



Sound Healing Summit™

The Three Sounds of Creation

Guillermo Martinez

Christine: Welcome, everyone. We're so glad you're joining us. I'm very excited to have our next speaker here with us, Guillermo Martinez, a master flute maker, performer, and someone who's going to talk to us about the understanding of three sounds of creation. I thought it would be fun to introduce you, Guillermo, by playing your flute that you made for me. I purchased this beautiful Native American flute with the double chamber drone flute key of D made with cedar wood, I assume, and at the NAMM Show where you were presenting. I thought I would just honor you. Thank you for taking time to be with us and teaching us about your knowledge. It's very unique to have someone who makes the instruments and plays the instrument and brings us 40 years of making instruments and your understanding of the purpose of them for healing ceremony and spiritual upliftment. Here's my introduction to honor you. [Flute Playing]

Christine: Please welcome Guillermo Martinez in his studio in Hummingbird Canyon near Anaheim, California. Mitakuye Oyasin. Welcome, Guillermo.

Guillermo: Thank you. Thank you for inviting me. I'm really grateful to be here and to talk about this. I do have to say that what I'm about to disclose is something that was taught to me. It's an oral tradition in like a true traditional fashion. A lot of teachings are passed on orally from teacher to student. My teacher was Xavier Quijas Yxayotl, which passed away a little bit more than a year ago now. I'm one of the few remaining people with this information, this knowledge. I'm really grateful to share it because it's part of the role of a teacher is to share the knowledge and to keep it alive and keep it moving forward. I'm very honored to do that in this forum here where you can reach a lot of people. I remember when I first shared it, and I remember how it resonated with me is when the body feels it's hearing something truthful, you feel it, like you can feel when someone's not telling you the truth or has other motives. But I felt this is truthful. When I do talk about it in whatever situation, if I'm teaching or so forth in workshop or maybe have someone to visit me and I give them this information and I could see it in their face that they feel like they're hearing the truth. So I'm grateful for that.

Christine: Beautiful. Well, it's been such a pleasure to have, I guess, three courses we've taught together through The Shift Network on the Native American flute and some of the principles of how to play it and how to create healing energy and how to really play as a soul player. You really brought us that language. I'm very grateful that you're here. It's been so great knowing you all these years, Guillermo. I've met Guillermo through my teacher and family, Uncle Manny Eagle Elk Council Pipe Sandoval, and been to many events and known many people who've carried your flutes. But this is not just about the flute today. We're talking about these three sounds of creation. It really resonated with me when you said it because I've been carrying all three of the instruments and didn't really understand how to utilize that. I'll hand it to you to talk about those different instruments.

Guillermo: Let's begin. First of all, we have to divide up our world into three levels, the lower world, the middle world, and the upper world. In each of these levels, they have a certain instrument attached to them. What I want to share with first is the drum. Here, I have several drums and have a Huehuetl here to my right, which is the sacred drum of the Aztec and the Mayan people. This is a copy that was done by one of my teachers. It's called the Drum of Malinalco. It's got various glyphs on it. It has Nahui Ollin, which is the four movements. It's got the eagle warrior, jaguar warrior, constellation bell. These drums tell stories, which is very unusual, I would say, for drums. If you consider all the drums that exist in the world, these drums are very significant. There's only, I think, two surviving drums from the colonization that happened in Mexico. But here immediately in front of me, I have a council drum and quite hard to see from here but it's quite large. It's made out of a solid trunk of pecan. It's got bison hides. I'm going to play it right here. [Drumming]

That little exercise I just did with the drum was to, it's something that almost anyone can do. When I'm teaching, I normally have my students close their eyes and sit. I'll play it for a few minutes and I'm talking as I go. It would be hard to talk over Zoom and play the drum at the same time. We're going to do this separate. But if you can imagine in your mind that drum playing in your mind and I would be talking. I've been talking about how the very first time you hear this is as a fetus when you were carried by your mother. You're actually hearing your mother's heart. You're not breathing. You're not eating. You're not going to the bathroom. You're not concerned about anything in the world. You're just in a simple state of being. You can hear your mother's voice. You can hear your father's voice, if he's there. If you have any siblings, you can hear their voice. Everybody's waiting for your entrance into the world. Everybody's waiting anxiously. You're just in there floating, listening. You're in this drumming, your mother's heart. The time comes when you come into the world. That's when I hit the ground really hard and I stop. Everybody just jumps out of their skin. For a moment there, everybody's heart is actually meeting exactly with the drum.

I try to keep it around 120 BPM, which is the natural rate for a heart, the human heart. I try to always keep within that rate. That's important. For that moment there, everybody's heart is in unison. They all match the drum. They're listening to you speak and then the drum stops. Hit the drum hard and it shocks everybody. You just send a tone. Remember that feeling. Remember it because that's what it feels like to be born. Because you're in there, you have to come to the world. Everything's bright. It could be cold. If you're lucky, you're born in a warm bath water, warm, gently into the world. But some of us, we come into the world is a kind of a shock to our system. But now we're part of the human race. Now we have to breathe. Now we have to eat. Now we have to go to the bathroom. Now we have to go through this path of life. There's no going back. We have to the cycle. That's why it runs around as well. To remind us of that journey, that we have a starting point and we have to go around until we get to the end, which is usually where we start. You can start again. That's why some of my drums, I have that medicine wheel on the back to remind us.

Then there's a cross piece. These are the directions, the four directions. They're all joined in the middle, and that's what we're trying to achieve. We're trying to find a divine nature, to find ourselves in the center of the circle connected to all directions. That's why the drum is important because it is our foundation just like the Earth is our foundation. It supports everything and it is our heart. In Native American ceremonies, there's the host drum is usually put in the center because they're the heart of that ceremony. How do we determine life? We determine life, you check your pulse to see if your heart is still beating. If your heart is not beating, then, that's how we determine life. Sometimes when I will work with children, I tell them, if I'm missing an arm, could I still be alive? They go, yeah. Missing a thumb? Yeah, you're fine. Missing a leg? Yeah, you're fine. Missing a kidney? We could be missing certain parts of our body and still be alive. You could even not have a brain. No brain too and still be alive.

But if you don't have a pulse, we have nothing. When this information I'm sharing with you was shared to the Jesuit priests by the priests of the house of song and dance. This is where, in ancient times, where you would go to learn about what I'm teaching you now. You learn about the drum, but you have to understand the spiritual significance of the drum before you actually learn to make one. When I do my workshops, I teach drumming. For example, they have to learn the spiritual aspects first before we get into the mechanical, the nuts and bolts of it. You're hearing it now. You're hearing that drums are important because it can take us back to that place. You can sit with a drum and play it calmly close to your heart. You can take yourself back to the womb where it was safe. You find the world is getting out of control. Sit with your drum and play. Get yourself back to center. Get yourself back to that safe place where everything was good, everything was safe. Taking that in consideration, now we understand what the foundation is. The Earth is represented by the drum. That's why they're circular. There's one

exception. There's one drum that is square. That's a different kind of drum. We'll get into that some other day. What is connected to the Earth? These were described by these priests as four kingdoms. When I'm working with kids, especially if you're in an outdoor setting, I have them look around.

Okay, children, what do you see? Or it could be adults, right? What do you see? What's connected to the Earth? Some kids will probably say trees first thing. Yes, trees, that's one of the kingdoms. Look below the trees. What's growing amongst the trees? Plants. If you're in a really wild area, you can see the four-leggeds, the animals, what we call the four-leggeds. That's another one of the kingdoms. The fourth one is usually hard for most people but some figure it out. They're small. They're actually one of the largest population on Earth is these things. These are the insects, bees and ants and beetles and so forth, all these insects. These are the four kingdoms. The instrument, that's the middle world and these are represented by the rattle. This represents a tree but also can represent plant, because if you have one made from a gourd. This is a tree gourd but there's another kind of gourd that's a little softer, not as hard as this one. That would be another representing plants. There's one representing animal. Here's a rattle that's actually a leg bone for the handle. That's pure animal energy right there. Here's another rattle or clap stick which is made from elderberry, all wood. And insects, so where do insects come in? Right here. These are made out of butterfly cocoons, and inside each cocoon that is gathered after the butterfly emerges is ants. The ant people are also incorporated in this. It has a beautiful soft sound.

Christine: I'm just going to jump in for one moment. Would you just play that for a little while? I'm feeling this incredible blessing while you play that instrument like cleansing. [Chanting]

Guillermo: That was a deer song, which would have been used with this type of rattle along with gourds. Those are actually worn around the ankle. That's the movement of the hunters when they're stalking. They reenact the deer hunts. When they go hunt the deer, they do what I would call sacred theater where they're actually like ritualistically, or I mean they do a ritual where they hunt the animal like in a spiritual form before they actually go hunt the animal physically and actually bring the carcass back. Some of the men would dress as hunters. There's one dressed as a deer. There are also mountain spirits involved where the spirits tell the hunters where the deer is hiding. This is something I should do with kids. We'd pick the deer. We'd pick the hunters and all the kids would learn their parts. We do this theater. It's like a play, but it's ritualistic. There's great fun.

Christine: It's great that you bring up the word play because so much of sacredness in these traditional ways and native cultures did have a lot of playful humor at times even. Okay, just while I have a moment, I want to ask you about my rattles. This is really an education for me. I carry corn rattle that I use in the corn planting ceremony in

Joshua Tree. It has corn in it, so that's plant, but I have rabbit fur. Then I have the animal and I have the hide kind of a rattle like you're teaching. I don't know. I got to find if it's deer or cow or what is this hide? But my other rattle is the ant pebbles which I understand you take the pebbles from where the ants got all those pebbles out, those ant hills that are beautiful circle like pyramids and that's where those are gathered from.

Guillermo: Okay, Christine, so I have to confirm that what you said is totally accurate. Now it brings up another element. Where did the stones come from? I always go to sacred sites like I remember because Chaco Canyon in Arizona, I went to a ceremonial dance area. There's a bunch of ant hills. I saw they had garnets in there and all this beautiful, oh, my gosh, it's so powerful. I went and found a bag or something in one of the bins. I just secretly looked for any rangers and just got as much as I could. When I teach classes on making rattles, you have to learn the mechanics, but once again it's a spiritual component. The stones that you use inside can be important like where you gathered them from, because they also carry the energy of that space, that place. That's another consideration. I used angled stones in my rattles. I also use crystals now so that you have certain energetic properties. You know amethyst, quartz, rutilated quartz, turquoise. This is through my dreams. I saw these rattles filled with crystals. It's a popular thing with me now, I mean with my customers, which brings to mind this rattle here. This one has angled stones and also beach stones. This is the plant but not from the Earth, from the ocean. It's a bull elk rattle. This only grows up in Santa Barbara County. Occasionally, I find them in some Orange County beaches. They have to be large like this and then it goes all the way up into Northern California like the Big Sur area, maybe up to, I think even on the coast of Oregon, Oregon Coast area as well possibly. But these get filled with air and you go find them on the beaches all dried. When I go to search the beaches, I go usually to find these so I can make this rattle. It's a really significant rattle. It was used by the coastal tribes of California and all the way up the coast wherever this was found. But that's a really nice rattle to have. Very rare. I don't see too many people offering that up or making them, but I do make them and I know a few people that do.

To summarize that, represent the Middle Earth, covered the drum, Lower Earth, Middle Earth, now we have the Upper Earth or the Upper World, which is the flute. In your mind, you have to imagine a pyramid. Put the drum in one corner and rattle on the other. Put the flute in one. The thing about these instruments is that neither of these instruments can play by themselves. You need that fourth component, which is the human being, which if you add that to the triangle, now you have the cross or part of that medicine wheel. The flutes come, of course, you know the woodwinds. Then we have clay flutes, flutes made out of antler, even gourd handles, made out of quite a few different materials. I think we'll go ahead and play one of these. [Music Playing]

Christine: Tell us about that third level, what are we feeling when we hear the flute in terms of this trilogy?

Guillermo: Good question. The flute represents wind. It represents birds. It also represents the soul. I normally tell a story of a young man who's been mentoring under an elder, and now they're trying to explain to him how the soul is like the wind. It's intangible. It's just free to roam. In the end, the student asked, well, how do we know it's there. We can't see it. Hold your breath and try to disconnect from it. See how long that lasts. It became evident to me when I saw my children come into the world. Remember, my firstborn, I paid more attention to the second as well just to see a second chance at this. When you see the baby crown and then you see the head, get to the shoulders, I thought, oh, my gosh, this baby is dead. It didn't seem to have anything there. Then just like that in an instant. She took her breath and opened her eyes. Just then you could see the body animates itself like something entered the body. Was it the soul? I don't know. I feel that's what it was because I think people experienced the same thing when the soul leaves the body. There's like a certain exhale, relax, exhale. Maybe that's when your soul leaves. These are just things that I've seen personally and things I know about.

The flute represents those things. It's this thing that connects all of us. It's just like it envelops the whole Earth. It shows that we're connected to everything. When these priests were explaining this idea, this trilogy to the Jesuits, they realized that no matter how hard they try to bring on their agenda, which was to bring Christianity, also to enslave these people, to make them work, to build their churches and their towns and also worked for them for nothing, that they have to take away everything. Not only do they have to take away their language, everything, and also their sense of the way that people prayed. That's how we pray. We pray through our instruments. Which brings the question of what was the original purpose of music, of singing? Was it just for fun? Was it to degrade women? Some of the music I hear now, there are some good there, but I also hear a lot of bad where it's not really doing anything that's really uplifting or showing our connection to the natural world. In ancient times, music was a way of connecting to our spiritual practice. I have my music. I listen to my jazz or whatever I'm listening to when I'm cooking dinner. But then there's other stuff that we do in ceremony, which for me is deeper and I kind of keep separate. Hopefully that answered your question.

Christine: Yes. There's a beautiful quote from the book *Hanta Yo* that says firstborn rose from the mud and learned to walk and then learned the most important magic of song and then learned that things could be changed through those songs. I just always love that quote because it's just like from the very beginning, it's about the song of life. Well, how would you maybe direct our listeners through this great transmission, this great understanding today? I love what you said about we might listen to jazz and you might have your favorite music, but it's very different than

listening. with these three simple instruments that really anyone can play, that's the other powerful part here. I might not be able to play jazz like Miles Davis, but I can pick up a rattle and be part of a ceremony. I can pick up a flute. I can pick up a drum. I can play my drum. What advice do you have for our listeners of now going forward with this understanding, maybe in their lives for that kind of healing or spiritual connection that people are often looking for?

Guillermo: Well, that's a really great question. I think, first of all, imagine there's going to be a lot of people in the sound healing that's one of the modalities that they practice. I say it's kind of a new thing. For me, I've been living with it my whole life pretty much. But the instruments are a little bit different. I don't have any drums or bowls. Nothing like that. I know a lot of people go that's the first things they acquire for doing sound baths and sound healings. I would direct people to get into more drums, flutes, and rattles which is more Earth based. But every culture, everywhere I've gone in the world, they pretty much have these. Drums are universal. I say if you're living in the UK, for example, there are druid cultures, there are things that are kind of making a comeback there where people are getting into their older Earth-based religions or incorporating instruments with that and the singing.

I met many of these people, so I know they exist because a lot of events that I do doesn't involve a lot of, traditional musicians from all over the world. That's where I get a lot of my information because you might see Mongolian throat singers, Yamabushi monks from Japan and they have their things. It's pretty universal. I say, research and find out what is from your area. It doesn't have to be Native American per se. It could be African drums. It could be so many different kinds of things. I primarily focus on comes from my background. I do have some instruments here that are from other cultures. I incorporate those if I feel like that's very useful for me and for my ceremonies and also in way of honoring people from those cultures and bringing them into my practice because I try to see myself as a citizen of the world. Yes, I'm Native American, but I also have an open heart and willing to learn from anywhere and anyone, from any one place because the truth is we're all from the Earth. We're all human beings. I try to limit myself and just keep to one tradition.

Christine: Thank you so much to Guillermo Martinez. Tell us the name of your company, your music company and how people can find you on Instagram or online.

Guillermo: Okay. So many years ago, because I started making instruments for ceremony and to do the work that I was doing with my teacher. There was never any agenda to market any of this, but people would always ask you, where did you get that drum? It's amazing. Would you sell it? You have to start making money not only for yourself but have a few extra for those people that ask. Now I do have a company. It's called Quetzalcoatl Music. I use get Quetzalcoatl because

Quetzalcoatl is the patron deity of music and arts and dance and the humanities. He was a prophet. I would put him along the lines of Buddha or Muhammad or the great teachers that have come into this world. He was for the Native American people. He's known as the Feathered Serpent. He only required things of beauty. Poetry, you could dance your offering. You could sing your offering. You can play instruments. You can offer flowers. You can offer feathers. These are all things of beauty and also something that does not require harming anything really per se. They're non-binding offerings. No blood offering. Just things of beauty.

I go, that's what I want my company to be, Quetzalcoatl. His symbol is on my flute. It's a conch shell, which is a creation symbol. It has seven points on it. Usually, the followers of Quetzalcoatl wear this piece of shell that had spirals and seven spikes on it. You see it on the end of this. You would cut it after we had seven spikes, seven of these little spikes. This is another sacred instrument. This is what you use to call in the ancestors. Before any of these other instruments play, you play this one. I would play it, but it's extremely loud. Quetzalcoatlmusic.org is my website. I have an Instagram which is really beautifully maintained by my daughter. That's Quetzalcoatl 13. How do you spell it? Quetzalcoatl is basically two words. Quetzal, which is the bird, national bird of Guatemala, and Coatl which means serpent. Quetzal serpent, Quetzal means plumed or precious. It would be like precious serpent or plumed serpent or feathered serpent. That's my Instagram handle. We have a lot of videos. We put things up, well, my daughter is, because it takes a young person to do all that.

Christine: That's for sure. Yes, you have a lot of great resources on your Instagram page, teachings, new instruments you're creating. You really bring people into your journey as an instrument maker and a performer. I really consider you a healer in this conference of sound healing. It's really why it's just wonderful what you've been able to share with us today and bringing us into your world of the cosmology of these three instruments and what they represent. How we can bring them in our lives. Absolutely. Thank you. Thank you for your time and your teaching and your energy and your wisdom and lineage that you've imparted here today. Thank you to all of you who have been here listening with us. I hope you've enjoyed our great session with Guillermo Martinez.

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