## **“I Belong Here” - Interactive Mural at Cultural Destinations Boutique, Education Building, MN State Fair invites Minnesotans to**

## **Share Personal Expressions of Belonging**

Don’t miss this chance to be part of a living piece of art. Join us at the State Fair and contribute to the "I Belong Here" mural, celebrating the collective creativity and spirit that binds us all.

The "I Belong Here" mural at the Cultural Destinations Boutique in the Education Building of the Minnesota State Fair is a community-centered project designed to engage people of all ages and backgrounds. Under the guidance of Artistic Director Reta and a team of local artists, using paints from natural sources, State Fair visitors will have the opportunity to contribute to a collective artistic expression of belonging. Reta and other visiting artists will ensure that each contribution is woven into a cohesive and inspiring artistic expression of belonging.

In addition, on the 6 special days of the Fair (August 26, 27,28, 29 and September 2) anyone who participates in the mural will be offered a 5 percent discount on anything at the [Boutique](https://www.culturaldestinations.org/boutique) – which features products from over 30 countries/cultures brought to you by local Minnesotan entrepreneurs.

**Cynthia Richards AKA Reta – “***My art …the silent language of my soul expressed in color.”*

Cynthia Richards, affectionately known as ‘Reta,’ has been an active presence in contemporary abstract expressionist art for over twenty years. Her artistic journey began in childhood, and her career has flourished through her education, earning a BFA degree, and her rich life experiences. Reta’s work is characterized by its continuous growth and evolution, never confined to a single style or school of thought.

Reta’s career highlights include founding the Art Couture gallery in Dubai, UAE, and draws inspiration from iconic artists such as Matisse, Rothko, Klimt, Pollock, Monet, Picasso, and Georgia O'Keeffe, which has helped her develop a unique and expressive style. Reta’s paintings connect deeply with audiences, communicating through the universal language of color and form.

**Antavia Paredes-Beaulieu & Migizi Green Tech Program – Natural Paints**

The I Belong Here Mural is partnering with Migizi's Green Tech program which has done pioneering work with youth artists using natural paint sources. Migizi will supply some of the paints used for the mural. Migizi Green Tech program youth will also work on the interactive mural with Reta, the lead artist.

The Migizi Green Tech program is led by Antavia Paredes-Beaulieu. Antavia descends from the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe and grew up in South Minneapolis. She attended South High School and earned her associate degree at Minneapolis College as a Power of You scholar. She continued her studies in chemistry at Metro State University as an Increasing Diversity in Environmental Careers Fellow, as well as abroad in Cuernavaca, Mexico as a Gilman International Scholar. Antavia has been a PhD student of chemistry at the University of Minnesota where she helped teach undergraduate analytical chemistry labs and spent time researching and synthesizing porous nanoparticles for PFAS phytoremediation as a 3M Science and Technology Fellow."

**Guest Artists:** Among local artists who will engage with visitors are Sheela Terakanambi, Akossiwa Medowokpo, Pa Chia Xiong, and State Fair award-winning youth artist Anne Tsai. Art collections from these artists will be featured in the boutique.

Come, express yourself, and see how your story becomes a part of something greater. Celebrate belonging with us at the "I Belong Here" mural!

For more information, please contact Dr. Bruce Corrie, [corrie@culturaldestinations.org](mailto:corrie@culturaldestinations.org). Tel: 612 321 8263