

National Music Centre launches *Speak Up!* exhibition on June 14, honouring Indigenous artists making social impacts

Exhibition to highlight Jeremy Dutcher, iskwē, Tanya Tagaq, and more

(Calgary, AB — June 13, 2019) The National Music Centre (NMC) is pleased to launch a new permanent exhibition at Studio Bell, showcasing Indigenous artists making social and political impacts in Canada.

Indigenous voices are deeply connected to the landscape we live within, they have long made significant contributions within the world of music. With the support from TD, *Speak Up!* will showcase Indigenous artists who have who have, or are, making a social impact on a local, regional or national level —motivating a new generation to take action while offering a better understanding of where they come from.

The exhibition features storytelling and audio with artifacts and video being added throughout the year. Visitors will gain an understanding of each artists' personal inspiration and drive for social change, as well as their feelings on the medium of music as a tool for speaking up.

Featured artists include: Singer-songwriter and First Nations activist **Willie Dunn**, operatic vocalist and composer **Jeremy Dutcher**, trip-hop singer-songwriter **iskwē**, eight-time Grammy-nominees **Northern Cree**, legendary filmmaker and genre-defying musician **Alanis Obomsawin**, Aboriginal poet, painter, broadcaster and filmmaker **Dr. Duke Redbird**, Anishinaabe singer-songwriter and emcee **Leonard Sumner**, Ottawa-based rock band **Seventh Fire**, Inuit throat singer and experimental artist **Tanya Tagaq**, and groundbreaking Cree hip-hop group **War Party**.

"This is a vital first step to nationally recognize the important and often unrecognized contributions of Indigenous artists," says David McLeod (member of the Pine Creek First Nation), Curator of *Speak Up!* Their deep connection to their music, their stories, and their community speaks volumes to the Indigenous experience. The first 10 artists are from across the country and represent multiple genres, but their creative output to bring about understanding in the world is what truly connects them all. The timeline of the artists is from the late '60s to present day. They all have and continue to radically shift the Canadian paradigm of who First Nation, Metis and Inuit people truly are. We're certainly not done yet, there is still a wealth of Indigenous music and history needing long overdue recognition."

"If I don't use my voice, someone else will try to speak for me," says iskwē. "Music is the language I use to break my silence, and to connect with others who feel that fight bursting in their hearts."

Speak Up! precedes Indigenous Music Week at Studio Bell, from June 19 to 22, featuring a week-long celebration of music and activities in partnership with APTN, Canada's Music Incubator, Indigenous

Resilience in Music, and Sled Island. More info on all Indigenous Music Week activities can be found at studiobell.ca/whats-on.

“This exhibition is one of many ways that the National Music Centre is honouring Indigenous artists and shining a light on their legacies as artists and activists,” said Andrew Mosker, President and CEO, NMC. “Guided by the knowledge and experiences of Indigenous voices, NMC is committed to bringing about a collective process of reconciliation through our exhibitions and programs.”

Speak Up! is accessible with paid admission to Studio Bell and open to the public on June 14, 2019.

About Studio Bell, home of the National Music Centre

Studio Bell, home of the National Music Centre (NMC), is much more than a museum. A national catalyst for discovery, innovation and renewal through music, NMC is preserving and celebrating Canada’s music story inside its home at Studio Bell in Calgary’s East Village. With programming that includes on-site and outreach education programs, performances, artist incubation and exhibitions, NMC is inspiring a new generation of music lovers. For more information, please visit studiobell.ca.

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