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## Winners Announced At Eleventh Annual Native American Music Awards

**Email:** [Nammys@aol.com](mailto:Nammys@aol.com)  
**Url:** <http://www.nativeamericanmusicawards.com>

New York, NY – 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 over 30 music category presentations, consistently outstanding live music performances along with an emotionally charged Hall of Fame induction in honor of the late Ritchie Valenz.

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

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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 Abbruzzese 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

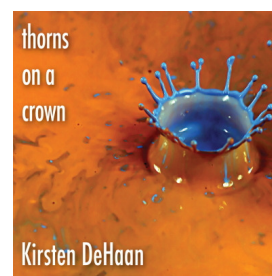
Dancing In The Rain  
Graywolf Blues Band

##### BEST COMPILATION RECORDING

Bitter Tears Sacred Ground  
Joanne Shenandoah & Michael Bucher



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## 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

Lifetime Achievement  
Stevie Salas

LIVING LEGEND  
Tommy Allsup

HALL OF FAME  
Ritchie Valens

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