



Lifetime achievement for Vinson and Martineau

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Singer-songwriter Laura Vinson and her husband, Dave Martineau, are nominated for a Lifetime Achievement award at Hinton's Arts on Fire - Mayor's Evening for the Arts Awards gala on March 1.

Currently away on vacation, the couple feels honoured to be recognized in this way and wishes they could be there to receive the award themselves.

"I'm thrilled, I'm absolutely pleased to no end that they would think of us in that way," said Vinson in a phone interview from their sunny vacation spot in Mexico.

The duo currently reside in Hinton where they own a music store and a bed and breakfast with a recording studio located outside of Hinton towards the mountains.

With long music careers behind them, they are still actively creating music, taking part in award-winning projects and helping the community through the music store and studio.

"We also have a big music school at our store that has a fairly high enrollment, we have a lot of kids and adults that come to that school," said Martineau.

"I also sell local artists, anybody that has CDs to sell from Hinton I sell them in that store."

Vinson and Martineau want to use their experience to help people understand the industry, how to publish their music and what their publishing rights are.

"A lot of people don't know that and we can help them with that," said Vinson.

Vinson and Martineau both started playing music as teenagers and never quit their dream, "I always wanted to do music, from the time I was little. I was writing poetry when I was eight years old. Always yearned to play an instrument and when I was 13 I got enough money to buy a

guitar," said Vinson.

Vinson, who was born in Brule, started her career as a country star over 45 years ago, and later became the face of the Mountain Métis in western Canada with a mix of Cherokee, Cree English and French. Many of her songs talk about the life of the North American Indigenous and their traditions. Aboriginal dancers often make appearances paired with her bands music and ancient rhythms and melodies.

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Laura Vinson
Singer/Songwriter

Martineau, a singer, songwriter, producer and multi-instrumentalist, originally met Vinson through their mutual label, Royalty Records. He plays multiple instruments including guitar, pedal steel guitar, dobro, lap steel and other unique stringed instruments. He's a key part of the band and is a co-songwriter and producer.

In the late 1980s, while Vinson performed in Europe with her country band she needed a soundman and asked Martineau if he would come to Europe, so he did.

"Then the guitar player quit and I asked Dave to play guitar, and he got me a soundman. Then the steel player quit, so Dave stepped in and played steel and got me a guitar player, and the rest is history," said Vinson.

After this, Vinson started writing more about indigenous stories and in 1996, Vinson created a

theater show around her award-winning album "Voices On The Wind." It became an international success and travelled through Europe, Asia, and North America.

Since then, Martineau has provided instrumental and vocal tracks on numerous recordings across western Canada and has performed with people such as Tommy Banks, The Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, Ian Tyson, Crystal Gayle, KD Lang, Tommy Hunter, Ronnie Prophet, Dick Damron and Wilf Carter.

Together they've been nominated and have won a plethora of awards including at the Canadian Country Music Association Awards, and the JUNOs.

Their time in Hinton has allowed them to work more with the Willmore Wilderness Foundation creating film scores for their documentaries, based on indigenous culture and horseback culture, and the guiding outfitters. The foundation works to preserve local history, and focus on education.

"I'm getting to write about what I really love and what I really think people need to know about. The whole Mountain Métis culture is something that people aren't aware of," said Vinson, who just finished writing scores with her husband for four films that are being nominated for awards.

Martineau and Vinson aren't done yet. They are looking to put out a double CD with songs done for films, they have more documentary music to write, they have upcoming performances in Yellowknife and Vinson is also set to speak at the University of Alberta about her songs and stories in March.

Other nominees for the Arts on Fire awards include Eilidh Tew (Performing Arts), Sarah Schneider (Performing Arts), Makayla Morrison (Visual Arts), and Madison Sharman (Culture and Heritage). Arts On Fire begins at 6:45 pm at The West Fraser Guild.