm, playing over a two-chord vamp, blues progressions, etc.

Another context that many flute players are working towards is a public performance. If there is interest for this in the group, you could illustrate how to use a traveling duet format to open their own five-person concert: house lights down and one player steps into a spotlight with a short flute solo. Another player responds from the back of the room, walking up the aisle onto the stage as they exchange a few phrases. Maybe the third player begins from a seat in the middle of the audience. Is there a balcony above the stage? Maybe a trap door on the stage?
Maybe the last person in the group could play from inside a box on stage that the other musicians have to unwrap. As R. Carlos Nakai once advised an eager group of flute players: “Be the entertainer, be the clown, capture their wonder.”

The goal of all the activities we facilitate is to leverage the power of simple song forms and ensemble structures to increase the musical potential of everyone in the group. This gives participants simple tools to help integrate their musicality into other aspects of their lives.

**Duet Forms**

Introducing flute duets with the concept of “free-form” is a great device for avoiding head-space crisis. But once participants are comfortable with playing duets around a circle, you might introduce some of the basic duet forms as specific techniques.

**Call and Response**

One flute calls a short melodic phrase. You could encourage people to use a shorter version of the One-Breath Solo technique described on page 15. The second flute responds with the same phrase.

This form has a whole lot of uses! First of all, in workshops as a listening exercise, people begin opening their ears and connecting pitches to finger positions. This has a huge benefit when people attempt to play a song “by ear”. Second, it gives players the practical experience of recalling short melodic phrases and being able to repeat them – a key building block to improvising compositions that have some song structure, such as **AABA**.

Call and response can be used between players on the same key flute, the same key an octave apart, or even flute pairs that are a musical fifth apart, such as E and B, F# and C#, G and D, and A and E.

It's also a cool technique that can be used in performance – imagine the opening of a concert when flutes call and respond back and forth across the venue and over the top of the audience …

**Conversations**

This is a great technique for flutes in different (and arbitrary) keys. We introduce it in workshops by having players start with an English-language conversation, and then transitioning that into flute conversations. Flutes take turns “playing sentences” – basic sentences at first, but adding emotional content as the game goes on.

**Solo over Drone**

A classic world music song form. A drone is simply a long held tone. The job of one flute is to simply hold a steady tone, typically a low tone and typically at a softer volume (for the other flute to play a melody over).

One of the most beautiful examples I know of Solo over Drone is from the Armenian duduk tradition … take a quick search on YouTube for Djivan Gasparyan playing **I Will Not Be Sad In This World**.

**Solo over Ostinato**

An Ostinato is literally a repeated pattern.

In **The Rhythm Connection** on page 31, we explored playing over rhythms created on rhythm instruments – a classic repeated pattern. However, it's easy to create simple repeated patterns on flutes – even a “**Ta Ta Ta** …” or chirps will create a rhythm, or a very simple melodic repeated pattern.
Alternating Solos

Finally, you can turn any of the duet forms into a form that alternately highlights each of the flutes on a solo. For example, in the Solo over Drone form, each player can take turns soloing over the drone note and then holding the drone note for the other player to solo over.

I hope you can put some of these forms to use in your next flute circle or performance … As always, feedback you might have on these approaches is welcome!
A Bill of Musical Rights

- Human beings need to express themselves daily in a way that invites physical and emotional release.
- Musical self-expression is a joyful and healthy means of communication available to absolutely everyone.
- There are as many different ways to make music as there are people.
- The human voice is the most natural and powerful vehicle for musical self-expression.
- The differences in our voices add richness and depth to music.
- Sincerely expressed emotion is at the root of meaningful musical expression.
- Your music is more authentically expressed when your body is involved in your musical expression.
- The European tradition of music is only one sound. All other cultures and traditions deserve equal attention.
- Any combination of people and instruments can make music together.
- There are no unmusical people, only those with no musical experience.
- Music improvisation is a unique and positive way to build skills for life expression.
- In improvisation as in life, we must be responsible for the vibrations we send one another.

This Bill of Musical Rights was developed by the Music for People organization. It is excerpted from Return to Child, ([Oshinsky 2008], page 17). ©2004 Music for People, used by permission.
I am standing, flute in hand, frozen in fear. The large third-grade class seated in front of me has just seen several great presentations by flute players, didgeridoo players, and storytellers. And then: “Clint ... you’re ON!”

This was early in my flute journey and my experience on the Native American flute was very limited. After playing for only a few months, I had arrived at my first large flute gathering, FLUTE SPRING, organized by Jan Kirlew. When we all headed out to a local school one afternoon, it did not occur to me that everyone would be giving presentations to various classes. The fear of performing did not cause me to freeze; rather, it was simply the lack of any idea about what I might say or do with a class of third-graders.

Suddenly, in a fantastic display of facilitation skill, Jesse Redhorse stepped up from behind me and announced to the class, “One of the great traditions we have is playing these song sticks with a drum.” He handed me a frame drum and beater and whispered “just watch my foot, beat the drum, and don’t stop”. He started with a slow, exaggerated foot-stepping motion that made it very easy for me to follow on the drum. When he saw that I was able to keep a reasonably steady beat, he gradually reduced his foot motions to a toe-tap and started to play his flute. Over the course of a few minutes, he had everyone in the room join in with foot-tapping, rhythmic clapping, and producing wind sounds with their breath.

This chapter was written by Clint Goss and edited by Kathleen Joyce-Grendahl. A similar article appeared in the August 2013 issue of Overtones, pages 7–8, published by the WORLD FLUTE SOCIETY.
This experience became my first shining example of facilitation. It incorporated multiple elements of music, such as melody, rhythm, and texture, the participation of everyone in the room, and group conducting of an improvised piece. Jesse also “facilitated” me in a way that I could not fail, thereby setting up a structure that provided “success for all”.

The “Non-Player” Brigade
You have probably seen them: the folks who show up at flute events in support of their spouse / partner / friend, declaring that they don’t play, aren’t musical, and are there just to watch. Maybe they knit, record a video, or text on their phone.

Over the years, I have made it my personal mission to involve these people. Trying to develop a collection of techniques for these situations provides a particular challenge. These “non-players” may be resistant to becoming involved in the music, and probably have built up a self-perception of musical incompetence.

The following ideas illustrate a few activities to help get everyone involved in the music:

**Warming Up**
At the start of a session, I ask everyone in the room to join the warm-up routine. This typically involves stretching, rhythmic body movements, deep breaths, sighing and vocalizing, mouth articulation, and vocal long tones. These are the types of activities that warm up the muscles and dispel some of the anxiety we all have about playing in front of others.

**Instruments that Always Work**
Having a collection of instruments in the room that are easy to play and produce great sounds is one of the hallmarks of almost every early childhood music program. Many instruments with pentatonic tuning will work nicely, especially tongue drums, resonant metal drums, and metallophones. Of course, many types of drums, especially those with beaters, can also spark spontaneous music.

When we facilitate a session, we set the room up so that the chairs are in a circle, with

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3 See the **Warming Up** chapter on page 85.

4 Any musical instrument that has tuned metal bars that must be struck to make a sound, usually with a mallet, is called a metallophone.
instruments in the middle of the circle. As people arrive, I encourage them to experiment with the instruments. If I leave the room for a few minutes, I often find that there is a spontaneous jam going on when I return. With a bit of group conducting, I can often build on that jam, add a flute solo over the top. Viola! The “non-players” are part of the music!

Another technique we use is to place a small instrument under everyone’s chair. My experience is that the folks who have been sitting and watching are the first to dive under their chairs when I say “Everyone has a new instrument under their chair”.

**Drone Instruments**

Sometimes a bit more encouragement is needed to get the non-players involved. Easy-to-play drone instruments can be great for this purpose. These instruments play a single, long-held note or chord and often work beautifully as an accompaniment to the flute.

I often use a shruti box, which is an East Indian instrument that combines a “squeeze-box” mechanism with levers that can be opened to play combinations of notes. I start on the shruti box as others play flute over the top. Next, while the music is playing, I offer the shruti box to one of the non-players. The transition is key here, and I have practiced a long time with exactly how to place the instrument in his or her hand while at the same time showing them the squeeze motion that will keep the shruti box playing. If I do it successfully, we are often rewarded with a person who falls in love with the musical sound that he or she is making, maybe for the first time in their lives.

Drone instruments can create the opportunity for participants to play duets with people who have more musical experience. In a Texas concert with world flutist Peter Phippen and Australian didgeridoo player Ash Dargan, we were joined by Dr. Stephen Mittelstet, the president of Richland College. Peter had the idea to start the concert with a dark stage, bringing the lights up underneath a set of resonant crystal bowls played by Dr. Mittelstet. The bowls, together with an experienced sound engineer, filled the hall with a cascade of consonant vibrations, creating the perfect backdrop for a fifteen-minute opening jam.

**Duets**

In what other ways can a “non-player” participate? A few casual questions might unlock some new duet possibilities.

People who like dance, Tai Chi, storytelling, or theater improvisation make great duet partners for flute players. If no obvious duet possibilities pop up, you can always pull out a set of poetry.

There are many ways to incorporate poetry into a session. For example, set up one or more pairs of chairs in the center of the circle for poet-flute duets. Invite non-players to try a duet with a flute player. That flute player could be their...

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5 A list of readings and poems is available on Flutopedia at [http://www.flutopedia.com/literature.htm](http://www.flutopedia.com/literature.htm).
partner or another flute player in the circle. It is interesting to see the differences in the dynamics between duet pairs who know each other and those that have just met.

Another approach is to have different flute players around the circle respond in between lines or paragraphs of poetry read by one non-player. The poetry reader can walk around in the center of the circle, moving from one player to another. It helps if the poetry or story being read changes emotions or character frequently, which will allow for varied musical reactions from the flute players.

These playful workshop constructs can have profound effects on the people who are exposed to them for the first time, opening up possibilities to perform together in settings that they had not considered. Try some of the readings of the 13th century Persian poet Rumi, song lyrics such as Dave Carter’s “When I Go”, or alternating the words and melody of “Amazing Grace”, and the ideas start to materialize.

As an experiment, try to imagine playing flute at a memorial service to this English translation by Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki of an ancient Zen poem:

\[
\text{Behold she was here a while ago.}
\text{Now she is no more to be seen.}
\text{She flies over the mountains}
\text{Her voice echoes through the valleys}
\text{She has vanished to this land of Nowhere}
\]

I believe that one of the main goals in community-based music gatherings is that every person at the gathering gets to express his or her sounds in an open and accepting environment. When we, the facilitators, work to develop techniques to make that happen, then we become practitioners of the “success for all” philosophy.

\[6\] Several poems for memorial services are published on Flutopedia at [http://www.Flutopedia.com/lit_memorial.htm](http://www.Flutopedia.com/lit_memorial.htm)
Ensembles

What do participants at a flute circle want from their gatherings? The answers are certainly different for each person. But the more I do this work, the more I believe that many participants have a deep desire to play with other musicians. Even for those who primarily play Native flutes as a solo instrument, the thought of jamming with others, engaging in musical conversations, and creating songs with more musical elements can truly be enticing. And flute circles are a great place to explore ensemble playing.

However, I found that learning to facilitate group ensembles is much more difficult than actually playing in them! My early attempts in 2003 used the all-time worst approach for music facilitators: verbal explanations of how I jammed with percussionists and keyboard players. That approach failed dismally. (Note to self: demonstrate – don’t explain). I regrouped and progressed to setting up real-life performance situations for four players, including a stage and microphones. This was an improvement, but half the participants just wanted to try playing with others and were put off by the similarity to a scary music performance scenario!

By 2005, Vera and I had progressed to using a structure developed by the Music for People group that involved four musicians sitting in a tight circle. This format seems to create focus in the group. Since two pairs of participants are sitting directly across from each other, listening is increased and the players’ awareness of observers outside the foursome is reduced. None of the participants were put off by the setup, but the results were not always satisfying or musical. The real problem was that everyone was playing a flute.

The Elements of Music

If you ask a room full of flute players to play something, each person will probably all pick up his or her flute. However, from a music-making perspective, a contrast of different
components of music often more satisfying to the ear. So, we convert the ensemble exercise into an exploration of the elements of music.

What exactly are the elements of music? The answer, at least for promoting musical ensembles, is simple: melody, harmony, rhythm, and texture. And remembering my “note-to-self” reminder, I help the participants explore these four music elements with demonstrations.

In each of the sections below, there is a description of the element\(^7\) and a corresponding demonstration technique that can be used to convey the concept with few words. Of course, the demonstration provides a far more direct learning experience, and the descriptions are only provided within the context of this chapter.

What is Melody?

**Description:** Melody is defined as a “linear progression of musical tones that the listener aurally categorizes as a single entity.” The definition does not include a qualitative concept. What one hears as a pleasant melody may not be heard as such by someone else. Therefore, a melody is simply a series of musical notes rhythmically organized into a sequence or idea that is recognized by the listener as being logical important, and memorable. Melody is an aspect of music that is usually most appealing and what listeners most remember about a musical composition.

**Demonstration:** I often simply ask: “Could someone please play a short flute solo?”

What is Harmony?

**Description:** Where melody is the horizontal aspect of music, harmony is the vertical component. Harmony is created when one player plays the melody, while another player executes long tones or presents a countermelody underneath. Chords, comprising of three or more notes, can also be played to support a melody. The chords do not have to be solely long tones; rather, multiple moving voices can create harmony, as well.

**Demonstration:** When addressing the concept of harmony, I hold a long tone on the lowest, fundamental note of my flute while another person plays a short solo over the top of my sustained pitch.

What is Rhythm?

**Description:** Rhythm is considered to be the heartbeat of music. It is the controlled movement in time. It is the element of music that is most closely allied to body movement, to physical action. Rhythm springs from the need for order inherent in the human mind. For

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\(^7\) The descriptions of each musical element were provided courtesy of Kathleen Joyce-Grendahl.
example, we organize our perception of time by means of rhythm – the tick-tock of a clock. Ancients discerned in rhythm the creative principles of the universe in the regular movement of the planets, the cycles of the seasons, the tides, night and day, and life and death.

**Demonstration:** When discussing rhythm, I used a rhythmic mnemonic such as:

**TaKaDiMi Gun--- [rest---] [rest---]**

When the group joins, I invite people to play short solos over the rhythm.

**What is Texture?**

**Description:** Texture is the element of music that often imparts the sense of emotion, quality, or location to the music. It is a sound without, or with very little, pitch or rhythm. Examples in nature abound:

- Waves
- Wind
- Cicadas on a warm night
- Creaking doors
- An avalanche

**Demonstration:** To introduce texture sounds, I have participants play shakers non-rhythmically, have them make wind sounds by breathing into the finger holes of their flute, and sometimes do very short chirps on their flutes.

**Setting Things Up**

Getting participants from a circle into ensemble quartets takes a bit of engineering. You could set up four chairs in the center of the circle and ask for volunteers. Or, you could have them take a break and move all of the chairs into quartets, so participants return to take a seat in a random quartet.

To reinforce the elements of music, I usually make sure each person in each ensemble sticks to exactly one of the elements: melody, harmony, rhythm, or texture. In the picture above, I have placed a piece of paper under each seat with “M”, “H”, “R”, or “T”. So, each person has an “assignment” for that ensemble. A gentler approach for a less experienced group is to let each person pick a role, as long as all four music elements are covered in each ensemble. I gently suggest that the rhythm players might want to grab a drum, but little “how to” information is provided.

One way to build confidence in participants, before the actual ensemble playing begins, is to have everyone in the room play together. There is a bit of cacophony, but this process gives players a chance to try out their instrument without “exposure”.

In the context of ensembles, I have all the rhythm players jam for a minute. Then the melody players join in. Next, the harmony players merge in the musical fray, followed by those players in charge of texture. You could even conduct the final texture sounds down to a
soft level and invite the first ensemble to play. Then, between ensemble groups, I will often conduct the transition from group to the next by having everyone stretch and breathe. This releases tension and introduces the music from the next ensemble out of silence.

**What If It Does Not Work?**

Sometimes an ensemble works well musically. And sometimes … “not so much”. It’s important to emphasize that we are all in a safe space, with no audience, and with no downside for a “crash-and-burn.” You could encourage participants to talk about each ensemble after they play, or after all the ensembles play. How did you feel about what you played? What did you like? What would you try differently next time?

Out of this, it usually emerges that groups who begin with rhythm often get more pleasing musical results. Ensembles where the harmony is played on a flute an octave lower than the melody seem to sound better. Ensembles that develop a mental / verbal “plan” are often disappointed. “And I love the sound of that gong at the end …” and so on. None of these conclusions are brought about by the facilitator; rather, the realizations really grow out of group experimentation and collective listening.

**Silence**

One challenge in ensemble situations if maximization of listening. Nothing gets in the way of listening more than everyone in each ensemble playing all the time. There are many ways to approach this issue. My favorite is to introduce one additional, fifth element of music called “silence”.

I often place an “S” in the center of each ensemble to reinforce this concept. You can see it in my hand in the picture on the previous page. However, make certain that nobody thinks that he or she has been assigned the role of “silence” in the ensemble, as it actually happened once!

One way to demonstrate silence (remembering my “note-to-self”) is to start a very busy vocal groove such as:

**TaKaDiMi TaKaDiMi TaKaDiMi Gun-Gun-**

Then have a flutist play a melody over the top of the verbal rhythm.

Contrast the busy rhythm with a sparse vocal groove such as:

**TaKaDiMi Gun--- [rest---] [rest---]**

… and have the same player solo over the top.
What is the difference? The greater silence in the second rhythm allows space for the flute solo to be heard and gives the opportunity for a conversation between two elements of music: melody and rhythm.

**Second Chances**

Going around the ring of ensemble groups a second time is usually where things come together. I try to keep people in the same roles, and it usually results in more satisfying results. If you have the time, several rounds of group ensemble playing can make for a great event.

But what if there’s a particular issue or problem that you see that does not come up during the discussion? If you are facilitating in a community music setting such as a community drum circle, there is little in the way of instruction and everything that comes up musically is acceptable. However, in a workshop or class setting, you might actually want to stress a particular teaching point. Take, for example, an ensemble that plays timidly. Simply telling them to play more boldly could possibly put them in crisis. Positive results are not likely to manifest using this approach.

A different approach to the situation is to offer an exercise of extremes: “Could I ask you, just as an exercise, to play another ensemble, and play extremely, ridiculously timidly?” After they play, follow up by saying, “Could I ask you now, as another exercise, to play massively, ludicrously boldly?” Simply the tactile and sonic experience of playing at the two levels of extremes will create a broader conception of how music can be played. It expands the musical playing palette of the flutist.

**Beyond Ensembles**

Facilitated ensemble playing is a great transition to performing as a group. If that is the direction of folks in your group, you could set up a series of experiences to introduce them to some of the realities of performing, such as:

- playing in a line facing an audience, rather than having direct eye contact in a tight circle;
- difficulty hearing yourself play
- problems hearing others in your group playing
- dealing with a sound system
- sometimes having blinding stage lighting.

However, I’ve found that most participants just want to jam, and are not thinking about performing. Creating cool music and having stimulating musical conversations holds endless fascination for many, and that is often far more interesting than trying to “take it on the road”.

**Note-to-Self**

One interesting paradox is that this chapter – this entire book, in fact – runs against my “demonstrate – don’t explain” maxim. If you are excited about the possibility of facilitating flute circles, I encourage you to seek out some of the experienced facilitators of community music and really get inside of what it is that they are doing.

How do they handle participants with different amounts of musical experience? How do they keep everyone relaxed? How do they keep the playing musical? What are their structures? What lessons are beneath the implementation of their various exercises?

In that context, I hope that this chapter and the other material in this handbook can provide some structures that may be useful in your own flute facilitation.
Facilitating with Rhythm

Human beings rarely get new and complex learning immediately. The brain makes a ‘rough draft’ of incoming information, which gives the learner something to refer to, like a place mark. Once the brain has designed a rough draft, it now can use this information to make a ‘prediction’ about what may happen next. The brain seeks safety and familiarity to enter into new learning and complexity and challenge to grow new, larger and more extensive dendritic branching.

— Eric Jensen, Teaching with the Brain in Mind, 1998

Rhythm inhabits a special corner of our musical world. We are intrinsically rhythmic beings—walking, skipping, and running through life—but many of us have been duped into believing that we somehow “lack rhythm”.

As a music facilitator or leader of a flute circle, you have a unique opportunity to correct the misconception that we don’t have rhythm. This chapter offers some simple techniques and activities you can use to incorporate rhythm into group music-making. These activities use the “building block” method—scaffolding later activities on top of what has become ingrained by earlier activities. They also provide as much expressive and improvisational freedom as possible, offering a structure that encourages creative music-making rather than a strict formula for producing music.

The Big Beat

Participants at community music gatherings and flute circles find safety in simple and predictable rhythmic structures. The Big Beat method grew out of this realization and has proved to be a valuable resource at our community music gatherings. You can build this activity on free improvisation, or on the names of the people in the group, which makes it more personal. Once participants grasp the Big Beat, they are able to add their own creative ideas more easily.

You can begin by leading this rhythmic pattern:

\[ \text{BIG Beat} \quad 2 \quad 3 \quad 4 \quad \mid \]
\[ \text{BIG Beat} \quad 2 \quad 3 \quad 4 \quad \mid \ldots \]

When you lead a pattern like this, it helps to engage as many senses as possible. You can reinforce the rhythm by saying the words loudly and clearly, tapping physically on the body or playing an “air drum”, and dramatically reducing the volume of “2 … 3 … 4 …” to a whisper. You can also ask people to walk, dance, or move to the rhythm to help internalize it.

To make a stronger connection with the body, you can change to the words “Heart Beat” for the two initial beats. If things become a bit “loose” rhythmically, you can reinforce the first two beats with a large, low drum. However, even if the rhythm is solid, it will help for later activities to have a low drum on those first two beats.

Once the group is entrained in the Big Beat rhythm, you can keep the two initial beats going but replace the 2, 3, and 4 beats with silence. Then you have an area of silence to fill. Here are some ideas:

- Develop some call and response – alternating between bars of your calls and the group’s responses;
- Move around the room, inviting each person to issue one or more calls and having the group provide the responses;
- Ask people to fit their own names into the rhythm in a musical way
- Have all the participants improvise simultaneously in the silent spaces by whispering on their voices

Once people gain confidence, you could move back to silence or whispering the numbers and demonstrate a 2-bar or four-bar improvised solo over the rhythm. It often works better to have people do this on their voices first, and then move to flutes.

If you are facilitating solos by each person in the space of a single bar, it would look like this:

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**Introducing Silence**

One of the key elements to creating music that engages the listener is the use of silence. Adding silence creates a sense of expectation and draws the listener in.

Rhythmic exercises provide an ideal opportunity to introduce structured silence. You could ask people to play in the spaces of every other bar, alternating with silence. You can do this as a listening exercise and ask people what their reaction is to the introduction of silence.
**Other Meters**

One variation you might consider is moving from a four-beat bar to another meter. The most common meter after four beats to the bar is three beats. The rhythm would be:

![Big Beat Rhythm Example](image)

**Seed Rhythms**

The Big Beat concept that we’ve developed so far is an example of the “seed rhythm” technique for developing rhythm-based improvisation within a group. The general idea is to use a very simple rhythm with lots of space for improvisation between the rhythmic elements.

As a facilitator, you get to explore what works in your situation. For Native American flute circles, you might explore a seed rhythm with a bit more “meat” and correspondingly more space between the rhythmic seeds. Here is an example of a seed rhythm that is a (very) simplified version of a well-known Middle Eastern rhythm. It uses two different tones, a feature that can be obtained on many hand drums:

![Dum Te-Ka Dum Rhythm Example](image)

**Rhythm in the Center**

Once a circle of players is entrained to a simple rhythm and has explored playing in the spaces, it is easy to transition to a more “jam session” type of structure. An easy way to do this is to morph the single-circle structure into a double circle that we call “Rhythm in the Center”. This is one of the most fun and satisfying activities at flute circles, and we often use it to close out a workshop or flute circle because people are free to go wild and stretch themselves.

Ask for some volunteers who would like to play percussion to take from three to five seats in the center of the circle. It helps to enlist the percussion player who has been holding the “Big Beat” or another seed rhythm on the low drum to keep that rhythm going. Now you have a solid, sparse rhythm and you can invite the other percussion players to select rhythm instruments of different types. Invite each percussionist, one at a time, to add to the rhythm, leaving some space for the remaining percussionists. This typically results in a complex, textured rhythm that has a firm grounding in the “Big Beat” that the group has become entrained into the group.

You can get the flute players to bring their flute and form a circle around the percussionists. Then model playing flute over the rhythm for four or eight bars, and pass the flute solo around the circle. You will likely have to conduct (with visual signals) when to move from one flute player to the next, but most groups will pick up the four- or eight-bar cycle fairly quickly and intrinsically know when to pass the solo.
As the facilitator, you’ll need to be aware of dynamics. Percussionists can easily drown out a flute solo – especially a low flute – so you may need to conduct the percussionists to play more softly for low or quiet flute and bring their volume up for high flutes.

**Success for All**

The “Rhythm in the Center” activity can be challenging for some flute players, especially those with little rhythm experience or with an “I don’t have rhythm” mindset. As a facilitator, keeping it in the realm of an experience rather than a test is central to the humanistic approach to flute circles. In this context, anything that the flute players put out is “OK” … if folks just noodle around for a while and pass the solo – that’s perfectly fine.

You just may find that those who had the most trouble with playing “in rhythm” or “with rhythm” are exactly those folks who get the biggest psychological lift out of a “jam circle”, encouraging them to keep at it until they are truly one with the rhythm.
Beautiful sounds of a piano combined with beautiful sounds of a Native American flute. Why are they so rarely heard at flute circles? Maybe this magic combination is so rare for exactly the reason it is so intriguing: a combination of two very different cultures. Many of us in the Native American flute community were turned off by early experiences with piano lessons or the seeming mountain of complexity surrounding music theory.

This chapter sidesteps the issues surrounding formal piano training and music theory and approaches the keyboard using straightforward techniques that connect us more directly with some of the gorgeous sounds the instrument can produce.

That’s Just a Trick
I was at my aunt’s elder care facility and found a room with a beautiful grand piano. I sat down and used one of the “straightforward techniques” that I’ll talk about later in this chapter. People started to filter in when they heard the music, and I had a small group of listeners after a few minutes.

When my aunt came in, she was amazed that I could play the piano. She was an experienced piano accompanist and well into her 90s at the time. When she saw what I was doing on the keys, she blurted out “That’s just a trick ... you’re using a TRICK!” Thankfully, I kept my cool, kept playing, and called back “You bet, Aunt Grace ... I use every trick I can to make beautiful music”.

For people who have spent years or decades developing their piano skills, a “trick” used by a keyboard novice – especially one that produces pleasing music – can be frustrating. Put-downs like “That’s just a trick” can easily result. But, there really is no competition here. The “tricks” I talk about in this chapter won’t lead you to playing Chopin preludes or the Moonlight Sonata. However, they can help develop our musical breadth and provide a fantastic opportunity for enhancing Native American flute players in your circle.

This chapter was written by Clint Goss. A similar two-part article appeared in the May 2015 and August 2015 issues of Overtones, published by the WORLD FLUTE SOCIETY. Many of the techniques are based on exercises from Return to Child, by James Oshinsky, 2008 (www.ReturnToChild.com). James reviewed this article and provided valuable suggestions.
Return to Child
There’s a philosophy that is shared by jazz musicians and Zen practitioners: the ideal of “beginner’s mind” or “return to child”. Approach these techniques with the wonder and sense of discovery that a newborn has when they first hear music – it can really open paths to deep listening.

Tai Chi Piano
You are sitting in front of 88 beautiful bells. You have 88 mallets, one for each bell. Some mallets are black and some white. The possibilities are endless.

To allow the bells to ring fully, look below the piano or keyboard. If you see one pedal, press it down with your right foot and keep it down. If there are multiple pedals, keep the rightmost one depressed.

Lift up your right hand in front of you and point one finger upward. Slowly, gracefully, and with purpose, sweep your hand to the side (just enough to clear the keyboard), then down toward the floor. As your hand passes the keyboard, let your eyes focus on any one of the black or white mallets in front of you. Let your arm swing back behind you, arch up over your head, and then come down, letting your finger land on the mallet that your eyes are focused on. Open your ears as the bell rings out.

Now slide your gaze left and pick any other mallet with your eyes. Repeat the same Tai Chi arc with your left hand – pointed finger, arm sweeping behind you and up over your head – and try to land your finger on the new mallet you are looking at. Return and repeat with the right hand, then the left, and keep going. You can repeat striking some bells or choose entirely new bells.

Pacing and Spacing
Try playing Tai Chi piano at an even pace. Experiment with stopping for a moment and then resuming. Explore the effects of completely random timing.

Become conscious of your breathing as you continue playing Tai Chi piano. Use your arm motions to help expand your chest and allow you to breathe more deeply.

Experiment with striking the bells with a strong, definite mallet strike. Then shift to a very soft touch. How soft can you go? Can you smoothly strike the bell with a touch so soft that it is barely audible?

Move very close to the mallets and examine each finger as it strikes the mallet. Then lean back and take in the whole picture: the descending hands, extended fingers, breathing, and sound.

Explore what happens when you strike mallets at the far left and right ends of the keyboard. Explore playing bells very close together and very far apart. What is the musical effect of

bells that are right next to each other? What about two white mallets that have a black mallet between them, and two other mallets with no black mallet?

Stop for a moment and do some of your favorite stretches. You might flex your fingers and wrists, rotate your shoulders in circles, or rotate your whole torso. Return to Tai Chi piano and note any differences after stretching.

**Performance Tai Chi Piano**

You can get fancy with the Tai Chi piano form and even turn it into performance art. Try standing up and engaging the entire body during Tai Chi piano (you’ll need to find a way to keep the pedal depressed). Can you do Tai Chi piano with two people?

**David Darling Audio Commentary**

David Darling’s thoughts on Tai Chi piano are available as an MP3 download. It is nine minutes long and I think provides some interesting perspectives. Go to:

http://DarlingConversations.com/tracks.htm

On Disc 3, the Tai Chi Piano track is a link to the MP3 file. You can click and listen to the track. You can also right-click (on Windows) or control-click (for Macs) and download the MP3 to your computer for listening later.

**White Key Tai Chi**

What happens if we only play some of the notes? (Now that we have ingrained the concept that we are playing bells with mallets, I’ll go back to the more conventional piano terms: “notes” and “keys”.)

Keep practicing Tai Chi piano, but limit yourself to the white keys. What happens? Can you describe the difference in sound?

**Sharing the Keyboard**

If you are facilitating a flute circle or other music gathering, you can certainly learn the techniques in this chapter and use them while facilitating. However, a powerful technique is to ask for a volunteer who has never played the piano. Every time I have guided a volunteer through the exercises described so far, taking them slowly and with kindness, the result has been a gorgeous and sparse background.

If the person playing Tai Chi piano is playing all the white keys, the notes sound consonant with a Native American flute in A minor. At this point, I usually play my low A minor flute over the piano background, and it typically “works” quite well. The challenge is that the flute must be brought into pitch with the keyboard – typically using breath pressure.

Once you have established that the combination of White Keys Tai Chi Piano with an A minor flute works, you can invite others to play A minor flutes. However, be aware that some flute players may not have experience with bringing
their flute up into pitch with breath pressure. Be ready to coach them to provide more “oomph” (or “breath support”). You might even need to help them adjust their block a bit to get a consonant sound. Since a mid-range A minor flute might be quite loud when the needed breath pressure is provided, this exercise often works better with a low A minor flute.

If people are familiar with the concept of “Mode 4” (very briefly: keeping the 4th finger hole from the head end of the flute closed rather than the traditional 3rd finger hole), you can invite an E minor flute to play in Mode 4. Mid-range E minor flutes are lower in pitch than mid-range A minor flutes and often go very well with White Key Tai Chi Piano.

**More Notes**

With the pedal still pressed down, add a thumb to the index finger on the right hand. You are pressing two keys simultaneously. Experiment with how far apart the two keys are … with one, two, three, or four un-played keys between the thumb and index finger.

While you are still alternating right and left hands, try adding a thumb on the left hand as well. Now you are playing pairs of high and low notes. How has the sound changed? If you are still playing on the white keys, does it still work with an A minor flute?

**Chords**

Now play both hands simultaneously – four notes at once. How do they sound? Try a different four notes. How do those notes sound?

This is where the deep listening really comes into play. If you don’t particularly like a four-note chord, move your fingers elsewhere. However, if you like the sound, play those same four notes again. Play them slowly three or four times.

Then, rather than moving to four completely different notes, change just one of the notes. Do you like it? If so, hang out there for a while.

Don’t forget to incorporate some of the earlier techniques: altering the pressure on the keys to bring in loud and soft sounds, varying the tempo and timing, moving your hands very close together or very far apart, and playing at the left and right ends of the keyboard.

You can also begin interspersing single notes in with the chords. Try alternating chords with single notes, and explore the difference between making your single notes one of the notes from the chord or a different note.

**Sustain and Momentary Damping**

What happens if you release the foot pedal (you’ve been holding it down all this time, right?)

If you release both the sustain pedal and your fingers, the strings should stop resonating (they will be “damped”). Now try this “momentary damping” technique: When you are moving from one chord to a new four-note chord, try releasing the sustain pedal just before you move to the new chord, and re-engage it immediately after you press a new chord. With a bit of experience, you can get your foot to release at just the right time, and for just the right amount of time, with no conscious effort.

Explore the difference between full-time sustain and momentary damping. What is the sonic effect?

**Arpeggios**

A beautiful alternative to playing all four notes together is to play them one at a time. The music term for breaking up a chord in this way is “arpeggio”. Experiment with playing each note separately up and down. Start very (very) slowly at first, and keep the speed right there for a long time. Try it a little faster only when you
are really comfortable with playing the four notes separately.

While Tai Chi piano most often offers spaciousness, arpeggios provide access to grooves and rhythmic patterns. These grooves can be a great invitation for a flute player of any level of experience to begin playing, and provide a beautiful contrast to long-tone flute playing.

The practice of alternating four-note chords with arpeggios and single notes is another of the tools we can use to create expressive improvisations on the piano.

**Black Key Tai Chi**

Move to playing only the black keys. What has changed? Do you like chords or single notes better? How do arpeggios sound?

Black keys are often the best place to start for people with no keyboard experience – there are fewer black keys than white keys and they can be easier to press. However, the key of Native American flute they are most consonant with is a rather unusual one: D# minor (the same as Eb minor). If you happen to have that key flute on hand, then combination with a black-key improvisation can be magical.

**Video Example**

Check out this YouTube video:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KkpQbjkRbzs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KkpQbjkRbzs)

You can find it on YouTube by the title “Pentatonic Improvisation – piano solo” by 7notemode. It is not exactly Tai Chi piano, but it demonstrates an all-black-key improvisation.

Of course, the limit of only five notes per octave can seem restrictive. Try this game: add one white key to the mix. Which white keys work the best?

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**A World of Sounds**

The techniques in this chapter can produce beautiful flute backgrounds on an acoustic piano, especially an acoustic grand piano. However, electronic keyboards use synthesized and sampled sounds, and can take the music in completely different directions. These instruments typically provide you with a palate of sounds from many instruments and cultures, and even completely synthetic sounds that do not correspond to any real-world instrument.

If you have access to such a synthesizer, find a mode where you can step through each of the available sounds. Many synthesizers have hundreds or thousands of available sounds. Try different techniques with each of the sounds – sparse vs. dense, soft vs. loud. Explore the difference between full-time sustain, momentary sustain, and no sustain. Many synthesizers use the sustain pedal in very different ways for each of their sounds.

Keep a pad of paper handy for the sounds that you think might be useful and jot down the name or settings used to access that sound. You might get lost in the sounds of these sounds for days or weeks … but that’s OK!

**The Claw**

We began by using a single finger on each hand, and then progressed to two fingers – the thumb and index fingers. Now add one more finger, first to the right hand, then left. I usually like to add the ring finger, but you can use any set of three fingers that are comfortable. If you are coaching another budding keyboardist, you can use the phrase “The Claw” to describe what it looks like.

Now we have a wealth of notes to work with – a total of six either simultaneously or in sequences. With a bit of experience, this can easily lead to what I jokingly call the “No Room for Flute” accompaniment. It is a problem I’ve commonly encountered with
experienced piano players when I first try to play duets: they are accompanying (or “comping”) with so much density that there is hardly any sonic space for a flute to be heard.

I’ve found over the years that, regardless of how much more experience the piano player might have compared to me, I may need to gently educate them about the ways and modes that Native American flute and piano duets work best – and that usually involves nudging them into playing with more space and silence in the accompaniment.

**Frequency Collisions**

Another key element of beautiful flute-piano duets involves being conscious of the area on the keyboard where the pitches collide with the flute. This area is usually near the center of the piano. It is also relatively small: a range of little more than one octave. Can you locate the area of the keyboard that exactly matches a particular flute?

In your duets, explore playing piano right in the pitch-range of the flute, and then separating your hands keeping free of the flute pitches. What sounds best?

**The Notes**

So far, not a single mention has been made of the notes on the keyboard. That is fine, but it does become helpful to make some connection with the names of the notes.

Working on the white keys is particularly easy. You can locate the **G** and **A** keys: First, find a group of three black keys; the **G** and **A** keys are the two white keys inside that group (see the diagram at the right).

Locate an **A** with your right thumb and play each of the white keys up the scale, naming their notes: **A B C D E F G** and **A** in the next higher octave. You should have ended in the same position within the group of three black keys. Now you know the names of the white key notes!

**Spanning an Octave**

Play an **A** with your left thumb. Can you reach the next lower **A** – an octave lower – with your pinky? Spanning an octave can add power and solidity to your music.

Get some experience running up the scale on the white keys while spanning the octave. Now run back down. Can you play every other note on the way up and down while spanning an octave? Can you reliably move three notes away – for example, from **A** to **D** and back – while spanning an octave?

**Descending Progressions**

Chord progressions give a sense of motion to music while introducing structure. One of the most pleasing and simple is a descending progression. First, find the notes marked “1” on the keyboard:

You are spanning two **A** notes with the left hand and using a claw with the right hand (playing **E**, **A**, and **C**). You can pick any octave that sounds good – it should produce a full, rich
chord. You can try this as an accompaniment to an A minor flute, if one is available.

Next, move to the notes marked “2”:

![Image of a piano with notes marked 1 and 2]

The left hand stays on the same two notes (as it does through the entire progression). The three fingers on the right hand each move one white key to the left.

The third chord follows the same pattern: the left hand plays the two A notes and the right hand slides one set of white keys to the left:

![Image of a piano with notes marked 2, 3, and 1]

Keep playing chords in this pattern, sliding your right hand one set of keys to the left, for a total of 8 chords. You will wind up playing the “8”s below. These are the same notes as the “1” chord you began with, but your right hand will be one octave lower:

![Image of a piano with notes marked 8, 8, 8, 8]

Once you get the basic pattern down, you can play the notes using any of the techniques developed so far: straight chords, arpeggios, single notes, or any combination of these. Explore these techniques in a duet with an A minor flute.

You are also free to play the descending scale in any meter. The most common meter is four or eight beats to each step in the progression, but you can try experimenting with three or six beats. Even more unusual rhythms can be found if you give five or seven beats to each step.

**Patterns**

Revisiting the world of arpeggios, and with the two additional fingers we just added, we can begin to build far more complex patterns with our chords. The possibilities are almost endless.

First, develop some dexterity with straight arpeggios up and down using six fingers (three on your left hand and three on your right). Try repeated descending runs (“waterfalls”) as well as ascending runs.

Now experiment with more complex patterns by changing the order of notes you hit, hitting pairs of notes at a time, and using rhythms of different patterns for the notes. If you play along with a background track or drumbeats in different meters and tempos, pleasing patterns will emerge.

**Video Example**

Begin viewing this YouTube video at about 4:47:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XEjEeSvOzag

You can find it on YouTube by the title “Lubomyr Melnyk – Evertina Tour 2014 (Live Trailer)” by Lubomyr Melnyk. It demonstrates this type of thick, pattern-based improvisation over chords.

Once you develop some patterns, see how they work in duets with flutes. Remember to try to avoid frequency collisions with the pitches of...
the flute and occasionally change one of your notes to establish some changes in chords.

**Video Example**

Here is a great Peter Kater YouTube video that demonstrates the pattern-style technique with an A minor Native American flute:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6WS_eV9bUKI

You can find it on YouTube by the title “Peter Kater – Live Concert – Improvisation #2 in A minor”.

**Other Techniques**

Take the back of your right thumb and place it on the highest white key. Then run the back of your finger across all the white keys to the left end of the keyboard. You can also try this in the other direction – from low to high – using the back of your index or middle finger. Log these sounds in your brain for future use … maybe there’s a place for them somewhere in your music …

Try a “crush chord”: use both your forearms and palms to press as many piano keys down at the same time. Do it with gusto! Useful? Maybe sometime …

**Three Notes, Four Chords**

And finally, I would like to share my favorite progression. It is a sequence of four spacious, descending three-note chords. I learned it years ago from Josée Allard, an experienced facilitator who often leads from her primary instrument, the piano. I have used it dozens of times in flute workshops and it has never failed.

Begin by playing these notes, one at a time in order, with your left hand. You are following “1”–“2”–“3”–“4” in a descending scale. These notes form the acoustic anchor for the chord progression:

![A minor chord](image)

Then add four notes with your right thumb. In this notation, you are playing the notes marked “1” together, then “2” together, etc. The right thumb plays only two keys, each of them twice:

![A minor chord with right thumb](image)

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9 Deep secret: I’ve used this progression on many of the background tracks of the www.NAFTracks.com series. I have used various synthesizer sounds and rhythms, but the underlying chord progression is basically the same. Please don’t tell anyone 😊.
Finally, add a third note to each chord. Again, you are playing all the notes marked “1” together, etc. You can play these upper notes with your right middle or ring finger. The result should be a pleasing group of notes that you can enhance in many ways with chords, arpeggios, and various finger patterns:

Here is the same progression, transposed for three other common keys of Native American flutes:

And now, find your own keyboard techniques – easy-to-play and potentially useful “tricks” for supporting flutes in community music gatherings. And when you do, please (please) take the time to send me an email (clint@goss.com) and tell me about it!
Thriving Flute Circles

What makes a flute circle thrive? This question was not actually on my mind as I strolled around the tents at a recent flute festival. I was crossing paths with old friends and playing random flutes. But, for some reason, I kept having conversations about thriving flute circles. Again and again I chatted with friends who relayed interesting stories about how their flute circle had grown, how the organization of the circle had evolved, and what activities they had done recently.

And a pattern began to emerge within these stories. I began talking to participants at other festivals, conventions, and at our own workshops. If their flute circle was thriving, I simply listened to their own description of their flute circle. The pattern seemed to bear out:

Thriving flute circles engage in activities that allow the participants to play for others, in varying degrees of safety and exposure.

Safety and Exposure

My training as a music facilitator was rooted in a culture of humanistic teaching. We create a safe space, free from judgement, and facilitate an enjoyable experience that raises the level of musicality of all the participants. Learnings happen almost as a side effect – when people are enjoying and expressing themselves. This philosophy seemed perfectly aligned with the predominant philosophy of the Native flute community.

Performing for others did not seem aligned with that humanistic philosophy. Judgement seems to be tightly bound with performing. Judgement from the audience as well as a performer’s own “self-judgement” seemed ever-present in performing situations. For many years, I held a principle during workshops of “we don’t need to perform to enjoy music”.

But then I began to see situations where Native flute players thoroughly reveled in the “playing for others” experience. This enjoyment seemed

This chapter was written by Clint Goss. A similar article appeared in the November 2015 issue of Overtones, published by the WORLD FLUTE SOCIETY.
to happen across the full range of player experience, even down to players who were just getting started. The thriving flute circles seem to have taken it one step further: situations which allow – even encourage – players to perform seems to be their significant distinction from less thriving flute circles.

**The Scary Naked Microphone**

One situation that does not seem to foster growth and positive energy: a flute circle where the main activity is playing at the microphone where the performer has little support. While folks are socializing, the “good” players take turns at the mic. As the event progresses, less experienced players are nudged to perform. Although applause and encouragement are generous, these players often get little musical support. They are told that the quaking knees and sweaty palms are part of the experience.

The first time I saw music facilitation of flute players was at one of these “naked mic” situations, but the results were very different. A young player who had started playing a few weeks earlier had developed a rather unorthodox style of playing: fairly loud passages with very fast finger movements and lots of “chirping” with vocal articulation, but no definite notes or melodic line. He was being encouraged to step up to the microphone, but an experienced flute facilitator sat down with him next to the stage and just asked him to play anything he wanted. The young player put out a passage, and the experienced player echoed his passage right back. Whatever the young player did, the experienced player called back. After a while the experienced player changed his responding call slightly, and the young player started following the experience player. They started doing call-and-response, which became call-and-answer, and then a semi-overlapping duet.

While this was going on, the experienced player moved over to the microphone, unclipped it from the stand, and brought it over to where they were sitting. He started putting it near the young player whenever he played. Someone brought over the mic stand and set it up between them. Then the experienced player got up and moved a short distance away, all the time playing in their duet style. The young player was still at the microphone, and the experienced player was now across the room, calling back responses across most of the other participants at the gathering. The young player was playing his heart out, focused directly at his duet partner, and having a great time. In the space of a few minutes, the facilitator had introduced a new player to performing without any apprehension, simply by supporting him in the style that he played.

**The Supported Microphone Experience**

There are many ways to support less experienced players when they first encounter the microphone. Here are some ideas:

**Introduce a microphone into a playing circle.** If you are going around playing solos or travelling duets or trios around the circle, the facilitator can simply walk around with a microphone or wireless mic and amplify various people who are playing. Folks get the experience of hearing their amplified sound with effects coming out of speakers, but from the comfort of the playing circle rather than a stage.

**Provide a back-up band.** A few players on a mixture of percussion instruments can provide tremendous support. If an experienced guitar or keyboard player is on hand, they might be able to fit in and lend even more support.

**Play in groups.** Have groups go up to the mic … “everyone with an E flute” or “anyone who’s been playing less than a year”.

**Let them play other instruments.** If they are not comfortable playing flutes, they might be comfortable with a drone instrument such as a
Shruti box or one of the very resonant pentatonic instruments such as the Swiss Hang or its many variants. These allow people to play within an envelope of consonant sound, which provides a lot of musical support.

**Events**

The events that thriving flute circles host all seem to have a component of performing in a supported environment. They can build upon the positive flute circle experience of “performing” in a supported way at a microphone. The rest of this chapter describes some of the types of events that you might consider for a flute circle that fit into this model.

All of these events have a common core of creating an event outside of the flute circle setting that folks work to towards. Flute circles are about fun, but also about ideas that can be put to use toward the future event.

**Joint Flute Circle**

An easy way to get started with outside events is to collaborate with another flute circle on a joint flute-circle event. Even if it is nothing more than having both flute circles meet at the same place and time, you will share ideas and activities and enrich both circles.

**Flutes in Service**

How many senior centers, elder facilities, or group homes would love to have an eager group of musicians come play for them? A few phone calls around town will certainly turn up opportunities.

Now your flute circles become opportunities to try out things for the “flutes in service” performance. Poetry and flute? Involving the audience in making music? Something involving sound and lighting? Expressive dance?

**Schools**

Doing programs in school settings can call for a bit more story-telling involving the instruments being played, the flute makers who created them, and about the players themselves. How does the flute work? How do we hear the sound? What is sound? Different style of playing? Historical songs?

You can use the full energies of the flute circle participants to create an educational presentation that keeps the little ones entertained and interested.

**Festivals**

A booth or tent in the vendor area can provide a great event to focus the energies of the flute circle and to spread the word about your activities. You could have a little sound system in the tent and have various members play. You could offer free lessons to players, with a small group introductory lesson followed by one-on-one lessons or duet playing. Less experienced players can be involved in many ways: running the booth, being part of the lessons, discussing their experiences getting started with the flute, and playing in one-on-one sessions with first-time players.

If this idea catches on, you could progress over the years to hosting your own festival. While this is a substantial undertaking, you get to design the event from concept through execution, so you can set the scope to suit your size and strengths. You could host an informal gathering in a park or on private property all the way through a full-blown festival with vendors, classes, and performances.

**The Flute Circle Album**

If you have one or more participants with recording experience, you could produce an album. It could take many directions: a “this is our music” album, a set of play-along background tracks, examples of song forms and structures, showcasing different types of flutes and other instruments, or recordings of a
particular genre of songs such as hymns or songs of a particular culture.

As with any endeavor that has a commercial component, it is a good idea to decide on the business arrangements at the start. Will the album be a for-profit venture or offered freely? Who will invest in the venture and how will they be compensated? How will any profits be used? Who owns the product of the venture (the music and the recordings)?

**Live Broadcasts**

We began experimenting with using video streaming at our workshops, and it has been fun for participants. The technology is fairly straightforward and a number of video-streaming services will broadcast live at no charge. An inexpensive webcam connected to a laptop and a good Internet connection is all that is needed. We have used Google Hangout, which integrates nicely with YouTube.

If you use it to collaborate with another flute circle, that other circle can be located anywhere.

If you use it for a broadcast event, you are now thinking about both sides of the lens: the experience that your participants have during the event, and how your event appears to viewers, both live and those who view later. Here are a few things to consider:

- Decide if you will have a host who introduces players or whether it will be “organic” – moving from one group to another without introduction.
- Will you use the sound from the webcam, or take the audio feed from a separate sound system with microphones and mixers?
- What kind of lighting will you have? This is a balance between how the event will look on the broadcast and putting your participants under the glare of stage lighting.
- How long will the event run?
- Will you have a fixed order of players and groups who sign up before the broadcast?
- How will you get the word out about the live broadcast?
- Will you have a person to handle the real-time “chat” interface?

**The Big Picture**

Music gatherings are about more than music. At their best, they foster social interactions and personal growth. They give us a voice that can directly express our emotions, and gives brings us to that elusive pinnacle of Maslow’s Hierarchy: Self-actualization.

As facilitators, we are asking participants to “perform” all the time. Simply playing solos around a circle involves taking a substantial risk for some players. Performing for an audience is an extension of that risk. If we, as facilitators, provide the opportunities with graded degrees of support and safety, participants seem to thrive, and so does our flute circle.
Support and Shift

Every year at Flute Haven, we offer a Leadership program designed for people who lead flute circles or other music gatherings. Most of these gatherings are centered on Native American flutes, but all incorporate other instruments and involve general group-music techniques.

The Leadership group is small – limited to six or twelve participants each year – and begins several days before the main weeklong program of workshops. Early in the program, each of the staff sums up their own approach to facilitation, in one or two sentences.

All of the approaches are fascinating, but a common thread begins to develop among the approaches. I can sum it up in three words: Support and Shift.

Often in musical (and life) situations, we want things to be different. As facilitators we could simply direct a change – “play this way, drum that way” – but specific verbal directions can carry a lot of baggage. Participants might be discouraged, thinking that they were “wrong” or disruptive or that you are displeased. A music student once confessed “I am painfully aware of the part of me that hurts with every comment my teacher makes”.

A more humanistic approach is to first support whatever is happening, even conducting it to be further from the direction you would like. And then, organically and musically, shift it to the place you would like to be.

The rest of this chapter describes some situations – some you might have encountered and others that may be in your future – and offers a “support and shift” approach to resolution.

Too Loud

It would be wonderful if the whole group was always mindful enough to allow the quietest instrument to be heard. But sometimes enthusiasm and energy rise to the point where nothing but thunder can be heard.

A Support-and-Shift approach would be to join that high level of energy, and maybe even conduct it louder. As long as none of the participants are wincing, you can bring it to an absurd level – maximizing the number of participants who recognize that it is too loud to be musical. Then bring it down … down … down to a very, very quiet level.

If you have one particularly quiet instrument – maybe a low flute or a soft percussion instrument – you can showcase them, bringing everyone’s volume below that quiet instrument.

The loud-soft contrast can be profound – a real opportunity for all to experience, rather than being told, the value of volume dynamics.
Too Tentative

Did you ever encounter a player whose sound is so tentative, so timid, so “closed”? You just want to shout “play that flute louder!” Imagine the reaction of a tentative flute player if you did shout that command …

I once saw a masterful handling of this situation by Ron Kravitz, a very experienced facilitator. Simply singling out a tentative player could put them into crisis mode, so Ron addressed this in the context of a quartet. He asked them “just as an exercise, could you all play extremely ridiculously softly, quietly, like you are timid”. They responded with a short improvisation. Then he asked them to play “extremely boldly, loud to a ridiculous degree”. They all complied, and the improvisation went on noticeably longer. Then he asked them to play very softly, with one person playing boldly as a contrast, passing the “bold solo” around the group.

The group really got into it and loved it. It was so popular that Ron took the exercise around the room to other quartets who were set up to play. The effect was magic. Everyone got to experience the extremes of bold / timid dynamics in a safe environment, without being exposed or singled out.

Too Long

As facilitators, we set the space for participants to express themselves. Ideally, they are mindful of the length of that expression, but they can sometimes lose context and test everyone’s patience.

We use the concept of “one-breath solos” to naturally limit the length of a solo. We extend it to two breaths or four breaths as appropriate.

Regaining control of a situation where a participant is playing on and on and on takes care. First of all, are they really trying the patience of the group? I believe that time appears to go faster when I am facilitating.

What seems interminable to me might be just right for the group. I also might want to move on to another activity, and that “want” may skew my perception of the time being taken.

If the person is playing a solo, one option is to conduct the group in supporting that solo. If they are playing rhythmically, even if the rhythm is “loose”, having people join in with shakers, soft percussion, or short staccato notes on their flutes is a form of support for the solo. You are then in a position to conduct an ending to the piece, or even to move to a new activity. If you conduct it to an ending, you might even conduct an applause so that the person who was playing the long solo does not feel slighted.

The Talker

What if the person taking “too long” is talking? This is a variation of the scenario above. They might be telling the story of a particular flute, talking about their own flute journey, or even taking the flute gathering in a whole new direction.

Here are some approaches to re-directing the energy along the lines of supporting the person’s monologue and shifting it in a more positive direction:

- We would love to hear you play that flute (that you are talking about).
- Would it be possible to put your story into a flute solo?
- Can you demonstrate what you are saying by playing your flute?

The Interrupter

Our most memorable sessions have been when there is lots of activity, communication, and ideas. However, there are situations where an individual keeps on interjecting their thoughts without any real benefit to the group.
As facilitators, we can become annoyed and lose our presence in the moment … making it difficult to support, when all we want them to do is stop.

I have talked to several psychologists, who have outlined two possible courses of action. You can either ignore the interrupter or showcase them. Showcasing might take the form of a solo (maybe two or four breaths), or even have them lead the melody in a group activity. So, if a participant is repeatedly interrupting, first I will try ignoring them. Some interrupters are OK with that … but if they get annoyed, I move to the “showcasing” strategy. Every interrupter we have showcased, and also acknowledged them for their contribution after they play, seems to be satisfied by this approach.

I’m Sorry, So Sorry

This is the title of what may be the most common flute song. A player who is in the habit of stopping at every unexpected sound (aka “wrong note”) that comes out of their flute, often with a verbal apology.

We wrestled for many years with how to help people over the “oops, sorry” syndrome. We could describe the scenario or point it out when someone does it, but that does not exactly support the “oops, sorry” player.

In order to demonstrate “oops, sorry”, I had to intentionally make a mistake. However, this proved challenging to do in an authentic way … until I figured out that the most common “mistake” is an unintentional overblow (a “squeak”). Simulating an overblow on the lowest note is easy – just crack the topmost finger hole. You can easily demonstrate coming down to the end of the song and then “accidentally” overblowing that lowest note and then how one might incorporate that note into the song.

Once I demonstrate it, participants find it easy to simulate themselves. And the experience of simulating a mistake tends to help them incorporate an actual unexpected sound into their song.

Emotional Releases

Perhaps the most unsettling situation can be an emotional release or even a breakdown. Emotions are closely tied with music, and participants can easily get to a point where those emotions boil over. In the end, this is often a very powerful and positive experience for all the participants, but, in the moment, it can be a challenge for the facilitator.

Psychologists have advised us that support is a key element of handling this situation successfully. Here are some suggestions that have worked for us:

- If the person is “tearing up” or their voice is cracking while speaking, ask them if they can channel that emotion into their music. This can be a powerful experience, and helps everyone learn how to access those emotions and learn how to turn them into, for example, a powerful solo.

- If the person is having a more substantial emotional release, they will often step out of the circle. Having a “lieutenant” – a person who can work with an individual who separates themselves from the group – can be a big asset. However, realize that if you happen to have a trained psychologist in the group, it might be tempting to “press them into service”. You would need to ask them specifically (and privately) if they are willing to do this before openly asking them for assistance.

- Ask the person “what can we do for you?” Options can include their stepping outside (ideally with the lieutenant), staying off to the side for a while before they rejoin the group, or simply sitting quietly near or in the circle and absorb the experience.
Another powerful technique, if they are open to it, is to have the group play music for them and to them. Using low drone instruments with mid-range solos on flutes can work well, as well as very soft heartbeat rhythms on low drums. Lowering the lights and having the person sit or lay down in the center of the circle can be a positive experience.
Tokyo Flute Circle

There is no more perfect expression of encouragement than the Japanese impulse to say “はい”.

It is pronounced “Hai” (like the English “high!”) and you hear it about one billion times per day. The typical dictionary translation is “Yes”, but it seems to mean something closer to “Keep on going, I am listening, I understand” … support for the person speaking, encouragement to continue.

When we applaud in the Western world, it has a component of approval. In the arsenal of a critic, that applause wields a power to grant or deny a seal of approval — and withholding that approval can mean anything from personal worthlessness to the end of a career. Applause becomes a goal, something sought to which we attach our self-worth.

In the more Buddhist-oriented Eastern traditions, “Hai” seems to carry none of that baggage of approval. And since there is no approval, there is nothing to be sought.

Early on in my flute playing career, I stumbled on that deep disappointment associated with “no applause”. I had developed a really good song, combined it with a story related to the audience, practiced it about one billion times, and somehow managed to pull it off on stage. The audience seemed completely engaged, and I was sure I had them — until the end. Then … barely a response. A bit of self-conscious clapping, and I made my uncomfortable exit. To make things worse, the next performer had a very simple piece that received thunderous applause. What happened?

This chapter was written by Clint Goss. A similar article appeared in Clint & Vera’s Flute Newsletter, March 2016.
A very experienced flute player who had seen both performances immediately understood my disappointment. He also pointed out the technique the second performer had used to elicit applause: He brought the energy of the music up higher and higher, involving flute playing, body motion, foot stomping, and finally his voice by humming into the flute. Then he cut the song off sharply and raise his flute in the air. The immediate release of energy compelled the audience to applaud wildly.

The experienced flute player also pointed out that a more difficult and valuable goal is to elicit a more deep and powerful emotion in your audience. “If you can make the old folks cry, you’ve really achieved something”. He set the goal: bring the audience down to a quiet place … end the song so that everyone sits there quietly and contently, with no impulse to do anything but breathe. Then wait a while and bring them back with a bow or a “Thank You”. He added with wry humor “And if you can do that with third-graders, teachers and parents will be in awe”.

In the context of a flute circle or any group community music, my personal goal is to remove all elements of judgement, even ones that bestow approval. We are a group of human beings, all supporting each other on our journey. We are all putting out sounds, and striving for quality, beauty, and emotional communication in those sounds. There is no place for a critic, no room for judgement, and certainly no need for those angry voices of self-doubt to cloud our sounds.

So when a circle of Japanese Native American flute aficionados turned to me in our first Tokyo flute circle, all I had to do was look across at Vera and we began to lead a soft and rhythmic “Hai … Hai … Hai …”.

Everything flowed from there.
The role of a music facilitator often boils down to one goal: How to facilitate a group of musicians with vastly different levels of musical experience to produce satisfying and compelling music and support the musical development of all participants.

In previous chapters, we have visited this core question from many angles. We’ve touched on philosophy, facilitation techniques, and song forms, but all these have made one basic assumption: all the participants are playing music in a closed, safe space.

Several years ago, I started challenging that assumption. Is it possible to take a facilitated group of flute players onto a stage and perform? Could it be done while preserving all the characteristics of a satisfying musical experience?

One of the forms we have used is a conducted improvisation where all the participants form a choir of flute players. The goals are exactly the same as with any facilitated group: inclusion of all participants within the bounds of their musical background and group cohesion leading to a positive experience.

The added element of an audience completely changes the energy of the group. As facilitators, we need to focus that energy in a positive way – reducing the “jitters” just enough to preserve the focus that it creates while keeping the whole experience light and enjoyable.

This chapter has a few hints on conducting skills, some suggestions on how to pull off a flute choir, and finally a roster of specific musical elements that have worked in flute choirs.

**Conducting Skills**

If you have never tried conducting a group of musicians, you are in for an awesome experience. With a few simple, clear hand...
motions you can convey what you would like, and it is a wonderful thing to hear the sound that comes back at you.

One of the most valuable resources for conducted improvisations is the set of techniques developed and used by community drum circle facilitators. The techniques include setting a beat and tempo, segmenting the group so you can layer multiple parts, dividing the group by types of instruments, showcasing individual players, and conducting beginnings and endings.

Here are some basic conducting tips, borrowed largely from that community drum circle experience:

**Use small, clear motions to convey your intent.** You already have everyone’s attention, so large arm motions are unnecessary, confusing, and distracting. Economy of gestures leads to lucid communication and great music.

**Use “reinforcement” or “confirmation” hand motions.** These secondary hand motions can help in case some folks did not get your intent. A good example is when conducting a “stop-cut” – a sudden, complete silence by the whole group. The best conducting motion conveys your intent and also shows them exactly where you want them to go silent. Vocal choir conductors often use the “Reverse-C” with both hands, but I like to use an “X” motion that cuts sharply down. Immediately after the stop-cut, you can reinforce the action by putting a finger over your lips in a “Shhh” motion. This confirms your intent and everyone is likely to understand you.

**Teach while you conduct.** Even if you think everyone “should” know what you mean when you conduct, when you use a new motion, it is OK to tell them what it means, even during a live performance. For example, the first time I use my signal for “keep going”, I will actually say to the group “this means keep going”.

Personally, I think this idea of having them learn while they are experiencing being conducted is better than a long non-musical teaching session explaining what each hand motion means.

**Head off confusion in “exposed” situations.** If everyone or a large sub-group is doing the same thing, it is not a problem if one or two participants are confused. They will quickly see what to do and catch up. However, if you are asking one person to do something, set them up for success. For example, a classic technique is to stop the entire group, except for one soloist. The musical effect can be magic when it works, but embarrassing if the soloist does not understand the song form. In that situation, I will get my soloist playing, then give them the “keep going” signal, and then lean over to them and whisper “whatever happens, make sure you keep on playing”. Then when I stop the rest of the group, I will immediately follow it up with a direct signal to the soloist to keep playing and nod demonstrably when they play.

**Know your signals.** Develop a set of signals for each thing you want to ask them, and refine them so that they are as simple and clear as possible. Here are a set of basic directives you might want to convey:

- Beginning and stopping;
- Changing volume and tempo;
- Setting a particular rhythm and emphasizing a beat within that rhythm;
- Identifying a single player for a directive;
- Segmenting the group. This can be by their location in the group or by type or key of instrument.
- Initiating particular song forms such as call-and-response or call-and-answer between two players.

Once you have developed these basic elements, work on putting them together to have a composite musical effect. A good example is
the “Stop/Cut” – stopping the whole group sharply, then counting them in to start playing again all together in perfect timing. This can be challenging, but you and your group will get it with a bit of practice, and the musical effect of an intense and precise stop/cut is powerful.

**Conduct a feeling.** You are not just getting musicians to play in a coordinated way, you are leading them through an emotional path that they will then, through their music, convey to the audience. You set the tone for that emotional path, and encourage them to express that in their playing.

To get an introduction to this style of conducting, drop in on a community drum circle facilitated by a trained facilitator, or check out the books Drum Circle Facilitation by Arthur Hull and Return to Child by James Oshinsky.

**General Suggestions**

Here are some general suggestions about structuring flute choirs:

**Practice, but don’t rehearse.** You would typically begin with your regular flute circle by conducting the entire group in basic group music-making. As the performance event approaches, there is a tendency of everyone involved to try to script the performance. I have succumbed to that impulse, and it seems to invariably lead to disappointment. It tends to work out much better if the performance is based on simple techniques that are used in-the-moment to improvise a creation by the whole group.

**Use multiple instruments.** More variety can be had if all the participants have other tools in addition to their flutes. Shakers are great, but all kinds of hand percussion instruments can be used.

**Facilitate complete musicianship.** Have them use everything at their disposal to make music. Voice in particular is very useful, all the sound that can be made with the hands and feet and the breath itself. A great way to get flute players to do a particular rhythm or effect on the flute is to have them do it vocally first. If I want them to articulate sharply and quickly on the flute, I’ll have them vocalize “Ta … Ka … Ta … Ka … Ta Ka Ta Ka TaKaTaKaTaKa …” and then move that onto their flutes.

**Know your soloists.** Selecting a novice to play a solo improvisation in front of an audience can invite disaster. Know the capabilities of your participants, and ask of them things that they can succeed at and shine.

**Support the less experienced players.** It is easy to overlook participants who do not have a lot of musical tools. But think of the sense of accomplishment when they can shine at what they do know how to play. If they are too shy to play flute, have them play a shaker, and see if you can get them to do it solo. I once had a participant who could not reliably play a solid note of any pitch, but she could make very nice chirping sounds. I whispered in her ear to chirp (she was blind and could not see hand motions) and then used a wireless mic with lots of reverb and echo and then dropped everyone else out, and the room filled with echoes of bird chirping.

**Have a strategy for complex requests.** If you ask a group to drone on a long tone, most will understand very quickly and those who don’t will join in shortly. But for more complex requests, especially if they are asked for something short, can cause confusion.

If I would like three short notes … _dit dit dit_ … asking the whole group will likely produce different lengths and speeds of notes, and sound rather ragged. If I ask just one player to play it – maybe a more experienced player – I will probably get something close to what I want. I can then modify it for the second and third repeats, if needed. Once it is solid, I can then invite the neighboring players to join in and then extend it to the entire group. The first
player provides a model for what it should sound like.

Another approach is to have the group do the exercise on their voices first. In the example of the three short notes above, you could begin by having them vocalize “Ta Ta Ta”. You can lead that with your voice and have them join you. Then, when it is solid after a few repetitions, move to flutes.

Take things to extremes. Once your choir has learned something, taking it to absurd levels can be fun. Once changes in volume are familiar, try taking them from very very loud to very very soft, and do it very quickly. If you segment the circle, you might start with one half of the circle playing something for sixteen beats and then the other half playing for sixteen beats. After a few rounds, try switching twice as fast – eight beats for each half of the circle. Then try four beats, then two beats, then just a single beat – back and forth as fast as they can go.

Keep it fun. Let them know that we are all in this together, and that you are not an expert at conducting. If things fall apart, laugh, have everyone stretch, and resume the improvisation.

Share the conducting! Don’t keep all the fun to yourself. Once a group is familiar with what you are doing, let others try conducting during practice sessions. If it works out well, you could even pass off the conducting during a live performance.

Involve the audience. This is a great technique for maximizing enjoyment. You could have them snap fingers or clap in rhythm, or join in with a heartbeat rhythm with their hands on their chests. If you can arrange it, placing a shaker or other small percussion instrument under their chairs can really be pleasing.

Check out YouTube. There are many videos on conducted improvisations that can provide you with springboards for your own ideas. Start with a search for “conducted improvisation” and explore from there.

Structure the opening. How will you get participants on stage? To avoid the clunky, noisy trundle, consider having your participants spread throughout the audience and simply conduct them from the stage. They can all get up and move onto stage while they are playing. But please use caution here so that nobody gets injured while walking and playing flute at the same time.

Also consider how you will relax all the participants during the opening. Be aware that some people may be very anxious about performing, even in a safe group. You might start with people stretching, deep breathing, chanting an “OM” together, or just making any sound they want. You could even include the audience in this activity.
Be theatrical. Consider the use of creative lighting, risers, costumes, and props.

Add other creative arts. Does anyone in the group have particular skills? Dancer? Flower arranger? Hoop dancer? Improvisational Haiku? Rap?

Conduct a closing that facilitates applause. It is your job as the conductor to let the audience know when the music has ended. A reliable approach is to bring the energy of the music up very high, hold it there, and then silence the music sharply. The resultant energy release tends to cause spontaneous applause.

Consider what key flutes to use. You can have everyone in the same key, but a range of flutes in consonant keys can add interest. A and D, G and C, and A and E (all minor pentatonic) are three good combinations.

Use different octaves. Having a group of very low pitched flutes can provide an underpinning to the music, and having a few very high flutes can be useful for ornaments or for a high solo that can be heard while everyone else is playing.

Specific Forms and Elements

Here are a few specific elements to a conducted flute choir improvisation that have worked for me in the past:

Forest sounds. Involve sounds and sound effects – on the flute and otherwise – that evoke nature sounds. Participants can breathe into the finger holes or obliquely across the foot ends of their flutes to create wind sounds. High flutes can be called on for chirping sounds, and mid-range flutes can add to the chorus with “TaKaTah...” bird calls. Specific flutes may be able make nature sounds such as Loon calls, growling, or other “animal calls in the distance”. Many flute players can play a “bark” ornament. Some flutes can make Loon calls.

Forest sounds are a great way to being a conducted improvisation since they involve many of the elements of a music warm-up and allow exploration and creativity by the participants. Forest sounds could also be used behind a solo flute and, if you use forest sounds for an ending, you have established “bookends” to your improvisation.

Single Note. If you want to avoid complex harmonies coming from different key flutes, you can use the fingerings below to get every key flute in the group to play a D. You might have a conducting signal to go to this note, and you could use it in different situations: drone notes, short staccato notes, or a rhythm that you set. These fingerings should all sound roughly the same pitch (although individual flutes might vary):

- D flutes: 🎼 or 🎼
- E flutes: 🎼
- F# flutes: 🎼
- G flutes: 🎼
- G#/Ab flutes: 🎼
- A flutes: 🎼
- A#/Bb flutes: 🎼
- B flutes: 🎼

Familiar melody. If you would like to incorporate a familiar melody and have one or two participants who can play the melody without pressure or stress, you can conduct a repeated background that leads into the melody. If the melody has lyrics, pick a word or two and use them to form the core of the background.

Amazing Grace provides a good example: Have half the group vocalize slowly “Grace ... Grace ... Grace ...”. Then intersperse the other half vocalizing “... A-ma-zing ... ... A-ma-zing ... ...”. Conduct the alternating
choruses till they are solid, control the volume and texture (even having them whisper if the group is large), maybe bring down the lights a bit, and then bring in the solo flute over the top. You can even conduct the audience to join the vocalists. The effect can be magic.

**Soloist and conducted responders.** Have a single soloist step forward and begin a free long-tone improvisation, ideally with clear phrases and some space between the phrases. Conduct a group of 5–20 flute “responders”. You can use long tones (often dissonant, since players are not told what note to play). You can conduct one or a few very short notes. You can bring them in and out with trills, ornaments, or chirps. You can even switch soloists.

**Small group.** Conducted improvisations have the added benefit of exposing all the participants to improvisation techniques and forms. These same forms can be used by a small group without having a conductor. If you have a sub-group that works towards this goal, bring them forward to improvise on their own. You could have them stand in front or bring out a few chairs in a circle. Give them a few minutes to do their thing, and then, if the opportunity arises, conduct the rest of the group to join them and have the soloists re-join the large group.

**Special Situations**

The techniques described so far can be the basis of a conducted improvisation for typical flute circle participants. These techniques might have to be substantially modified for other groups. The Return to Child book provides this example of a format that can work for young participants:

> Younger groups may need to be specially prepared to be able to follow a conductor. This game involves a leader, a large group, and an unlimited number of soloists. The leader begins with a ball, throwing it in the air, playing catch with him or herself, and bouncing the ball up and down. The leader instructs the group to make one sound when the ball is caught, and another contrasting sound when it hits the ground. A third sound is taught to accompany the ball’s movement when it is rolled to someone in the group. Whoever receives the ball becomes the new conductor. The leader can also teach the group to add sound effects to the leader’s steps through the garden.

**Suggested sounds:**

- footsteps: “crunch” – like walking through leaves; or (advanced) separate sounds for heel and toe
- ball caught: “chuk” – (any staccato sound)
- ball bounce: any contrasting staccato sound, such as “boing”
- rolling ball: crescendo or glissando (“shhhhhhh”)
- holding the ball above your head: high tones
- holding the ball near the floor: low tones

Experiment with walking and bouncing the ball in rhythm. The group’s attentiveness is increased if the leader’s movements are not always predictable. Try a fake catch so the ball passes through your hands and bounces, or try a hesitation instead of a step. At any time, the leader may stop moving and point to a person to become a soloist (a bird), who then keeps a solo going as long as the leader keeps pointing at them. Other soloists can be given other animals to imitate (a snake, etc.), which gives the game an element of musical styles as well.

This game teaches attentive listening and the attunement of the large group to the leader. The focal point is the trajectory of the object being tracked.
(the ball, the footsteps). The leader can pass the leadership role to other group members by rolling the ball to someone else. The group never knows who will be the next soloist or who will be the next one to lead the group. The activity works with moderate to large size groups (12–60).

But above all, have fun with conducted improvisations, find your own style and elements, and everyone – the participants, the audience, and you – will have a good time.
When we facilitate a flute circle, our most important goal is that everyone has a great time. If we can develop a community music jam, engage everyone to the level of their musical experience, and give all participants a chance to express themselves, then everyone is likely to enjoy themselves and want to live in that space of music again and again.

Everyone also learns a bit about music. Our level of musicality ticks up a notch. It’s almost a side-effect – a byproduct of coming to a facilitated flute circle. We play better, have new musical ideas, and come away with a desire to go deeper into our music.

But what if the gathering is explicitly designed with the goal of “learning music”? Maybe the setting is a flute workshop or a group that has specifically come together for some future performance. The situation may even have specific learning goals relating to individual or group playing. Participants may have traveled long distances, invested substantial resources, and have high expectations.

In this setting, it is easy to fall back into “lecture mode” and talk about how to play music. Eyes glaze over, attention wanders, and real learning takes a nosedive.

Educators who have studied humanistic teaching techniques for decades have found that the deepest learning happens when students have direct experience with the subject. Hearing someone lecture about the subject is a poor substitute. If we embrace the concept of creating direct experience for our participants, then our role changes from “lecturer” to “facilitator” – from “sage on the stage” to “guide on the side”. But this shift from lecturer to facilitator creates one main challenge:

_How do we structure group music activities that achieve particular learning goals?_

I have found that a facilitation structure that I call “Duet Games” is extremely useful for...
giving participants direct experience with a number of central musical education goals.

**Setting up Duet Games**

The facilitation structure for duet games is simple: Set the room up so that people can play in duets, face to face. Participants can be paired randomly with respect to musical experience, but specific pairs should have the same key flute for most exercises. It is also nice if there is a reasonably clear sequence to the pairs so that participants know which pair is next in the sequence.

You could set up the pairs in a straight line, some staggered sequence of pairs, or (my favorite) two concentric circles with participants in the inner circle facing those in the outer circle.

**Duet Song Forms**

The duet games structure is ideal for teaching basic duet song forms to participants. A great way to start is to ask people to play “High-Low” duets: any duet melody they want, but when one person is playing upper notes on the flute, the other is staying down in the low range. Encourage them to switch back and forth whenever the impulse strikes, or when they notice that their partner has move from low to high or high to low. This duet song form is a good first exercise because it requires little explanation and the music tends to be fun and light.

After “High-Low”, you can move on to other duet song forms. Here are a few duet song forms that have been described in detail in other chapters in this book:

- **Conversations**: Begin with a verbal question and answer conversation (“What did you have for breakfast?” … “Ham and eggs, but they ran out of coffee” … “No coffee – How can that be?” …). We actually kick off conversations with a cute video from YouTube showing babies having a back-and-forth conversation. From verbal conversations we move gradually to playing conversations back and forth on flutes.
  - **Melody, Hold Your Last Note** (or “Solo / Drone”): One person plays a melody and then holds a long tone drone note for the other person to solo.
  - **Solo / Ostinato**: One person plays a solo and then moves to a repeated pattern (an “ostinato”). The partner then follows with a solo into their repeated pattern.
  - **Descending Scale**: A special case of Solo / Ostinato where the repeated pattern on one flute is a simple three-note or four-note descending scale.
  - **Solo over Rhythm**: One person establishes a rhythmic pattern on the flute, typically using short staccato notes or articulation such as notes starting with “Ta” and “Ka”, double tonguing (“TaKa”) or triple tonguing (“TaKaRa”).

In all these duet forms, the roles (melody vs. drone, melody vs. repeated pattern, etc.) switch back and forth throughout the duet.

These exercises teach some valuable skills:

- the ability to improvise based on another person’s playing,
- to establish a repeated pattern,
- to hold a rhythmic structure with and even tempo and meter, and
- to use various articulations in playing.

And all of these music topics are covered with a minimum of talking and a maximum of experiential learning.

You can also point out that these structures can be very useful in a performance situation. The only preparation that two flute players need is to choose one of the song structures, have flutes in
consonant keys, and decide who will start first. Any duet pair can perform for an audience using these structures with no rehearsal or elaborate plan.

**Call and Response**

After basic duet song forms, we usually move on to a sequence of specific duet games that work toward particular goals. For this section, I will call the two participants in each duet pair “X” and “Y”.

Ask X to play a short solo – you might limit its length by asking for a “One Breath Solo”. Then Y tries to echo back exactly what X played. This is made easier since each player can see the other’s fingerings. You might point out that this is not a duel – the job of each X player is to make their melody easy and straightforward enough for Y to successfully echo the melody.

This exercise goes around the group at least twice, so that the roles can be reversed: Y playing the solo and X echoing it back.

**Blind Call and Response**

After Call and Response duets, we ask the “X” side or the “Y” side to turn their chairs around and repeat the entire exercise. Since they cannot see each other’s fingerings, they are echoing each other’s melodies blind.

If people need assistance, you might encourage players to stick to the basic pentatonic minor notes and play stepwise melodies – far easier than taking large leaps. You might also suggest that all players try to listen to the melody being played and attempt to follow along with their fingerings while they are listening. Now everyone is getting experiential practice, not just the duet pair that is playing.

This exercise moves participants into a place of deep listening. We now have to hear the pitches and link them mentally to the fingerings. Audiation – the link between a pitch heard only in the mind and physical act of fingering the flute – is a key element in music training. With practice, it leads many players to being able to hear melodies in their head and play them directly without thinking.

**Song Structure**

We then ask participants to repeat their own phrase. This develops a skill that may be new to some of your participants: repetition. I have heard many players say that they can “play wandering melodies all day long” but that “they don’t sound like songs”. Being able to repeat your own phrase is the beginning step in developing song structure.

Once everyone gets the hang of repeating their own song phrase or one-breath solo, we move back to duet games by asking one person to play a phrase (call it “A”), then repeat “A”. The other duet partner then plays something different – call it “B” – but ask it to make it
“about the same length as A”. Then the first player again repeats their phrase “A”.

This moves us into one of the classic song structures used in most verses and choruses that you hear in modern music: AABA. If there are enough duet pairs in the circle, we often see participants start to smile as the familiarity of the AABA song structure starts to emerge.

As a final step, we ask each participant to attempt their own “AABA” form as a solo. However, we are always careful to point out that nobody is saying that they should use AABA structure. Song structure is always an option if it suits you, but it is perfectly alright to play songs without a specific structure.

**Leaps and Steps**

Another aspect of creating melodies is the use of steps (moving between neighboring pitches) versus leaps (jumping to pitches that are farther away). Many players who start by learning the basic scale up and down become accustomed to playing only in steps. They may learn to change direction, improvise on one note, and add ornaments, but might never have experienced adding leaps to their melodies.

In the Duet Games facilitation structure, we ask one player to play a single leap – two notes that are fairly far apart. The duet partner then fills in the steps between the two pitches of the leap with a stepwise melody. This exercise mimics how leaps and steps often work in song melodies: a leap is often followed by steps that fill in the intervening notes.

**Shadowing**

This duet game asks both partners to play in synchronization, as closely as possible. Participants might think this is impossible for improvised melodies, but many players can shadow each other amazingly well with a little experience.

You might ask duet partners to move to flutes that are an octave apart, or even (in more advanced settings) to consonant flutes in different keys.

**Contrast**

One of the most important over-arching song structures is the use of contrast. Songwriters often call it “A / B / A” (not to be confused with the AABA structure of a verse or chorus). It appears in almost all fiction as a “journey structure” where the characters proceed from “safe” to “danger” to “safe” (maybe on a repeated cycle).

In the Duet Games setting, we often experience this by using emotions. Each duet pair chooses or is assigned an emotion. We then play duets continuously from one duet pair to the next, allowing each pair to start with the emotion/style of the preceding pair, but then changing the feel of the improvisation using their own emotion. If the group does not know beforehand which emotion has been assigned or chosen by each duet pair, people can try to guess the emotion from their playing.

We can then showcase two particular pairs, going from the first pair to the second and then back to the first to demonstrate the A / B / A song structure.

**Styles**

In settings with more experienced players, we sometimes move into specific song styles. Of course, we have to make it clear that we are not telling them that they should play Native American flutes in this style, we are just offering it as an experience to expand the tools they have to play in their chosen style.

Three easily accessible styles are Avante Garde, Jazz, and Blues with a 12-bar cycle. For each of these, we can demonstrate the style, or play flute recordings that best show the style of
playing. The lesson is that we can easily emulate many different styles by adopting the structure or ornamentation used in that style.

Of course, these facilitation structures and activities are offered as a toolbox that you can have available as a music facilitator. Pick and choose the activities that fit best, improvise based on the needs and reactions of your group, and … most of all … have fun with all the activities that you lead.
Music Theory Questions

One area that I am constantly working on is how to answer basic questions about music theory. These questions tend to be the ones where the first answer – the head-space explanation – leads to more questions, confusion, and feelings of musical inadequacy. Here are some of my favorite questions and some of the answers that I have found seem to work for players across a wide range of experience:

What is the difference between major and minor?

Rather than any verbal explanation using music theory, I’m hoping to offer an experience. If a piano is handy, I’ll play the two chords shown below with a 3-finger “claw” configuration on each hand, saying “Major” and “Minor” as I play them.

Moving to the Native American flute, I play the major and then minor chord notes up and down a few times. Then a bit of improvisation on the each of the two sets of notes gives the feeling of these two very different chords. If the group is intermediate or above, I show them these two chords and have them try some “one-breath solos” on the four-note combinations.

How do I play in major?

Since most songs in Western music cultures are in a major mode, the question “How do I play in major?” is usually related to “How do I play songs that I know?” After trying many ways of introducing people to playing in major, my favorite approach is to simply ask people to play a short melody that starts and ends on [music notation].

This approach brings in different ideas, many of which might be new to players:

- The concept of a root note for a melody. The root note is the note that the melody centers on, typically beginning and ending on that note.
- The exercise opens up the possibility of creating melodies with a different root than [music notation] or [music notation].
- The idea that, even if your root note is [music notation], you can still play the [music notation]
note. You could demonstrate a melody that end on ♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭♭-------

**How can I play alternate scales?**

I struggled with how to approach this for many years. I would hand out a double-sided chart of fourteen carefully mapped-out scales, including seven “basic” ones on the front of the sheet and seven “exotic” ones on the back. I’d then ask people to pick a scale (they’d usually pick a really complex one), practice it for five minutes, demonstrate a scale up and down for the group (lots of frustration and failures), and then try improvising in it (few people got this far).

Finally, I realized that it wasn’t the scale that was important, but the process of how to learn a new scale. So, I now introduce an extremely simple scale: the four-note bugle scale. We learn the notes together one at a time as a group. Then we play the bugle scale up and down together many times, sing it while playing it, try some scale-song improvisations, and then play the familiar melody *Taps*. Everyone seems to succeed at this. Then we move into adding and really emphasizing the vibrato. Most of these sessions close with playing *Taps* while visualizing ourselves at a memorial service.

And what about the chart of fourteen scales that I used to hand out? It still exists – as a handout (provided at the end of this chapter). The message is that all these scales can be learned by the same method: slow learn the notes, practice playing up and down the scale, practice scale songs, introduce leaps between far-away notes, and then free improvisations.

In the end, it seems to be that the biggest challenge is striking a balance between the head-space and the heart-space: playing from the heart as much as possible and asking the head for new material when horizons need to be expanded.

**The Circle of Fifths**

Finally, the topic of the circle of fifths is often brought up by one of the participants. This can easily become a head-space subject, with charts and verbal descriptions and applications on mobile devices popping up all over the room. (You could really go on a tangent and show the first known version of the circle of fifths, shown above. It is from Идея грамматики музицинойкской «Idea grammatiki musikiyskoy», «An Idea of Musical Grammar», by Nikolay Diletsky, 1679, currently curated by the Russian State Library.)

We’ve tried a lot of angles with this topic, and the best one seems to be:
1. Motivate why the circle of fifths is useful: How do you find two flutes that play well together?

2. Provide a listening exercise: I have one person play the fingering \( \text{\textcircled{\textbullet} \text{\textbullet} \text{\textbullet} \text{\textbullet}} \) or \( \text{\textcircled{\textbullet} \text{\textbullet} \text{\textbullet} \text{\textbullet}} \) and then have the walk around the room and try to find a person with another flute that, when they use the fingering \( \text{\textcircled{\textbullet} \text{\textbullet} \text{\textbullet} \text{\textbullet}} \) or \( \text{\textcircled{\textbullet} \text{\textbullet} \text{\textbullet} \text{\textbullet}} \), plays the same pitch. You could hint that it will be a smaller / higher flute, but you can also let them figure that out.

3. Have those people try an improvised duet and see if the process works.

If participants are still interested in a graphic representation, you could point them to the Circle of Fifths page on Flutopedia, at http://www.flutopedia.com/circle_of_fifths.htm. It has several potentially useful charts, two of which are shown on the next page.
Scales

The two-page scale summary mentioned earlier is included on the next two pages. While these pages can be daunting if the facilitator hands it out during a workshop or flute circle, this kind of information could be ideal for some players if it is made available during a one-on-one lesson or if they work on it at home. However, there are some issues:

- They are based on a single flute design – the Northern Spirit A minor flute – by a single flute maker – Richard Dubé. Since fingerings are not standard, you would need to adjust a significant portion of the finger diagrams on the chart.
- The names for the scales are my own – I know of no generally-accepted consensus for the names of scales.
COMMON SCALES FOR NATIVE AMERICAN FLUTES

Fingerings for Six-hole Northern Spirit A minor flutes by Richard Dubé
Developed by Clint Goss

Pentatonic Minor

Zuni Sunrise

Upper Hexatonic Minor

AKA: “Mode 4” Sommertime Greensleeves *

Diatonic Major

Joy to the World Over the Rainbow The First Noel Shenandoah Colors of the Wind

Upper Tritonic Major

AKA: “Bugle Scale” Taps

Upper Major

Oh Tannenbaum Amazing Grace (lower) Simple Gifts Kayówajineh

High Major

Oh Come All Ye Faithful Amazing Grace (upper)

Chromatic

All the notes - not usually used in songs.

Root note of the scale
Orange: half-hole fingerings

Notes in the upper register


Visit www.Flutopedia.com for more Native American Flute resources

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Lessons on Lessons

If you mess around with flutes long enough, someday you’ll find yourself giving a lesson. It might be to help out a first-time flute player at a festival, coaching novice players at a flute circle, or something more formal such as a class presentation. But whatever the context, there are some basic guidelines to making the transition from player to teacher that we will look at in this chapter.

Unlike formal school programs, flute lessons come in many shapes and sizes. There are one-on-one lessons and group classes. These can be single sessions, multiple sessions over several days, periodically throughout a semester, or done occasionally over a long timeframe. And unlike formal school programs that assume all students have a quantifiable background in a lock-step program of learning, Native American flute students arrive with vastly different musical and life backgrounds. They also have a wide range of goals. Combine that with your own specific background and approach to the instrument, and the teaching possibilities are endless.

How People Learn

Given all these teaching scenarios, it’s useful to look at some of the basics of how people learn. The generally accepted model is that we have a limited “working memory” (or “short-term memory”) in which to take in new information and actively solve problems. Meaningful observations and problem solutions move into our vast store of long-term memory that grows into our mental representation of the world ([Atkinson 1968]). This world-model, co-created with our environment, enables us to

This chapter was written by Clint Goss. A similar article appeared in the May 2012 issue of Voice of the Wind, published by the INTERNATIONAL NATIVE AMERICAN FLUTE ASSOCIATION (INAFA). An on-line version is available on Flutopedia at http://www.Flutopedia.com/art_lessons_on_lessons.htm.
recall solutions to real-world problems by finding matching situations from long-term memory, without burdening our limited working memory in problem-solving. This is seen when chess players recall board configurations from long-term memory rather than puzzling through each move (see [Groot 1965], [Chase 1973], and [Burns 2004]). I believe that we see it when a flute riff is called upon as a single learned unit, or when appropriate ornaments just emerge at appropriate places in our melodies.

A widely accepted theory of learning says that learners can only construct a mental representation of the world through engaging in active cognitive processing (see [DAngelo 2009] for an overview of Constructivism). You can’t open a student’s brain and pour in the information – they must process it through an active process that engages the mind. Or, in the famous quote from Confucius: “I hear and I forget. I see and I remember. I do and I understand”.

Building Blocks
The extreme limitations on working memory mean that new information can only be absorbed in small chunks. For example, if someone is interested in learning to play a “pop” ornament, typically used at the end of a melodic phrase, you might break it down into several components. Since it involves breath articulation and finger dexterity together, you can work on each skill separately:

- Have them say “what”. Then transition to breathing the “what” without vocalizing it, cutting off the air flow as their tongue clamps to the roof of their mouth.
- Practice the new skill.
- Then get used to the finger motion of going from  to  in one motion, without breath and sound.
- Practice this new skill.
- Then combine the two new skills in one “pop” ornament.
- Practice the combined skill in isolation.
- Practice playing short phrases that end in a “pop”.

This is the “building block” approach to lesson plans, based on the assembly of solutions from a solid foundation of learned sub-solutions. As knowledge and skills increase, the base expands, supporting further learning.

The goal in teaching the “pop” ornament is not only to wire the complex finger and breath motions into long-term memory, but to associate them with the sound and feel of the ornament. I believe that the association with the sound works in reverse when we are playing, causing us to “hear in our mind” the sound that we want and also causing the ornament to appear in our music, not by conscious thought but by an association between sound and the finger/breath motions in long-term memory.

And excellent background in the best-practices of learning is provided from an unlikely source: the Federal Aviation Administration. Their Aviation Instructor’s Handbook ([FAA 2008], available free as a PDF) provides a practical roadmap for experts in a field (commercial pilots) who have no background in
education. The 1977 version of that handbook was my constant companion when training to be a flight instructor, and those same skills transfer beautifully to teaching music.

One element emphasized by the *Aviation Instructor’s Handbook* is lesson plans. The outline of teaching a pop ornament is a good example – an outline for teaching a skill. Developing these approaches and outlines takes time. But as your interest in teaching grows, you’ll start asking yourself “*how could I teach that?*” Simply developing a mental plan for how you might teach something will begin to build up a mental library for teaching the myriad elements of the Native American flute as well as music in general.

**Fully-Guided versus Partially-Guided Instruction**

A major debate in education over the last 50 years centers on how students learn most efficiently. The approach of fully-guided instruction advocates providing the student with full, explicit instructional guidance – providing demonstrations and direct guidance for the proper or best way to accomplish a task. The various partially-guided approaches to instruction (including discovery learning, problem-based learning, inquiry learning, experiential learning, and constructivist learning) are designed to provide partial or minimal instructional guidance and expect students to discover some or all of the concepts and skills on their own. Partially-guided advocates take the view that students do best when they construct their mental world model through guided self-discovery.

Significant effort has been put into researching these techniques, and some educators have recently declared that the debate is over: fully-guided instruction is more efficient and has the best long-term results ([Clark 2012] and [Kirschner 2006]). However, what these studies offer us may be limited in scope. I believe that fully-guided instruction is ideal when teaching small, well-defined tasks such as the pop ornament. But when looking at the larger context of adults seeking personal expression and self-actualization, self-discovery methods might be exactly the best approach.

Take, for example, the activity of listening to music and how it might help a new flute player. Most of us listen to a lot of music, but often in a relatively detached, entertainment-based fashion. But as musicians, there is a wealth of things we can learn from deep music listening. You might listen to a piece of music with a student, and then offer the things you heard: what was the song structure, the use of ornaments, the variations in different repetitions of a verse or chorus, the use of rhythm, sound textures, dynamics, beginning and ending styles, song forms such as solo-drone, echoing, call and response, or shadowing, etc. Then ask the student to bring a piece of music the next time and offer their own self-discovered analysis.

The rationale for this approach is the basics of the Constructivism: converting an otherwise passive casual listening experience into an active cognitive process.

Another aspect of teaching music relates to the many cultural messages that we receive by the time we are adults about our own musicality. This often interferes with the basic aspects of our music development. Adults who have been told (and believe) that they have no rhythm are a good example of people who, I have found, do not respond well to direct, fully-guided instruction. After years of experimentation and coaching in humanistic teaching techniques, I’ve found that:

- putting flute players in an environment of strong, simple rhythms (on a sound system or with live drummers),
... can turn the most musically inexperienced players into playing right along with the beat. The experience is set up in a fully-guided way, but the learning and feeling of accomplishment are born of self-discovery (“Yes, I do have rhythm!”)

Lesson Structure

Another challenge is how to structure a lesson, especially if it is a single one-on-one lesson with a new student.

After finding out a bit about their background and intentions, I often ask them to “play something”. From a humanistic approach to teaching (see Chapter 17 of [Rowan 2005]), which places the teacher in the role of supportive facilitator rather than judgmental critic, we realize that even a request such as “play a song” can put students into crisis mode, so “play something” or “play anything you like” can be far more effective.

Beginning a lesson with unstructured playing by the student is a great way to focus and structure the lesson. The focus is off the teacher, giving us freedom to listen, observe, and diagnose the areas where the student has the most opportunity to improve. For me, the game is to come up with two or three things to focus on – ideally a mix of areas that can be immediately improved as well as ones that can be set as more long-term goals.

Maybe the student uses only one attack at the start of each note. Maybe they have not yet developed vibrato or are playing at a very quiet volume. Maybe they are uncomfortably stiff in their body movements, or have choppy endings to their notes.

You might pick a few of these and structure exercises to overcome them. Of course, simply telling them “you’re too stiff when you play” isn’t very helpful. This is where fast thinking and creativity (and practice structuring lesson plans) comes into play. How can we get them to loosen up? “Great ... play the same thing, but walk around the room while you’re playing”. If they’re still stiff: “OK now make small circles with your shoulders as you walk and play”.

For people who always play in a certain way, such as very quietly, it may be simply a matter of helping them explore other styles. One thing you can do is have them emphasize the trait you would like to change: “Could you play that extremely softly” ... and then “Could you now play it extremely, ridiculously loudly”. Then you could move on to having them play a phrase very softly, then very loudly, then back to soft, and so on. This approach avoids the problems of teacher criticism while allowing them, in a safe space, to expand their musical options.

Some things, such as teaching vibrato, are special topics that deserve research to find the best teaching approach. After many experiments, I’ve found that having students lay down on a fairly hard surface and attempt vibrato breathing with one hand on their belly can dramatically shorten the time it takes to “get” vibrato. However, they should know that, while most techniques on the Native American flute can be learned with a few minutes practice a day for a week or two, vibrato can take a year or more to develop.

And possibly the most valuable thing you can offer during a lesson, especially a single one-on-one lesson, is to share music training and enrichment techniques that a student can bring forward into their everyday life. Simply the act of walking can be a musical exercise.
Windshield wipers slapping, singing in the shower, meditating on your breath on a busy train, deep music listening, readings from your suggested reading list, listening to all the sounds in our various environment … the list is endless.

**Moving Forward**

Of course, this chapter just skims the surface of a very, very deep field. If you’re teaching a class, do you need a textbook, and which one will you use? How do you handle students with a high level of experience on the flute, or with formal music theory training?

Here is some advice from Cornell Kinderknecht, an experienced flute teacher with extensive formal music training:

- After you develop your lesson plan for a single one-on-one lesson, develop elements that would apply to on-going lessons. These can include: learning to know more about the student personally to bring that into their music, setting goals that are per-lesson and longer term, finding how to measure and instill a sense of achievement over time, considering how to deal with set-backs, motivation, etc.

- Explore the different types of learners and various personality types. Become comfortable teaching musicians who follow by example, those who like step-by-step details, those that like to play solo versus duets, those that like to improvise versus compose their melodies versus those that like to play established melodies, and those that need more or less encouragement to flourish.

- Study some classic forms of traditional music education, such as the master class, dexterity exercises, and composition techniques, and explore how they can be applied in the context of a Native American flute lesson.

- Find how to strike a balance between reinforcing a student’s own style of playing and sharing your particular style and approach to the instrument.

In the end, I’ve found that a focus on teaching brings me a far deeper understanding of my own musicality and a stronger connection with the instrument. And, as another old saying goes: the best way to learn something is to teach it!

**References**


Our stories all began with a first breath – and then a cry – as we came out of the womb. The sound of the voice – our own and our parents – was our first connection to the outside world. And moving from crying and speaking to singing seems to be a universal human impulse. However, as facilitators of community music groups, we hear many tales of how people’s singing voice was silenced: “Just move your lips” from the teacher, “You be a hummer, dear” from the choir director, “My Sally can’t carry a tune in a basket”, and the ultimate put-down: “Shut Up!”

Many people come to the Native American flute after a long period of lost musicianship, often due to those early, stifling judgments and put-downs. Maybe it is because the flute so closely matches the singing voice in timbre and range, because the breath pressures involved in playing mirror breath pressures in speech ([Goss 2013]), or simply because the style of parlando playing so characteristic of the instrument matches poetic speech ([Nakai 1996]). The birthright of vocal expression, an alternate channel of creativity, a connection back to first breath – all of these are native to Native flutes.

As facilitators, we began integrating vocal elements into Native American flute workshops in 2006. Since then, we have seen substantial benefits with only a few minutes of vocal exploration. Simple practices such as sliding the voice, humming into the flute, and vocal articulation games can add dramatically to expression in flute playing. In particular, the practice of humming in unison with the pitches...
of the flute seems to create a mental link that makes it possible to play by ear melodies that you know—a major goal of many flute players. At a deeper level, we have seen some flute players have dramatic and profound openings when they re-connect with their voice.

**Facilitating Vocal Elements**

Since so many of us have deep-set negative feelings about our singing voice, nudging a group into singing exercises takes care. We usually begin by incorporating vocal elements into a music warm-up. This can be done during stretching and other movement activities:

- Focus on the sound of your own deep breaths. Then shift attention to body sensations during deep breathing.
- Add a humming sound to the breathing. Put your hands over your ears and hum. Make the humming the sound of “MMMM” or “OMMMM”. Feel the vibration, the depth, the infinite.
- Introduce pitch with “sirening” from extremely high pitches down to low pitches and back up.
- You can now introduce a drone sound—maybe from a recording, a group of pre-arranged flutes all holding the same note, or a shruti box or other drone instrument. A fairly prominent drone sound makes people more comfortable with vocalizing.
- Ask them to slide their voices to a steady pitch that they like—one that they think “goes nicely” with the surrounding drone sounds. If they need help hearing their own voice, they can place one or two hands in front of their mouths to direct the sound to their ears.
- Explore sliding up and down to find other places that they think “go nicely” with the drone sounds.

At this point, you’re likely to find the entire room toning or humming in glorious consonance. With some encouragement to the participants to keep toning, you may be able to reduce the volume of the drone support so that their voices are the dominant (or only) sound in the room. The experience of being part of a consonant choir, maybe for the first time in their lives, can be profound.

**Exploring Articulation**

How we begin each note on the flute—the “attack” of the note—dramatically affects the character and emotional feel of our melodies. Most attacks are controlled by the breath and mirror how we vocalize “plosives” like “T”, “K”, and “P” sounds. Vocal articulations games can open up creative possibilities for flute players.

We use several approaches in flute workshops. One is simply to feel the air pressure of various vocal sounds on the back of your hand. Sounds like “Taaa”, “Kaaa”, “Raaa”, and “Haaa” vary dramatically in the sharpness of the air. We then move those vocal sounds onto the flute and explore the difference in sharpness when we attack each note with the mouth dynamics of “Taaa”, “Kaaa”, “Raaa”, and “Haaa”.

Playing entire songs with each of the sounds, as well as using no articulation and connecting all the notes, gets players to the point of being able to control which articulation to use.

Another approach is babbling. When we babbled as babies, we were preparing our mouths and muscles for speech. Babies make the same sounds no matter what culture or language they originate from. When you babble,
it helps you loosen up all the mechanisms in your mouth to sing. Babbling will take you out of your rational mind and straight into your body. It is also fun!

Move your hands in a quick, pulsing manner. Imitate this movement with your voice, mouth, and tongue. For example: **Ba-ba-la-ta-la-ta-ma-ma-ma-ba-ba**. Make up your own syllables. Whatever comes out is perfect. Facilitate babbling “conversations” with partners or small groups. Use your hands as you express to each other, one at a time.

Consonants are another way to approach authentic singing. Ar-ti-cu-la-ting them will create rhythm. Play with the sound of:

- “kuh kuh kuh”
- “puh puh puh”
- “duh duh duh”
- “fif fif fif”, and
- “guh guh guh”.

Feel how the consonants are made in different parts of your mouth and throat. Now combine consonants such as: “kuh duh”, “duh guh”, and “dih kah”.

Lead the group in vocalizing “**dih kah dih kah dih kah** ...” at various speeds. Now keep the breath exhaling on this phrase, but silence the vocal component. You are exhaling in a repeated, pulsating breath pattern. Keep going and bring a flute to your mouth. Can you play a melody while breathing this way?

**Sing What You Play**

After a warm-up and vocal articulation workout, people are usually more open to using their voice. It’s time for the core exercise:

Try humming into your flute. Hold any note on the flute and siren your voice up and down. Can you hear places where the voice and flute sound good together? Can you slide your humming up just a tiny bit and then back down to the place where they sound good? Can you slide down slightly and back up?

Now the leap: try changing to the next higher note on the flute, and then sliding your voice slowly up to that new note. If that works, you could go back and forth between those two notes, sliding your voice each time. Can you slide more quickly and then move your humming in unison with the flute? When that gets easy, try adding one additional higher note – three notes to play with and slide between.

The ultimate goal is to be able to hum in unison with your playing. This involves stepwise melodies and, after a while, incorporating leaps between far-away notes.

This practice eventually becomes “Sing What You Play” – a core practice of many jazz musicians. It also seems to be the best and
The easiest entry into the world of playing melodies you know on the flute by ear.

**Your Key of Flute**

When you work in the realm of Sing What You Play, you quickly realize that some keys of flutes are better than others. This is different for each person, and depends on your vocal range. Most novice vocalists sing easily in a range limited to about one octave – the same as most Native American flutes. That’s why most hymns that are sung by a congregation span no more than one octave.

There are many approaches to the question: what is the right key flute for me? Some involve the resonant frequency of the Earth, some are based on body measurements (a traditional “grandfather tuned” approach), and some are based on the span of your hands. While all of these have merit (and hand-span is an important consideration for getting the holes covered reliably), our personal belief is that there is a hugely important consideration: the key of flute that matches your vocal range.

You could explore your most comfortable vocal range by getting the help of an experienced vocalist. However, we think it’s more fun to experiment with Sing What You Play in different key flutes and find what keys work best.

**Becoming Adept at Vocal Facilitation**

As a facilitator you need to be reasonably adept at an exercise before leading it. The structures and forms that have been described in previous issues of this column have required little in the way of musical experience. However, vocal facilitation calls for a bit more experience.

Working with these exercises, in service of a group you plan to lead, just might be the most rewarding experience for you (as well as your group). And as a side benefit, you’ll find that you can do vocal exercises almost anywhere – including the shower!

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We humans love to think. We analyze, reason, interpret, draw conclusions, debate those conclusions with ourselves, and then start the whole cycle all over again. We’re so accustomed to this process that we extend it to every endeavor, including our music.

At the same time as being encouraged to “feel the music”, we are asked to think about so many specific elements. We can feel like a quantum particle in a state of constant, unpredictable flux. I start to think, then I think about needing to feel, then I feel, then I think about the next passage, then I think I should be doing more feeling ... Pretty tiresome and not a lot of space for “just playing”.

Playing Native American flute asks for a different process. When we “play from the heart” we introduce a whole new dimension that seeks to bypass the thinking mind. This direct connection with sound is so powerful that, when we get lost in the music, it is possible to transcend what we “think” is possible and create music that takes us to a whole new level of play.

One of my goals when leading a flute circle or workshop is to create an environment where these transcending experiences can take place. And the main roadblock to those experiences is that part of us that loves to think. We can create a safe space for people to play, provide the right musical background and support, and set up the facilitation structure, but the minute that thinking mind surfaces, creativity takes a nosedive. But we have one more tool in our arsenal to guide players along the path to directly connecting with the music: distractions.

The Dancer

When I was very new to playing music, I found myself by chance in with a group of very experienced musicians who were on their way to a gig. And ... amazingly ... they invited me to join them. WOW!

The day of the gig unfolded in a structure that is common for improvisational concerts: the group gets together for a few hours to jam. Then you break for dinner and someone creates a general outline for the concert based on elements from the jam session. During dinner, the organizer of the concert asked me to play one particular flute that I had played during the jam session and said “and don’t worry about anything else that happens, we’ll support you”. My thinking mind took over and I started planning what to play – what style to use, what intervals to play, particular melodies I might use.

The concert was in a beautiful space, and the music was great. Mid-way through the event, I got the nod and launched into my pre-planned flute solo. Then things took a whole different turn. Out came two modern dancers who spanned the stage in front of me and interpreted...
what I was playing. I became transfixed on their avant-garde moves. My thinking mind switched off and emotion took control. Bass, percussion, and keyboard joined in one musical unit with the movement of the dancers, and the experience became my life-long lesson of the power of distraction.

I promised myself after the concert that if I ever had the opportunity to facilitate other flute players, I would try to make that experience happen for them. This article is part of the fulfillment of that promise.

The Candle
One of the easiest facilitation techniques you can use is to ask people to play to a candle. Simply place a candle in front of a player (closer is better, maximizing visual involvement) and ask them to play a number of one-breath solos. Turning down the lights can increase focus.

The best candles for playing Native flutes are ones that generally have a steady flame, with an occasional flicker. If your environment forbids open flame or have smoke detectors that could be activated, there are many good battery-powered candles.

More Lights
Continuing on the theme of lighting, consider any lighted element that can be used in an improvisational music setting. Our workshop gear includes:

- Drum sticks that light when struck against a drum or any surface. They are made of Lexan™ and have long-lasting batteries as their power source. The shop for the Blue Man group is a good resource.
- Gloves with lighted finger tips. They have a switch to select various patterns of light. You can actually use these to do some conducting of a group, then move into leading some distraction-filled improvisations. You can also turn the gloves over to participants to experiment with.
- A scarf embedded with tiny lights that can be used in dance movements to create a feeling and mood.

The Moving Hand
I have found that asking a person to play to some particular place can be helpful. I often hold my open hand above my head and ask a person to play to it. The initial purpose was to encourage a person to raise their flute, opening their throat and chest, and play louder, increasing the projection of their sound. This also has the side-effect of raising the pitch of their flute playing. I began using it in situations where their flute playing was flat in comparison to another pitched sound, such as a drone or a backing track. Playing louder increased their pitch and brought them nicely into tune.
Then I found that if I moved my hand gently from side to side, players tended to focus on my hand. This provided a great distraction. I have even used this technique in recording sessions for players who have been trying to “get it right” in take after take.

**Walking**

This technique also started out for another purpose. If a person has trouble playing in rhythm, I simply ask them to walk – slowly and evenly – and then to play anything they want on their flute while walking.

Caution: Walking while playing flute is potentially dangerous! The player can easily trip over something. Also, hitting the foot of the flute against anything can knock out the player’s teeth. For these reasons, I always walk alongside the player to make sure the path in front of them is clear.

Of course, as with the moving hand technique, walking while playing provides a great distraction.

**Performance Art**

Combining flute playing alongside a storyteller, a poetry recitation, or a dancer can be powerful ideas for performances. In a flute circle setting, these collaborations can provide a great distraction, taking the flute player outside of their thinking mind.

There are many sources of poetry and stories that you can collect to spur these activities. But in the realm of dance, you may find that participants may be shy about dancing, even in the safe setting of a flute circle. We often use a few simple props such as colorful scarves or colored yarn and encourage people to “conduct the group” using these devices.

**Video**

Finally, a great distraction is to use a video – either silent or with a simple drone or backing track – and have participants play to the video. We have experimented with scenes of nature, photo-montage videos on a particular subject, and even sections of production films for which the music track was absent.

The experience of playing to a video is new to many flute players, so we have found that if we have them play several times to the same video footage, they get comfortable with the scenes in the video and can anticipate what to play without thinking about them. But we have learned not to allow more than a few seconds between repetitions of the video, or else the “thinking mind” comes into play, and the value of the distraction is lost.

**Be the Distraction**

And finally, my un-planned and slightly embarrassing distraction.

I’m facilitating a session and it’s going great. People are jovial, playing freely, and with expression. And then, near the end of the session, I realize my pen has been slowly seeping a spreading spot of sopping, deep blue ink onto the breast pocket of my bright white shirt. Maybe everyone was transfixed into distraction, or maybe it had a more subconscious effect on the participants – I will never know. But the music did flow with an unusual and quirky character.

*Whatever works!*
Playing Nine Emotions

This chapter grew out of a presentation given by Raman Kalyan at the World Flute Society convention in Eau Claire, Wisconsin on July 28, 2016. The topic was “Creating Emotions with Indian Ragas” and Raman demonstrated his approaches to evoking each of the nine essential emotions used in the South Indian tradition of Carnatic music. He evoked an amazing array of emotions and feelings by using a combination of scales, ornaments, playing techniques, and special effects on his set of bansuri flutes.

Could these techniques transfer to Native American flutes? Rather than learning a set of individual playing techniques, could we use emotions as the motivating goal? Could we make this playing approach accessible to participants at flute circles and workshops without requiring advanced skill levels?

These questions became the major focus of our music practice in the months following Raman Kalyan’s presentation. We explored playing techniques, researched Carnatic music theory (a vast subject, which we could only scratch the surface), and mapped the mountain of potential scales. At workshops throughout the fall and winter of 2016, we experimented with facilitation techniques that might open doors for others into this approach to making music.

Emotions and Music

The link between music and emotion has been studied extensively, but is not yet clearly understood. We know that much of the emotional content in movies is conveyed by the music – simply hearing the “danger theme” from Jaws can elicit a fear response. That direct link often happens between flute player and listener – a direct emotional link is created that transcends language and defies analysis. Many theories have been proposed, but none are universally accepted.

However, we do know that listeners absorb the intended emotional content of performed or recorded music even if they are not familiar with the instruments, culture, or scale of the

This chapter was written by Clint Goss and Vera Shanov. A similar pair of articles (parts 1 and 2) appeared in the February and May 2017 issues of Overtones, published by the WORLD FLUTE SOCIETY.
music ([Balkwill 1999]). If you ever get the opportunity to turn off the music track on a movie (a few DVD or Blu-ray editions of movies allow you to do this), watch some portion of the movie with the dialog and environmental sounds turned on, but without the music. It immediately becomes obvious how important the music is to cueing the emotional reaction of the viewer.

While this music-emotion link is powerful for listeners and viewers, we began to find that the value of our “Playing Nine Emotions” sessions was quite different. In session after session, flute players gave us valuable feedback on the exercises:

- Exploring emotions that participants may not have played before opens a gateway to new techniques that had never been tried before.
- Watching how others played each of the emotions – both live and on recordings – gave participants valuable ideas and inspiration.
- One way to approach many of the emotions is to use an alternate scale. This gave participants a particular reason and goal to learn a new scale, and really get comfortable with it.
- Providing the participants with a written worksheet that listed some of the techniques used in each emotion in the recorded samples and live playing gave them a take-away that really helped players.
- Simply moving the focus away from a technique onto a goal (playing one particular emotion, for example) enabled players to play from the heart, rather than the anxious concentration associated with playing a particular technique.

We believe that it is also a valuable experience – for a time, at least – to make conscious choices about the playing techniques we will use. It is wonderful to play from the heart. However, in the context of a playing exercise, we think there is a benefit to saying “I will incorporate some short staccato notes into my playing” or “I will play powerfully and use a lot of leaps in my melody”.

This article describes the approach that we now use for this topic at Native flute workshops. We hope that it might be useful for facilitators in creating exercises and fun activities for flute circles, classes, and individual students.

**Caveats**

The goal of this article is to expand the palate of music techniques for Native American flute players by focusing on emotions. This approach draws on the Carnatic and Hindustani musical and cultural traditions of India as well as some historical narratives of Pacific Northwest Coast and other North American cultures. While we do borrow elements from the cultures and music traditions, this article is not an authoritative source of information on those very rich cultures.

We have picked what we believe are the best elements from the sources that are listed at the end of this article. We have also developed new techniques and elements specific to playing the Native American flute that we believe serve the goal of developing a focus on emotions.

**The Nine Emotions**

The Carnatic Indian music tradition has made use of a set of emotions since about the second century CE, beginning with eight emotions and adding the ninth emotion (Peace) one or two centuries later ([Karuna 2013], page 23). The emotions are integrated with and related to the use of Carnatic raga scales and composed ragas, and do not line up exactly with the various systems of emotions generally studied in Psychology.

For each of the emotions, we have also found corresponding graphics from Haida and other
Northwest Coast traditions that represent the animals most closely associated with each of the emotions. These animal images seem to be a valuable addition to the session, helping participants get into the spirit of the emotions before playing them.

From these basic elements, we created the “Wheel of Nine Emotions”, shown above.

In the Carnatic music tradition, the sequence of emotions begins with Love and works its way clockwise ending with Peace. For each emotion, we provide:

- Some of the alternate English-language names for the emotion. It is good to point out that any particular emotion can span a wide range. Love, for example, encompasses parental love, erotic love, devotion to a practice or a philosophy, or the general concept of beauty.
- The original Sanskrit word for the emotion. This can help if participants go deeper into this work, since there is often confusion from different English words used by different sources for each emotion.
- The color associated with the emotion, from Carnatic traditions.
- The animal that most closely matches the emotion, from Haida or Northwest coast traditions.

### Elements of Music

What tools can we work with when conjuring up an emotional response? Here are some of the useful elements of music:

**With rhythm or without rhythm.** One of the basic decisions is whether we play in a free-flowing way, using phrases and pauses, or whether we play in some repeating rhythm.
**Tempo and meter.** If we are playing in a rhythm, what is the meter (a duple meter such as 4/4 or 2/4 or a treble meter such as 3/4 or 6/8 time) and what is the speed (tempo) of the rhythm.

**Key of flute.** Do we want a high-pitched flute, mid-range, or low-pitched flute? Is there a particular key that works best?

**Specific flute.** Is there a specific flute you have that conjures up the emotion? Maybe the timbre of the flute is particularly breathy or sharp. Maybe there is a specific effect or ornament you can produce on that flute, such as the warble.

**Articulation.** We have the choice of connecting all our notes (“legato”), or separating them with vocal articulation – an “attack” at the beginning of the note. There are many types of attacks that vary the sharpness of the beginning of the note – try beginning the note by saying “Ta”, “Ka”, “Ra”, and “Ha” which (for most players) produce gradually softer attacks. You can also incorporate double tonguing (“TaKa”) and triple tonguing (“DaKaRa”) on some notes. What is the emotional effect of each? How can these be used within the wheel of nine emotions?

**Duration.** You can hold a note for its full duration (up until it is time for the next note) or you can shorten it, adding silence to the music. A note can be shortened all the way down until it is just a “Dit” – a “staccato” note.

**Ornaments.** Do the various ornaments and effects we can play on our instrument support a given emotion? Grace notes, turns, mordants, trills, runs, and flourishes are examples of ornaments.

**Vibrato.** One of the classic ways of evoking an emotion on Native American flutes is the use of vibrato – varying breath pressure to alter both pitch and volume. The speed and depth of the vibrato can be controlled, as well as the ability to bring in vibrato after holding a steady long tone.

**Accompaniment.** Should the emotion be played solo, or with an accompaniment. The accompaniment could be simply a drone note, a drum beat, a repeating pattern on a guitar or keyboard, or a full-blown background track.

**Dynamics.** How can volume be used in the service of the emotion?

**Specific scales.** Finally, which particular scale evokes the emotion?

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**Facilitation Techniques**

This article is structured in the way that we facilitate sessions on Playing Nine Emotions at flute workshops. However, you will certainly want to vary your approach for your own setting.

Our general outline is to:

- Provide a short phrase that provides a mental image for the emotion. For example:

  
  **Disgust – A cockroach in your soup**

  The phrases we use are shown just beneath each of the emotions in the section below.

- Provide an initial looped video (as participants are arriving) that shows each of the emotions for 15–30 seconds each, with the recorded music we have selected corresponding to each emotion.

- Hand out a printout of the emotions shown above, and a worksheet that minimizes the need to take notes during the session.

- Go into each emotion in depth, showing all the elements related to that emotion.

- Let them hear the recorded music selection for each emotion as part of a video that conjures up that emotion.
• Discuss the specific musical techniques that might support playing that emotion.
• Demonstrate using those techniques live.
• Lead a few short group exercises throughout on a few of the techniques that might not be familiar to all the participants, such as a new scale, or an articulation such as double tonguing.
• After demonstrating all nine emotions, we ask them to go off and prepare a short “four-breath solo” centered on one of the emotions. We randomly assign the emotions, so that we get a good mix.
• After 10 or 20 minutes, we all rejoin the circle, with each participant first playing their solo, and then saying which emotion they were assigned.

Participants seem to really enjoy hearing selections of recorded music (mostly from production albums) that we think really capture that emotion. In the descriptions below, we list the titles that we think demonstrate each emotion. However, if you have a large music library, you might search though it for selections that you think work best.

Love

You meet the love of your life

The recorded music example we use for Love is the Omaha Song by R. Carlos Nakai and Udi Bar-David on the Voyagers album, 2007.

In our search of Haida and Northwest coast traditional narratives, the Hummingbird is the animal most often associated with Love. Joe Wilson created the graphic of the Hummingbird we use with this emotion.

We demonstrate Love with a parlando style, on a flute with a relatively “clean” voice (not “breathy” or “raspy” or “harsh”). The flute is typically low-pitched – a low A minor flute works well for us – and we use large leaps in the melody. The primary Native American flute scale – pentatonic minor – works well for us and we play legato style most of the time.

One thing that does improve the demonstration is the use of a drone accompaniment – we often use a shruti box tuned to the notes on the flute that match these two flute fingerings:  [diagram] (the root and the fifth, in Western Classical music tradition).

We also find that it is helpful for the flute player to imagine a scene. The imagery we suggest is:

Imagine the face of a person you adore.

Joy

You dance with wild abandon

The recorded music example we use for Joy is the Roundabout track by Cornell Kinderknecht on the album Returning Home, 2005. Joe Wilson created the graphic of the Sun that we use with this emotion.

We demonstrate Joy on a mid-range or slightly higher-pitched flute (such as G, A, or Bb), with a light, rhythmic melody in a duple or treble meter (4/4 or 3/4 time). The scale is pentatonic major – very similar to pentatonic minor, but rooting the melody by beginning and ending on [diagram]. We get a lighter feel on the melody by mixing articulations and using some short staccato notes, and various light ornaments.
**Sadness**

*You lose the one you love*

The recorded music example we use for **Sadness** is the track *I Will Not Be Sad in this World*, which is track #4 from the 1983 album of the same name by Djivan Gasparyan. The Killer Whale is most often associated with **Sadness** in the narratives we surveyed, and Clarence Mills created the Whale graphic that we use.

We demonstrate **Sadness** using a parlando style with a very slow tempo on a flute pitched several steps below mid-range – a D minor or E minor. We usually do this accompanied by a slow, steady rhythm on a tamboura, tuned to g-d-d-D (for a D minor flute). The melody is played legato with no ornaments, and we typically play in a Miyako-Bushi scale, which is fingered on most contemporary Native American flutes with the fingerings:

| 1 | 4 | 5 | 6 |

Also, as with **Love** – we suggest using imagery when playing **Sadness**:

*Imagine the face of someone you adore, who is no longer with us.*

This suggested imagery can potentially bring up strong emotional responses in participants, so care is needed here. If people become visibly emotional, we try to get them to channel their feelings into their music, which can be a powerful experience.

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**Anger**

*Someone cuts you off on the highway*

The recorded music example we use for **Anger** is Kevin Locke’s *I Sing for the Animals* track from the album *Earth Gift*. Richard Shorty created the graphic of the Grizzly Bear – the animal that is most often associated with **Anger** in the narratives we found.

We demonstrate this emotion without specific rhythm, but with lots of repetition of heavily ornamented phrases on a mid-range flute. But beyond specific playing techniques, we think the key to this emotion is to play powerfully – a style that may be new to flute players who have played predominantly in the New Age genre. After observing participants at six recent workshop sessions, this emotion seems to be one of the most valuable, because of its ability to introduce players to the feel of powerful solos.

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**Fear**

*It’s dark. You hear a noise.*

The recorded music example we use for **Fear** is a recording made by Cornell Kinderknecht at the Armadillo Flute Retreat on November 18, 2004, recorded and mastered by Butch Hall. This recording is available, courtesy of Cornell, at:

John A. Sharkey created the graphic of the Octopus – the animal that we use with this emotion because of the association in one Haida legend that we found.

There is not a lot of Carnatic music that focuses exclusively on the emotion of Fear, and we could not identify a scale specifically oriented to this emotion, but as Native American flute players we have another possible direction. We can take the opportunity to depart from the pitches typically used in modern music. It is possible to play 64 pitches if we use all the possible combinations of open and closed finger holes on a six-hole flute, but modern music only uses 12 pitches in an octave. As flute players, we typically bypass 52 pitch possibilities. In working with the emotion of Fear, we have found that some of those un-played pitches can be valuable.

Try this sequence of fingerings on a 6-hole flute:

```
[Diagram of fingerings]
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The first and second fingerings form an interval on most flutes called the “tritone”, often called the “devil’s interval”. It is the first two notes of songs such as Maria from West Side Story as well as the theme of The Simpsons. The next two fingerings typically produce pitches outside the 12-note scale typically used in Western classical music, and can evoke an unsettling feeling. The last fingering generates a pitch on most flutes that is a half-step sharp of the octave note, and can also be unsettling.

We combine the fingerings above on a mid-range or higher flute. We add trills, deep vibrato, and exaggerated changes in volume.

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**Courage**

*Playing flute at Carnegie Hall*

The recorded music example we use for Courage is not a Native American flute, but rather a simple fife that, for us, immediately elicits the feeling of Courage. It is a live track by Otha Turner called Shimmy She Wobble that is on the album *Live: 1989 Memphis Music & Heritage Festival*.

The Eagle is the animal that is most often associated with Courage in the narratives we surveyed, and the Eagle graphic was created by Clarence Mills.

When playing this emotion, we try to emulate that feel of that drum-and-fife track using live percussion and an upper mid-range flute in the key of B or C#. We play rhythmically, in a stately 4/4 time, at a fairly loud volume (“forte” in classical music terms), and using a particular scale called the Mand scale. On most contemporary Native American flutes, these fingerings will produce the Mand scale:

```
[Diagram of Mand scale]
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**Disgust**

*A cockroach in your soup*

The recorded music example we use for **Disgust** is the *Wolf In Dream* track by Mark Holland from the album *Songs from Within*.

We looked for a long time for an animal that embodied **Disgust** in Haida and other Northwest coast traditional narratives, but came up empty. Then we found Si Scott’s amazing graphic of a Rat that we use with this emotion – perfect!

We demonstrate **Disgust** with a non-rhythmic melody, using out of tune intervals (similar to **Fear**), adding extreme slide techniques, large volume changes, and allowing the flute to overblow into the upper register.

**Surprise**

*You win the lottery!*

The recorded music example we use for **Surprise** is a beautiful emulation of a bird singing using a high-pitched flute: the *Bird Song* track by Hawk Henries from his album *Keeping the Fire*. Clarence Mills created the graphic of the Butterfly we use with this emotion – the animal we have found that is most often associated with **Surprise**.

For us, this is an excellent opportunity to demonstrate the use of space and silence. In the style of a bird song, we use short phrases on a high flute with trills, short staccato notes, fast runs and flourishes, and random, extended pauses. Adding some *avant garde* percussion in occasional bursts adds to this surprise.

**Peace**

*Sitting in meditation*

The recorded music example we use for **Peace** is the *Returning Home* track by Cornell Kinderknecht from the 2005 album of the same name.

The animal we have found in Northwest Coast tradition narratives that is most often associated with **Peace** is called the Spirit Bear. This animal was thought to exist only in those traditional narratives until it was identified in 1905 as an American Black Bear subspecies found in remote areas of British Columbia ([Sachs 2010]). Jon Erickson created the graphic of the Spirit Bear we use with this emotion.

We like to demonstrate this over the background of a flowing, repeated pattern on a piano. Peter Kater’s track *Grace* provides an excellent example. We use long tones on a flute somewhat below a mid-range, and add occasional percussion on a Ting-Sha to punctuate the music.
**Other Systems of Emotions**

The Carnatic system is certainly not the only system of organizing emotions. A psychologist in one of our workshops noted that a key emotion important in therapeutic settings – Shame – is not represented in the Carnatic tradition. Also, the degree of intensity of each emotion is not represented.

One system that does represent emotional intensity is known as the Plutchik’s Wheel ([Plutchik 2001](#)). motions on opposite sides of the circle are opposites or counterbalance each other, and this wheel also has combinations of neighboring emotions. You might experiment with this version of the landscape of emotions and see if it suits flute players better.

**References**


Songwriting

One of the common laments of flute players is “I’m in a rut.” The description often continues with “I love playing flutes, but my melodies just wander all over the place and never seem to go anywhere.” A player might confess that people who listen to their playing get bored. Many players wish that their music “sounded more like real songs”.

There are a lot of resources on how to write songs: books, courses, and videos abound. Performance-rights organizations such as ASCAP host weekend and weeklong workshops in songwriting techniques. In Nashville, the mantra for writing a chart-topping song in the Country music genre is “four chords and the truth.” In classical music circles, conservatory students analyze compositions in fine detail, identifying the interplay of themes and their use throughout the instruments in the orchestra.

Unfortunately, many of these approaches do not suit the Native American flute or the genre of music that we typically play. Without lyrics, and often staying in one key and even one chord, the techniques used by most songwriters simply do not apply.

As flute circle facilitators, we can lead a wide range of activities. Some of them are ideal for helping participants to play melodies that “sound more like real songs”. Even if you do not announce that song composition is a goal of the activity, participants will often begin to hear when their playing sounds more structured and song-like. This article looks at several activities that seem to work towards the songwriting goals.

Play the Clock

One of the best techniques we have found for establishing structure with participants is to have them play one-minute solos. We make it a game by having a human clock in front of them – a person (facilitator or participant) who represents the sweeping second hand of a clock using an outstretched arm. (It helps for this “clock-keeper” to have an actual clock or watch in front of them with a second hand). We also ask them to try to complete their solo right at 60 seconds.

Once participants get some experience playing a solo within a given time period, we suggest that they try to have a beginning, a middle, and an end to their solo.

We initially used this activity just as a fun game, but then began to realize the potential in teaching song composition. Something about attempting to fit a song within a given period seems to develop structure, even after just one or two attempts. However, it seems to have the most impact when we combine the “play the clock” game with the request for a beginning, middle, and end. Doing these components separately – just “play the clock” or an untimed
beginning / middle / end solo – seems to have much less impact.

A / B / A

The suggestion to develop a song with a beginning, a middle, and an end is a great introduction to A / B / A song form. Once people are comfortable with changing their playing style within a solo and making a conscious choice to have different parts within a song, the next logical step is to ask them to make the beginning and ending similar.

The general A / B / A song form is very common in most genres of music. It is often compared with many of the stories of our culture, which often take the listener on a journey. We begin at home – at “A” – a familiar place, and then journey to “B” – maybe unfamiliar, dangerous, or fearful – before returning back to our home “A”.

When players are starting out, it is a good idea for the A and B parts to be noticeably different. You could even have, as a listening exercise, the group close their eyes and raise their hand briefly when they think a change from A to B or B back to A has been made. Here are some suggestions about things that could be altered to create a noticeable contrast:

**Rhythm.** A song could begin in parlando style, without a particular rhythm or meter, then become rhythmic, before going back into parlando style.

**Pitch.** A song could begin predominantly on the lower notes, then move to the upper notes for the B section before returning to the lower notes. Mary Youngblood’s song Yuba is a great example of this technique, beginning with two “A” sections at the low end of the flute before alternating high (B) and low (A) sections for the remainder of the song. It could be valuable to listen to this song and actually write out as a group the A and B sections as they play.

**Tempo.** A song could start and end at a slow tempo, using an up-tempo version of the same melody for the B section.

**Accompaniment.** The beginning and end could be solo flute, with the B section adding some accompaniment.

**Scale.** The transition from A to B could be marked by a change in the scale used.

Aside from using these basic musical techniques to create contrast, it is often better in flute circle activities to suggest a change in emotion or intent. We often ask people to play two different emotions by setting the scene, such as asking a person to play “the day they got married”, then “the day they had their first fight”, then “the feeling when they made up”.

**Playing over a Rhythm**

One of the most basic (and fun) activities to facilitate is to set up a basic rhythm and go around the circle with flute solos. It helps participants if you build the rhythm on a simple groove, but if you add some structure on top of
the groove, you can help flute players find a motif on which to build a song.

For example, a basic rhythmic groove might be (in the common language of the African djembe):

\[
\text{Gun} - \text{Do Gun} - \text{Do} | \\
\text{Gun} - \text{Do Gun} - \text{Do} | \ldots
\]

A common mnemonic for this rhythm is:

\[
\text{Walk the Big Dog} | \\
\text{Walk the Big Dog} | \ldots
\]

To add some structure onto this groove, you might repeat this cycle:

\[
\text{Gun} - \text{Do} \text{ Gun} - \text{Do} | \\
\text{Gun} - \text{Do} \text{ Gun} - \text{Do} | \\
\text{Gun} - \text{Do} \text{ Gun} - \text{Do} | \\
\text{GunDO} - \text{Do} \text{ Gun} - \text{Do} | \\
\text{Gun} - \text{Do} \text{ Gun} - \text{Do} | \\
\text{Gun} - \text{Do} \text{ Gun} - \text{Do} | \\
\text{GUN} - \text{-- -- --} | \\
\ldots \text{ or } \ldots
\]

\[
\text{Walk the Big Dog} | \\
\text{Walk the Big Dog} | \\
\text{Walk the Big Dog} | \\
\text{WalkING the Big Dog} | \]

\[
\text{Walk the Big Dog} | \\
\text{Walk the Big Dog} | \\
\text{Walk the Big Dog} | \\
\text{Hey!} | \]

You are likely to find that, with this longer cycle, participants begin to learn to pass the solo at the end of a cycle. They also begin to play phrases that fit nicely in the cycle. Those phrases can form a motif on which to build a larger song.

**Song in a New Place**

Another way to approach rhythm is an exercise that is familiar to many jazz musicians: play a melody you know “in a different place”. What this means is to keep the basic rhythm of a song, but alter the melody. You can preserve the same relative direction of the original melody, or disregard it entirely and pick your own notes.

Nursery rhymes are a good place to start this exercise because they have very straightforward rhythms and melodies. Try “Jack and Jill went up the hill …” and progress on to songs such as “Jingle Bells”. With some creativity in the melody, the listener might not even be able to guess the original song that is being used.

The value of this exercise for songwriting is that the player inherits the rhythm from the original melody. However, it is important to avoid one big trap: participants who try to play the actual melody of the original song, and get tied up trying to find the notes. This is where several demonstrations by the facilitator can be very valuable.

**Journey from a Home Phrase**

The value of the Playing over a Rhythm and Song in a New Place activities is that most participants will discover a nice motif that fits within a simple meter and which they can remember. Once players have a motif, they can use this in a song form that we call Journey from a Home Phrase.

The concept is simply to play the motif (the “home phrase”) once or twice, then go in a different melodic direction, but return to the home phrase occasionally and end the song on that phrase. This is great practice for the next exercise …

**Verse and Chorus Structures**

Once participants have a solid motif that they can easily repeat, they can build an “A” section
by simply playing the motif twice, playing something different, and then repeating the “A” motif one last time. They then have something that sounds like a verse or a chorus of a song.

This verse or chorus can then be built up into a larger A / B / A structure of a complete song.
The next two pages contain a copy of the “topic map” we developed in 2013 for use in workshops. It has a list of various elements that we use in workshops and flute circles:

- Flute playing techniques and effects
- Song forms
- Performance structures
- Ornaments
- Scales
- Facilitation techniques and structures, and
- Rhythm techniques

The images are printed on two $36'' \times 48''$ posters and hung up during workshops. It is useful for several reasons:

- It allows participants to get an overview of the (potential) topics covered.
- It provides a springboard of ideas for ensemble playing, performances, and facilitation.
- It allows participants to ask questions about items they have not encountered, and
- If the facilitator is ever in need of a topic for the next activity, they only need to look over at the topic map.

We are providing a copy of these images, since so many people have found them useful for their sessions. They are also available on-line on the Flute Haven web site at:

http://www.FluteHaven.com/topic_map.htm

This chapter was developed by Clint Goss and Vera Shanov. An on-line version of the topic map images is available at http://www.FluteHaven.com/topic_map.htm.
Native Flute School
Topic Map

Clint Goss
clint@goss.com

One Quality Sound
Long Tones
One-Breath Solos
Journey from a Home Phrase
Cerdd Dant
AABA Structure
Songs on One Note
Scale Songs
Alphabet Songs
One-Minute Solos
Sing what you Play
Play what you Sing
Song in a New Place

Solo / Drone
Melody / Hold
Your Last Note
Solo / Ostinato
Descending Scale
Call and Response
Conversations
Trading Phrases
Shadowing
A/B/A
Playing over ... Chord Vamps 12-bar Blues Form

Ta Ka Ra Ha

Vibrato
Attack
Duration Stacatto
Endings Warble

Duration Volume Attack Timbre Texture Rhythm

Fall Off Cut

Lead vs. Support
Soundtrack
Poetry
Dance
Meditation
Devotional

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version: May 9, 2013
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Flutopedia
an Encyclopedia for the
Native American Flute

www.Flutopedia.com

Grace Notes
Pop/Clamp
Mordent
Turn
Bark
Runs
Rhythmic

What Can I Add
to this Sound?
Melody
Harmony
Rhythm
Texture
Silence

Trills
Bend/Slide
Tonguing
Double/Triple
Flutter
Continuous

Warmups
Body
Voice
Instrument

Conducting
Dynamics
Stop/Cut
Sculpting

Traveling Ensembles
Rhythm Circles
Showcasing

Parlando
Heartbeats
Accents

Grooves from Within
Claves
Hand Counting
Odd Meters

Scales
Penta Minor
Penta Major
Mode Four
Hexatonic Major Extended
Blues
Middle Eastern
Hirajoshi

Bugle
green = root note

Cross-Fingering
Upper Register
Woven Scales

Byzantine
Spanish Gypsy

Rhythm Techniques

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version May 9, 2012
Part 3 –

Poetry and Readings
Introduction to Poetry and Readings

“Give your Spirit a Voice”

— Chief Red Hawk, as cited by Erik Friedling’s Siyotanka.de web site.

Combining Native American flute playing with a poetry reading can produce a rich collaboration.

This section of the Native Flute Handbook has a wide range of readings, quotations, and poetry selections. They are divided into chapters based on the settings that they might be most useful. Within each chapter, the poems are in no particular order. These readings generally follow the organization of parallel pages on Flutopedia.com. A few readings have been very slightly modified to fit the situation.

The later chapters are more specific to topics related to music: flutes, general music, and silence. They might be useful in flute circle and music workshop settings.

Many of these readings have been privately distributed in our monthly newsletters. If you use them for public performances, please be careful to observe any intellectual property rights (copyrights, trademarks, etc.) of the authors or rights-holders.

Also, don’t forget to credit the author! In the case of the fortune cookie on the right, I have no idea how to credit the author.

Technique

When playing flute in collaboration with a reading, there are a number of approaches you might consider. In one common technique, the poetry is read in the cadence of call-and-response with spacing to allow for intervening flute music.

Sources

The author and source of the text are provided with each reading. Background information is also provided in several cases. However, there are a few readings from the same source that are sprinkled across several chapters … the background information for those readings is provided here:

The Radiance Sutras

Several readings in various chapters that follow are from the Vijñāna Bhairava Tantra (“The Radiance Sutras”) translated by Lorin Roche.

From the liner notes of the Elixir album comes a description of The Radiance Sutras provided by Denise Kaufman:
The Radiance Sutras is a sensuous, poetic version of the Vijñāna Bhairava Tantra, a classic yoga text from around 800 AD in Kashmir. Unfolding as a conversation between the cosmic lovers Shakti and Shiva, the text is full of wonder and delight. Listening to music, making love, savoring food, wandering in nature, gazing at the sky in astonishment: all are contemplated as pathways to ecstatic union with the Divine.

The translations by Lorin Roche are from his book *The Radiance Sutras: 112 Gateways to the Yoga of Wonder and Delight. The Radiance Sutras*. 
The poetry in this chapter might be useful for flute circle facilitators. We used it in our flute school where we often do activities centered on one-breath flute solos. When I realized that Haiku poetry is intended to be spoken in a single breath, we envisioned an activity in the circle that alternated one-breath Haiku with one-breath flute solos. It evolved into a call-and-response … very wonderful! I assembled Haiku from many authors, then ordered and modified it appropriately.

This poetry is re-composed from English-language and Japanese-language Haiku by various authors for the purpose of flute-playing workshops centered on breath and breathing. The authors of the original Haiku are: Daver Austin, Matsuo Bashō, Leonard Cohen, Gabi Greve, Nizamettin Esen Haymanali, Kōyō, Rachel Marsh, Ian Marshall, Robert D. McManes, Soen Nakagawa, Yoko Ono, i write passion, Jen Rosenberry, Wally Swist, S. D. Tiwari, Susan C. Willett, Richard Wright, Joanna Bolouri, and Jeff Ketts at Native Rhythms 2015.

In one breath
the Native flute
exhales a butterfly

Sun’s red rays
brighten heavy clouds
flute sounds

When I look at her
my heart starts to see her in
ways my eyes cannot

We wake at dawn
crow calling crow
through the fog

Flute notes breathe
flowing out through fingers
poured through minds

Sink down deep down
clouds of thought drift
as the breath breathes me

Lingering flute
floats the eagle
over the canyon

Piercing the winter clouds
one note of the Native flute
resounds endlessly

In the boat
playing the flute
chickadee hovering

A cool evening
the sound of a flute
stars over far fields

This chapter was written by Clint Goss. A similar article appeared in Clint & Vera’s Flute Newsletter, May 2015.
Silence
and a deeper silence
when the crickets
hesitate

Angel's Landing
I hear the unblown flute
in the shade of a tree

Illuminating
the silence between us ...
firefly

Breathing in welcome
nourishing body, mind, soul
breathing out thank you

Fingers dance over
six holed hollow wood flute
sweetness blends in ears

Soft murmurs in wood
humming my spectral view
soul of flute

Forgetting to breathe
should set off a wild alarm
but we're used to it

Bright autumn day
listening to the silence
of stones growing older

Spring passes
and one remembers
one's innocence

Summer passes
and one remembers
one's exuberance

Autumn passes
and one remembers
one's reverence

Winter passes
and one remembers
one's perseverance

Night, and the moon!
My neighbor, playing on his flute –
out of tune!

Unless it's about
food, dinnertime, snacks, or treats
cat's not listening

Summer's day
a duet of frog
and Native flute

That enchanted flute
of your bewitching warm breath
brush my lips and ears

Gone not ... but lingers
in the heart ... on the fingers
listen ... out to the horizon

In one breath
the Native flute
exhales a butterfly

Some Spanish-language Haiku
Tus dedos encontrando
aletas para buscar aquí
viento, lleno de palabras

Cómala, la dulce
un regalito del sol
este día completo
Benedictions, Invocations, and Blessings

Cherokee Blessing
May the warm winds of Heaven
blow softly upon your home;

May the Great Spirit
bless all who enter there

May your moccasins
make happy tracks in many snows,

And may the rainbow
always touch your shoulder.

Apache Blessing
May the sun
bring you new energy every day;

May the moon
softly restore you by night;

May the rain
wash away your worries;

May the breeze
blow new strength into your being;

May you walk
gently through the world and know
its beauty all the days of your life.

— contributed by Larry Hurst at
Flute Haven 2010

Troubles
May the wind take
your troubles away.

— Son Volt,
Song: Windfall, Album Trace

This chapter is composed of poetry collected by Clint Goss from many sources. A similar collection is maintained on the Flutopedia web page at http://www.Flutopedia.com/lit_benedictions.htm.
Deep Peace
Deep Peace
of the running wave to you
Deep Peace
of the flowing air to you
Deep Peace
of the quiet earth to you
Deep Peace
of the shining stars to you
Deep Peace
of the gentle night to you,
moon and stars
pour their healing light on you
Deep Peace to you
— Traditional Gælic Blessing

Your Heart
May your music take you
where your heart wants to go.
— Anonymous

Blessing of the Four Elements of Music
May your body dance
in the rhythm of life.
May your heart sing
a melody of love.
May your soul harmonize
with all of creation.
May your mind rest
in the silence of peace.
— Christine Stevens,
Music Medicine, 2012, page 177

Chief Dan George’s Prayer
O Great Spirit,
Whose voice I hear in the winds,
and whose breath gives life
to all of the Earth,
Hear me.
I am small, I am weak.
I need your strength and wisdom.
Let me walk in beauty,
and make my eyes ever behold,
the red and the purple sunset.
Make my hands respect
those things that you have made,
and my ears sharp to hear your voice.
Make me wise,
so that I may understand
the things you have taught my people.
Let me learn the lessons you have hidden in every leaf and rock.
I seek strength,
not to be greater than my brother,
but to fight my greatest enemy – Myself.
Make me always ready
to come to you,
with clean hands and straight eyes.
So when life fades,
as the fading sunset,
my spirit may come to you
without shame.
— by Chief Dan George, O.C. (1899–1981) aka Geswanouth Slahoot, aka Dan Slaholt. There are many versions and variants of this reading currently in circulation. This one matches the rendition by Richard W. Nash on his Native flute and poetry recording.
**Wind Woman**

SHE is Coming.
She is Coming.
Between Two Wings of a Butterfly
Wind Woman is Coming.

She is Whistling.
She is Whistling.
With Her breath, the Flute of Earth
She is Whistling.

She is Gathering.
She is Gathering.
A Storyteller of Beauty Heart
She is Gathering.

Singing She Comes in the Morning.
Singing She Comes in the Evening.
She Comes with a Healing Gift,
She Comes with the Gift of Herself.

She Comes with Wet Roots,
Ripe Yellow Corn and Old Stones.
She Grinds the Yellow Corn.
She Shines the Old
Stones like New Pebbles …

Tonight When the Moon Rises
And the Fire Friendly …
She Fleshes Earth’s Beauty Heart with
Corn Dust, Tears and Song.

— Betina Lindsey, 2015
Contributed at the 2016 Zion Canyon
Native Flute School
MAY YOUR MUSIC TAKE YOU WHERE YOUR HEART WANTS TO GO
Playing Native American flute at a memorial service can be a profound experience for all involved. Playing *Amazing Grace* is often appropriate, but there are also some great readings that can be used in combination with flute music.

Here are some that I have found:

**Do Not Stand at My Grave and Weep**

*Do not stand at my grave and weep. I am not there; I do not sleep.*

*I am a thousand winds that blow.*

*I am the diamond glints on snow.*

*I am the sunlight on ripened grain.*

*I am the gentle autumn rain.*

*When you awaken in the morning's hush*

*I am the swift uplifting rush Of quiet birds in circled flight.*

*I am the soft stars that shine at night.*

*Do not stand at my grave and cry; I am not there; I did not die.*

— Mary Elizabeth Frye, 1932

**Without**

*The silence of nature within.*

*The power within.*

*The power without.*

**The path is whatever passes – no end in itself.**

**The end is grace – ease – healing, not saving.**

**Singing the proof**

*The proof of the power within.*

— Gary Snyder

**Zen “No” Poem**

*Behold she was here a while ago. Now she is no more to be seen.*

*She flies over the mountains*  

*Her voice echoes through the valleys*  

*She has vanished to this land of Nowhere*

— Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki  

*Zen and Japanese Culture ([Suzuki-DT 1959])*

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This chapter is composed of poetry collected by Clint Goss from many sources. A similar collection is maintained on the Flutopedia web page at [http://www.Flutopedia.com/lit_memorial.htm](http://www.Flutopedia.com/lit_memorial.htm).
Song for Guy Davenport

Within the circles of our lives
we dance the circles of the years,
the circles of the seasons
within the circles of the years,
the cycles of the moon
within the circles of the seasons,
the circles of our reasons
within the cycles of the moon.

Again, again we come and go,
changed, changing. Hands join, unjoin in love and fear,
grief and joy. The circles turn,
each giving into each, into all.

Only music keeps us here,
each by all the others held.
In the hold of hands and eyes
we turn in pairs, that joining
joining each to all again.

And then we turn aside, alone,
out of the sunlight gone
into the darker circles of return.

— Wendell Berry, from The Selected Poems of Wendell Berry ([Berry 1999]), and also Earth Prayers from Around the World by Elizabeth Roberts ([Roberts-E 1991], page 286).

Rebirth

En nuestras almas todo
por misteriosa mano se gobierna.
Incomprehensibles, mudas,
nada sabemos de las almas nuestras.

Las más hondas palabras del sabio
nos enseñan,
lo que el silbar del viento cuando sopla,
o el sonar de las aguas cuando ruedan.

In our souls everything
moves guided by a mysterious hand.
Incomprehensible, unspeaking,
we know nothing of our own souls.

The deepest words
of the wise men teach us
the same as the whistle of the wind
when it blows
or the sound of the water
when it is flowing.

— Antonio Machado (1875-1939),
Spanish poet, translated by Robert Bly,
from Times Alone: Selected Poems of Antonio Machado ([Machado 1983]).

Note that I have changed the third and fourth lines of Robert Bly's English translation from the original translation of “We know nothing of our own souls that are understandable, and say nothing.”
My Spirit
I am in the sunrise
to welcome you to the new day.
I am in the wind
to caress you and call your name.
I am in the running,
babbling brook laughing
to bring you joy.
I am in the dancing flames
of the fire
to warm your heart with memories.
I am in the flowers that bloom
to share my smile with you.
I am in the evergreens
to remind you that my spirit
is always with you.
I am in the sunset
to ease out of the day and relax.
I am in the moon
to watch over you while you sleep.
Wherever you are,
my spirit is with you
loving you always.

Patricia B. Smith, Ph.D.,
July 30, 2013,
contributed at Flute Haven 2013.

When I Go
Come, lonely hunter,
chieftain and king
I will fly like the falcon
when I go
Bear me my brother
under your wing
I will strike
fell like lightning
when I go
I will bellow like the thunder drum,
invoke the storm of war
A twisting pillar spun
of dust and blood
up from the prairie floor
I will sweep the foe before me
like a gale out on the snow
And the wind will long
recount the story,
reverence and glory, when I go

Spring, spirit dancer,
nimble and thin
I will leap like coyote
when I go
Tireless entrancer,
lend me your skin
I will run like the gray wolf
when I go
I will climb the rise at daybreak,
I will kiss the sky at noon
Raise my yearning voice at midnight
to my mother in the moon
I will make the lay of long defeat
and draw the chorus slow
I'll send this message down the wire
and hope that someone wise
is listening
when I go

And when the sun comes, trumpets
from his red house in the east
He will find a standing stone
where long I chanted my release
He will send his morning messenger
to strike the hammer blow
And I will crumble down uncountable
in showers of crimson rubies
when I go

Sigh, mournful sister,
whisper and turn
I will rattle like dry leaves
when I go
Stand in the mist
where my fire used to burn
I will camp on the night breeze
when I go

And should you glimpse
my wandering form
out on the borderline
Between death and resurrection
and the council of the pines
Do not worry for my comfort,
do not sorrow for me so
All your diamond tears will rise up
and adorn the sky beside me
when I go

— Dave Carter (1952–2002)

A description of this song by Dave Carter’s partner, Tracy Grammer, in the liner notes of ([Whitman 2004]):

Inspired in part by his extensive shamanic studies and by symbols from “the flower ornament scriptures,” a sacred Buddhist text, Dave wrote this song to give his mother images and music to journey by as she made her way through the final stages of Alzheimer’s. The song was written in June, 1997; Nadine Carter died on July 10.

Dave and I sang this song at every full-length concert we gave from 1998 to 2002. The song has always been my favorite of Dave’s works. On July 19, 2002, Dave Carter left this world at the age of 49. I did not know how deeply the song was ingrained in my consciousness until that final moment, when in a profound state of shock and grief I uttered to him the most earnest wish I could think of from his song:

“Fly like the falcon …”

— Tracy

December 5, 2016
General Poetry for Music Performance

Make Me a Wave

Make me a wave
Upon it I'll ride
Show me direction
We'll roll like the tide

Make me a groove
And with it I'll play
Rhythm and harmony
One way to pray

— Brian Jeffries, jfleco@aol.com, contributed November 9, 2013 at the Native Rhythms festival.

We Are the Stars

We are the stars that sing.
We sing with our light.
We are the birds of fire.
We fly across the heaven.
Our light is a star.

— Passamaquoddy tribal prayer, from Chants and Prayers by Stan Padilla ([Padilla 1996]). See The Song of the Stars below for a longer version.

Stream Music

Stream music is
downhill music
with such fluency
that I stop my
walk to listen
on the bridge.

Water races over
rocks, melody
changing with
each moment.

Nature weaves
itself into my
awareness until
I too am humming,
my voice and a
nearby crow's
mingling so easily.
There seems to be
no fixed boundaries
here in the woods,
thrumbing with
the earth's slow
heartbeat.

— Danna Faulds, from Limitless – New Poems and other Writings ([Faulds 2009]).

This chapter is composed of poetry collected by Clint Goss from many sources. A similar collection is maintained on the Flutopedia web page at http://www.Flutopedia.com/lit_poetry.htm.
**I Feel the Wind**

This quotation is from the *America* episode of the PBS series *First Peoples*, aired June 24, 2015. It is a quote from Bob Stevens, San Carlos Apache Reservation:

*I feel the wind,*  
*and the wind blows right through me.*

*All the sounds become a part of me, become a rhythm with my heartbeat.*

*Not only do I become the world around me, but the world around me becomes me, and we become one.*

---

**The Song of the Stars**

A longer version of *We Are the Stars* quoted above.

*We are the stars which sing,*  
*we sing with our light;*  

*We are the birds of fire,*  
*we fly over the sky.*

*Our light is a voice;*  

*We make a road for spirits,*  
*for the spirits to pass over.*

*Among us are three hunters who chase a bear;*  

*There never was a time when they were not hunting.*

*We look down on the mountains.*

---

**The Subject Tonight Is Love — In a Tree House**

**Light**

*Will someday split you open*  
*Even if your life is now a cage.*

*For the Divine seed,*  
*the crown of destiny*  
*Is hidden and sown on ancient soil,*  
*a fertile plain*  
*You hold the title to.*

*Love will surely bust you wide open*  
*Into an unfettered,*  
*blooming new galaxy,*

*Even if your mind is now*  
*A spoiled mule.*  
*A life-giving radiance will come,*  
*The Friend's gratuity will come.*

*O look again within yourself,*  
*For you were once the elegant host*  
*To all the marvels of creation.*

*From a sacred place in your body*  
*A bow rises each night*  
*And shoots your soul into God.*

*Behold the Beautiful Drunk Singing One*  
*From the lunar vantage point of love.*

*He is conducting the affairs*  
*Of the whole universe*  
*while throwing wild parties*  
*In a treehouse—on a limb*  
*In your heart.*

— Hafiz (Khwāja Shams-ud-Dīn Muhammad Hāfez-e Shīrāzī), translated by Daniel Ladinsky, from *The Subject Tonight is Love*, ([Hafiz 2003]).
The Song of Hiawatha

By the shores of Gitche Gumee,
By the shining Big-Sea-Water,
Stood the wigwam of Nokomis,
Daughter of the Moon, Nokomis.

Dark behind it rose the forest,
Rose the black and gloomy pine-trees,
Rose the firs with cones upon them;
Bright before it beat the water,
Beat the clear and sunny water,
Beat the shining Big-Sea-Water.

At the door on summer evenings
Sat the little Hiawatha;
Heard the whispering
of the pine-trees,
Heard the lapping of the waters,
Sounds of music, words of wonder;
“Minne-wawa!” said the Pine-trees,
“Mudway-aushka!” said the water.
In the Islands of the Blessed,
Most beloved by Hiawatha
Was the gentle Chibiabos,

He the best of all musicians,
He the sweetest of all singers.
Beautiful and childlike was he,
Brave as man is, soft as woman,
Pliant as a wand of willow,
Stately as a deer with antlers.

When he sang, the village listened;
All the warriors gathered round him,
All the women came to hear him;
Now he stirred their souls to passion,
Now he melted them to pity.

From the hollow reeds he fashioned
Flutes so musical and mellow,
That the brook, the Sebowisha,
Ceased to murmur in the woodland,
That the wood-birds
   ceased from singing,
And the squirrel, Adjidaumo,
Ceased his chatter in the oak-tree,
And the rabbit, the Wabasso,
Sat upright to look and listen.

All the many sounds of nature
Borrowed sweetness from his singing;
All the hearts of men were softened
By the pathos of his music;
For he sang of peace and freedom,
Sang of beauty, love, and longing;
Sang of death, and life undying
In the Islands of the Blessed,
In the kingdom of Ponemah,
In the land of the Hereafter.

— Henry W. Longfellow, excerpts from sections 3 and 4 from *The Song of Hiawatha* ([Longfellow 1855]), in Kalevala meter.
Mother Earth’s Lesson

I walk upon this land I call my home ~

The only human sound I hear is the crackling of the parched desert floor beneath my feet ~

I stop to listen to the lessons the elders told me I’d hear, if I walked gently on Earth Mother ~

“Oh Mother Earth … I hear Nothing!”

I placed each foot step gently, continued my journey and stopped once again to listen ~

“I Hear Nothing, Nothing!” I shouted in desperation of the lessons ~

And as hope began to fade, like the sun setting in the distance, I began to pray, “O Creator of all things, forgive my lack of humbleness. I come with heart desires to know the journey that you have for me and the lessons my elders have set before me. Help me to listen, help me to hear.”

In the fluttering of a bird’s wings as it flew close to my head, I heard a sweet voice whisper to me ~

“Patience, my child.
You Must Have Patience
Open your spirit
so you may hear the messages that are sent to you.
Creator shall give them to you when you have prepared yourself to hear.”

SH~~~~
SH~~~~
SH~~~~ my child
Patience ~~~~~ Listen

— Nakakakena (Boe Harris), 2009

Love

Love is …

the glue that holds us together
unfettered and free, unconditional and open
a heart's purest expression that can be shared
the ultimate vulnerability and knows no bounds
eternal beyond the physical and intellectual awareness
the essence of who we are and what we are meant to be
freely given to be embraced, nurtured in its infancy and relished in its maturity
a beacon lighting the way to wholeness and completion of spirit
the undercarriage of faith and hope
Love ...
seals the holes and cracks of life and living
blossoms in all seasons
inflates and grows with no limitations
enables great feats of courage, strength, endurance
heals all wounds
enables us to forget and put away the past
answers the questions that seem to have no answers
enables us to experience the authentic essence of soul
nestled inside a fragile physical body

Love – God's greatest gift
enabling forgiveness, compassion, empathy and reaching out beyond yourself

Love, so simple, so complex, so easy, yet so hard.
It requires us to let go and accept who “we” all are without reservation

Love is the essence that, when we die, releases into the universe and settles like fairy dust on those we shared it with.
It stays working its magic forever.

Love is our final companion on our journey home.
Love, pure unadulterated love.
Love just “IS.” It is the essence of “I AM.”

— Patricia B. Smith, Ph.D., written February 4, 2007, contributed at Flute Haven 2010.
The Invitation

It doesn’t interest me
what you do for a living.
I want to know
what you ache for
and if you dare to dream
of meeting your heart’s longing.

It doesn’t interest me
how old you are.
I want to know
if you will risk
looking like a fool
for love
for your dream
for the adventure of being alive.

It doesn’t interest me
what planets are
squaring your moon ...
I want to know
if you have touched
the centre of your own sorrow
if you have been opened
by life’s betrayals
or have become shrivelled and closed
from fear of further pain.

I want to know
if you can sit with pain
mine or your own
without moving to hide it
or fade it
or fix it.

I want to know
if you can be with joy
mine or your own
if you can dance with wildness
and let the ecstasy fill you
to the tips of your fingers and toes
without cautioning us
to be careful
to be realistic
to remember the limitations
of being human.

It doesn’t interest me
if the story you are telling me
is true.
I want to know if you can
disappoint another
to be true to yourself.
If you can bear
the accusation of betrayal
and not betray your own soul.
If you can be faithless
and therefore trustworthy.

I want to know if you can see Beauty
even when it is not pretty
every day.
And if you can source your own life
from its presence.

I want to know
if you can live with failure
yours and mine
and still stand at the edge of the lake
and shout to the silver
of the full moon,
“Yes.”

It doesn’t interest me
to know where you live
or how much money you have.
I want to know if you can get up
after the night of grief and despair
weary and bruised to the bone
and do what needs to be done
to feed the children.

It doesn’t interest me
who you know
or how you came to be here.
I want to know if you will stand
in the centre of the fire
with me
and not shrink back.

It doesn’t interest me
where or what or with whom
you have studied.
I want to know
what sustains you
from the inside
when all else falls away.

I want to know
if you can be alone
with yourself
and if you truly like
the company you keep
in the empty moments.

— Oriah Mountain Dreaming,
from *The Invitation*, 1999.
Pale Blue Dot

Look at that dot.  
That's here.  
That's home.  
That's us.

On it everyone you love,  
everyone you know,  
everyone you ever heard of,  
eyewitness human being who ever was,  
lived out their lives.

The aggregate of our joy  
and our suffering,  
thousands of confident religions,  
ideologies, and economic doctrines,  
every hunter and forager,  
every hero and coward,  
every creator and  
destroyer of civilization,  
every king and peasant,  
eyewitness young couple in love,  
eyewitness mother and father,  
hopeful child, inventor and explorer,  
eyewitness teacher of morals,  
eyewitness corrupt politician,  
eyewitness “superstar,”  
eyewitness “supreme leader,”  
eyewitness saint and sinner in the  
history of our species  
lived there –  
on a mote of dust  
suspended in a sunbeam.

The Earth is a very small stage  
in a vast cosmic arena.

Think of the endless cruelties  
visited by the inhabitants  
of one corner of this pixel  
on the scarcely distinguishable  
inhabitants of some other corner,  
how eager they are to  
kill one another,  
how fervent their hatreds.

Think of the rivers of blood spilled  
by all those generals and emperors  
so that, in glory and triumph,  
they could become the  
momentary masters  
of a fraction of a dot.

Our posturings,  
our imagined self-importance,  
the delusion that we have some  
privileged position in the Universe,  
are challenged  
by this point of pale light.

Our planet is a lonely speck  
in the great enveloping cosmic dark.

In our obscurity,  
in all this vastness,  
there is no hint that  
help will come from elsewhere  
to save us from ourselves.

The Earth is the only world  
known so far to harbor life.

There is nowhere else,  
at least in the near future,  
to which our species could migrate.

Visit, yes.  
Settle, not yet.

Like it or not, for the moment  
the Earth is where  
we make our stand.

It has been said that astronomy  
is a humbling and  
character-building experience.

There is perhaps  
no better demonstration of the  
folly of human conceits  
than this distant image  
of our tiny world.
To me, it underscores our responsibility
to deal more kindly
with one another,
and to preserve and cherish
the pale blue dot,
the only home we’ve ever known.


**Pale Blue Dot – Slightly Shorter Version**

Look at that dot.
That’s here. That’s home.
That’s us.

On it everyone you love,
everyone you know,
everyone you ever heard of,
every human being who ever was,
lived out their lives.

The aggregate of our joy
and our suffering,
thousands of confident religions,
ideologies, and economic doctrines,
every hunter and forager,
every hero and coward,
every creator and
destroyer of civilization,
every king and peasant,
every young couple in love,
every mother and father,
hopeful child, inventor and explorer,
every teacher of morals,
every corrupt politician,
every “superstar,”
every “supreme leader,”
every saint and sinner in the
history of our species
lived there –
on a mote of dust
suspended in a sunbeam.

Think of the endless cruelties
visited by the inhabitants
of one corner of this pixel
on the scarcely distinguishable
inhabitants of some other corner.
Think of the rivers of blood spilled
by all those generals and emperors
so that, in glory and triumph,
they could become the
momentary masters
of a fraction of a dot.

Our posturings,
our imagined self-importance,
the delusion that we have some
privileged position in the Universe,
are challenged
by this point of pale light.

In our obscurity, in all this vastness,
there is no hint that
help will come from elsewhere
to save us from ourselves.

The Earth is the only world
known so far to harbor life.
There is nowhere else,
at least in the near future,
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Visit, yes.
Settle, not yet.
Like it or not, for the moment
the Earth is where
we make our stand.

To me, it underscores our
responsibility to deal more kindly
with one another,
and to preserve and cherish
the pale blue dot,
the only home we’ve ever known.

Look at that dot.  
That's here. That's home. That's us.

On it everyone you love,  
everyone you know,  
everyone you ever heard of,  
lived out their lives.

Every hunter and forager,  
every king and peasant,  
every young couple in love,  
every mother and father,  
inventor and explorer,  
every “superstar,”  
every “supreme leader,”  
every saint and sinner in the  
history of our species  
lived there –  
on a mote of dust  
suspended in a sunbeam.

The Earth is the only world  
known so far to harbor life.  
There is nowhere else,  
at least in the near future,  
to which our species could migrate.  
Visit, yes. Settle, not yet.  
Like it or not, for the moment,  
the Earth is where  
we make our stand.

It underscores our responsibility  
to deal more kindly  
with one another,  
and to preserve and cherish  
the pale blue dot,  
the only home we've ever known.

Readings for Flute Circles and Workshops

This is a collection of mid-length readings that are ideal for use in flute circles or music workshops. They can provide inspiration or focus. They also provide material for poetry-music duets.

Allow

There is no controlling life. Try controlling a lightning bolt, containing a tornado. Dam a stream and it will create a new channel. Resist and the tide will sweep you off your feet. Allow and grace will carry you to higher ground. The only safety lies in letting it all in – the wild with the weak; fear, fantasies and success. When the loss rips off the doors of the heart, or sadness veils your vision with despair, practice becomes simply bearing the truth. In the choice to let go of your known way of being, the whole world is revealed in your new eyes.

— Danna Faulds, from Poems from the Heart of Yoga ([Faulds 1997]).

Anticipation

You cannot hold your love hostage to what you actually play. You have to love it a second before you play it, and that creates a sort of vibration of trust that even reflects in the physiology of how you drop the finger and how you play a note on a saxophone and how you hit a cymbal. When there’s so much anticipation that you’re going to love the next sound, you touch it so much differently than if you’re anticipating that you’re required to reach a certain level of beauty. So it’s very much a mindset. I always say, if you want to love the sounds, love the sounds you play and very shortly after they’ll be followed by a lot of sounds that you really do love.

— Kenny Werner, from A Spiritual Journey, Jazz Improv Magazine, Volume 5, Number 3, Spring 2005

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Our Deepest Fear

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate.
Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.
It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us.

We ask ourselves, Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?
Actually, who are you not to be?
You are a child of God.
Your playing small does not serve the world.
There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you.

We are all meant to shine, as children do.
We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us.
It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone.
And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same.
As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.

— Marianne Williamson, from A Return to Love: Reflections on the Principles of A Course in Miracles

Flute Addict

Something of a lighter style:

You know you're a flute addict when:

- Your spreadsheet of flutes reports “Out of Memory”.
- You get an email about “exciting new fetishes” and are disappointed when you realize that it’s just porn.
- Your employer blocks access to The Flute Portal.
- You start designing an addition to your house to accommodate your ever-expanding flute collection.
- You ask the car dealer what the lowest key flute the car can hold.
- You hear flute music in your head every day when you first wake up.
- Your friends start discussing an intervention.
- You swear that your old friends would no longer know you – because you realize that you are happier and feel better than you've ever felt.

— written by Clint Goss, when trapped in an office for an hour, without access to his flutes

---

The original text is written as prose in paragraph format. We have re-structured it here for easier reading as a poem.
Advice from a Tree

Dear Friend,

Stand Tall and Proud
Sink your roots deeply into the Earth
Reflect the light of a greater source
Think long term
Go out on a limb
Remember your place
among all living beings
Embrace with joy
the changing seasons
For each yields its own abundance
The Energy and Birth of Spring
The Growth and Contentment
of Summer
The Wisdom to let go of leaves
in the Fall
The Rest and Quiet Renewal
of Winter

Feel the wind and the sun
And delight in their presence
Look up at the moon
that shines down upon you
And the mystery
of the stars at night.
Seek nourishment from
the good things in life
Simple pleasures
Earth, fresh air, light

Be content with your natural beauty
Drink plenty of water
Let your limbs sway
and dance in the breezes
Be flexible
Remember your roots

Enjoy the view!

You Are Music

You don't play music,
You Are music.

You don't need rhythm,
You Are rhythm.

You don't have to play
the songs of another.

You can breathe a melody
right here, right now.

You can let a groove
burst out of your being …

Right here, right now …

— Clint Goss,
inspired by a poem by Anna Taylor

Shorter Version

Dear Friend,

Stand Tall and Proud
Sink your roots deeply into the Earth
Be content with your natural beauty
Go out on a limb
Drink plenty of water
Remember your roots
Enjoy the view!

— Ilan Shamir, from Advice from a Tree: Guided Journal, published by Your True Nature, ([Shamir 1999]).
The Ocean of Sound

Beloved, listen.
The ocean of sound is inviting you
Into its spacious embrace,
Calling you home.

Find that exuberant vibration
Rising new in every moment,
Humming into your secret places,
Resounding through the channels
of delight.

Know you are flooded by it always.
Float with the sound,
Melt with it into divine silence.

The sacred power of space will carry you
Into the dancing radiant emptiness
That is the source of all.

— Vijñāna Bhairava Tantra ("The Radiance Sutras"), Sutras 16 and 60, translated by Lorin Roche.
Flute-Specific Poetry and Readings

How to Be Alone with a Flute

Do not think of your suffering
Release it through your breath into the flute.
Let your fingers lengthen or shorten the flow of air, make it live, speak something real –
If only for a moment:
that moment when a deer fades back among the trees
That moment when a flame flickers in and out
That moment of a heartbeat, finite, irretrievable
That moment when a pure note cuts through silence –
And your pain eases back into the wilderness, beats its time, flickers out.
That moment I call joy.

— Will Reger

Playing Flute to the Geese

I close my eyes,
hear my song,
feel its unsung words in the easy rhythm
of my breathing,
of fingers rise and fall.

When at last
I open them,
I see invisible geese –
dark birds against
dark hay bales under
dark, autumn sky.

I can feel them;
they are still here.

— Carl Bludts, from Feathered Pipe Memories ([Bludts 2000])

This chapter is composed of poetry collected by Clint Goss from many sources. A similar collection is maintained on the Flutopedia web page at http://www.Flutopedia.com/lit_poetry.htm.
The Indian Flute

I don't know when this poem was written, but I received a copy of this poem in November 2002 at the Armadillo Flute Retreat in Flower Mound, Texas.

Native flutes create circles, offering at random the gift of bonding with those who have not forgotten in this high decibel world how to listen, to hear as the ancients did, voices rooted in nature.

The Indian flute maker selects a piece of cedar, its tree rings still alive, and prunes it into a long tube. Through its grain he burns a sequence of holes, then carves a bird fetish for its wind-blown nest.

The flute player breathes his own life into the flute, explores the primitive scale and coaxes some tone to unfold, to resonate, until the spirit of the tree is awakened to its own vibrations.

The fingers of the player caress the holes to release a bird call or a playful pattern that draws children to dance. Other notes are woven into a tapestry of longing with an old legend of Chippewa lovers.

A native lullaby calms a baby, and an old woman hums the fragment of an Indian song performed sixty years ago at a Chatauqua concert.

Sometimes the flutist begins to improvise, and lets go conscious control to allow the dreams of the flute maker to re-enter his instrument, creating a shimmering mystery of wordless wonder.

Like a pebble tossed into a pond, the haunting music casts a wave of circles and captures the ear of those on edge, each listener tuning the melody to his own hunger, for a blessing he did not know he needed.

— Elizabeth Nichols (1922 – 2012)

Transformation: Love to Flute

Love
Live
Life
Lite
Lute
Flute

— Clint Goss, 2015
The Indian Flute-Song
I do not blame the little birds
   For flying down so near;
I do not blame the little brook
   For creeping close to hear;
The tiny specks of sunshine too
   that flutter from the sky,
And drop in spots of golden light
Down through the leaves
   so green and bright,
   And on the soft grass lie;
They come in answer to a voice
   That seems a brother's call:
The flute-song that my father plays,
   The sweetest song of all;
It brings the summer breezes back
   Just as they thought to creep
To sunny lands so far away,
Where they could take a holiday,
   And, drowsy, drop to sleep.

It sets the little aspen-leaves
   To dancing on the tree;
And starts my heart to singing
   To the sweetest melody.
And even in my dreams at night
I hear the flute-song call,
So sweet and drowsy, low and clear,
It brings the woodland voices near,
   And seems to sing them all.

— Grace Purdie Moon,
    from [Moon-GP 1917]

Native Flute
The sound of the flute is
   wind medicine
sighing down through time
to heal pining hearts and spirits
with melodies sublime
Chirping birds respond in their
   musical way
as lively choruses awaken our bodies
to joyful dancing
and mellow tunes calm our bodies
   into peaceful sleep
A dried stick or branch, hollowed
sings its love songs and lullabies,
in a trio of player, air,
   and river cane

— Judy Curtis
    Contributed at the 2016 Zion Canyon
    Native Flute School
**Anasazi Spirits – A Tribute to Coyote Oldman**

The ancient spirits gathered
as the familiar echoing sounds
of their canyon home drifted
into the night sky ~

They had waited ~
Those sounds had stayed silent
for so long ~

The ancient spirits
circled themselves in prayer,
thanking Coyote Oldman ~
From his sincere, humble
love and desire,
a joy was brought back to them ~

They had prayers of concern,
that in the hands of those
that carried this ancient song stick,
would be hearts of respect
and humbleness ~
Prayers that the new journey
of their ancient voices
be walked
with words of remembrance
and songs of honor ~

A gift given to the new earthly ones,
so that their ancient voices
could once again be heard
among the others ~

— Nakakakena (Boe Harris), July 2008

---

**My Flute Sings**

My flute sings songs from my heart.
Hanging on the wind
with joy and love,
Spreading to the world
waves of wonder
Calling to the hearts
of those who hear.

My flute song answers questions
I don’t yet know how to voice
And tells stories so those who listen
can know their own story.
My flute sings songs
of my journey through pain
Through life, love
and grows wisdom in its notes
My flute song connects me to
earth, sky and spirit
Guiding me on my journey
to listen deeply to this world.
My flute sings songs from my spirit.
My flute sings

— Terry Mack, October 15, 2011
Rumi Poetry Related to Music

Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī (Jalalu'ddin Rumi, Maulana) was a 13th century Persian poet (1207–1273), musician, and founder of the Mevlevi order (“Whirling Dervishes”) of Sufī tradition. Many of his poems of great beauty and insight work well with the Native American flute.

This chapter provides a few of his poems. Most translations are by Coleman Barks, unless otherwise indicated.

Take Down a Musical Instrument …

Today, like every other day,
we wake up empty and frightened.

Don't open the door to the study
and begin reading.

Take down a musical instrument.

Let the beauty we love
be what we do.

Without You …

Without you
the instruments would die.

One sits close beside you.
Another takes a long kiss.

The tambourine begs,
“Touch my skin so I can be myself.”

Be Your Note

God picks up the reed-flute and blows.
Each note is a need
coming through one of us,
a passion, a longing pain.

Remember the lips
where the wind-breath originated,
and let your note be clear.

Don't try to end it.
BE your note.

Like Birds Sing

I want to sing like birds sing
not worrying who hears
or what they think.

Beyond Wanting

Beyond wanting, beyond place,
inside form, That One

A flute says,
“I have no hope for finding that”

But love plays
and is the music played.

Let that musician finish this poem.

This chapter is composed of poetry collected by Clint Goss from many sources. A similar collection is maintained on the Flutopedia web page at http://www.Flutopedia.com/lit_rumi.htm.
Where Everything is Music

We have fallen into the place where everything is music.

The strumming and the flute notes rise into the atmosphere, and if the whole world's harp should burn up, there will still be hidden instruments playing, playing

This singing art is sea foam. The graceful movements come from a pearl somewhere on the ocean floor.

Poems reach up like spindrift and the edge of driftwood along the beach wanting, wanting

They derive from a slow and powerful root that we cannot see.

Stop the words now. Open the window in the center of your chest, and let the spirits fly in and out!

Harken to this Reed

The poem is from the opening of the Mathnavi – the largest work of the great Persian poet Rumi. Rumi uses the image of the reed cut from a reed-bed to make a flute as a metaphor for the soul, emptied of “self” and filled with divine spirit:

Harken to this Reed forlorn, Breathing, even since ‘was torn From its rushy bed, a strain Of impassioned love and pain.

“The secret of my song, though near, None can see and none can hear. Oh, for a friend to know the sign And mingle all his soul with mine!

‘Tis the flame of Love that fired me, ‘Tis the wine of Love inspired me, Wouldst thou learn how lover bleed, Hearken, hearken to the Reed!”

A Craftsman Pulled a Reed …

A craftsman pulled a reed from the reedbed, cut holes in it, and called it a human being.

Since then, it’s been wailing a tender agony of parting, never mentioning the skill that gave it life as a flute.

— Jalāl al-Dīn Rūmī, from Mathnawi, excerpted from a translation by Coleman Barks and John Moyne in The Essential Rumi ([Barks 2004], page 146). This poem can also be found in [Khan-HI 1993].
**The Reed Flute's Song**

This poem is the opening of the prologue of Book 1 of Mathnawi ([mahs-nah-vee], also spelled Masnavi) by Rūmī. He is also known as Maulana, so this is often titled Mathnawi of Maulana.

The Mathnawi is a six-volume epic poem with over 25,000 lines ([Harmless 2008], page 180). It is written in a lyrical, rhythmic, poetic version of Persian, but the poetic style does not translate well into English with the same force and power as the original manuscript. One of the most cited original sources for the Mathnawi is a manuscript dated 1278 CE (677 A.H.) ([Nicholson 1930]). See also [Papan-Matin 2003] and [Amjad 2007].

Many translations of this poem have been made. Here is an early English translation by E. H. Whinfield ([Whinfield 1898]). It was originally published as one long poem with about seven words on each line. This version has been re-arranged to read like a book:

Hearken to the reed flute, how it complains, lamenting its banishment from its home:

“Ever since they tore me from my osier bed, my plaintive notes have moved men and women to tears. I burst my breast, striving to give vent to sighs, and to express the pangs of my yearning for my home. He who abides far away from his home is ever longing for the day he shall return. My wailing is heard in every throng, in concert with them that rejoice and them that weep. Each interprets my notes in harmony with his own feelings, but not one fathoms the secrets of my heart. My secrets are not alien from my plaintive notes, yet they are not manifest to the sensual eye and ear. Body is not veiled from soul, neither soul from body, yet no man hath ever seen a soul.” This plaint of the flute is fire, not mere air. Let him who lacks this fire be accounted dead!

‘Tis the fire of love that inspires the flute, ‘tis the ferment of love that possesses the wine. The flute is the confidant of all unhappy lovers; yes, its strains lay bare my inmost secrets. Who hath seen a poison and an antidote like the flute? Who hath seen a sympathetic consoler like the flute? The flute tells the tale of love's bloodstained path, it recounts the story of Majnun's love toils. None is privy to these feelings save one distracted, as ear inclines to the whispers of the tongue. Through grief my days are as labour and sorrow, my days move on, hand in hand with anguish. Yet, though my days vanish thus, 'tis no matter, do thou abide, O incomparable pure one!

Here is a version of the same Rūmī poem, excerpted from a translation by Coleman Barks and John Moyne in The Essential Rumi ([Barks 2004], pages 17–20). This poem can also be found in [Khan-HI 1993]:

**Listen to the story told by the reed, of being separated.**

“Since I was cut from the reedbed, I have made this crying sound.

Anyone apart from someone he loves understands what I say.

Anyone pulled from a source longs to go back.

At any gathering I am there, mingling in the laughing and grieving,

A friend to each, but few will hear the secrets hidden within the notes. No ears for that. Body flowing out of spirit, spirit up from body: no concealing that mixing. But it's not given us
to see the soul. The reed flute is fire, not wind. Be that empty.”

Hear the love fire tangled in the reed notes, as bewilderment melts into wine. The reed is a friend to all who want the fabric torn and drawn away. The reed is hurt and salve combining. Intimacy and longing for intimacy, one song. A disastrous surrender and a fine love, together. The one who secretly hears this is senseless.

A tongue has one customer, the ear. A sugarcane flute has such effect because it was able to make sugar in the reedbed. The sound it makes is for everyone. Days full of wanting, let them go by without worrying that they do. Stay where you are inside sure a pure, hollow note.

Every thirst gets satisfied except that of these fish, the mystics, who swim a vast ocean of grace still somehow longing for it!

No one lives in that without being nourished every day.

But if someone doesn't want to hear the song of the reed flute, it's best to cut conversation short, say good-bye, and leave.

The Reed
Who is luckiest in this whole orchestra? The reed.

Its mouth touches your lips to learn music.

All reeds, sugarcane especially, think only of this chance.

They sway in the canebrakes; free in the many ways they dance.
Readings and Quotations on Music

**Telling What’s in Your Heart**

*Playing a flute is like writing a book. You're telling what's in your heart …*

*It’s easier to play if it’s right from your heart. You get the tone, and the fingers will follow.*

— Eddie Cahill

**Pete Seeger**

Once upon a time, wasn’t singing a part of everyday life, as much as talking, physical exercise, and religion? Our distant ancestors, wherever they were in the world, sang while pounding grain and paddling canoes, or walking long journeys.

Can we begin to make our lives, once more, all about peace? Finding the right song and singing it over and over is a great way to start.

And when one person taps out a beat while another leads into the melody, or when three people discover a new harmony they never knew existed, or a crowd joins in on a chorus as though to raise the ceiling a few feet higher, then they also know there is hope for the world.

— Pete Seeger – American Masters, PBS – broadcast June 13, 2010

**As Old as the World**

*There has always been a flute, just as there have always been young people. The flute is as old as the world.*

— An “old Indian man”, as told to the anthropologist Frances Densmore and published in her 1926 book *The American Indians and Their Music.*

This chapter is composed of readings collected by Clint Goss from many sources. A similar collection is maintained on the Flutopedia web page at [http://www.Flutopedia.com/lit_music.htm](http://www.Flutopedia.com/lit_music.htm).
**Moral Law**

There are many, many citations to various versions of this wonderful poem that attribute it to Plato (428–348 BCE). However, while attempting to locate the primary source, I found myself deep down the rabbit hole and found no full citation.

I finally found a paper by Australian Music Therapist Denise Grocke ([Grocke 2006] "Music is a Moral Law" — A Quotation from Plato?), who had apparently been diving even deeper down the rabbit hole than I had.

Here are two versions from various sources, with the attribution as Denise Grocke suggests:

**Short Version**

**Music is a moral law.**

*It gives soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination, and charm and gaiety to life and to everything.*

**A Longer Version**

**Music is a moral law.**

*It gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination, a charm to sadness, and life to everything.*

*It is the essence of order, and leads to all that is good, just and beautiful, of which it is the invisible, but nevertheless dazzling, passionate, and eternal form.*


**The Gift**

*We all sit in the orchestra of Tao. Some play their fiddles, some wield their drum sticks. Tonight is worthy of music.*

*Let's let loose with compassion. Let's drown in the delicious ambience of love.*

— Hafez, (Khwāja Šamsu d-Dīn Muḥammad Hāfez-e Šīrāzī, Persian: خواجه شمس‌الله شیرازی, 1325/6–1389/90, Persian lyric poet and Sufi master)
**For Drumming:**

A beat is like a footstep.
It begins a journey.
Beats are beginnings.

You don't need an interpreter to understand a groove.
You don't need to speak a people's language to dance to their drum.
There is a whole world out there making music.
I listen, my mind open and my ears ready.

They say a drummer is never without a drum.
A percussionist can play on anything.
But like any artist, my true instrument is myself.
My song is my soul.

Create your own path.
Keep on walking and don't look back.

— Bashiri Johnson

**The Star of Love**

Music, be thy sails unfurled,
Bear me to thy better world;
O'er a cold and weltering sea,
Blow thy breezes warm and free;

Take me to that far-off shore,
Where lovers meet to part no more;
There doubt, and fear and sin are o'er,
That star of love shall set no more.

— Margaret Fuller, from *Summer on the Lakes, in 1843* ([Fuller 1843]), excerpt from her poem, page 244. Margaret Fuller describes the Winnebago courting flute earlier in the publication.

**It Was the Wind**

It was the wind that gave them life.
It was the wind that comes out of our mouths now that gives us life.
When this ceases to blow, we die.
In the skin at the tips of our fingers we see the trail of the wind;
It shows us where the wind blew when our ancestors were created.

— Anonymous Navajo poem, from [Matthews 1897], page 69.

**Play Your Own Way**

I say, ‘Play your own way’. Don't play what the public wants.

You play what you want and let the public pick up on what you're doing – even if it does take them fifteen, twenty years.

— Thelonious Monk

**The Vapor of Art**

Music is the vapor of art.

It is to poetry what reverie is to thought, what fluid is to solid, what the ocean of clouds is to the ocean of waves.

— Victor Hugo, from *William Shakespere*, Part 1, Book 2, Chapter 4, 1864.
**Tao Te Ching**

The space between Heaven and Earth is like a flute:

**Empty, and yet it does not collapse.**

When moved, more and more emerges from it.

**But many words exhaust themselves on it.**

It is better to regard the ‘within’.

— Lao Tsu, from [Tsu 1985], chapter 5

**Beloved of My Heart**

There are few things which grow only in sharing. Music grows in sharing. If somebody is there, a sympathetic listener, then even just his presence helps you go deep into your effort … then a subtle love affair happens. The energy of the player and the energy of the listener meet and create a circle, and that circle is fulfilling.


**For Carlos Santana**

Artists paint with canvas and brush, Musicians paint with sound. With pain and passion Each note to fashion To color life, profound.

Vibrations flood the conscious And elevate the soul. Music transcends All beginnings, all ends, And makes the Spirit whole.

— Kathleen Dahill, February 28, 2002

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**Your Own Experience**

Music is your own experience, your thoughts, your wisdom.

If you don’t live it, it won’t come out of your horn.

— Charlie Parker

**Talking About Music**

Talking about music is like dancing about architecture.

— Martin Mull, 1979
The Rapture of Music

Immerse yourself in the rapture of music.
You know what you love. Go there.
Tend to each note, each chord,
Rising up from silence and dissolving again.

Vibrating strings draw us
Into the spacious resonance of the heart.

The body becomes light as the sky
And you, one with the Great Musician,
Who is even now singing us
Into existence.

— Vijñāna Bhairava Tantra (The Radiance Sutras), Sutra 18, translated by Lorin Roche.

Notes

Notes soar like eagles
riding the thermals high above the earth.

Notes giggle in laughter and joy
like children at play.

Notes cry releasing pain, sorrow,
and longing for healing and peace.

Notes dance in your ears
reminding you of the joy and delight of life.

Notes softly caress your being
lulling you gently to sleep.

Notes for all moods, emotions,
experiences in life’s journey,
and just for being closer to God and nature.

Notes sing through the night
carrying love, respect,
respite, and joy to others.

Notes transport our souls
to their new home after death.

Notes welcome the birth of new life into a world of potential, hope, and growth.

Notes reflect our soul's deepest desires and secrets that words cannot convey.

Notes are the heart and soul of our soul's expression to others.

Notes from within, beyond the mind, beyond the physical into our inner recesses and back out into the universe.

Notes, notes, notes.

So much from just six holes.

So beautiful from nature's instrument of wood.

Even in death, nature's trees communicate to us through notes.

So simple, so beautiful, so heartfelt.

Just simply notes from the soul – our soul, nature's soul, and God's soul to us all.

— Patricia B. Smith, Ph.D., written 2006, contributed at Flute Haven 2010.
The Five Faces of the Flute

**Sound**

I am the First Face of the Flute
I am the Face of Sound.

Born in a Vibrating Column,
Held in the Hands of the Flute Player,
I Spread on the Wind, Waves upon Waves,
Touching, Moving, Pulsating,
Permeating the Body,
Activating the Mind,
Stirring Emotions, Carving Memories.

I am Created from the Breath and
Received into the Soul.

I am Recorded, Mixed, Mastered,
Downloaded, and
Reborn to Vibrate Again.

All Life feels the Face of Sound.

All that we know to Exist
has Vibrated with Sound
from the Bang of Creation.

I am the Line between
Movement and Stillness,
Connection and Isolation,
Warmth and Ultimate Cold.

For You who
Conjure me Up with Your Breath ...
Rejoice.

**Express**

I Am the Face of Expression,
the Second Face of the Flute.

Reaching from the Soul of Memories,
the Heart of Feelings,
The Need to Speak with No Words,
To Say “I Am”, “It Is Me”,
“This is Who I Am”.

I ride on Vibration,
One Soul to Another Soul,
One Soul to All Souls.

I carry the message –
Or the Rallying Cry.
Or the Mournful Sorrow.

I speak through Improvisation,
dress myself in Ornaments,
Carry my Message with Dynamics
and Timbre and Texture,
And Pace myself with the
Silence of The Inhale.

Beyond Measurement,
beyond Analysis,
beyond Comprehension,
beyond Understanding,
Only by Direct Experience can the
Face of Expression be Known.
Connect
Before Language, Before Symbols,
Before Culture or Society,
I was the Glue that Bound all Humans.

I am the Face of Connection –
the Third Face of the Flute
that allows us to
Play Together,
the way Children Play Together.

To Communicate, Collaborate,
Exchange Emotion Directly.

To Signal across the Distance, to Jam,
to Share a Secret, to Give and Take.

I can lay the Groundwork
for Another to Soar.
I Repeat, Reinforce, Enhance,
Or Join another’s Voice in Harmony.

I Echo the Voice of Another –
Support and Enhance,
Encourage and Expand.

Words have only a Shadow of my Power.
Remember Me in all your Music.

Grow
I was Born beneath every
Melody and Rhythm,
every Jam, every Gig,
every Flute Circle,

Every Single Note
that has Ever been
Played or Thought or Dreamed.

I am the Face of Personal Growth –
the Fourth Face of the Flute.

I Build on what Was Before.

Reinforcing, Augmenting,
Filling new Spaces, Reaching Higher.

I was the Voice that
Invited you to Breathe into the Flute
that Very First Time.

To Close the Holes, then Open them.
To Step, then Leap.
To Play For Others, then With Others.
To Record, to Craft,
to Study, to Learn,
to Copy, to Create.

To Find all the New in You
that is Yet to be Played.

To Jam with Wild Abandon.
To Mourn a Friend.

To Inspire in a House of Worship,
to Enrich in an Elder Home,
to Facilitate a Flute Circle,

I am not about Music, I am about Life.

Heal
Beyond the limits of what we Experience,
is what we Know.

The Practice of the Breath,
infused with Vibration
and Wrapped in Sound.

The Smile, the Exhale,
the Release, the Joy.

I am the intrinsic and unknowable
Fifth Face of the Flute.

I am the Face of Healing.

The Bonus, the Dividend,
that which we can Barely Measure,

But which we Surely Know,
inside the Inside of Us,

The feeling of a Better Day
When we Play.

— Clint Goss, March 1, 2016
with gratitude to George Schenk and
“The Five Faces of Food”
Soundlessness

The highest music is where the sound does not destroy the soundless moments in between. As the musician becomes more and more refined, he can manage to create sound, and between two sounds he can give you an experience of soundlessness. That soundlessness touches the heart.

— Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh (Osho)

The African Song of Soul

When a woman in a certain African tribe knows she is pregnant, she goes out into the wilderness with a few friends and together they pray and meditate until they hear the song of the child. They recognize that every soul has its own vibration that expresses its unique flavor and purpose. Then the women attune to the song, they sing it out loud. Then they return to the tribe and teach it to everyone else.

When the child is born, the community gathers and sings the child's song to him or her. Later, when the child enters education, the village gathers and chants the child's song. When the child passes through the initiation to adulthood, the people again come together and sing. At the time of marriage, the person hears his or her song.

Finally, when the soul is about to pass from this world, the family and friends gather at the person's bed, just as they did at their birth, and they sing the person to the next life.

In the African tribe there is one other occasion upon which the villagers sing to the child. If at any time during his or her life, the person commits a crime or aberrant social act, the individual is called to the center of the village and the people in the community form a circle around them. Then they sing their song to them.

The tribe recognizes that the correction for antisocial behaviour is not punishment; it is love and the remembrance of identity. When you recognize your own song, you have no desire or need to do anything that would hurt another.

A friend is someone who knows your song and sings it to you when you have forgotten it. Those who love you are not fooled by mistakes you have made or dark images you hold about yourself. They remember your beauty when you feel ugly; your wholeness when you are broken; your innocence when you feel guilty; and your purpose when you are confused. You may not have grown up in an African tribe that sings your song to you at crucial life transitions, but life is always reminding you when you are in tune with yourself and when you are not. When you feel good, what you are doing matches your song, and when you feel awful, it doesn't. In the end, we shall all recognize our song and sing it well. You may feel a little warbly at the moment, but so have all the great singers. Just keep singing and you'll find your way home.

— Alan Cohen, author of The Dragon Doesn't Live Here Anymore.
The Iron Flute

The Buddhist priest Myofu called himself Shoku, meaning “nothingness in essence”. He came from Hansen but nobody knows from which family or class he was born. His mind had secretly been gifted with divine signs and he was noble and magnanimous.

He was so attached to the traditional boat life that when he encountered a beautiful seashore he built a hut in the field of Blue Dragon near there. He had nothing unnecessary but only played the iron flute with joy. He also liked reciting poems.

One day he took off his clothes, stood up, and abandoned his body. He was blowing the iron flute as his body followed the ebb into the water. He approached the final place playing the flute above the water.

He disappeared out of sight but still the flute was heard sounding over the boundless sea. Far from the shore nothing existed but the flute in the air and the body in the sea.

Three days later, he was seen on the sand shore like a living Buddhist sitting in meditation with the legs crossed.

— From A Biography of Myofu, translated by Akitsugu Taki from Biographies of Highest Buddhist Priests in the Great Ming Dynasty, Book Seven [大明高僧傳] (Taisho Tripitaka), edited by Clint Goss

The Flute of Interior Time

The flute of interior time is played whether we hear it or not.

— Kabir (c.1440 – c.1518)

Fame and Spirituality

Here are two quotes from the film Twenty Feet from Stardom. These thoughts really capture some truths about the musical art and musical fame:

**Sting**: Real musicians – there’s a spiritual component to what they do that’s got nothing to do with worldly success. The music is much more an inner journey. And any other success is just cream on the cake.

There's this idea you can go on American Idol and suddenly become a star. But you may bypass the spiritual work you have to do to get there. And if you bypass that, your success will be … wafer thin.

**Lisa Fischer**: Some people will do anything to be famous. And then there are other people who will just … sing. It's not about anything except being in this special space with people. And that is really the higher calling.
Short Quotations
This section contains a wide array of short quotations on music from various sources.

I never had to learn to play.
I just learned I had to play.
— Paraphrase of a quote by Mark Cavendish

If you are too busy to develop your talents, you are too busy.
— Julia Cameron

Always be a first-rate version of yourself, not a second-rate version of someone else.
— Judy Garland

The musical notes are only five in number, but their melodies are so numerous that one cannot hear them all.
— Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, Chapter V Energy, paragraph 8

If music be the food of love, play on.

Your stairway lies on the whispering wind
— Robert Page

A solo is a duet with the universe.
— David Darling

The slower you do it, the faster you learn it.
— Arthur Hull, *Drum Circle Spirit*

If only I could so live and so serve the world that after me there should never again be a child who considers himself unmusical.
— Paraphrase of a quote by Isak Dinesen (pen name of Karen Blixen), author (1885–1962)

I would teach children music, physics, and philosophy; but more importantly music for in the patterns of music and all the arts are the keys to learning.
— Plato

This will be our reply to violence: To make music more intensely, more beautifully, more devotedly than ever before.
— Leonard Bernstein

Take a music bath once or twice a week for a few seasons, and you will find that it is to the soul what the water-bath is to the body.
— Oliver Wendell Holmes

The advice I am giving always to all my students is above all to study the music profoundly ... Music is like the ocean, and the instruments are little or bigger islands, very beautiful for the flowers and trees.
— Andrés Segovia

The piano ain’t got no wrong notes.
— Thelonious Monk

The woods would be silent if no birds sang except those that sang best.
— Henry VanDyke
In the silence between two sounds resides the depth of the musical content.

Improvisation is not the expression of accident but rather of the accumulated yearnings, dreams, and wisdom of our very soul.
— Yehudi Menuhin

Life is a shipwreck, but we must not forget to sing in the lifeboats
— Voltaire

What if the Hokey-Pokey is really what it's all about?
— Ange Chianese

The theory of relativity occurred to me by intuition, and music was the driving force behind that intuition.
— Albert Einstein

Amazement
It is often easy to forget how magical this instrument is. Especially in a world where music is so often judged, and musicians are so often put down for expressing themselves. And especially when we get involved in some of the head-space aspects of our passions.

So I would like to conclude this chapter with a message recently posted on a flute newsgroup. It is by a flute maker we met a long time ago on our first long-distance gathering down in Dallas:

The mystery is within you as you pick up the flute and breathe into it and affirm your connection to the universe.

I often say "I play for my own amazement"

Though it is sometimes said in jest, it is also the truth.
— Robert Brandt
Readings and Quotations on Silence

Quotations

Silence is your Friend –
You are always playing a duet
with the silence around you.

— David Darling, a mantra of the Music for
People organization.

Silence is the potential
from which music can arise.

— Keith Jarrett, from the liner notes of the
Spirits CD.

Silence which is Vibrant

Our opinion concerning the origin of music
depends on our opinion of silence. There is a
silence which is vibrant, and there is a silence
which is stagnant — not dormant nor containing
latent power, but absolutely lifeless. Through
this stagnant silence there passes a wave of
mental impulse; this is repeated, it constitutes
itself a unit, the silence becomes vibrant, it
becomes a medium of communication, and the
mental impulse may, through this vibrant
silence, be transmitted to minds which are
sufficiently sensitive to receive it. From this
intensity of vibration the song bursts forth, like
lightning from a cloud. The intensity being
reduced, the means of expression is changed to
words of an extremely limited vocabulary; this
is succeeded by an increased number of words
until in profuseness of verbiage the more subtle
means of communication are lost. The human
race today is forgetting what silence is or can
be. We are too noisy to know its possibilities.
We seize the tools nearest at hand, and have too
long depended upon words. The silent figures
sitting motionless along the Ganges are
monuments to the silence that died centuries
ago.

— Frances Densmore, excerpt from
[Densmore 1909] Scale Formation in

The Inner Music

The inner music has a strange quality. The outer
music needs an instrument, it needs a duality –
the musician and the instrument. The inner
music does not need duality – the musician is
the music, the musician is the instrument, the
musician is all. There is no division. The inner
music means silence, the sound of silence.

Silence has its own music. It can be heard only
by those who have dropped all noise from the
head. It can be heard only from the heart, not by
the head. The heady person goes on missing it.
Only the person who is full of heart, full of
love, can hear the music. This is the music that
helps you to go beyond. It becomes a rainbow
bridge. You cannot grasp it with the mind, you
cannot comprehend it with the mind. The mind
has to be put aside, completely put aside and

This chapter is composed of poetry collected by Clint Goss from many sources. A similar collection
then suddenly it is there. That is the whole art of meditation, putting the mind slowly aside and getting to the inner music, becoming attuned to the inner world of oneness. You can call it the experience of god, tao, truth, dharma; it is really nothing but the experience of the ultimate music.

— Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh (Osho)

The Soundless Sound

Music is the art of hearing the soundless sound, the art of hearing the music of silence – what the Zen people call the sound of one hand clapping.

When you are utterly silent, not a single thought passes your mind, there is not even a ripple of any feeling in your heart.

Then you start, for the first time, hearing silence …

Music helps you from the outside to fall in tune with the inner … Listening to great music you suddenly become silent – with no effort.

Falling in tune with the music you lose your ego with no effort. You become relaxed, you fall into a deep rest. You are alert, awake, and yet in a subtle way drunk.

— Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh (Osho), excerpt from [Rajneesh 1981] Beloved of My Heart — Darshan Diary, First Edition

Silence, Liberty and Peace

The twentieth century is, among other things, the Age of Noise. Physical noise, mental noise and noise of desire – we hold history's record for all of them. And no wonder; for all the resources of our almost miraculous technology have been thrown into the current assault against silence. That most popular and influential of all recent inventions, the radio is nothing but a conduit through which pre-fabricated din can flow into our homes. And this din goes far deeper, of course, than the eardrums. It penetrates the mind, filling it with a babel of distractions, blasts of corybantic or sentimental music, continually repeated doses of drama that bring no catharsis, but usually create a craving for daily or even hourly emotional enemas. And where, as in most countries, the broadcasting stations support themselves by selling time to advertisers, the noise is carried from the ear, through the realms of phantasy, knowledge and feeling to the ego's core of wish and desire. Spoken or printed, broadcast over the ether or on wood-pulp, all advertising copy has but one purpose – to prevent the will from ever achieving silence. Desirelessness is the condition of deliverance and illumination. The condition of an expanding and technologically progressive system of mass production is universal craving. Advertising is the organized effort to extend and intensify the workings of that force, which (as all the saints and teachers of all the higher religions have always taught) is the principal cause of suffering and wrong-doing and the greatest obstacle between the human soul and its Divine Ground.

— Aldous Huxley, excerpt from [Huxley 1946].
**The Hidden Harmony**

When for the first time you fall in love, you meet the opposite. Immediately, it is as if you have got wings, you can fly; poetry arises in your heart. What is happening? The opposite has created something in you. Silence alone is not very beautiful, sound alone is not very beautiful, but the meeting of sound and silence is very, very beautiful – that is music. The meeting of silence and sound is music.


**Darkened Silence**

*If you take one silent moment  
To remove yourself  
from all your senses —  
You will find within  
that fraction of eternal time  
The place where  
all your answers are found —  
And where all your fears  
shall never exist.*

— Marc Duggan – PoetryForYou.com
Part 4 –

Rhythms
World Rhythms

This chapter describes world rhythms that I have collected from various sources. They have proved useful in various facilitation settings.

The rhythms and grooves are notated in either an African drum language or a Middle Eastern drum language.

**African Drum Language**

This is a variation of the African drum language derived from the Uruba tradition and introduced in the U.S. by Baba Olatunji. It is used for the large African djembe drum.

- **Gun / Dun** – the “bass” notes on a djembe. Hit near the middle of the drum head with a slightly cupped hand and the fingers together. **Gun** is for the dominant hand and **Dun** for the non-dominant hand. Also written “B” for bass.

- **Go / Do** – the “tone” sounds on a djembe. Hands are open and flat with the base of the fingers hitting hear the rim of the drum head. **Go** is for the dominant hand and **Do** for the non-dominant hand. Also written “T” for tone.

- **Pa / Ta** – the “slap” or “snap” sounds on a djembe. With loose wrists and open fingers, slap near the outer rim of the drum head with a whip-like motion. **Pa** is for the dominant hand and **Ta** for the non-dominant hand. Also written “S” for slap.

**Middle Eastern Drum Language**

This is a variation of the Middle Eastern drum language typically used to describe rhythms for the smaller doumbek (aka darabouka) drum or frame drums.

This chapter is a snapshot of Clint Goss’s working document of collected world rhythms. Various versions of this document have been distributed at various times. Please note that some of these rhythms are subject to copyright claims.
**Dum** – the “bass” note, typically played by hitting the drum head slightly off-center with the right thumb (frame drum) or slightly cupped hand (doumbek).

**Tek** – the “rim tone” sound, typically played on a frame drum with the third finger of the right hand near the edge of the drum and on a doumbek with a flat hand near the edge of the drum head.

**Ka** – the “offbeat” note, typically played on a frame drum with the ring finger of the left hand near the rim and on a doumbek with the tips of the fingers of the left hand near the rim.

### Notation

The rhythms are broken into beats, with spaces between the beats. So:

```
Gun  Dun  Go  Do  Pa  –  Ta  –
1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8
```

… is 8 beats on a djembe with the two “–” beats representing rests (silent beats) on the 6th and 8th beats.

Two equally spaces notes in one beat are written without a space between them:

```
Gun  Dun  GoDoGoDo
1    2    3    4
```

Beats 1 and 2 each have one note, and beats 3 and 4 each have two equally spaced notes (typically 8th notes).

- Djembe 16th notes and 16th notes with 16th rests:
  ```
  GoDoGoDo  GoDo--
  ```

- Pick-up 16th beat: G’Do equivalent to “---Go Do”

- Emphasis is represented with capitalized: *PA*. 
• Triplets are three notes in place of two, written with “:" characters around them:

:TeKaKa:

• A full mute is written [Pa], a partial mute is written <Pa>, and a flam (two notes in very rapid succession, almost indistinguishable) is written {PaTa}.

---

**Basic Exercises**

**Basic 4/4 Exercises**

developed by Randy Brody

1: Gun Dun Go Do | Gun Dun Go Do |
2: Gun Dun GoDo – | Gun Dun GoDo – |
3: Gun Dun Go Do | Gun Dun Pa Ta |
4: Gun Dun Go Do | Pa Ta – – |

**4/4 Exercises**

developed by Randy Brody

1: Gun Dun Go Do | Gun Dun Go Do |
2: Gun – GoDo GoDo | Gun – – – |
3: Go Do Gun – | Do Go Dun – |
3alt: Pa Ta Gun – | Pa Ta Gun – |
4: Gun – GoDo GoDo | Gun – Pa Ta |
5: Gun Ta Gun Ta | Gun Ta GoDo – |
6: Gun – GoDo GoDo | Gun Dun GoDo – |

**Basic Warmup Exercises**

from Ryan Camara – DrumCamp 2006

First:
GoDoGoDo PaTaPaTa
GoDoGoDo GunDunGunDun |

Second:
:GunDoGo: :DunPaTa:
**Basic Cultural Rhythms**

**Congo Square**
from Randy Brody Weston Drum Circle
November 2000

\[\text{Gun Do GoDo } \rightarrow \text{Go} \mid \text{Dun Gun Do } \rightarrow \mid \]
\[\text{I play music with all my friends } \mid \]
\[\text{Gun Dun GoDo } \rightarrow \text{Go} \mid \text{Dun Gun Do } \rightarrow \mid \]
\[\text{Dun Gun Do PaTa } \mid \]
\[\text{I play music with all my friends and then } \mid \]

**Dance Beat**
from Randy Brody Weston Drum Circle
1/15/2001. 6/8 time alternating hand triplet rhythm

\[\text{Gun Do Go Do Dun Go Do Do } \mid \]
\[\text{Gun Do Go Do Dun Go Do Do } \mid \]

**Variation 1:**
\[\text{Go Do Go Do Go Do } \mid \]
\[\text{Go Do Go Do Go Do } \mid \]

**Three:**
\[\text{Tek TeKa Dum } : \mid \]

**Variation 2:**
\[\text{Gun Do Gun Do Gun Do } \mid \]
\[\text{Gun Do Gun Do Gun Do } \mid \]

**Take 5 Beat**
from Randy Brody Weston Drum Circle
1/15/2001. 5/4 meter

\[\text{DunGo–Go Dun Go Pa } \mid \]
\[\text{DunGo–Go Dun Go Pa } \mid \]

or

\[\text{GunDo–Do Gun Do Pa } \mid \]
\[\text{GunDo–Do Gun Do Pa } \mid \]

**Dakkcore**
\[\text{[dah-KOHR]}\]
from Anthony at Drum Cafe in Cape Town – 4/9/2001

\[\text{Gun Dun GoDo} \rightarrow \text{Go Do GoDo } \rightarrow \mid \]
\[\text{GoDo } \rightarrow \text{Go Do GoDo } \rightarrow \mid \]
\[\text{GoDo } \rightarrow \text{Go Do GoDo } \rightarrow \mid \]

**Jara Cedicular**
from Anthony at Drum Cafe in Cape Town – 4/9/2001

\[\text{GoDo } \rightarrow \text{Go Do GoDo } \rightarrow \mid \]
\[\text{GoDo } \rightarrow \text{Go Do GoDo } \rightarrow \mid \]

**Moroccan 3–6–9 Folk Rhythm Combo**
for 3 Doumbeks – from Randy Brody via John Marshall

**Three:**
\[\text{Tek TeKa Dum } : \mid \]
Six:
Tek Tek Tek Dum
Tek Dum Dum

Nine:
Tek Tek Dum
Tek Dum Tek
Dum Tek Dum

Fanga
from Randy Brody. Nigerian Welcome Song

Drum part 1:
Gun –Go – D'Go | Gun Dun GoDo – |
Let's take a drive to Mac Donalds |

Drum part 2:
Gun Dun Gun –Dun GoDo |
Gun Dun Gun PaTa |

Voice (Yoruban language):
Fanga alafia, ah-shay ah-shay
Welcome well-being, may it be so

Ah-shay Ah-shay, Ah-shay Ah-shay,
May it be so, may it be so

Fanga alafia, ah-shay ah-shay
Welcome well-being, may it be so

Fanga
from R. Clark, Gainsville, FL.
clark@acceleration.net.
www.acceleration.net/clark/. see
www.djembe.net/share/Fanga.htm

Break b-b-t-t-- | b-b-tt--

Break b-b-tttt | b-t-tt--

Fanga alafia, ah-shay ah-shay
Welcome well-being, may it be so

Fanga [FAHN-gah]
from Thomas Wright. See
www.djembe.net/share/Fanga.htm

Djembe b--bb-tt | b--bb-ss | b--bb-tt | b--bb-ss |

Bass --SS---- | ----S-S- |

Bell H-HH-HH- | H-H-H-H- |

Bass KK--KK-- | KK--KK-- |

Bell ---H---H | ---H---H |

Bass D------- | D-D----- |
Bell \( L-L-L-L- \) | \( L-L-L-L- \)

Each dunun (sangban, kenkeni, dununba) has its own bell part, notated directly below its line. The djembe is a “part 2”.

**Misc Rhythm**

from 6/19/2006 Randy Brody drum circle

**Djembe:**

\[
\text{GoDo GoDo Go GoDo} \\
\text{Gun Dun Gun GunDo}
\]

\[
\text{GoDo GoDo Go GoDo} \\
\text{Gun Dun Gun GunDo}
\]

\[
\text{JuJu}
\]

some parts from Bashiri Johnson’s Supreme Beats JuJu samples.

**Low Congas:**

\[
\text{---GoDo} \\
\text{GunDunGoDo —GoDo} \\
\text{GunDunGoDo —GoDo}
\]

**Lead Drum:**

\[
\text{Dun—— Go —Gun—} \\
\text{Dun—— Go —Gun—}
\]

**Djoli**

\[\text{[joh-LEE]}\]

(West African -> Brazil -> Became the Samba rhythm). Walk the big dog is the calypso rhythm, according to Mary Knysh, 2/13/2010.

**Randy Brody Part 1:**

\[
\text{Gun —Do Gun Do} | \text{Gun Do Gun Do} | \text{Walk —theBigDog} | \text{Walk —theBigDog} | \text{Walk —theFatDog} | \text{Walk —theFatDog} \quad \text{(Mary Knysh)}
\]

\[
\text{GoDo —Do GunDun} | \text{Go Do GunDun} | \text{Gun GoDo Gun GoDo} | \text{Gun GoDo} | \text{Gun GoDo} | \text{Gun GoDo} | \text{Gun GoDo} | \text{Gun GoDo} | \text{Gun GoDo} | \text{Gun GoDo}
\]

**Traveling Solo Game based on Djoli Samba Rhythm**

(Around the room solos, with space for individuals to solo)
GunDO – Do Gun Do | – – – – |
Trip ON the Fat Dog | (each person solos) |

Egyptian/Bedouin Seven ("Moon Fever")?
Egypt March 2005

Doughbeck:
Dum – K'Tek Tek
Dum – K'Tek Dum
– K'Tek Tek Dum
– K'Tek |

Dum – K'Tek Tek
Dum – K'Tek Dum
– (Sqk)–
(Sqk) – |

Djembe:
Gun – D'Go Do
Gun – D'Go Gun
– D'Go Do Gun
– D'Go |

Gun – D'Go Do
Gun – D'Go Gun
– – (Squeek)–
(Squeek) – |

Baya
[BYE-yah]
from Randy Brody and Mary Knysh

Round in 4 parts:
GoDoGoDo Gun Gun Gun | 
Gun GoDoGoDo Gun Gun | 
Gun Gun GoDoGoDo Gun | 
Gun Gun Gun GoDoGoDo |

Nigerian Frekoba in Four
from Randy Brody

Part 1:
Gun Dun Go Do Gun Dun Go Do |
Gun Dun Go Do Gun Dun Go Do |

Part 2:
Gun Dun GoDoGoDo Gun Dun Pa Ta |
Gun Dun GoDoGoDo Gun Dun Pa Ta |

Part 3:
Gun Dun GoDoGoDo Gun PaDo – PaDo |
Gun Dun GoDoGoDo Gun PaDo – PaDo |

Baladi
[bah- lah-DEE]
Egyptian Rhythm – from Randy Brody Weston Drum Circle 11/21/2005. Minor variations by Clint to make it a 8-bar cycle:

Dum Dum TeKa Tek | Dum TeKa Tek TeKa |
Dum Dum TeKa Tek | Dum TeKa Tek |
Dum Dum TeKa Tek | Dum TeKa Tek |
Dum Dum TeKa Tek | Dum TeKa Dum |
– |

Grape fruit cantaloupe | peach cantaloupe apple |

Ayub
[ah-YOUB]
from Randy Brody – 12/9/2005. Companion rhythm to Baladi (Ayub uses lower drum, Baladi uses higher)

DumTeKa DumTek | Dum TeKa DumTek |
Gun DoGo Dun Go | Dun GoDo Gun Do |

Strawberry grape fruit | strawberry grape fruit |
West African 3/4 Polyrhythm
from Randy Brody – 12/4/2005

West African Three:
Gun GoDo Go | Gun GoDo Go |

West African Six:
GoDo GoDo GoDo | Gun Dun Gun |

West African Gankogui (bell or drum):
Gun Do Go | DoGo –Do –Go |
Dun Go Do | GoDo –Go –Do |
Please pass the tartar sauce oh |
Low HI HI | HI HI HI HI |

Basic 3/4 Rhythm heard on Native track
– 12/8/2005
Gun –Do GoDo | Gun –Do GoDo |

Cinte
[SIN-tay]
from Randy Brody – 12/9/2005
Go GoDo Gun Do | Gun Do Gun Do |
Quick take a bite and chew and chew and |

Dogon
from Randy Brody – 12/9/2005
GoDo GoDo Gun Go | GunDo Go –DoPa |
Chicken fingers French fries and a Coke – its good |

Hoo Roo
from Randy Brody – 12/9/2005

1: Gun Dun Gun G’Do | 2: [PA] GoDo D’Go – |
3: GoDo Gun GoDo Gun | 4: GoDo—GoDo—GoDo—Go |
5: Pa Ta {PaTa} Pa |

Masmoudi Kebir (8/4)
from Jeff Senn web site. Masmoudi Kebir (Kebir = “big”) is also known as “Warring Masmoudi” (due to its aggressive cadence), it is a common masmoudi played for Middle Eastern Dance, and this 8 beat measure is really the basis for many other rhythms.

Dum Dum TeKaTeKa Tek |
Dum–TeKa TeKaTek– TeKaTeKa Tek |

Maqsoum (4/4)
[mahk-SOOM]
from Jeff Senn web site. Maqsoum (which means, “cut in half”) is really a whole class of rhythms that fit in a 4 beat measure. The maqsoum is quite basic to Middle Eastern rhythm; maqsoums, and 8 beat measures formed by concatenating a maqsoum with another 4 beat measure, form a rhythmic basis for much Middle Eastern music. This version is a simple and very basic version.

Basic:
DumTek –Tek Dum– Tek– |

Filled in:
DumTek TeKaTek–Dum–TeKa Tek–TeKa |

Masmoudi Saghir – Beledi (4/4)
from Jeff Senn web site. Beledi is a commonly requested dance rhythm – just about everyone knows it (and many dislike it because it is so common). Unfortunately “Beledi” means different rhythms depending on where you are. “Beledi” really implies a sort of gypsy-ness or
non-urbaness (possibly “hick”, depending on who you ask). This version, more correctly called Masmoudi Saghri (“Small” Masmoudi) is perhaps the most common “Beledi” rhythm. If you look closely you will see that it is really a Masmoudi “squeezed” into 4/4 time.

Basic:
\[
\text{DumDum TeKaTek– Dum–TeKa Tek} \\
\]

With bridge:
\[
\text{DumDum TeKaTek– Dum–TeKa Tek–TeKa} \\
\]

Walking Maqsoum (4/4)
from Jeff Senn web site. Walking Maqsoum is another rhythm sometimes called Beledi – especially among Middle Eastern Dancers in the Western U.S. A “walking” rhythm is one that has a even or steady (not very syncopated) beat – presumably reminiscent of a steady walking footfall.

Basic:
\[
\text{DumKa TeKa DumKa Tek} \\
\]

With bridge:
\[
\text{DumKa TeKa DumKa Tek–TeKa} \\
\]

Ayyub (2/4)
from Jeff Senn web site. Ayyub is a simple fast rhythm often played for accelerating or energetic sections of Middle Eastern Dance performance. It is a driving rhythm that somehow “wants” to get faster and faster. Ayyub fits well within other rhythms and can be generally useful as an accent – however played too long, it does get monotonous …

Basic:
\[
\text{Dum K’DumKa} \\
\]

Filled version:
\[
\text{DumKa TeKa} \\
\]

Advanced Cultural Rhythms

Here are a few more complicated rhythms, but ones that are still very commonly used as basic rhythms in music and dance in various parts of the Middle East.

Karsilama (9/8)
from Jeff Senn web site. Karsilama (Turkish for “face-to-face”) is a very common 9 beat rhythm – it is, perhaps, the most common “odd count” rhythm in Middle Eastern music. It is very common in Turkish tunes, and is probably Turkish in origin. It can be played very fast, or very slow, and can be filled in many ways. It is a particularly popular rhythm among Middle Eastern dancers.

Basic:
\[
\text{Dum – Tek – Dum – Tek Tek Tek} \\
\]

Filled:
\[
\text{Dum KaKa Tek KaKa Dum KaKa Tek Tek Tek} \\
\]

Ciftetelli (8/4)
from Jeff Senn web site. Ciftetelli is probably Greek or maybe Turkish in origin. It is usually played slowly and with a variety of fills. Remember when playing this rhythm that silence is a note! “Cifti” is characterized by strong accents on 1, 3 1/2, 6 and often 5. It has a unique character – the strong beat on 3 1/2 makes it sound like it “turns around” in the middle and the rest at the end (if not filled in) is a dramatic pause. Here is one version:

Basic:
\[
\text{Dum–TeKa TekTek TeKaDum– Tek Dum Dum Tek} \\
\]
Cifteteli (4/4)
from Darbuk.Ka. The Cifteteli rhythm, originally from Turkey, entered the Arabic world with the expansion of the Ottoman Empire. In fact, Chifteteli is how Belly Dance is named in Turkey and Greece. It is also known as “camel rhythm” because it is very appropriate for this kind of movement of the oriental dance. It is a 4/4, very common in popular Turkish music, so it would be the equivalent to the Egyptian Maksoum.

Darabouka:
Dum –Te–Ka  Dum–Dum– Tek |

Djembe:
Gun –Go–Do Gun–Dun– Go |

Zumbaty (4/4)
from Darbuk.Ka. There is also an Egyptian rhythm, quite similar to Cifteteli, known as Zumbaty, coming from Sumbat, a village in the Nile Delta, home to Gawazy dancers and singers who travel to Cairo to try their luck and settle in the mythic Muhammed Ali Street, the centre of the artistic life in Cairo since the XVI century.

Darabouka:
Dum –Te–Ka  Dum –Tek |

Djembe:
Gun –Go–Do Gun  –Go |

Serto (4/4)
from Jeff Senn web site. Serto is a Greek rhythm. It alternates accent on every other measure:

\[
\text{Basic:} \quad \text{Dum–KaTe –KaDum– Dum– Tek} \\
\text{Filled:} \quad \text{Dum–KaTe –KaDum– Dum–TeKa} \quad \text{Tek–TeKa} |
\]

Saidi (4/4)
[Seye-EE-dee]
from Jeff Senn web site. Saidi is a rhythm often used for a cane dance. The beats at 4 (and sometimes 3 1/2) can be varied dramatically or replaced with other percussion (such as hand clapping) to give the rhythm a distinct sound.

Basic:
Dum–KaTe –KaDum– Dum– Tek |

Filled:
Dum–KaTe –KaDum– Dum–TeKa  Tek–TeKa |

Rumba (4/4) and Bolero (4/4)
from Jeff Senn web site. Rumba and Bolero are similar rhythms with different accents. Bolero is often played with a “triplet” in the second half of the first beat. A triplet is 3 beats fit into a 2 beat space. Both rhythms have made their way from North Africa through Spain and Cuba into modern music.

Rumba:
Dum–teka  teKA teKA DumKa |

Bolero:
Dum–:tekaka: Teka  Teka  DumKa |

Three-Five Rhythm (8/4)

\[
\text{GUNDo GoDUN GoDoGunDo} \quad \text{GunDo GunDo PaTa PaTa} |
\]
Otha Turner Rhythm from Shimmy She Wobble (4/4)

4/30/2006

GUN  D’GoDo – G’Do GunDo |

Syncopated and Odd Meter Rhythmic Exercises

These exercises were distilled from sessions and workshops facilitated by Mary Knysh and David Darling, and hosted by the Music for People organization. They are designed for group work in developing and improvising grooves, especially syncopated rhythms and complex meters.

The notation here is different from the African and Middle Eastern Drum language.

The Drum version of each uses the Gun and Dun sounds on a djembe, but represents the silent beats with L and R “silent” hits in the thigh.

The Voc(al) version is useful for a group that is vocalizing the rhythm over body percussion. The upper row is the vocalization and the lower row represents finger snaps or slaps on the thighs or chest with the L and R hands.

Three-Two Clave Syncopation (4/4)

Voc:  
Go – – Do – – Go – | – – Da – Da – – – | 
R L R L R L R L | R L R L R L |

Twelve-Eight GoGeh Syncopation (12/8)

Drum:  
Gun L Gun L Gun L | Gun L R Dun R L |

Inverted Three Syncopation (3/4)

Drum:  
Gun L Gun L Gun L | Gun Do R Do R Do |

Vocal:  
Go – Go – Go – | Go Geh – Geh – Geh | 
R L R L R L | R L R L R L |

Five Four Grooves (5/4)

Drum:  
Gun L R Dun R | Dun R L Gun L |

Vocal:  
CHI Ki Da GA Da | GA Da CHI Ki Da |
GA Ma La TA Ki | TA Ki GA Ma La |
R L R L R | L R L R L |

Seven Eight Grooves (7/8)

Drum:  
Gun L R Dun R Dun R | Dun R L Gun L |

Vocal:  
CHI Ki Da GA Da Ga Da | GA Da Ga Da |
Ga Da CHI Ki Da |
GA Ma La TA Ki Di Mi | TA Ki Di Mi GA Ma La |
R L R L R L | L R L R L |

Beatriz Pinto Rhythm (4/4)

– from AOI 2006
**Rhythms from Drum Camp 2006**

These are rhythms learned from the various facilitators and instructors at Drum Camp 2006 in Ashland, Oregon.

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**West African Rhythms**

**Mane (12/8)**

[MAH-ney]
from Lamine “Dibo” Camara, DrumCamp 2006

Go–Go Do–Do Go–Go Do–Do | Go–Go Do–Do GoDoGo DunGoDun |

**Casabe (4/4)**

[Cah-sah-BEY]
from Lamine “Dibo” Camara, DrumCamp 2006. Composite modern (1950’s) rhythm from two traditional rhythms from two different Guinea tribes. Currently a symbol of liberation. Part 2 is the CaSAH rhythm.

Part 1:

GunDun Go GunDun Go | GunDun GoDo–Do Go |

Part 2:

Go –Do Go GunDun | Go –Do Go GunDun |

or

---

**Core 12/8 Rhythm**

from Ryan Camara, DrumCamp 2006

Part 1:

Pa–Do Pa— Pa–Do Pa— |

Part 2:

Pa— TaGoDo Pa— TaGoDo |

---

**Bell Triplets (12/8)**

from Ryan Camara, DrumCamp 2006. Three flavors:


---

**Standard break in 4/4**

from Ryan Camara, DrumCamp 2006

{PaTa} Go Do Go | Do PaTa Pa – |

End/Flam

Standard:

{PaTa} GoDo–Go–Do | Go PaTa Pa – | End/Flam

---

**Standard break in 3 / 4**

from Ryan Camara, DrumCamp 2006

{PaTa} Go Do–Go Do–Go | DO
Cool Triplet Rhythm
from Ryan Camara, DrumCamp 2006

—Go | Dun—Go DunGo— —— |

Really Common Accompaniment Rhythms in 4
from Kalani, DrumCamp 2006. Can be used separately or together:

1: Pa –Ta Pa GoDo |

2: Gun GoDo — Pa | (more rhythmic)
   Gun DoGo — Ta | (faster to play)

Echauffement
from Kalani, DrumCamp 2006. French for “heating up” … typically used by the lead drummer before a break to call attention to the upcoming break.

GoDoPaTa PaTaPaTa PaTaPaTa
PaTaPaTa |
GoDoPaTa PaTaPaTa PaTaPaTa
PaTaPaTa |
GoDoPaTa PaTaPaTa PaTaPaTa
PaTaPaTa |
GoDoPaTa PaTaPaTa PaTaPaTa {PaTa} – — |

Yankedy
   [YAHN-keh-dee]
from Kalani, DrumCamp 2006. Full-moon socializing dance, Sousou ethnic group – dance of seduction – done with scarves – 2 people hold the scarves. Part 1 and Part 2 are probably doundoun parts.

Part 1:
Gun —Dun Gun —Dun | Gun —Dun Gun —Dun |

Part 2:

[Dun] — —Dun Gun | [Dun] — — Dun Gun |

Djembe
D’Gun Go D’Gun D’Go | D’Gun Go
D’Gun D’Go | <-cool!

Second part of Yankedy from Mohamed Camera, Drumcamp 2006, with triplets:

Pa–Ta Go–Do PaTa– —Gun | Pa–Ta Go–Do PaTa– —Gun |

Makru
   [MAH-crew]
from Kalani, DrumCamp 2006. Seduction dance follows Yankeddy. Pt1 is on Dodumbah. Pt2 is on Sangban.

Part 1:
Gun D’Gun GoDo Go |

Part 2:


Djembe 1:
Gun GunTa GunDo GunTa | Gun GunTa GunDo GunTa |

Djembe 2:
GunDo —Do Go Ta | Gun Do Gun Do |

Cool third part for Makru from Ryan Camara:

Djembe 3:
Gun —Ta —Go Do | Gun Ta —Go Do |

Yolele
   [yoh-LEH-leh]
from Mohamed Camera, DrumCamp 2006. Part 1 is triplets. Is Part 1 and Part 2 4 against 3??

Part 1:
Pa–Pa TaGoDo PaDunGo DoGoDo | etc.
Clave Rhythms

“Clave” means “key” or “cornerstone” or “peg”. “Hemeola” is a 3-feel over a 2 pulse, or two pulses in different places of the same rhythm. The “B” is used to indicate a bell strike or a “beat”.

Son Clave – aka 3-2 Clave or “Straight” Clave

from Kalani, DrumCamp 2006

Beats:

\[
\begin{align*}
& B- -B - B- - B- | - B- - B- - B- | \\
& 1 & 4 & 7 & 3 & 5
\end{align*}
\]

Spacing:

\[
\begin{align*}
3 & 3 & 4 & 2 & 4
\end{align*}
\]

Vocal:

Takaday Takaday Takadimi Taka
Takadimi
Gamalah Gamalah Takadimi Gama
Takadimi
Chikida Chikida Gadagada Chiki
Gadagada

Bell part against Son Clave (H=High bell, L=Low bell):

Bell:

\[
\begin{align*}
& H- LL H- LL | H- L- H- - B- |
\end{align*}
\]

Son Clave:

\[
\begin{align*}
& B- -B - B- - B- | - B- - B- - B- | \\
& 1 & 4 & 7 & 3 & 5
\end{align*}
\]

Brazilian Clave – aka Chin Bao

from Kalani, DrumCamp 2006. Son Clave with and eigth delay on the last note.

Beats:

\[
\begin{align*}
& B- -B - B- - B- | - B- - B- - B- | \\
& 1 & 4 & 7 & 3 & 5
\end{align*}
\]

Spacing:

\[
\begin{align*}
3 & 4 & 3 & 2 & 4
\end{align*}
\]
Vocal:
Takaday Takadimi Takaday Taka Takadimi
Gamalah Takadimi Gamalah Gama Takadimi
Chikida Gadagada Chikida Chiki Gadagada

Afro-Cuban Clave in 6
from Sue Lundquist, DrumCamp 2006

Beats:
B– B– B– |–B –B — | 1 3 5  8 10 |

Spacing:
    2  2  3  2  3

Vocal:
Taka Taka Takaday Taka Takaday
Taka Taka Gamala Taka Gamala
Gada Gada Chikida Gada Chikida

Tuareg Clave in 9/4
[TWAH-reg]
from Abdul and Hassan drummers in Ouarzazate April 2007. The “B” are the low beats, and the “H” is a high hit (B=Gun, H=Do on djembe)

Beats:
B– –B — B– | — — B– B– H— | 1  4  7 | 5  7  9 |

Spacing:
    3  3  6  2  2  2

Vocal:
Takaday Takaday Takadimidimi Taka Taka TAKA
Gamalah Gamalah Takadimidimi Gama Gama TAKA

Chikida Chikida Gadagadagada Gada Gada GADA

Bob Bloom Clave
from Bob Bloom’s 12/31/2011 Drum performance in Westport. The “B” are the low beats, and the “H” is a high hit (B=Gun, H=Do on djembe)

Beats:
B— B— — |B— B— — | 1  4  4  1  3  3 |

Spacing:
    3  5  2  6

Vocal:
Takaday Takadimidimi Taka Takadimidimi
Gamalah Takadimidimi Taka Takadimidimi
Chikida Gadagadara Chiki Gadagadagada

Brazilian Rhythms

These are typically done on the conga drum, with the Gun/Dun as “bass” and Go/Do as “tone”. Pa/Ta slaps are often closed, written (for example) [Pa]..

Bakoso – Brazilian Conga in 6
[bah-KOH-soh]
from Sue Lundquist, DrumCamp 2006

Part 1:
Gun GunDun GoDo | Gun GunDun GoDo |

Part 2:
Dun GoDun [Pa] | Dun GoDun [Pa] |
Part 3:
Go GunDun [Pa] | Gun GunDun [Pa] |
Bell:
B B BB | –B –B –B |
You seeJoJo | –Go–Go –Did |
Part 2 and 3 can be done as “say it-play it” with “Kin KaNee – Kin KaNee –” – without the [Pa] – as in the name of the drum that usually plays that part. This plays well in counterpoint against the Bell part shown. This was taught to me by Miguel in Kiental, Switzerland at the Music for People gathering, July 2007.

Marcha Pattern for Conga – 8-beat
from Kalani, DrumCamp 2006. Slow for ChaCha, Fast for Rhumba or Momba
Hand Finger Slap  Finger  
Hand Finger Tone  Tone  
L  L  R  L  
L  L  R  R  
Mute Mute Mute Mute  
Mute Mute Open Open

Marcha Pattern for Conga – 6-beat
from Kalani, DrumCamp 2006. For low and high drums:
Low:
Hand Finger Slap  Finger Tone  Tone  
L  L  R  L  R  R  
Mute Mute Mute Mute Open Open
High:
Slap  Finger Tone  Tone  Hand Finger  
R  L  R  R  L  L  
Mute Mute Open Open Mute Mute

Rhumba Guaguancó
[wah-WAHN-co]
from Kalani, DrumCamp 2006. For conga – not straight rhythm … use a ‘rolling egg’ varying rhythm:
Go [Do]Go –[Do] [Go][Do] | 
[Go]  [Do]Gun –[Do] [Go][Do]  |
R  L  R  L  R  L  
R  L  R  L  R  L  
Bell part is rhumba rhythm offset by one bar:
Bell:
— B– B– — | B– –B — –B |

Capawera
[Cah-pah-WEH-rah]

Constitution Museum Rhythm
from Constitution Museum, Philly, ?2006?
Beats: BBBB B–B–  B–BB BBB– |

Morph
Morph “Walk the Big Dog” into “The Big Dog Walks” … which is a different rhythm that I’m familiar with from Randy’s drum circles …

D’Gun Dun Gun –|

Afro-Cuban Rhythms

Core Afro-Cuban Rhythm for BaTA drum
from Sue Lundquist, DrumCamp 2006
GunDoGun Do –| Gun Dun Go –|
**Bomba**


*Basic Rhythm – easier to play straight:*

Gun – Dun – Go  Do  |

*Version to use if playing silent taps on all 8ths:*

Gun – Dun – Do  Go  |

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**Conga de Comparsa**

from Sue Lundquist, DrumCamp 2006. Comparsa is the group that plays the conga. Played with the fat end of a drum stick on conga – two tones: “M” muted (with left hand) and “O” open.

*Basic:*

M —— M —— M —— O —— |

*Variation 1:*

??

*Variation 2:*

M — M — M — M —— O —— |

*Break:*

M — M — M — M — M — M — M — M —— |

(crescendo)

*Variation 3:*

M ——— O ——— M ——— M ——— |  

M ——— M ——— M ——— M ——— |

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**Long Bell**

from Pete Barnhart, Drumming class Dec 14, 2006. Only a few parts recalled, and this needs to be checked for accuracy!!

Note the variation in the bell part from the Bakosso Brazilian bell part. These two rhythms work together!

*Djembe:*

Gun  Go  Pa  GunTa – Do – Dun  |

*Djembe:*

{PaTa}  PaTa  PaTa — Ta  Pa — |

---

**Bell:**

B  B  B  BB — B — B  |

You  see  Jo  JoGo — Go — Did  |

---

**Arabic Rhythm**

from guy in Fes who sold Vera the leather coat Apr 11, 2007. Called “Lalam Namah” by the leather store guy.

Works as a part in ¾ time, but also as a 4/4 time with triplets. This rhythm really best on a low and high drum pair, like bongos, with the Do being the high-note drum. This is the ¾ version:

*Djembe:*

GunDun — GunDo — Gun — DunGun Do — |

R  L  R  L  R  L  R  L  R  L  R  L  R  L  R  L  R  L

… and the 4/4 version with triplets:

GunDun — GunDoGunDun  GunDo — |

---

**Ted Natale Simple Rhythm**

from “Djembi Jam” track 5 of Jeff Ball free downloads

*Djembe:*

Gun — Do  Gun — — Do  |

Gun — Do — — |

---

**Cool Rhythm heard in some song**

February 2007

*Djembe:*

—  Gun — Gun — GunDun  |

—Gun Dun — GunDun  Gun — |

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**From “Laila” – Best of Bollywood**

in iTunes database

*Djembe:*

Gun — Do  Gun — — Do  |

Gun — Gun DoGoDo — — |
From “Migra” – Santana
in iTunes database. Cool rhythm – need to transcribe!

Djembe:

Clave-style rhythm of Jim Oshinsky
Oct 14, 2007

Djembe:
Gun– GoDo–Go  Do– |
Gun— — — —Do |

Two Georgian Rhythms of the Georgian Dance Troupe
Oct 28, 2007

Djembe:
:Gun–Go: :DoGoDo: :GoDoGo:
:DoGoDo: |

Djembe:
GunDo GoDun GunDo GoDun |
GunDo GoDun Gun “Hey” |

Guiro Rhythm
from woman in town North of Cusco we went to for the day March 2008. Can be played in Three or fast 6/8 two-beat.

Guiro:
Down DownUp— | Down DownUp— |
Down–Down Up— | Down–Down Up— |

Flowing
rhythm used in first of the “Five Rhythms” of Gabrielle Roth. From Randy Brody 12/1/2008:

Djembe:
Gun– Dun– GunDun –Gun |
–Dun –Gun Dun–  Dun– |

Gun– Dun– GunDun –Gun |
–Dun –Gun Dun–  — — |

Kung Fu Panda
rhythm used in Kung Fu Panda, heard 11/29/2009:

Djembe:
Gun– –Dun –Gun Dun– |
— — GoDoGoDo |

Darling Warmup
David Darling warmup groove 2/12/2010:

Djembe:
… … —Gun– |
Dun— Go—DoGo—Do—Gun— |

Brazilian Carnival Rhythm
from Mary Knysh 2/13/2010. Notice that this is an odd number of drum beats, so the hands switch every cycle.

Djembe:
Pa— Ta— Gun— Dun— |
PaTa —Gun —Dun Gun— |

Eee Zhay Ya Ya |
EeZay —Ya —Ya —Ya |

Ta— Pa— Dun— Gun— |
TaPa —Dun —Gun Dun— |

Eee Zhay Ya Ya |
EeZay —Ya —Ya —Ya |

Klezmer Rhythm
Classical Klezmer group in Krakow March 2010:

Djembe:
Gun— DoGun—Gun Do— |
Rhythm

Invented April 2010 (NOTE: Interleaves with prior rhythm!!):

**Djembe:**

- GunPa –Gun Pa– GunPa –
- Gun Pa– [GunPa]– [GunPa]– |

**Vera Clave**


**Djembe:**

| Gun– –Dun — GoDo 
Gun– –Dun –Go DoGo 
Gun– –Dun –Go DoGo DoGo 
Gun– –Dun — GoDo 
Gun– –Dun –Go DoGo DoGo DoGo |

**Rhythm from Angelique Kidjo Improv**

Heard at Newport Jazz Fest Aug 2011.

**Vocal:**

| DiKaDiKa Do–Dah– Do— — — |

... into ...

| DiKaDiKa DiKaDiKa Do–Dah– Do— — |

**Twelve Rhythm**

Heard in Bern, Switzerland, Summer 2007

**Djembe:**

| Go Go Pa GoGo Pa Go Go Pa Go Pa Go |

Actually a melody in minor mode like AADAAEAAFAEA. Recorded as a riff on the Zoom H4 as STE-102.mp3 in Dec 2011 on the Wing.

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**References**


Jeff Senn info is from *A practical Introduction to Middle Eastern Drumming* available at http://www.maya.com/local/senn/handout.html.

Randy Brody web site is at http://www.SoundDirections.net.


Pete Barnhart web site is at http://www.damusic.biz/.

“Darbik.Ka” is a two CD set with extensive liner notes. With Khamis Khenkesh and Mohamed El Sayed.


Part 5 –

Sheet Music
Sheet Music Introduction

The remainder of this handbook has sheet music transcriptions for a wide range of songs. All of these transcriptions are posted on Flutopedia, along with substantially more information than can be fit into this handbook:

- Versions with inverted finger diagrams;
- Performance notes;
- Background information on the song; and
- Audio recordings.

While it may be convenient to play off these printed sheets, please look over the information on Flutopedia:


Also, please realize that some of these songs have associated copyright restrictions.
Amazing Grace
Low Register Version

Nakai Tablature for Native American flute
Fingerings for six-hole pentatonic minor tuning

Traditional melody, lyrics by John Newton
arranged by Clint Goss

Amazing... Grace how sweet the sound. That

saved a poor wretch like me.

once was... lost but now am found. Was...

blind but... now I see.

*These notes are substitutes for notes that cannot be played easily on Native American flutes.*
Amazing Grace
High (Extended Range) Version

Nakai Tablature for Native American flute
Fingerings for six-hole pentatonic minor tuning

Traditional melody, lyrics by John Newton
arranged by Clint Goss

Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound. That saved a poor wretch like me.

once was lost but now am found. Was... blind but... now I see.

* Finger diagrams in blue are alternate fingerings, used for ease of play. Standard fingerings may sound better, but are more challenging to play.

From www.Flutopedia.com
Clint & Vera’s Native Flute Handbook

Updated May 13, 2014

311
Several nations have used this melody, either as a national anthem or as a composition of utmost importance. Parts of the melody have been traced back as far as Dr. John Bull (1563–1628), but the composer of the melody in its final form is still unknown. Many credit it to Henry Carey, an Englishman (1690–1743). The words were written in 1831 by Reverend Samuel Francis Smith, and American clergyman. The song was first sung publicly at a celebration of American independence in the Park Street Church, Boston, July 4, 1831. Numerous other verses have been written to the melody.

2. My native country, thee,
Land of the noble free,
Thy name I love:
I love thy rocks and rills
Thy woods and templed hills;
My heart with rapture thrills
Like that above.

3. Let music swell the breeze,
And ring from all the trees
Sweet freedom’s song:
Let mortal tongues awake;
Let all that breathe partake;
Let rocks their silence break,
The sound prolong.

4. Our father’s God, to Thee,
Author of liberty,
To Thee we sing:
Long may our land be bright
With freedom’s holy light;
Protect us by Thy might,
Great God, our King!
Nakai Tablature for Native American flute
Fingerings for six-hole pentatonic minor tuning

Henry Carey (?) (melody)
Samuel Francis Smith (lyrics)
arranged by Clint Goss

My country, 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty,

Of thee I sing: Land where my fathers died! Land of the

Pilgrims' pride! From every mountain side Let freedom ring!

Several nations have used this melody, either as a national anthem or as a composition of utmost importance. Parts of the melody have been traced back as far as Dr. John Bull (1563–1628), but the composer of the melody in its final form is still unknown. Many credit it to Henry Carey, an Englishman (1690–1743). The words were written in 1831 by Reverend Samuel Francis Smith, and American clergyman. The song was first sung publicly at a celebration of American independence in the Park Street Church, Boston, July 4, 1831. Numerous other verses have been written to the melody.

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Let rocks their silence break. 
The sound prolong.

4. Our father's God, to Thee, 
Author of liberty, 
To Thee we sing: 
Long may our land be bright 
With freedom's holy light; 
Protect us by Thy might, 
Great God, our King!

From www.Flutopedia.com
Clint & Vera's Native Flute Handbook

Updated January 6, 2014
Bridal Chorus

Here Comes the Bride from the opera Lohengrin (1850)

Nakai Tablature for Native American flute
Fingerings for six-hole pentatonic minor tuning

Richard Wagner (1813–1883)
arranged by Clint Goss**

Here comes the bride, friends by her side,
Wedding bells ring loud, the door opens wide,
Here comes the bride, all dressed in white,
Sweetly, serenely, in soft glowing light.

** Lyrics are from various sources and are unrelated to the original opera.
* This note substitutes for a note that cannot easily be played on most Native American flutes.
**By the Waters of Minnetonka**

*Original Melody*

Nakai Tablature for Native American flute
Fingerings for six-hole pentatonic minor tuning

Andante Moderato

**Inspired by a Sioux Love Song recorded by Mr. Lieurance in October, 1911, on the Crow Reservation in Montana. The tune was sung by Sitting Eagle, a Sioux.**

From www.Flutopedia.com

Clint & Vera’s Native Flute Handbook

Updated March 22, 2011
*By the Waters of Minnetonka*

Arrangement suited to the Native American Flute

Nakai Tablature for Native American flute

Fingerings for six-hole pentatonic minor tuning

*Andante Moderato*

**Inspired by a Sioux Love Song recorded by Mr. Lieurance in October, 1911, on the Crow Reservation in Montana. The tune was sung by Sitting Eagle, a Sioux.**

From www.Flutopedia.com

Clint & Vera’s Native Flute Handbook

Updated March 22, 2011

317
Colors of the Wind
Modified Melody for Native American flute

Nakai Tablature for Native American flute
Fingerings for six-hole pentatonic minor tuning

Music: Alan Menken, lyrics Stephen Schwartz
arranged by Bob Child**
transcribed by Clint Goss

** The melody has been modified to fit the range of the Native American flute.
people who look and think like you. But if you walk the footsteps of a stranger, you'll learn things you never knew you never knew. Have you ever heard the wolf cry to the blue corn moon, or asked the grinning bob-cat why he grinned? Can you sing with all the voices of the mountain? Can you paint with all the colors of the wind? Can you paint with all the colors of the wind?
** Death Song of the Cherokee Indians **

Nakai Tablature for Native American flute
Fingerings for six-hole pentatonic minor tuning

Cherokee Traditional **
arranged by Clint Goss


From www.Flutopedia.com       Updated February 26, 2011
Clint & Vera’s Native Flute Handbook
EARTH MY BODY

Nakai Tablature for Native American flute
Fingerings for six-hole pentatonic minor tuning

Traditional Native American chant
arranged by Clint Goss

Low Version

\[ \text{Earth my body} \quad \text{Water my blood} \]

High Version

\[ \text{Air my breath and} \quad \text{Fire my spirit} \]

\[ \text{Earth my body} \quad \text{Water my blood} \]

\[ \text{Air my breath and} \quad \text{Fire my spirit} \]

This chant was taught to me by Wayne McCleskey in the Summer of 2002.
Nakai Tablature for Native American flute
Fingerings for six-hole pentatonic minor tuning

Jean de Brébeuf, circa 1642
arr. by Gary Cope, tr. Clint Goss

Time references are for synchronizing with The Huron Carol backing track - Track 21 on Jam Tracks in E Minor

From www.Flutopedia.com

Updated February 22, 2011
December 5, 2016
Nakai Tablature for Native American flute
Fingerings for six-hole pentatonic minor tuning

KAYOWAJINEH

Traditional Seneca
collected by Pete Seeger
arranged by Clint Goss
Maliseet Love Song

Traditional Maliseet

Nakai Tablature for Native American flute
Fingerings for six-hole pentatonic minor tuning

March 10, 2016

December 5, 2016

from www.Flutopedia.com

Updated November 18, 2013
December 5, 2016
Maliseet Love Song
Alternate (Simplified) Fingering

Nakai Tablature for Native American flute
Fingerings for six-hole pentatonic minor tuning

Traditional Maliseet
collected by Natalie Curtis (Burlin) **
arranged by Clint Goss

Ode to Joy
Solo Flute

Ludwig van Beethoven, 1824
Ninth Symphony, Opus 125, Fourth Movement
arranged by Clint Goss

Nakai Tablature for Native American flute
Fingerings for six-hole pentatonic minor tuning

*This arrangement closely follows the original 1824 Beethoven choral score.

From www.Flutopedia.com

Updated January 6, 2014
December 5, 2016
** Origin of the Flageolet **

Modified for Minor Tuning

Nakai Tablature for Native American flute
Fingerings for six-hole pentatonic minor tuning

Traditional Mandan and Hidatsa collected by Frances Densmore **
arranged by Clint Goss


From www.Flutopedia.com

Updated October 27, 2011

330

December 5, 2016
Nakai Tablature for Native American flute
Fingerings for six-hole pentatonic minor tuning

Pokarekare Ana
Standard Fingering

Traditional Waiapu
arranged by Clint Goss

Pokarekare ana nga wai o Waiapu

Whiti atuko hei marino ana e

E he e Hokimaira

Kamate a hau i te aroha e

*Traditional Māori (Waiapu culture, Northern New Zealand) love song, composed about 1914 of uncertain authorship. Custodianed by the family of Paraire Tomcana.
Pokarekare Ana
Simplified Fingering

Nakai Tablature for Native American flute
Fingerings for six-hole pentatonic minor tuning

Traditional Waiapu
arranged by Clint Goss

*Traditional Māori (Waiapu culture, Northern New Zealand) love song, composed about 1914 of uncertain authorship. Custodiated by the family of Paraire Tomoana.

From www.Flutopedia.com

Updated January 6, 2014
December 5, 2016
Sakura Sakura
桜 桜

Key of A Hirajosji
Fingerings for Anasazi tuned flutes

Japanese Traditional **
arranged by Clint Goss

** From 伊澤修二, Shūji Izawa, Collection of Japanese Koto Music, Department of Education, 1888.
Nakai Tablature for Native American flute
Fingerings for *Anasazi* tuned flutes

**From 伊澤修二, Shūji Izawa, Collection of Japanese Koto Music, Department of Education, 1888.**

From www.Flutopedia.com  Updated October 9, 2011
Clint & Vera’s Native Flute Handbook
Nakai Tablature for Native American flute
Fingerings for Anasazi-7 tuned flutes

** From 伊澤修二, Shūji Izawa, Collection of Japanese Koto Music, Department of Education, 1888.

From www.Flutopedia.com

Updated October 11, 2011
December 5, 2016
Nakai Tablature for Native American flute
Fingerings for six-hole pentatonic minor tuning

Traditional Sea Shanty**
arranged by Clint Goss

```
\[ \text{Oh Sh-
\text{en-doah I long to hear you. A-}
\text{way you roll-ing river. Oh Sh-
\text{en-doah I long to hear you. A-
\text{way I'm bound to go 'cross the wide Mis-
\text{so-ri.}}]}
```


From www.Flutopedia.com
Clint & Vera’s Native Flute Handbook
Nakai Tablature for Native American flute
Fingerings for six-hole pentatonic minor tuning

Traditional Sea Shanty **
arranged by Clint Goss

Oh Shenandoah I long to hear you.

way you rolling river.
Oh Shenandoah I long to hear you.

Always I'm bound to go 'cross the wide Missouri.


From www.Flutopedia.com
Updated March 18, 2011
December 5, 2016
Simple Gifts
Popular Version of the Melody

Nakai Tablature for Native American flute
Fingerings for six-hole pentatonic minor tuning

Joseph Brackett, Jr., 1848
arranged by Clint Goss

From www.Flutopedia.com
Clint & Vera’s Native Flute Handbook

Updated February 23, 2012
Nakai Tablature for Native American flute
Fingerings for six-hole pentatonic minor tuning

Day is done, gone the sun From the lakes, from the sky. All is well, safely rest. God is nigh.

---

Fingerings for five-hole pentatonic minor tuning

Day is done, gone the sun From the lakes, from the sky. All is well, safely rest. God is

---

**A modification of an earlier bugle call known presently as “Scott Tattoo” by Winfield Scott, 1835.**

From www.Flutopedia.com

Updated December 2, 2011

December 5, 2016
Wehdeyaho
Variation A

Nakai Tablature for Native American flute
Fingerings for six-hole pentatonic minor tuning

Traditional Tihanama
arranged by Clint Goss

This note replaces a note in the original melody that would normally sound two semitones below the lowest fundamental note of the flute. See Variation B for a different way to handle this issue.

This song is often identified as the “Cherokee Morning Song” and was recorded under this title by Rita Coolidge. However, the language of the song is from the Tihanama culture. Tihanama was last spoken as a primary language in the late 1800s. It was estimated that, as of 2007, “less than 40 people speak it at all, perhaps only 3 or 4 well”.


A blog post by user Wamkuswaka on October 11, 2013 translated the phrase as “Our spirits are strong”.

From www.Flutopedia.com
Clint & Vera’s Native Flute Handbook

Updated January 16, 2014
This phrase replaces a phrase in the original melody that would normally be out of the range of a Native American flute. See Variation A for a different way to handle this issue.

This song is often identified as the “Cherokee Morning Song” and was recorded under this title by Rita Coolidge. However, the language of the song is from the Tihanama culture. Tihanama was last spoken as a primary language in the late 1800s. It was estimated that, as of 2007, “less than 40 people speak it at all, perhaps only 3 or 4 well”.


A blog post by user Wamuduskasapa on October 11, 2013 translated the phrase as “Our spirits are strong”.

From www.Flutopedia.com

Updated January 16, 2014
December 5, 2016
Yaquis Deer Dance
Standard Fingering

Nakai Tablature for Native American flute
Fingerings for six-hole pentatonic minor tuning

Traditional Yaquis / Zuni Dance
arranged by Clint Goss
You Are My Sunshine

Standard Fingering

Nakai Tablature for Native American flute
Fingerings for six-hole pentatonic minor tuning

Oliver Hood
arranged by Clint Goss

\[\text{You are my sunshine, my only sunshine.}\]

\[\text{You make me happy, when skies are grey.}\]

\[\text{You'll never know dear, how much I love you.}\]

\[\text{Please don't take my sunshine away.}\]

*Authorship is disputed and often attributed to Jimmie Davis and Charles Mitchell. Attribution to Oliver Hood is based on Theodore Pappas, *The Theft of an American Classic*, Chronicles, November 1990.*

From www.Flutopedia.com
Clint & Vera’s Native Flute Handbook
You Are My Sunshine
Simplified Fingering

Nakai Tablature for Native American flute
Fingerings for six-hole pentatonic minor tuning

You are my sunshine, my only sunshine.

You make me happy, when skies are grey.

You’ll never know dear, how much I love you.

Please don’t take my sunshine away.

Authorship is disputed and often attributed to Jimmie Davis and Charles Mitchell. Attribution to Oliver Hood is based on Theodore Pappas, The ‘Theft’ of an American Classic, Chronicles, November 1990.
Zuni Sunrise

Nakai Tablature for Native American flute
Fingerings for six-hole pentatonic minor tuning

Parlando

Traditional Zuni
arranged by Clint Goss
Flute On!