

ACTIVITY PAGES

**Musical Instruments–2004**

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<i>Dance Style 2004</i>	<i>Instrument</i>
Flamenco	Guitar Cajon
Bolivian	Sikus (panpipes) Charango – strings Bombo – drum Sukay Quena - flute
North Indian	Ankle bells Tabla drums

**Spanish–Flamenco:**

**Guitar**

The guitar is a descendant of various Middle Eastern instruments including “el ‘ud” - the lute - and “tar”, a long-necked lute of Persia. (“tar” means “string”). Today’s acoustic guitar has six steel or nylon strings stretched across a fretboard and a hollow wooden body. (Mexican style guitars traditionally use nylon strings.)

**Cajon**

A cajon is a rectangular wooden box played as a drum. It’s varied form and dimensions depend on the player’s comfort, since the player usually sits on it while playing. The caj—n usually has a circular hole called “boca,” or mouth, in the rear face, to amplify sound. Some have two rectangular holes on the sides of the caj—n, instead. The caj—n is played by beating with both hands on the front side, which is the thinnest side, about 4-7 millimeters thick. It is played on the sides and even sometimes on the back as well. There are many ways to play, including with the base of the palm of the hand, with the forefingers excluding the thumb, with the palm folded, or with tapping of the fingertips.

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### **Bolivian/Andean Dance:**

**Siqu** (siku – plural sikus), also called panpipes or zampoñas

The sikus is of Aymara origin, and is made out of 17 cane tubes arranged in two rows. Sikus comes in four sizes, with the smallest at about 4 inches to the largest at about 5 feet long. Their names are from small to large; Ica, Malta, Zanca and Toyo. They are played in sets of two, in interlocking melody and rhythm. The musicians who play the sikus and dance are known as Siquiris.

### **Charango**

The Charango is a small ten string lute, which is believed to have originated in Aymara territory (Potosi) in the 17th century. Created after the Spanish conquest, it was influenced by the Spanish vihuela (an ancestor of the guitar). The back of the instrument is traditionally fashioned from the carapace of the armadillo, however today many of the best charangos have wooden backs instead of employing the armadillo shell.

### **Bombo**

A cylindrical shaped drum from the Andean region and popular in the styles found in Argentina, Chile, Bolivia and Peru. The drum is played with a stick and a mallet, which strike the wooden rims and the head. The body of the drum is made out of a hollow tree, with the mounted skins retaining the animal's fur, thus producing a very distinctive mellow and deep tone.

### **Quena**

The quena is a vertical flute, tubular in shape, open at both ends, with a U-shaped mouthpiece. It has six finger-holes in front and one in the back. Quenas are available in a variety of sizes, according to purpose and to local customs. The quena is native flute of the Andes, originating many centuries before the Spanish conquest, and it holds a position of substantial prominence in Andean culture. It can be made of wood or bamboo, though traditionally is made of clay, stone and bone, especially the wing bones of the condor.

### **North Indian–Kathak:**

**Ghungroo** (ghunguru) are the brass ankle bells that kathak dancers wear wrapped around the ankles. Dancers typically wear between 101 and 151 bells, sometimes more, sometimes less, if the dancer is very young. Unlike other classical Indian dancers who wear bells attached to leather straps, kathak dancers wear their bells strung on cord with each bell held in place by a special looped knot. The bells have iron balls inside which add quite a lot of weight, and make it necessary for the dancers to develop leg and body strength with intense training. Kathak dancers can make many different sounds with the ghungroo, making possible many intricacies of rhythm.

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The bells “ground” the dancer upon the floor and earth, and act as an extension of the dancer as musician, and as an expression of the soul. After a dancer receives ghungroo from their teacher or “guru,” the bells must be wrapped in a nice cloth, stored in a special bag, and treated with care and respect. Before dancers put their bells on to dance, they hold them to the forehead, mouth and over the heart, unifying mind, body and soul.

**Tablas**

A set of tablas are the classical drums of North India and include two drums, one for each hand. The bayan is the larger and lower-pitched of the two; the tabla is smaller and higher-pitched (shown below, on the left). The black dot in the center of each drum head is a gob of iron and wheat flour that allows the drum to be tuned. The smaller tabla drum is tuned to an exact pitch to match the music being played. The bayan’s drum head is looser than the tabla’s, giving it a lower pitch, but the tabla player leans her hand into the bayan to raise the pitch in the middle of a note, creating the characteristic “doo-WUMP” sound unique to the tablas.