

MUSH HOLE REMEMBERED:

R. GARY MILLER

A MEMORY-BASED EXHIBIT OF ART
BY A SURVIVOR OF AN INDIAN
RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL.

Curated for the Woodland Cultural Centre by Neal Keating



Mush Hole Remembered

R.G. MILLER



OCTOBER 19 - DECEMBER 24, 2008

Exhibition Opening Reception October 26 at 3:00 pm

This exhibition of works by R. Gary Miller, Mohawk Artist, is a testament to his life while at the Mohawk Institute from 1953-1964. The suffering and hardships he experienced while there left deep wounds, scars, and horrid memories; memories that have taken him to every level of self-destruction that one can imagine. His ability to bring these images to life and allow others to witness his life has been a part of his healing. You can witness this healing with the adjacent exhibition of his works, **THE ART OF HEALING**, which consists of distinctive landscapes showcasing nature's beauty transforming the ugliness of a child's memories of his residential school life to a peaceful and serene place.

WARNING: Not suitable for all audiences



Woodland Cultural Centre

184 Mohawk St. Brantford

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ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL
CONSEIL DES ARTS DE L'ONTARIO

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
Affaires indiennes et du Nord Canada

Canada Council
Conseil des Arts

poster from original opening

**MUSEUM
ENTRANCE**



WARNING

CONTENT & ARTWORK MAY BE
OFFENSIVE TO SOME VIEWERS

ADMITTANCE 14 YEARS and over
with ADULT ACCOMPANIMENT

The exhibit

- includes ca. 44 objects.
- is designed in four sections:
 - Introduction
 - Evocation
 - Genocide
 - Surviving.

Section I: Introduction

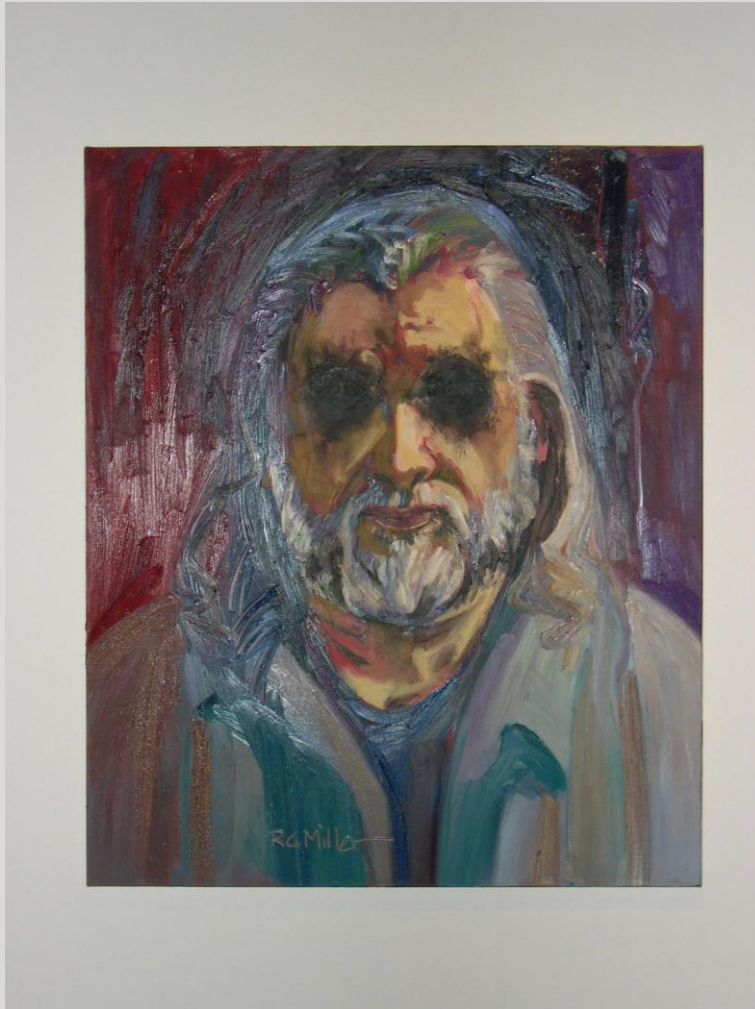
This section introduces the artist as a whole person, fully conscious of what happened to him when he was a child, and of the connection between violence and colonization.



“Mush Howl”
(1)

Installation shot





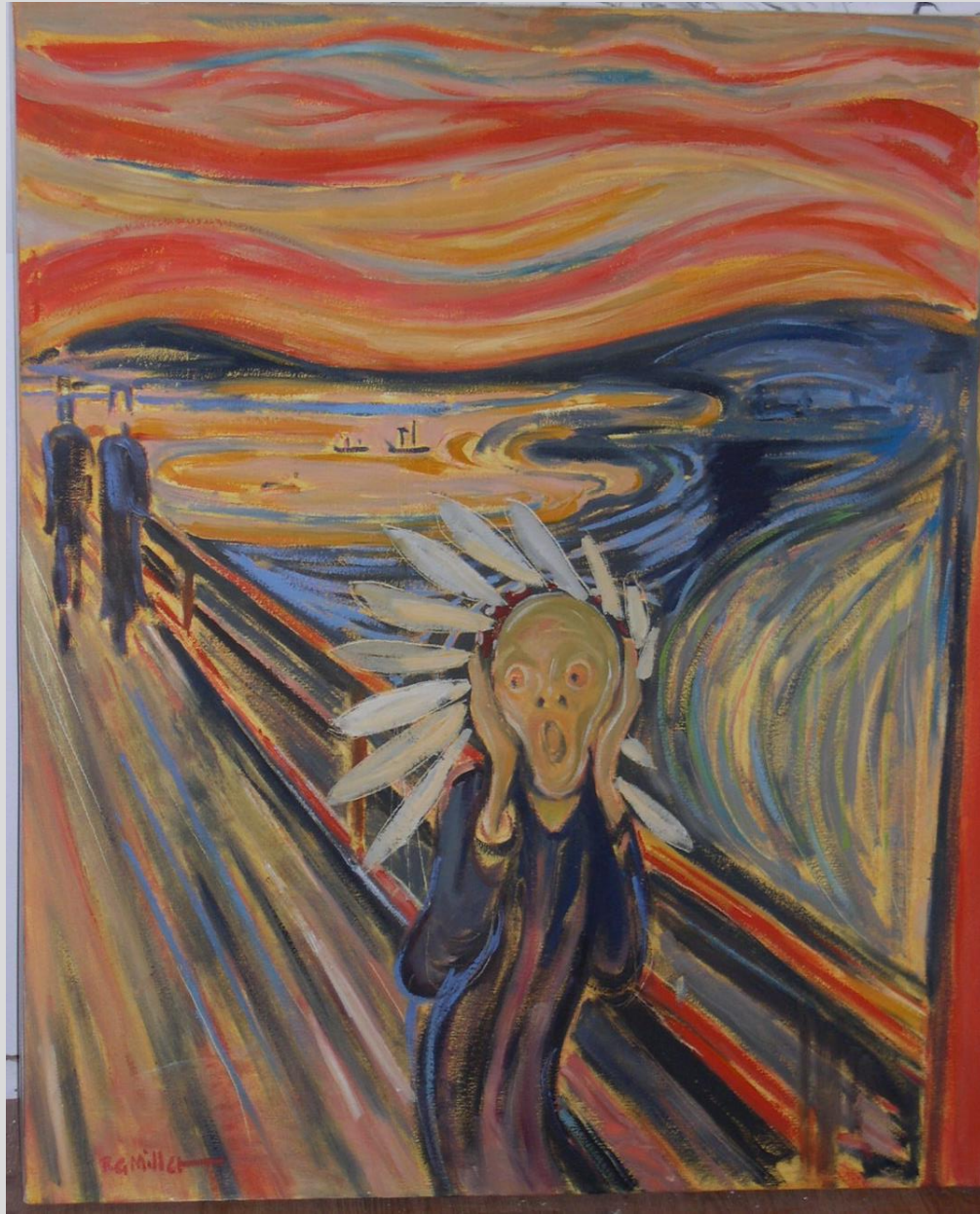
Nothing Left But the Husk (2)



A Legend in His own Eyes



Scream Too (4)



Aboriginal Scream
(5)

Section 2: Evocation

This section evokes memory through a large mural that “reads” from right to left, and also through a video kiosk in which loops a 37 minute video documentary about the artist and this exhibit, filmed by the curator.



Gary in a
Hole (7)

Gary In A Hole
Oil on canvas
24" x 24"



To Show You
Were There
8/1/15

“To Show You Were There” (8)



“Dismembered Memory Wampum Belt”

This artwork consists of twelve separate paintings that are strung together in a sequence – modeled on the idea of the Hiawatha belt.



“Dismembered Memory Wampum Belt” (9-11)



“Dismembered Memory Wampum Belt” (installation shot – objects 10-16)



“Dismembered Memory Wampum Belt” (installation shot, objects 12-18)



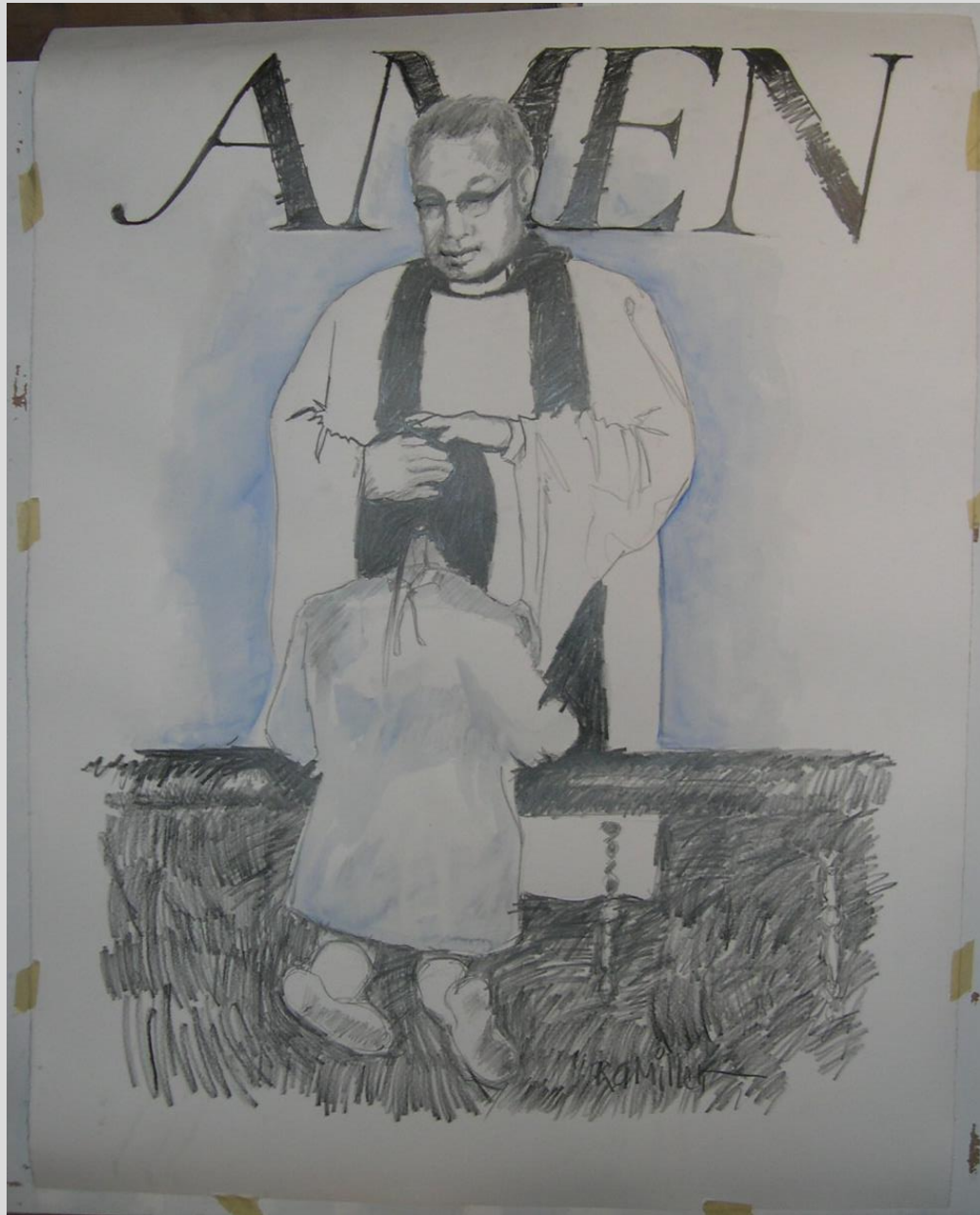
“Dismembered Memory Wampum Belt” (installation shot, objects 16-20)

Section III: Genocide

This section takes the viewer further into Miller's memory, into the night-time of extreme loneliness, fear, loathing, and sexual predation that constituted the lived environment of the Mush Hole. These are expressions from the inside of the artist's mind, both verbal and visual.



“What Was in the Mush” (21)



"Christian Service" (22)



"Erasure" (23)



“Untitled Collage I” & “Ribbon Shirt” (25, 24)

Not...
 You must remember those who are placed in
 the residential schools will be forgotten
 and their names will be forgotten
 in the history books.
 You must remember those who are placed in
 the residential schools will be forgotten
 and their names will be forgotten
 in the history books.



A Simple Creed.

Any aboriginal man, woman, or child who did not
 agree to being culturally extinguished and thrown
 their land had to be killed. One way or another. The
 reason for this genocide in Canada is
 "assimilation" - but behind it stands the belief
 in the inherent superiority of European Christianity
 and its offspring, corporate capitalism. - Keith D. Annett

I only dream simple things
 I don't dream big but in starting to paint
 I want to be more older with less drama
 I want to dream of life
 I want to dream of peace and leave the drama for
 the past and leave the drama for
 the future.

The truth is that
 we are suffering the
 loss of our identity
 and our culture.
 We first have to put
 this suffering and we
 have to live, find the
 meaning of our truth,
 dance it, sculpt it,
 Only they will be able
 to reveal the truth
 that is yours.

when I dream of my youth
 I dream of old Mishkike -

you really wouldn't want
 to visit the neighbourhood
 of my mind!

50 thousand and counting

I am - whitey



Where are they?
 They're gone
 Raped & abused

In the very near future you
 will have bad service if you
 do not stay on the Rez.
 The Natives practice the right and
 ask any non-Indian who works or
 studies. Wanted? Do not want?
 Co-opted and cancelled so fast as you -
 out of work!

We all look for God Spirit above all here the
 made track in my effort -
 in our malpractice, in our minds, in our feelings
 in our hearts, in the mirror of our hearts - the God
 then looks
 outside create -

AAT does not apologize

Industry encouraged
 are politically and morally
 culture towards Natives
 issues

Why 70% of all prisoners
 from Manitoba west are Native?

Gary just before
 doing autumn
 year - student serving time
 2 yr old!

Thousands of aboriginal victims have survived
 have their corpse. "The day after death"
 according to John Joseph. But they did not
 they were returned children, and they were born
 from their families were by their drafted by
 mercenaries, as shown by politicians and interests
 by RCMP officers and the Courts across Canada for
 over a century.

"Without the soul the individual life is nothing
 what else it matter if the body is tortured or
 the soul may be saved? Without the soul there is
 no life"
 Thomas Merton

Maybe the Mush in
 Mushhole is not what they
 fed us every morning but
 what they turned our brains
 into and left empty husks
 behind -

Let to go
 with down
 sense
 in

TELL YOUR STORY!

LAHONTSI!

This is mine
 and mine
 alone.

THERE ARE
 PLACES INSIDE I'M AFRAID
 TO GO!!

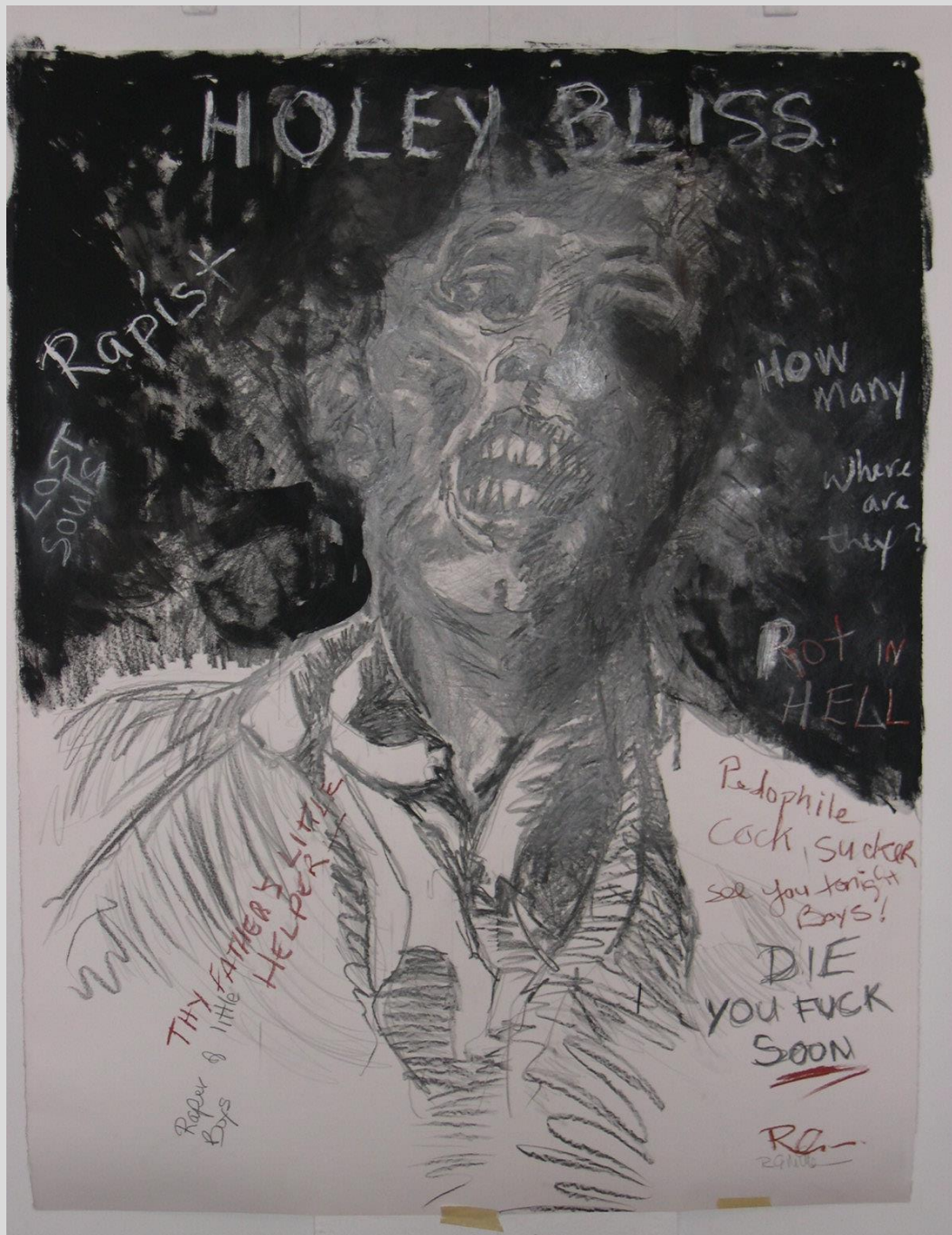
Lahiaaks
 RGMincer



"Ribbon Shirt" (24)



“Untitled Collage II” & “Holey Bliss” (26, 28)



“Holey Bliss” (28)



THE CURSE OF THE RUINED GIRL
OUT
THE INDIAN OUT

(27)



“Holocausts Target Children Especially” (29)



"Still There" (30)



"Better Dead Than Red" (31)



“From the Inside Out” (32)

Section IV: Surviving

This section includes portraits and landscapes by Miller that demonstrate his survival adaptation as an artist. As such, the inclusion of different works in this section may change during the course of the tour. It is also very important that this section include some kind of semi-enclosed place, where people may pause after coming through the other three sections. It should minimally include chairs, sweetgrass and sage for smudging, along with matches and tray, tissues, lists of contact info for crisis lines. Ideally this section should also include writing and drawing paper, pens or pencils, and a large covered container for visitors to express their response to the exhibit. If possible, a counselor should be on hand to assist any visitors who experience strong emotional triggering .



installation shot, section IV: Surviving. Safe Space (33-35)



installation shot, section IV: "Surviving" (36, 37, 39, 40)



"War Canoe" (41)