

## ***Kinnie Starr***

Tansi, Boozhoo, Hello and Welcome to The National Music Centre' Speak Up! Exhibition, celebrating the voices of Indigenous music trailblazers past, present and future.

Kinnie Starr is Mohawk, Dutch, German and Irish. Like a Hollywood movie script, she nervously took the stage in a New York City club in the mid-90s and was an instant sensation. Her debut album, *Tidy*, released in 1996, marked the beginning of her critically-acclaimed career, one in which she's always met the music industry on her own terms.

Kinnie's worked in multiple genres, including hip-hop, alternative rock, pop and EDM. She's also a visual artist and filmmaker, known to be outspoken on issues like race, gender politics, Indigenous injustices and reconciliation.

Kinnie has released eight albums to date and her music's been featured on soundtracks for TV series *The L Word* and movies *Down and Out with the Dolls* and *Thirteen*.

In 2010 Kinnie won a JUNO Award for her production on the Digging Roots' album, *We Are*. That same year she played the Winter Olympics in Vancouver, BC, and a year later she was recognized as a pioneer in hip hop alongside Michee Mee by Toronto's ManifesTO Festival.

In 2016 the issue of less than five percent of music producers being women inspired her to executive produce the acclaimed documentary *Play Your Gender*, shedding light on gender inequity in the music industry. She plans to confront what's changed – or not – in a podcast coming out in 2020.

Kinnie suffered a brain injury and other physical damage in car accident in 2015, limiting her ability to perform live. But after four years of physical rehab, she's again creating and performing, and truly a force to be reckoned with.

I'm David McLeod, curator of Speak Up! Click on more of my Curator's Comments to learn about other artists, like Kinnie Starr, whose music is a force for change. Miigwetch