

Starr shines on debut CD *Tidy*

SOUND ADVICE
MARCUS AMAKER Features Editor

TIDY Kinnie Starr
 ★★½ (out of four stars)

When an artist cites Black Sabbath, De La Soul, Stevie Wonder, Elvis Costello and PJ Harvey as influences, it's no surprise the music is nearly impossible to put into one category.

This is the case with *Tidy*, the excellent debut CD from Canada's outspoken female singer-songwriter Kinnie Starr.

Kinnie Starr's music is, in equal parts, complicated, melodic, brilliant and crazy. One minute she sounds like 4 Track Demo-era PJ Harvey ("Ophelia," "Stiff Sour Lemon Rind") or an aggressive punk rocker ("Woven"). On other songs she toys with fuzzy hip-hop ("Spring Again") or funk ("Rime Gone Rong").

And just when it seems she's done it all, she throws in spoken word poetry and a bilingual song about appreciating life ("Praise!").

And surprisingly, it works brilliantly.

It would be easy to dismiss Kinnie Starr as another player in the ever-changing angst-ridden world of female rockers if you don't pay attention.

Beneath the surface, she's as passionate about visual art, knowledge and truth as she is about her music.

Proof of this lies in the linear notes on the back of the CD warning against tampons, the self-made shirts promoting masturbation, the messages of TV as

about everybody being, "like one tree grown from the sun." In "Loons," she says, "the leaves are turning generously into the colors that reside in me."

"Tidy" is an ironic name because the album is anything but neat and structured. Starr experiments often with noises and sounds.

"Um...ah" is a two-minute interlude featuring nothing but a distorted piano. "Simple" is a deceptively sexy spoken-word poem complete with bells and multi-layered vocals. "Praise!" sounds like it was inspired by African tribal music, and a lot of the other songs are interrupted by strange phone messages from

people saying things like "butter yellow...it's my favorite color."

Although the album is uneven at times, *Tidy* is a solid release from a strikingly original artist.



Kinnie Starr

"crack for the masses" and the various drawings in the CD jacket.

Proof also lies in the lyrics which speak of love and inner-peace. For example, in "Rime Gone Rong" she sings

Quilts show piece of past

QUILTS continued from page 3

Mazloomi's work has a wide range of emotion, color and subject matter. She says that her aim is to allow others to feel "the spirit of the cloth." Her "Walking on the Wild Side" shows her work is steeped in traditional patterns and textures, but a wildness dying to break free of tradition also runs through her work.

Marline O'Bryant Seabrook's "The Gallery" uses small scenes to put together a quilt storybook. Quilts from her Gullah Series piece together significant moments in African-American history and culture. A tribute quilt to Philip Simmons, an African-American blacksmith, is a must see. And her "Porgy and Bess Revisited" looks like an enormous movie poster.

Among the contemporary pieces, the museum has added its private collection of quilts, photographs and paintings from the early part of the century. A red and blue quilt, Courthouse Steps made in 1945, blends in with the spirit of the show. An old sewing machine is now on exhibit, for example. Close by, a photograph shows a woman and her children using the sewing machine in 1937.

The effect is an authentic connection to the past. In fact, a celebration of different voices and styles and techniques linked together by a common culture runs throughout the show.

The exhibit runs from May 4 through Aug. 10, on the third floor of McKissick Museum.

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