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Haunting, Mesmerizing World-Influenced Flute Playing By Joseph L Young

Just like in the Old West when the word quickly got out when a hot-and-fast gunslinger rode into a new territory, be aware that there is a great new flute-player that has appeared on the horizon and he is headed your way. His name is Joseph L Young (that's right, no period after his middle initial). He plays a large variety of ethnic flutes from all over the world starting, of course, with the Native American wood flute and its classic warm, earthy, breeze-through-the-trees sound, but also including flutes from Central America, South America, Ireland and Scotland, China, the ancient Americas (the Anasazi tribe) and elsewhere. The flutes can be made of wood, clay or metal as long as they capture the original tribal sound that they were created for. With most ethnic flutes, superb playing is not about speed, but about imparting emotions, feelings, warmth and imagery through music. That is what Young is all about. His music fits well in the soft, gentle, relaxing new age music category as well as the world-fusion genre (other world inflections come from the Chinese erhu, Celtic harp, hammered dulcimer, tin whistle and percussion).

I never heard the first three Young albums, but his fourth one, *Ethereum*, was just released and it is superb. He compliments the flutes and old-style instrumentation with synth sounds including strings and washes and gentle counter-melodies. Apparently he started his music career as a saxophonist before becoming primarily a flutist and he does one lovely tune, "Entangled," in which he overdubs himself on sax and flute dueting on a pretty melody. The dulcimer and erhu on "Free" are nice touches too. The Celtic harp and double flutes on "Shimmer" also caught my ear. A few of the tunes, such as "Wavelength" and "Boundless," may fall into the ambient music region, but because every tune has flute on it, they can't help but be somewhat melodic because that instrument tends to create melody whenever you switch from one note to another.

If you like soft, slow, gentle, mesmerizing new age music with a touch of world influences and the haunting sound of native flutes, this one is for you.