



NATIVE JOURNAL

A National Voice in the Spirit of a Brighter Future



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MUSIC as Ken Williams hears it...

THE FLUTE PLAYER

Traditional **Dakota flute with sounds of nature**- Bryan Akipa. 1993.

North American Indian flute playing is an art that I find rarely present in Indian musical expression. Whenever one thinks of Indian styles of music the drum is the most prevalent. This is natural since a lot of music that is still played comes from pow-wows. Drums and singing are important to our culture and heritage. But we seem to be missing something because flute playing represents such a different psyche or personality in Indian life that we need to touch on.

Indian flute playing is meditative, emotional and visceral. It is not pretty and flighty like the European flute tradition. Indian flute songs are like prayers: devotionals to a woman, the great spirit, or an animal.

It certainly presents a different aspect of our culture that we and non-Indian people don't really know about. Bryan Akipa brines about this different world in his CD. *The Flute Player*.

Akipa is a self-taught flute player and carver. He is a member of the Sisseton Wahpeton Sioux Tribe.

There are nine tracks on this disk, all of them accompanied by sounds from

nature. It is the perfect meditation disk. His music calms and embraces you. There is a strong spiritual connection to his music and it flows through you. It is music of peace and serenity.

It is also known that nature sounds have a calming effect on people. That makes sense. Have you ever tried to calm down to the sounds of a city?

Traffic, construction, sirens or airplanes landing create noises, not comfort.

We can't always find our way to a park or a lake to find our spiritual centers. Bryan Akipa's music is the next best thing. So when the world is weighing you down and you need a moment to yourself, grab this disk. Play it. Relax. Reconnect yourself to that quieter side of your soul that allows you to recharge and rejuvenate your mental batteries.

