

Continued from previous page

But that was the extent to which he thought about it — for about a month and a half, anyway. But because of the pandemic, he kept mulling it over.

“Normally when we go through our day to day lives during regular times, I think we have a lot of pretty good ideas, whether it’s about our job or our family or our home, and we just kind of let it go because we’ve got other things we’ve got to get to,” Morin said.

“By the time another six weeks had passed, I came up with having Native American artists all across North America do works on antique maps,” he said.

Chapman was on board with it, too. The proceeding would entail learning quite a bit about the antique map world.

“I had to then find out where you want to acquire them from — and where you don’t,” he said. “Now my time was filled up, but I wasn’t just sitting around wondering about this and that. ... Then we had to get in the maps, then we had to line up the artists and then we had to get them to them and get them back.”

They sent out about 100 maps to close to two dozen Indigenous artists from as far north as Alaska and Canada’s Baffin Island and as far south as Mexico. Though they haven’t received

all of the altered maps back yet, “you just can’t wait forever,” Morin said. “We can’t wait for all 100 maps to come back, and we anticipated this would probably happen.”

Morin and Chapman see these works on maps as not only a new interpretation of ledger art, but also paralleling a movement within geography and cartography known as “decolonizing the map.”

“If you’re decolonizing the map ... you’re identifying the places that were important to the Native American people,” Morin explained. “That becomes more difficult, because now you’re involving the history of those people, so you’re going to have to do a lot more research in terms of what did they find important that they gave names to.”

The artists took either a narrative storytelling approach or depicted a single subject. An example of the latter is Caddo and Winnebago artist Dolores Purdy’s “We Haven’t Forgotten You,” which depicts two women, one of whom holds a parasol.

“That (title) is kind of the unofficial name of the theme about missing and murdered Indigenous women in the American West,” Morin said. “I realize the public isn’t going to know about that ... but people who know the Native

American world will understand what’s going on there, and that will be even more meaningful for them.

“I find maps fascinating, as I know that the flattened perspective and place names only hint at the rich world it represents,” Chapman added in a follow-up email. “The artists involved in this project brought their creativity and contemplation to each map. Their narrative and perspective is now an important overlay. It’s simply fascinating to study each map for its historical value and then see it transformed into a contemporary and timeless story.”

The reason Chapman and Morin included “1st Edition” in the name is because they have more such shows planned for the future. As Morin said earlier, they think the idea of antique map art could prove to have legs, in the way ledger art has.

“I don’t care if artists do this, and if Native Americans want to get their maps and start doing this, go for it,” Morin said. “But I don’t want another gallery to jump on top of us and copy this. So by calling it ‘1st Edition,’ we’re letting the gallery world know that there will be an edition next year, and the next year, and the year after that.”

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Submitted photo

Caddo and Winnebago member Dolores Purdy’s “We Haven’t Forgotten You” is painted on a 14-by-23-inch 1883 map of Indian Territory.

‘Kids Curate’ to open Friday at High Desert Museum

BY DAVID JASPER

The Bulletin

On Friday, “Kids Curate,” an exhibit created by fifth graders from R.E. Jewell Elementary, opens at the High Desert Museum.

Every school year, Museum curators work with students from a different Central Oregon school in the program, which integrates art history, writing and science both in the classroom and through field trips, culminating in an exhibit at the museum south of Bend.


The Jewell students are part of the eighth annual “Kids Curate” program, which explored how plants and animals use energy from the sun. Each class was assigned a hab-

itat — forest, riparian or shrub-steppe — and created line drawings of various flora and fauna from the different ecosystems, which were then laser-etched onto plexiglass tiles to create a mosaic on the gallery wall. It displays through June 6.

“The ‘Kids Curate’ students bring a one-of-a-kind display to the High Desert Museum every spring,” said Museum Executive Director Dana Whitelaw. “We are excited to give students learning opportunities outside of the classroom, fusing art and science as well as connecting community and place.”


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