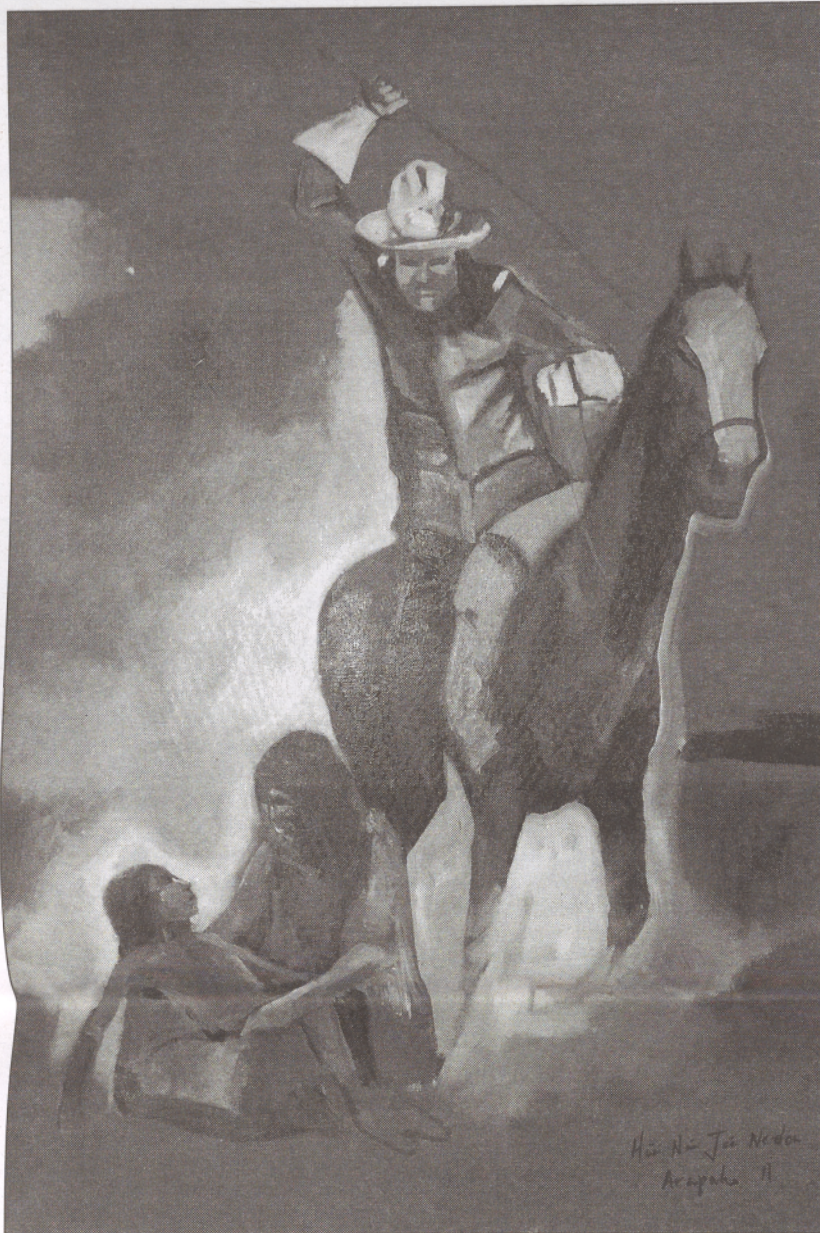




COURTESY OF BRENT LEARNED

SAND CREEK, from page 11

Americans and future atrocities carried out by the U.S. military. To this day, Dunbar-Ortiz wrote, the U.S. military refers to enemy territory as "Indian Country."

"The continuity between invading and occupying sovereign indigenous nations in order to achieve continental control in North America and employing the same tactics overseas to achieve global control is key to understanding the future of the United States in the world. The military provided that continuity," Dunbar-Ortiz said.

Levi said he hopes "One November Morning" succeeds in telling the story of Sand Creek so that other massacres do not happen. Levi compared events like Sand Creek and contemporary colonial warfare, saying of the My Lai Massacre in Vietnam, "They were shot down just like the way our people were – same way."

"In a sense, these massacres that happened, they were unprovoked. ... The people didn't know they were gonna get hit, but they did, and the people that did it were jealous people, like Chivington – he wanted to be a U.S. senator ... and he was using the blood of our people as a way to bolster himself, but it backfired on him."

By killing off many of the Cheyenne chiefs, the massacre at Sand Creek created a legacy of immense distrust and intensified the resistance of Plains Indians, who could no longer be persuaded by any leaders who wanted to make peace with Europeans.

In the 1865 Treaty of the Little Arkansas, the Cheyenne and Arapahos agreed to relinquish all rights to the Colorado territory, highly coveted by whites as a

source of gold. This, historian Dee Brown said, was the real meaning of the massacre at Sand Creek – the seizure of land.

Descendants of the Sand Creek survivors filed a class-action lawsuit against the U.S. government in 2013. In the Treaty of Little Arkansas, the federal government acknowledged the wrongness of the

massacre and promised land and money to relatives of victims and to the survivors. Sand Creek defendants say that compensation never arrived and that decades of research have identified more than 15,000 descendants who deserve compensation. Bills were introduced in Congress to grant reparations to victims and their families in 1949, 1953, 1957 and 1965, but none of them passed.

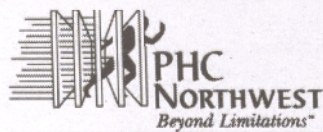
Although some recent legal settlements with tribal nations have involved large sums of money, there are many cases where monetary compensation is refused in favor of land and cultural rights.

In Canada, a class-action lawsuit originally seeking compensation for residential school atrocities turned into a five-year national process of Truth and Reconciliation – an alternative justice model once used in South Africa to address crimes committed under apartheid.

Levi said his art is intended to produce the same kind of healing and hopes to begin a process that will address the impact the massacre had, and still has, on the Cheyenne and Arapaho people. This year, Cheyenne and Arapaho tribal members visited Sand Creek to pay respects and ran through the snow from Sand Creek to Denver to honor their ancestors. November marked the 151st anniversary of the massacre.

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