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### Eleventh Annual Native American Music Awards & Winners

October 5, 2009 by [DirtyLinen](#)

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*Jan Michael Looking Wolf for Artist of the Year, Joanne Shenandoah & Michael Bucher's Bitter Tears Sacred Ground for Best Compilation, Jana's rendition of A Change Is Gonna Come for Song/Single of the Year, Kevin Locke's Earth Gift for Record of the Year, and American Idol Semi-finalist Charly Lowry for Best Video Among Those Honored*

Niagara Falls, NY – On Saturday October 3, 2009 the Eleventh Annual [Native American Music Awards](#) (N.A.M.A.) was held at the Seneca Niagara Hotel & Casino in Niagara Falls in front of a packed house that featured consistently outstanding live music performances along with an emotionally charged Hall of Fame induction in honor of the late **Ritchie Valens**.

Taking this year's top honors are; **Joanne Shenandoah & Michael Bucher's Bitter Tears Sacred Ground** for Best Compilation, **Jana Mashonee's** rendition of Sam Cooke's, *A Change Is Gonna Come* with **Derek Miller** for Song/Single of the Year, **Jan Michael Looking Wolf** for Artist of the Year, **Skylar Wolf** for Debut Artist of the Year, **Will and Lil Jess** for Debut Duo/Group of the Year, **Kevin Locke's Earth Gift** for Record of the Year, and American Idol Semi-finalist **Charly Lowry** for Best Video for her long form video featuring her song, *Movin On*.

Hosted with grace, class, style, humor and even professional music talent by actor **Gil Birmingham**, others on hand at the Awards ceremony included: **Shane Yellowbird** who won for Best Country Recording, **Atsiaktonkie** who won for Best Folk Recording, Flutist of the Year **JJ Kent**, **Wind Spirit Drum** whose recording *Amazing Grace* took Best Gospel Inspirational Recording, **Thunder Hawk Singers** for Best Historical Recording, **Gabriel Ayala** for Best Instrumental Recording, **Bryan Akipa** For Best Male Artist, **Eagle & Hawk** for Best Rock Recording, **Rezhogs** for Best Rap Hip Hop Recording, **Oshkii Giizhik Singers** for Best Traditional Recording, **Michael Searching Bear** for Best World Music Recording, and **Michael Brant DeMaria** for the Native Heart Award.

Other nominees in attendance included; **Benjamin Grimes**, **Kelly Montijo Fink**, **Jackie Tice**, **Mike Serna**, **Pappy Johns Band**, **Jimmy Shendo**, **Augusta Cecconi Bates**, **Douglas Blue Feather**, **Yvonne St Germaine** and **Donna Kay** who all participated in the program.

Capping the evening's ceremonies were consistently transcendent and flawless performances beginning with drum group **Young Gunz**, **Dallas Washkahat and Fawn Wood**, classical guitarist **Gabriel Ayala**, **Eagle & Hawk**, soprano opera singer **Jennifer M Stevens** accompanied by composer Augusta Cecconi-Bates, **Joanne Shenandoah and Michael Bucher** who performed material from their award-winning recording, Lifetime Achievement Recipient **Stevie Salas** pumped it up with original Pearl Jam drummer **Dave Abbruzesse** and bass player **TM Stevens** of Shocka Zooloo and the late James Brown, and a spectacular rendition of Stevie Ray Vaughn's *Pride & Joy* by the show's host **Gil Birmingham** and nominee **Jimmy Wolf**. **Darryl Tonemah** gave a rising performance in his trademarked barefeet, **Jana's** riveting vocals were unmatched, **Shane Yellowbird** showcased material for his upcoming Grand Ole Opry appearance, and new artist **Jace Martin** captured the audience with his Ritchie Valens tribute song, *We Belong Together*.

**Tommy Allsup**, original guitarist of the Buddy Holly band who flipped a coin with Ritchie Valens for the last seat on their ill-fated plane, bought the audience to tears as Allsup, who became emotional and choked up as he recapped and retold the story of his tour mate Ritchie Valens and his tragic end.

Following the Hall of Fame induction and Ritchie's sister, Irma's acceptance speech, Tommy Allsup, who is an enrolled member of the Cherokee Nation, joined Ritchie's little brother, Mario, and his group, **The Backyard Blues Band**, who rocked the house

and performed a special extended rendition of "La Bamba".

N.A.M.A. and its Advisory Board contingency would like to congratulate all the winners and nominees and proudly honors these legendary performers and songwriters who have been leading forces in the Native American music community.

The Native American Music Awards & Association, founded in 1998, is the world's leading membership-based association consisting of music industry professionals directly involved in the recording and distribution of traditional and contemporary Native American Music initiatives. The growing success of the Awards show now features over one hundred and fifty nominees annually, with at least one third of those nominees being new artists. For the past eleven years the Awards has set industry standards for professional Native American musicians who are gaining greater acceptance and exposure from both national and international audiences.

See below for a complete list of winners

## **ELEVENTH ANNUAL AWARD WINNERS**

### **ARTIST OF THE YEAR**

**Jan Michael Looking Wolf**

*The Looking Wolf Project*

### **BEST BLUES RECORDING**

*Dancing In The Rain*

**Graywolf Blues Band**

### **BEST COMPILATION RECORDING**

*Bitter Tears Sacred Ground*

**Joanne Shenandoah & Michael Bucher**

### **BEST COUNTRY RECORDING**

*Life Is Calling My Name*

**Shane Yellowbird**

### **DEBUT ARTIST OF THE YEAR**

**Skylar Wolf**

*Devil's Son*

### **DEBUT DUO / GROUP OF THE YEAR**

**Will & Lil Jess**

*Reservation Nights*

### **BEST FEMALE ARTIST**

**Joy Harjo**

*Winding Through The Milky Way*

### **BEST FOLK RECORDING**

*Four Wolves Prophecy*

**Atsiaktonkie**

### **FLUTIST OF THE YEAR**

**JJ Kent**

*Ta Te' Topa Win*

### **BEST GOSPEL/INSPIRATIONAL RECORDING**

*"Amazing Grace"*

*Lenape Spirits*

**Wind Spirit Drum**

### **GROUP OF THE YEAR**

**Brule'**

*Lakota Piano II*

### **BEST HISTORICAL RECORDING**

*Native Pride***Thunder Hawk Singers****BEST INSTRUMENTAL RECORDING***Tango!***Gabriel Ayala****BEST MALE ARTIST****Bryan Akipa***Songs From The Black Hills***BEST NATIVE AMERICAN CHURCH RECORDING***Peyote Ways***Primeaux & Mike****BEST NEW AGE RECORDING***Deep Within***Tony Redhouse****BEST POP RECORDING***Na Unu Nahai (Shape Shifter)***Apryl Allen****BEST POW WOW RECORDING***Band of Brothers***Midnite Express****BEST PRODUCER****Kelly Parker***Out Of The Blue***BEST RAP / HIP HOP RECORDING***All Day All Night***Rezhogs****RECORD OF THE YEAR***Earth Gift***Kevin Locke****BEST ROCK RECORDING***Sirensong***Eagle & Hawk****SONG/SINGLE OF THE YEAR***“A Change Is Gonna Come”***Jana Mashonee****SONGWRITER OF THE YEAR****Samantha Crain***The Confiscation: A Musical Novella***BEST SPOKEN WORD RECORDING***The Great Story From The Sacred Book***Rain Song/Terry & Darlene Wildman****BEST TRADITIONAL RECORDING***It Is A New Day***Oshkii Giizhik Singers****BEST VIDEO***“Movin On”***Charly Lowry & Aaron Locklear**

**BEST WORLD MUSIC RECORDING***Ceremony***Michael Searching Bear****NATIVE HEART****Michael Brant DeMaria***Siyotanka***LIVING LEGEND****Tommy Allsup****HALL OF FAME****Ritchie Valens***Submitted by Native American Music Awards*

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