



Zackariah and the Prophets Memorial Award Application

Cluster Stars and Sandra Sutter

I respectfully submit my application for the Zackariah and the Prophets Memorial Award category.

I have been living in Calgary for many years, and have progressed through various projects and bands to a place in time where the Elders I work with (Reg and Rose Crowshoe from Piikani First Nation) asked me to share my own music with the world. Because of that request and my commitment to ensuring that I walk in a good way in this world, Cluster Stars was born.

I am a recording artist and singer-songwriter and have performed at many different venues across western Canada. I sing, write and perform in a variety of styles including contemporary Indigenous, Americana, folk, country, jazz and rock. I am inspired by my Indigenous heritage and have been active in the arts, particularly music, for many years.

In May I was awarded an Esquao award from the Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women, and will receive an award in August from the Aboriginal Role Models of Alberta, both in the Arts category.

I am the Aboriginal Partnerships Manager for the PTW Group of Companies and the Executive Director for the Circle for Aboriginal Relations Society. I sit on several Indigenous serving boards and committees across Canada. It is my honour to live and breathe

the concepts I think, speak and sing about every day. The work that I do fuels the passion that is Cluster Stars.

Cluster Stars was created to share the knowledge, beauty, wisdom, strength and resilience of The First People with other cultures. The songs take you on a safe although at times an emotional journey starting with our connection to the land and nature, traveling through difficult circumstances both historical and current, towards healing, wisdom, and hope. The album has been nominated for 11 Industry awards, receiving a Native American Music Award for Best Americana recording in September and an Indigenous Music Award for Best Producer/Engineer in May.

The album was recorded with producers and JUNO-winners Vince Fontaine and Chris Burke-Gaffney. It was started in ceremony. All content was vetted by Reg and Rose Crowshoe, and Reg is a performer on the album. Including fiddle, bagpipes, a hand drum and an honour song in the project help to ground the work in the traditions of my Indigenous, European and Métis heritage and serve to differentiate messages that are connected through common musical and vocal elements. The album cover art visually reinforces our connection to the land, nature and women, who are also represented throughout the album lyrics.

We continue to showcase the material at different venues ranging from bare bones intimate to full production with visuals. Material from Cluster Stars is featured in a live play created by Strathmore High School (New Blood-the Dance Show) and a short film by Tito Gomez that I also had the honour of acting in (The Healing).

Our Calgary concert series starts in August. Stay tuned!