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Crowd Hits Dance Floor at NAMA

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The Native American Music Awards took place at the Seneca Niagara Casino on Saturday and opened with the sounds of drumming reverberating through the air. The audience watched intently as the many individuals dressed in colorful native dress walked slowly down the aisle.

Later on in the program, the Cherokee National Youth sang a song in the Cherokee language. They sang with great melody and harmony together, and they certainly were a crowd pleaser.

Once the crowd was warmed up, the rock band Redbone performed their hit "Come and Get Your Love." They moved the crowd even more. They had the crowd dancing and giving lots of applause afterwards. Then to add to the excitement they were joined on stage by Janice Marie Johnson from Taste of Honey. She came on stage playing guitar and began to perform her famous single "Boogie Oogie Oogie." They really got the dancers moving. People were leaving their seats and joining the dance floor. Johnson got the crowd clapping along with her. The dance floor became a sea of bodies. Then some traditionally dressed American Indians joined her on the stage. Johnson said that the crowd needed even more native inspiration which caused even more traditionally garbed American Indians to join her.

The audience waited in anticipation to hear the award winners. "Nammy" recipients were Artist of the Year, Jim Boyd for Blues to Bluegrass, Best Female Artist, Nicole for Deep Dreams, and Best Country Recording Tracy Bone for No Lies.

Jan Michael Looking Wolf received a Flutist of the Year "nammy" for Unity.

Wolf said, "I want to thank the Creator for the gift of being able to create music."

Edmund Bull received a Best Male Artist "nammy" for Follow Your Dreams. After he received the award he said, "I just want to thank my producer that believed in me."

The Breeze from Six Nations, Ontario was nominated for a "nammy" for debut group of the year. They didn't win this category. Guitarist Carter Bomberry said, "We were flattered that we've been nominated for a few other awards shows within the past year with no wins but plenty of prospective jobs and great exposure. We're glad to be a part of this and be out doing our music. It [our heritage] affected us in how we interpreted our dreams which are a big part of our culture."

Rickey Medlocke from Lynyrd Skynyrd and Blackfoot, said how he felt to be inducted into the NAMA Hall of Fame. "After being passed over by the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, this was cooler. This is better and this just thrills me."

Medlocke admitted that his grandfather played a big part in his musical development occurring at such an early age. "Also because I grew up with him and they legally adopted me and he was a delta blues musician."

Commenting on what it has been like to be with Lynyrd Skynyrd again for the past twelve years he said, "It's been a rebirth kind of thing. It's been a thing where it's been at this level and it's brought back to rock again and it's a great honor and pleasure to be with those guys."

Medlock also talked about his favorite body of work. "Probably more or less some of the early Blackfoot stuff and some of the early Lynyrd Skynyrd. [It] Encompasses some of the southern rock with blues and country."

Then he spoke about how his heritage has influenced his career. "My heritage has influenced me to be able to go out and to speak and represent a nation of people and it makes me very proud to be of the blood. It makes me very proud to the max."