

## Mp3 Coalition - Awake



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Blues rock featuring haunting lyrics and expressive guitars 10 MP3 Songs COUNTRY: Country Blues, ROCK: Americana Details: 2005 ISMA Nominee Category: Best Alt. Rock Album AWAKE is the second album produced by Coalition. The album features lyrics and vocals by Tony Rosales with Duwayne Begay on guitar, Elton Sloan on bass, and Alex Begay on drums. Written and recorded during the heady rise and tumultuous first years as a group, the album is darker lyrically and features more intricate guitar work than its critically acclaimed predecessor CRY. Fans of the group will be pleased to see that the band continues to evolve musically and professionally in their individual roles as performer, poet, composer and producer. ----- BIOGRAPHY: In the burgeoning music scene of the Navajo Reservation, one Dine band stands out from the sea of heavy metal and country bands. Tuba City-based Coalition sing the Navajo blues and many people are listening. Coalition is: Tony Rosales (vocals/guitar), Duwayne Begay (guitar), Elton Sloan (bass guitar) and Alex Begay (drums). The band formed in 2002 and released "Cry," their debut album independently, which generated a lot of buzz around Indian Country with broadcasts on several native radio stations across the country. Coalition is set to release "Awake," the band's second full-length album of songs on love and loss. The band has been received as a blues band, but the diverse musical backgrounds of the band members mix in elements of punk, blues, metal and rock, according to lyricist and singer Tony Rosales. "When we first started, we never sat down and discussed what our music should sound like. A lot of people say we sound like a blues band but I think we are more pop rock with a taste of blues in the mix," Rosales said. The acoustic harmonies and lyrics are reminiscent to the style of Tom Petty, although the vocals of Rosales are inherently more blue collar. The songs speak of tough love: "Heartbreaker," "Shelter" and "Cry" epitomizing the lovelorn look back at what once was. Rosales said the word 'coalition' always stood out in his mind as a great name for a band during his

youth. Eventually the union of diverse elements would be discussed between the quartet and the band Coalition was born. Rosales and Duwayne Begay worked as security guards before the formation of Coalition. The band's first batch of songs came from impromptu jam sessions between Rosales and Begay during their watch. "The songs were written while Duwayne and I were working as security guards. There was nothing much to do as security guards, so we'd bring our guitars to work and play until our shift was over," Rosales said. Band manager Iris Price-Nez knew the band had talent and encouraged the group to release their independently produced album. Price-Nez said the rapid success of "Cry" resulted from the song themes people identified with and the pure originality of the compositions. "The album was already finished by the time I met them but they were nervous about releasing it and almost didn't. People always comment on the quality of the music and the level of workmanship that went into [Cry]," she said. People are looking forward to the nine tracks that comprise the second Coalition release, "Awake." Rosales said all of the tracks on "Awake" are good, especially since the band wrote all the songs collectively as a band before recording. It will be interesting to see how the new album will be received, especially since Rosales received emails from people who related to songs on the debut album to real life situations. "We get emails from people saying a certain song from the debut album helped them cope with certain problems in their life," Rosales said. "It's a strange feeling for us, but I guess when I think about it, writing the song was therapy for me, so why not for others who listen to the music?" Alex Begay recorded both Coalition albums on his independent label, "The Shack." The Shack is exactly what the name implies, a shanty located directly behind the Begay residence in Tuba City. Alex Begay and Elton Sloan are also members of Downplay, a Dine punk band from Tuba City. When Begay is not recording music at The Shack, the structure will occasionally host concerts of the punk rock variety, featuring Downplay and friends. Through the years, Begay has brought native and national acts for live performances at The Shack. Most notably, Begay has brought Link 80 (Asian Man Records), The Slackers (Hellcat Records) and Total Chaos (Epitaph Records) to The Shack for shows that brought in people from across the reservation. Besides recording albums for Coalition and Downplay, Begay has also produced albums for other Dine bands like Ethnic De Generation and The Stillbornes. Although Coalition is a 100 native band, don't expect to see them walk on stage with feathers hanging off their guitars anytime soon. Rosales said the group will let the music speak for itself. "I think there are a lot of misconceptions with native music because when you hear the word 'native music,' the first thought is flutes drums and chants," Rosales

said. "Music is such a wide medium and I don't think there are any rules, you write what you feel."

Coalition will be in the native music scene for the long haul and band manager Price-Nez said the band will keep on playing: If you book them, they will come. "The guys have played on the back of flatbed trucks in the heat and dust and bitter cold. They've played on pallets when there was no stage and played in places where there were hardly any people," Price-Nez said. So yes, if you book them, they will come.

Coalition's second album "Awake" will be in stores across Indian Country later this month. Information:

coalitionrocks.com Rick Abasta, Dine band strikes chord on rez: Coalition sing, feel the blues, Native

American Times

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