

National Music Centre brings *Speak Up!* exhibition online on June 21 to coincide with National Indigenous Peoples Day

New additions to exhibition honouring Indigenous artists making social impacts include Northern Haze, Charlie Panigoniak, and Kinnie Starr

(Calgary, AB — June 16, 2020) The National Music Centre (NMC) is pleased to bring its previously launched *Speak Up!* exhibit online with several new additions in time for National Indigenous Peoples Day on June 21.

The online exhibit, which highlights Indigenous artists making social and political impacts in Canada, will now include Igloolik psych-rockers **Northern Haze**; the father of Inuktitut music, country-folk artist **Charlie Panigoniak**; and singer-songwriter **Kinnie Starr**, known for her blend of conscious hip hop and groove-driven pop.

"Music saved me by helping me find my voice," said Kinnie Starr. "I've always been an outlier and have learned through music to love that lane. We are all much more unique than others know. As the pressures of social media continue to back us all into little boxes, which we now call "brands", music is still a place where people can put on headphones and just feel their centres, that spot nobody else can name. That's the function of music, to light people up, make them feel strong from the inside."

Indigenous voices are deeply connected to the landscape we live within and have long made significant contributions within the world of music. With support from TD, *Speak Up!* showcases 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.

"I strongly believe that the *Speak Up!* exhibition is a great starting point to learn about Indigenous voices that are urgent, beautiful, and truly transcendent," said David McLeod (member of the Pine Creek First Nation), Curator of *Speak Up!* "For thousands of years, music has played an important and even sacred role within the lives of First Nation, Métis and Inuit peoples. Traditional music, languages, and cultural practices have withstood and survived an onslaught of colonialism. *Speak Up!* celebrates and honours the resiliency, contributions, and stories of 13 artists. It's a thrill to be a part of something so important."

Featuring music, photos, storytelling, and curator comments, the online exhibit also includes the following previously announced artists: 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**.

The launch of *Speak Up!* will coincide with National Indigenous People Day on June 21, a day that celebrates the heritage, diverse cultures, and outstanding achievements of First Nations, Inuit and Métis people. The exhibit is free online and accessible at studiobell.ca/speak-up.

“As social movements grow and protests continue around the world, this new online exhibit feels particularly timely,” said Andrew Mosker, President and CEO, NMC. “Throughout history, music has been used as a vehicle to vocalize social injustice, ignite change, and foster greater inclusivity, understanding and respect. We are proud to share the stories that amplify the voices of Indigenous artists and to work together with Indigenous communities to advance the process of reconciliation.”

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 registered charity and 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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