

NEWS RELEASE

SANDRA SUTTER

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Custer Stars wins “Best Americana” at Native American Music Awards

Seneca, New York, October 12, 2018 – Sandra Sutter’s debut album, *Cluster Stars*, was recognized today as the Best Americana recording at the Native American Music Awards (NAMAs) in Seneca, New York.

The Calgary singer-song writer also received three other nominations at the NAMAs, including Best Female Artist, Song of the Year and Best Pop Recording.

“I am truly honoured that *Cluster Stars* was recognized at an event dedicated to missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls,” says Sutter, who is well known for her work with Aboriginal communities and non-profit organizations. “My hope is that some of my songs bring comfort, hope and healing to family and friends who have lost or are missing loved ones.”

Released in February, 2018, *Cluster Stars* is a unique blend of songs aimed at creating a spiritual and emotional bond between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.

Produced by JUNO-winners, Vince Fontaine (Eagle & Hawk / Indian City) and Chris Burke-Gaffney, *Cluster Stars* is a powerful folk-pop album that explores themes of Indigenous and non-Indigenous dialogue, reconciliation and Indigenous women’s empowerment.

“*Cluster Stars* is meant as a bridge between world views, an opportunity for people to explore their own thoughts and feelings, and a safe space for expression and healing,” Sutter explains.

How Many Times, for example, speaks to the issue of murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls, and is meant to open our hearts and minds toward understanding the decades of trauma that many Indigenous women have suffered. “The song reminds us that many of our struggles as marginalized people are intergenerational, but there’s hope that we can break this cycle,” she says.

Song of Heaven was written in support of people suffering from a trauma – whether it’s due to a personal experience or from the loss of a loved one, the song is meant to create a safe space for people to share their stories and heal. “Although this song was inspired by a traditional honour song and by war veterans suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, it also provides support for anyone suffering from any kind of loss or trauma in their life.”



Lyrical and musically, the album was both inspired and endorsed by prominent Piikani First Nation Elders (Chief) Dr. Reg and Rose Crow Shoe. *Cluster Stars* is named for their family teepee, capturing moments when the moon shines through the teepee, creating a star cluster image on the ground.

Sutter, a Cree-Metis who was adopted and raised by a non-Indigenous family, was recently nominated for the Indigenous Songwriter of the Year at the Canadian Folk Music Awards to be held in Calgary, Nov. 30-Dec. 1. *Cluster Stars* was previously nominated in four categories at the Indian Summer Music Festival in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, where Sandra performed with Eagle and Hawk.

To learn more about the inspiration behind each song, visit:

<https://sandrasutter.bandzoogle.com/artist-s-notes>

For Sandra's complete profile, visit: <https://sandrasutter.bandzoogle.com/about>

Listen to individual songs by visiting: <https://sandrasuttermusic.bandcamp.com/releases> or download the album on iTunes.



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