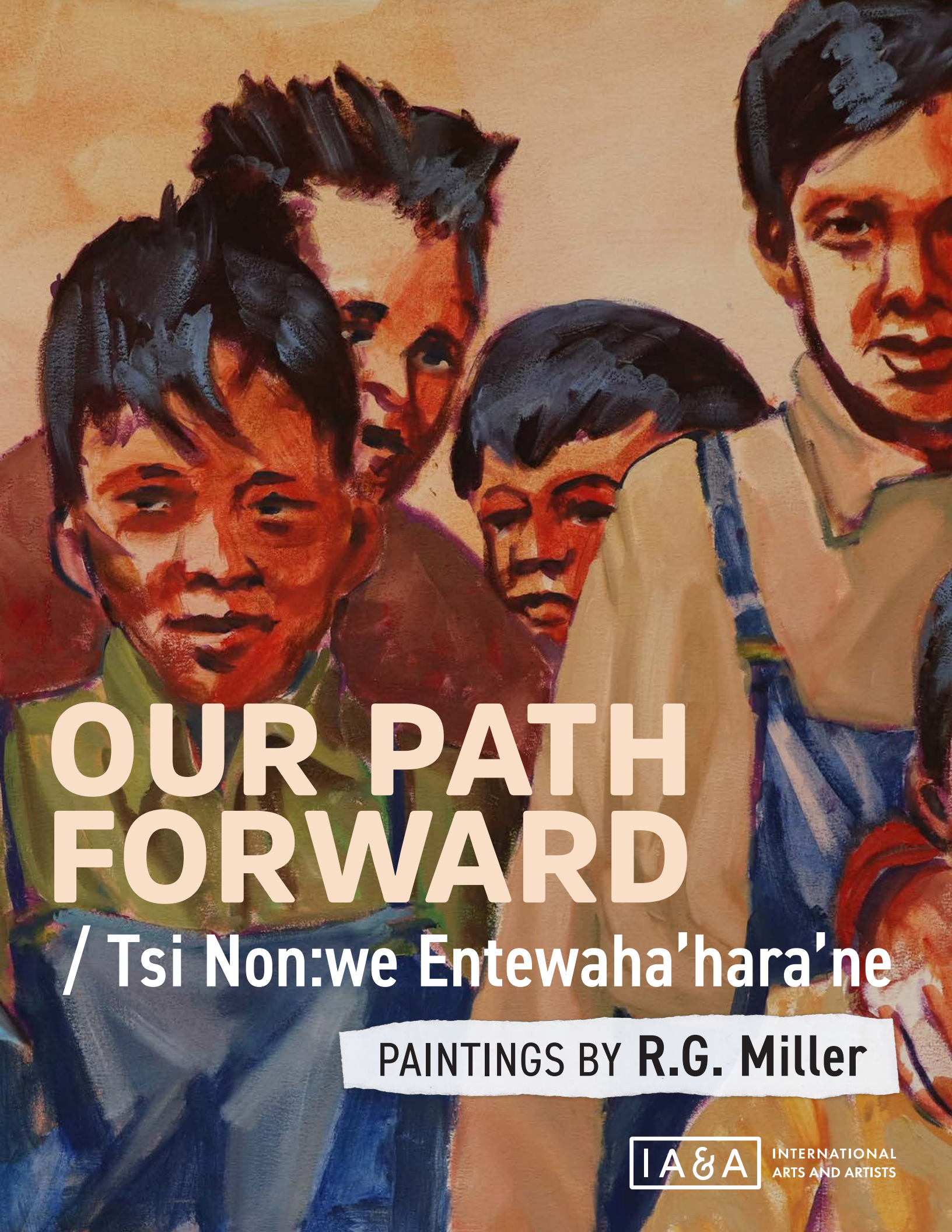




OUR PATH FORWARD

/ Tsi Non:we Entewaha'hara'ne

PAINTINGS BY R.G. Miller

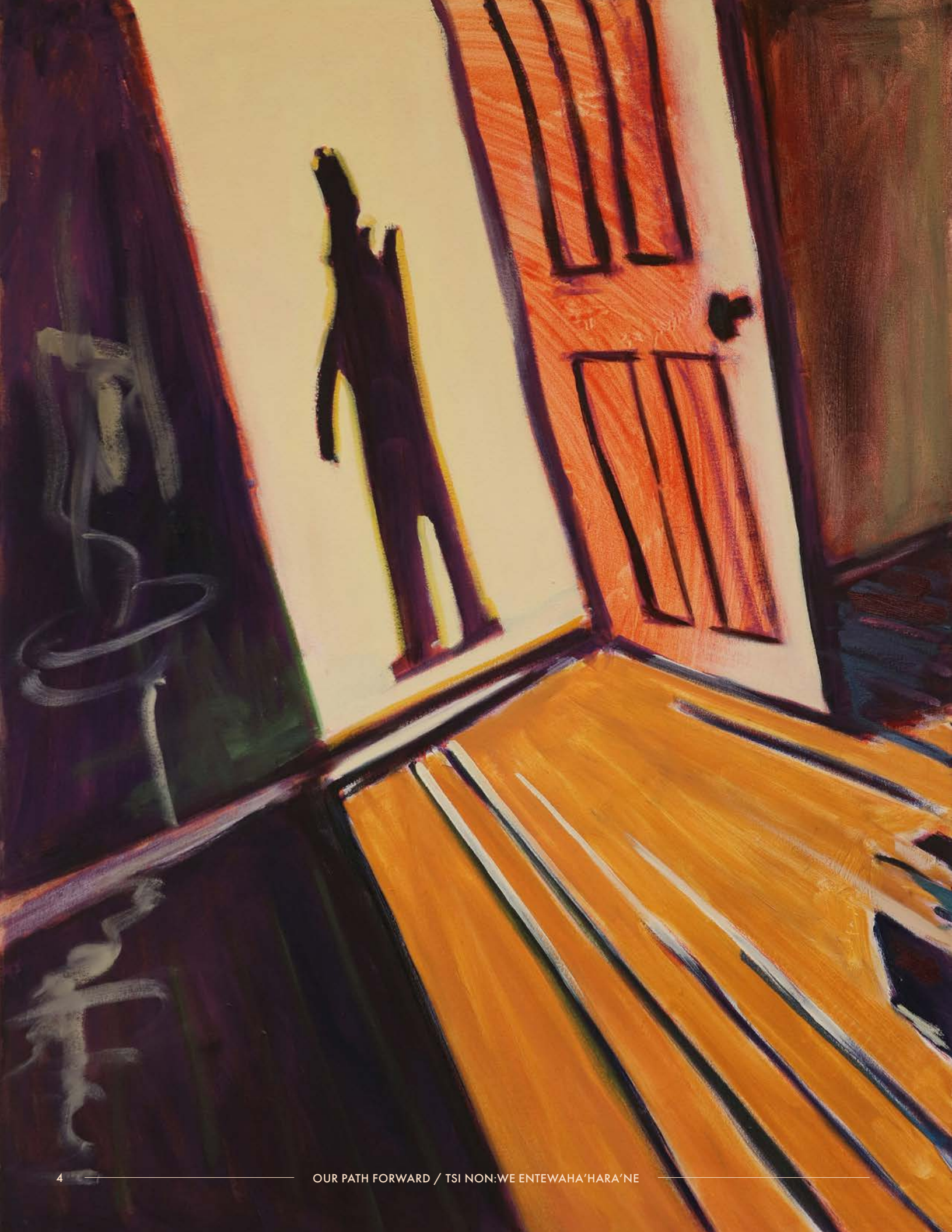


INTERNATIONAL
ARTS AND ARTISTS

OUR PATH FORWARD / Tsi Non:we Entewaha'hara'ne

PAINTINGS BY R.G. Miller





2. *They Came at Night*, 2008, Oil on canvas, 48 1/8" x 36 1/4", Image courtesy of Neal Keating, Photographed by Nicolina Scibona, © R.G. Miller.

About **R.G. MILLER:**

R. G. Miller (Six Nations Mohawk/Wolf Clan) is a painter and mixed-media artist whose work confronts the history and legacy of the Canadian Indian residential school system through deeply personal testimony. Born into the Six Nations of the Grand River community, Miller was removed from his family in 1953 at the age of two and sent to the Mohawk Institute Indian Residential School in Brantford, Ontario—known to Survivors as the Mush Hole. He remained there for 11 years.

During his time at the Mohawk Institute, Miller experienced the harsh conditions, cultural suppression, and abuse that characterized the residential school system. Drawing became an escape for Miller while at the Mush Hole. He began by first copying figures in comic books. His ability was noticed enough that he was allowed to take an art class in a school nearby. This provided a temporary reprieve from the normalized abuse that awaited him when he returned to the Mush Hole. He was released at age 14. His art draws directly from his lived experiences, depicting not only the trauma he endured but also his resiliency and survival instincts.

In 1969, he began formal art training at the Ontario College of Art (OCA—today known as OCAD University), where he excelled in painting, drawing, and printmaking. After six years training and then teaching at OCA, he continued his artistic development at the University of Toronto. During those Toronto years, he often painted with, and learned from, the Ojibwa artist Arthur Shilling (who was also a Mohawk Institute Survivor). By the 1980s, he became an independent artist and remains so to the present day. His work is found in multiple collections in Canada and the United Kingdom.

While Miller is widely known for his powerful residential school works created between 2003 and 2008, his broader practice spans more than three decades and includes vibrant portrait and landscape painting, often in a neo-expressionist style. For Miller, artmaking is both a means of storytelling and a path toward healing.

His works have been exhibited in community, cultural, and academic settings, where they serve as visual testimony and as catalyst for dialogue around truth, reconciliation, and Indigenous sovereignty.

3. *Don't Like Church*, 2008, Oil on canvas, 36 3/8" x 48 1/8", Image courtesy of Neal Keating, Photographed by Nicolina Scibona, © R.G. Miller.
4. *We Were Boys*, 2008, Oil on canvas, 48 1/8" x 36 1/4", Image courtesy of Neal Keating, Photographed by Nicolina Scibona, © R.G. Miller.



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5. *Gary in a Hole*, 2003, Oil on canvas, 25 7/8" x 25 5/8", Image courtesy of Neal Keating, Photographed by Nicolina Scibona, © R.G. Miller.

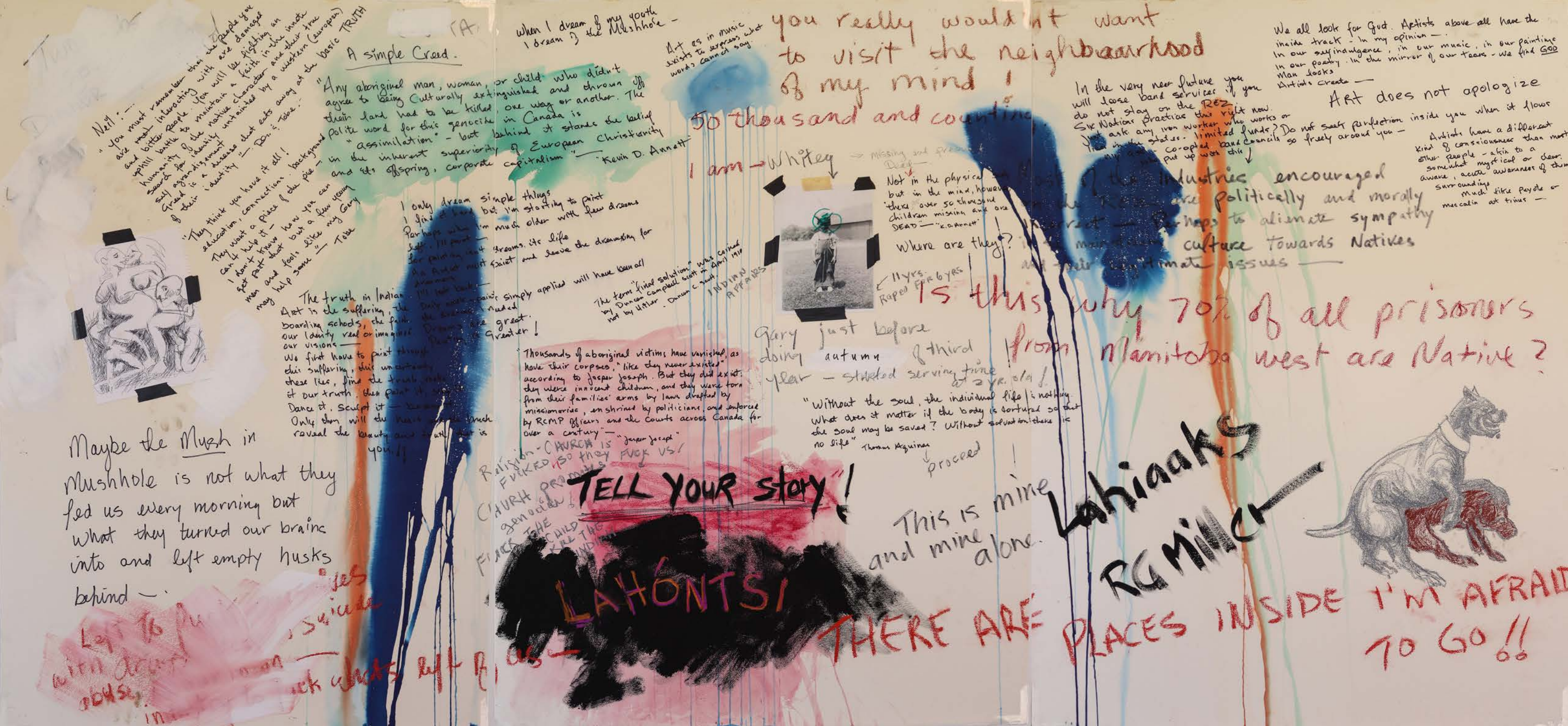
About THE EXHIBITION:

Whether you are a Survivor of an Indian residential school or are learning about the history of these institutions for the first time, *Our Path Forward / Tsi Non:we Entewaha'hara'ne: Paintings by R. G. Miller* invites you to learn about artist R.G. Miller's personal experience.

Taken from his family at the age of two, Miller spent 11 years at the Mohawk Institute—known to Survivors as the Mush Hole—a residential school in what is now Brantford, Ontario on the Six Nations reserve. The residential school system was a federally funded and church-run network of institutions in both Canada and the US, designed to forcibly assimilate Indigenous children with the ultimate goal of dismantling Indigenous nations. By removing the children from their families, languages, and cultures, these schools sought to erase Indigenous identities and replace them with Christian and settler values.

This exhibition gives form to Miller's memories of the Mush Hole, revealing not only what was taken from him, but also what survived—his resilience, resistance, and Indigenous sovereignty. His paintings convey what cannot always be expressed in words, and they resonate with the testimonies of Survivors across generations and nations.





6. Tell Your Story!, 2008, Oil on canvas, 48 1/8" x 36 1/4", Image courtesy of Neal Keating, Photographed by Nicolina Scibona, © R.G. Miller.

When one Survivor shares, others are empowered to speak, generating emotional, political, and historical momentum. Miller's visual storytelling adds a unique dimension to the testimonies of Survivors, who together have begun to reshape national conversations. The exhibition supports its

visitors through their encounter with Miller's story by providing the consulting services of trained Indigenous art therapist, Lauren Jimerson (Seneca, Heron Clan), and creating a safe space to facilitate nervous system regulation and provide resources. The exhibit includes large oil paintings, mixed

media sketches, and collages created by Miller from 2003 to 2008.

Our Path Forward is for all of us, it boldly insists on Indigenous truths and resistance; power lies in Survivors telling their stories.

7. *The Façade of Order*, 2008, Oil on canvas,
60 1/8" x 60 1/4", Image courtesy of Neal
Keating, Photographed by Nicolina Scibona,
© R.G. Miller.

HISTORY:

Established in 1831 in Brantford, Ontario, the Mohawk Institute was the first and longest-operating Indian residential school in Canada. Funded by the federal government and run by the Anglican Church, it became a model for similar institutions across the country. Over the course of its operation, thousands of children from at least 59 Indigenous Nations were sent there.

From the late-19th to the mid-20th centuries, Canada operated at least 137 federally subsidized residential schools, with more than 100 additional church-run institutions. In the United States, at least 451 federally supported Indian boarding schools were in operation. Together, these systems removed an estimated half a million Indigenous children from their homes. Many never returned.

Following the closure of the Mohawk Institute in 1970, the building and grounds were reclaimed by Indigenous nations and transformed into the Woodland Cultural Centre—a site dedicated to cultural preservation, language revitalization, and truth and reconciliation.

It was the courage of Survivors breaking the silence in the 1990s that led to the 2008 apology from the Prime Minister of Canada, reparations for nearly 90,000 Survivors, creation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and its 94 Calls to Action. Their stories have since crossed borders, spurring the 2021 launch of the U.S. Federal Indian Boarding School Initiative, which confronted a similar legacy.



8. *When I Dream of My Childhood*, 2003,
Mixed media, 55 ¼" x 112 ¾", Image
courtesy of Neal Keating, Photographed by
Nicolina Scibona, © R.G. Miller.



9. *Shaft of God / Beaten If You Skipped It*, 2008, Oil on canvas, 48 1/4" x 36 3/8", Image courtesy of Neal Keating, Photographed by Nicolina Scibona, © R.G. Miller.
10. *Always Hungry*, 2008, Oil on canvas, 42 1/4" x 35 1/8", Image courtesy of Neal Keating, Photographed by Nicolina Scibona, © R.G. Miller.



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11. *We Were Girls* (detail), 2008, Oil on canvas, 45 1/8" x 36 1/4", Image courtesy of Neal Keating, Photographed by Nicolina Scibona, © R.G. Miller.

THE BROADER STORY:

- Mary Annette Pember, *Medicine River: A Story of Survival and the Legacy of Indian Boarding Schools* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2025).
- *Sugarcane*, directed by Julian Brave NoiseCat and Emily Kassie (National Geographic Documentary Films, 2024).
- Tommy Orange, *Wandering Stars* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2024).
- Gabriel Pietrorazio, "Biden apologizes for government's role in running Native American boarding schools," NPR.org (October 26, 2024).
- September 30th: National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (Canadian day of national memorial recognizing the harmful impacts of Indian Residential Schools on Indigenous families and communities).



FRONT *Don't Like Church* (detail), 2008, Oil on canvas, 36 $\frac{3}{8}$ " x 48 $\frac{1}{8}$ ", Image courtesy of Neal Keating, Photographed by Nicolina Scibona, © R.G. Miller.

BACK Installation image of the *Tsi Non:we Entewaha'hara'ne / Our Path Forward* exhibition at the Rochester Contemporary Art Center, August 30, 2024. Photography courtesy and copyright of RoCo.

EXHIBITION SPECIFICATIONS

Number of Works

29 objects

Curator

Neal B. Keating

Organized by

Rochester Contemporary

Toured by

International Arts & Artists,
Washington, DC

Art Therapist

Venues required to contract
with consultant and trained
art therapist Lauren Jimerson
for a minimum of 10 hours

Requirements

Moderate security;
1,500 – 2,500 square feet

Participation fee

Please inquire

Shipping

International Arts & Artists
makes all arrangements;
exhibitors pay outgoing
shipping costs within the
contiguous United States

Booking Period

12 weeks

Tour

Summer 2027 – Winter 2031

Publication

For more information, contact
ProjectManager@ArtsandArtists.org

Contact

TravelingExhibitions@ArtsandArtists.org
9 Hillyer Court NW
Washington, DC 20008
202.338.0680
ArtsandArtists.org