

From the Canadian prairies in southern Alberta comes one of Canada's best folk/roots songwriters, John Wort Hannam. John is known for his unique take on the simple day-to-day dramas of common folk through songs that map the landscapes of both the human heart and this vast continent of ours. He is a born story-teller with a keen eye for the quirky and lyrics that create stories behind the songs; comparisons have been made to Gordon Lightfoot, James Keelaghan, and John Prine. His emotive voice is a strong and constant presence. John has achieved some fine accolades in a few short years.

2009 Grand Prize Winner - Calgary Folk Music Festival Songwriting Competition
2008 North American Folk Alliance Award Nominee
2007 Double Western Canadian Music Award Nominee
2007 New Folk Winner - Kerrville Texas New Folk Songwriting Competition
2007 Grand Prize Winner - Calgary Folk Music Festival Songwriting Competition
2005 Double Canadian Folk Music Award Nominee
2005 Western Canadian Music Award Nominee
2004 Grand Prize Winner - Calgary Folk Music Festival Songwriting Competition

For five years John Wort Hannam was a fulltime school-teacher on the largest First Nations reserve in Canada – The Kainai Nation, part of the Blackfoot Tribe. He taught creative writing to grade 9 students. In 1997 a friend played him a Loudon Wainwright III record and John was hooked by the music and stories. In 1998 he bought a guitar and learnt some chords. In 2003 he quit teaching to pursue the dream of being a working musician.

He released his debut CD “pocket full of holes” in 2002 followed up with “Dynamite and ‘Dozers” in 2004 and then his third full-length CD “Two-Bit Suit” in spring of 2007. John recently recorded his fourth CD “Queen’s Hotel” to be released in the fall 2009.

His many appearances have included a 2009 mainstage performance at the Kerrville Folk Fest, a 2008 performance at London's Trafalgar Square, and the 2006 Smithsonian Folklife Festival in Washington DC.

Thriving on live performance, John Wort Hannam is truly happy when he is on the road playing and connecting personally with an audience. John Wort Hannam has performed as a solo, duo, and trio at concerts and festivals and tours extensively in Canada and the US. Recently he returned home from a highly successful mainstage set at the prestigious Kerrville Folk Festival in Texas and will now spend the summer traveling, playing and gearing up for a fall release of “**Queen’s Hotel**” that will take him across the country and into the US.

“**Queen’s Hotel**” is Wort Hannam’s fourth full-length recording. Once again Juno award winning Steve Dawson takes the helm producing 11 tracks of

authentic Canadiana folk/roots music. The writing, although true to John's narrative story-telling style, is tighter, smarter, more personal, and with a breadth of subject matter not seen on previous recordings. The upbeat "**With The Grain**" (a song for which Wort Hannam won Grand Prize at the 2009 Calgary Folk Music Festival Songwriting Competition) recalls the conversation where John tells his father he would quit teaching to attempt a shot at performing music. "**Worth A Damn**", a timeless sounding duet performed with multi-Juno award winner Jenny Whiteley is reminiscent of a John Prine/Iris Dement collaboration. Despite the title, "**Requiem For A Small Town**" is a rollicking 3 and a half-minute look at the town that just never quite made it. The poignant but catchy "**Lucky Strikes**" was written after a visit to Fort Macleod's infamous Queen's Hotel. Wort Hannam also revisits two songs from previous independent releases: "**Church of the Long Grass**" which has been called by some "the un-official anthem of southern Alberta" and "**Pier 21**" which recounts the immigration of Wort Hannam's family from the island of Jersey in the Channel Islands, UK to Canada in the late 70's.

"**Queen's Hotel**" was recorded live off the floor at Vancouver's The Factory. Musicians sat in one room facing each other in a circle and played the songs – no bed tracks, no click, and no overdubs except for a few harmonies. It captures a realness that sounds less like musicians making a record and more like musicians making music that just happened to be recorded.

With many of the same players: John Wort Hannam on guitar and tenor guitar, Steve Dawson on dobro, national, and weissenborn, John Reischman on mandolin and mandola, Rob Becker on upright bass, Geoff Hicks on percussion, and Jeanne Tolmie, Tyler Bird, and Jenny Whiteley on backing vocals, "Queen's Hotel" has a pared down and subtler sound compared to Wort Hannam's previous recordings and leans more on the folkier side of the folk/roots spectrum.