

Meet Martha!



Siyo/Halito Musical Explorers!

I was born in New York City to parents from diverse backgrounds: My mother was Native American and my father was African American. I spent a lot of my childhood with my Cherokee/Shawnee grandmother and Choctaw grandfather in Black Mountain, Kentucky, a small coalmining town in the hills of Appalachia. Although we were just like any other American family, we also had our own traditional ways, prayers, and songs. I moved back to Brooklyn when I was small, but we went back to Kentucky often for ceremonies. Today I live in Fort Greene, Brooklyn. I am so excited to play, sing, and share the music from my homeland with you!

Wado/Yakoke,

Martha



Musical Explorers
c/o Carnegie Hall
881 Seventh Avenue
New York, NY 10019

Leaving from
Corona, Queens



We asked Martha ...

When did you start playing music?

I began singing at a very young age. At my kindergarten graduation, we sang the alphabet song in call and response style, and I was the lead singer! I was eight years old when I began piano lessons and 11 when I started to play guitar.

What instruments do you play now?

My main instrument is my voice. I walk with it, speak with it; it's easy to carry but very delicate, so I am extra careful with how I use it. I also play hand and foot percussion, shakers and rattles and tambourine!

What is your favorite thing about performing your style of music?

I love incorporating Native American traditional music into today's music, keeping our culture alive by mixing the past with the present.

What inspires you?

My family and my ancestors inspire me. They went through some very challenging struggles throughout American history. Yet we are still here having survived the struggle, and now I can share their stories.



Harlan County, Kentucky

Arriving at
Fort Greene, Brooklyn

