

## **Distinctive Features of the Native American Way of Playing**

### **1. A strong melodic movement from the upper to the lower end of the flute.**

In Western music we tend to start music at the bottom note and work toward the top.

Native American music tends to start at the top and work toward the bottom note.

### **2. No set timing for phrases.**

In Western music we count time using meter, or number of beats at a fixed rate of speed.

Native American music counts time by accenting the beat and varying the length of the breath.

### **3. Many kinds of embellishments, often in the same piece**

In Western music, embellishments are often subordinated to melody and meter.

Native American music uses many flips, chirps, pops, barks, etc. etc. etc.

### **4. Wide trills, more than one note apart**

In Western music, trills are usually limited to one note or two adjacent notes.

Native American music can trill across the entire octave, using crossfingering.

### **5. Rolls, half-holes, and slides**

In Western music, notes are usually played distinctly and separately using fingers and tongue.

Native American music includes partial notes and gradual moves from note to note.

### **6. Use of the “warble” or rapid overblowing**

In Western music, overblowing is deemphasized.

Native American music prizes the warble, especially on the fundamental. Squeaks are allowed.

### **7. Long tail-offs to a slightly flat closure**

In Western music, the last note can be longer, but it is measured and sustains volume and pitch.

Native American music uses long tails, decreasing in volume and lowering slightly in pitch.