

Jon Chandler Receives WWA Spur Award for Best Song

Denver, CO., April 2 - Western Writers of America has announced winners of the 2009 Spur Awards, with Colorado-based singer/songwriter and author Jon Chandler receiving the Best Song Spur for his song *Linwood*, a look at the final days of notorious frontier legend Doc Holliday's life. *Linwood* appears on Chandler's newly-released CD *The Grand Dame of the Rockies – Songs of the Hotel Colorado and the Roaring Fork Valley*.

The award is Chandler's second Spur, following the Medicine Pipe Bearer (Spur) Award he received in 1999 for his novel, *The Spanish Peaks*.

"I'm beyond pleased," said Chandler. "This is only the second year the Spur has been awarded for Best Song, and with the possible exception of a Grammy, I can't imagine a better validation of my efforts in the Western Music genre."

Linwood anchors a collection of songs dealing with historical and contemporary takes on the Glenwood Springs, Colorado area. According to Chandler, "I work closely with the Historic Hotel Colorado in Glenwood Springs, and pitched the idea of a CD reflecting on the area as well as the Hotel Colorado's importance to the Roaring Fork Valley to the Hotel's Managing Partner and General Manager."

Managing Partner David B. Storm of Denver-based Providence Hospitality Partners and former Hotel Colorado General Manager Larry MacDonald (now with Providence's Historic Plains Hotel in Cheyenne, Wyoming) saw value in the concept and financed the project, with *The Grand Dame of the Rockies* released on Chandler's independent label, Arroyo Records. The Hotel hosted a CD release concert by Chandler and his band in November 2008 where the new songs were presented to the Glenwood Springs community. The project contains ten Chandler compositions with storylines ranging from Ute mysticism to Arbuckle's coffee, from Teddy Roosevelt's western adventures to a couple's golden anniversary.

According to Storm, "Jon has such a purely western persona, and is known as a premier traditionalist in both his writing and music careers. His take on the Hotel Colorado's place as a Colorado landmark, as well as Glenwood Springs' reputation as a national jewel, is unique and artful."

The plot behind *Linwood* has been on Chandler's mind since high school, when he visited Tombstone, Arizona and was smitten by the legends of Wyatt Earp and Doc Holliday. "As a kid, I devoured anything I could read or listen to about the Old West," he explained. "It became my abiding passion, and Doc Holliday in particular exemplified my view of the frontier as being both lawless and noble."

"I wanted to get into Doc's head, so I reread a couple of biographies before working on the song. Conceptually, the song fit the project perfectly since Doc died from tuberculosis in Glenwood Springs."

The Grand Dame of the Rockies was produced by Jon Chandler and John Macy, and recorded at Macy Sound Studios in Denver, utilizing many of the area's premier musicians. Chandler will receive the Spur Award on June 20 at the Western Writers of America's annual convention in Oklahoma City.

A seventh-generation Coloradan, Chandler is the author of two novels, *The Spanish Peaks* and *Wyoming Wind*, and two non-fiction books, *Conversations* (the History of Westminster, Colorado) and *A Century of Dignity – the History of Olinger/Crown Hill*. He is in the final stages of editing his new novels, *He Was No Hero* and *The Diamond Country*, and has released six CDs of original music. A new CD, *I'm Still Here*, will be released in September 2009.

The Spur Awards, given annually for distinguished writing about the American West, are among the oldest and most prestigious in American literature. In 1953, when the awards were established by WWA, awards were given to the best western novel, best historical novel, best juvenile, and best short story. Since then the awards have been broadened and today, Spurs are offered for the best western novel (short novel), best novel of the west (long novel), best original paperback novel, best short story, best short nonfiction. Also, best contemporary nonfiction, best biography, best history, best juvenile fiction and nonfiction, best TV or motion picture drama, best TV or motion picture documentary, best first novel and best song.