

Local artists nominated for national music awards



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Local men Tim Brooks and Faran Sohappy both participated in the recording of a song nominated for both the Indian Summer Music Awards and the Native American Music Awards.

"Grand Coulee resident Faran Sohappy worked as an engineer and Coulee Dam resident Tim Brooks played the flute on a song called Nature Walk, written by singer/songwriters Joan Hammel and Rebecca Slone Rivera," a Sept. 21 press release from Hammel's company Paxton Productions states.

Hammel and Slone Rivera are based in Chicago, Illinois where the song was started. Hammel travelled to the Colville Indian Reservation, where she met Sohappy, in 2017 as part of an artist residency through the National Park Service.

There, Hammel and Sohappy began collaborating at a recording studio set up at the Nespelem Community Center.

Sohappy invited his uncle, Tim Brooks, to play flute on the track, which was then emailed back to Paxton Productions in Chicago for completion in 2018, placing it within the time period of eligible songs for this year's awards.

The song is about the joy of nature and contains lyrics honoring Native American culture.

The work is nominated for Best Folk Recording at the Native American Music Awards, or NAMMYs, where the winners will be announced in Niagara Falls, New York on Nov. 2.

For the NAMMYs, the public may vote for a nominee. Their votes will be weighed along with the votes of the NAMMY members to determine the winner. Votes can be cast at <https://www.nativeamericanmusicawards.com/vote-now>.

Sohappy is looking for funds for a planeticket to the event and a "gofundme" page has been set up at <https://www.gofundme.com/4z4pbn-send-faran-to-the-nammys>.

"It's hard to put into words - it's pure excitement," Sohappy said. "I have never been to New York at all. To be able to go to the Native American Music Awards, it is very exciting."

The song was nominated, but did not win, for the Native Spirit category at the Indian Summer Music Awards, which were announced last weekend.

The song is released on Paxton Productions' record label Baby Mary Records, which "has a major distribution deal" to iTunes, Spotify and more, Hammel said, making the song available around the world.

A link to a Youtube video of the song will be included in the online edition of this article.