JOURNAL #3

'HOMECOMING;
CHIRICAHUA NDE' APACHE ODYSSEY"

~Preliminary Version~

THEATRE MOVEMENT INTERNATIONAL

INTRODUCTION BY DIRECTOR RUDRADEEP CHAKRABARTI

We traveled for research and study to both the Chiricahua Nde' Prisoner of War Place in Oklahoma and, to their 'homelands' in the Southwestern part of the United States. We trained with tribal historian; ***LEELAND MICHAEL DARROW***, ***who*** also served as DRAMATURG for the play. We also attended the Mescalero/Chiricahua Maturation ceremonies. Thereafter, deCoy Gallerina (member of the Chiricahua tribe) began an interview process with tribal members, including tribal chairman ***JEFF HAOZOUS*** and elder ***EVA CHAPPABITTY*** (the oldest member of the tribe, presently 95 years of age). deCoy then wrote the play "HOMECOMING; Chiricahua Nde' Apache Odyssey", which we premiered in a preliminary form, at the San Francisco International Arts Festival (featuring deCoy as solo performer with ***MIGUEL GARCIA*** as sound designer). The play is cross-platform; including movement, dance, music, poetry, prose and other elements which lend to theatrical interpretation.

Our theater ensemble began as a small self-funded, independent touring group, founded in the San Francisco Bay area, exploring unheard voices with multi-cultural themes with emphasis on post-colonial political theater with cut-edge contemporary performance language. We have presented theatrical performances on themes of diversity, indigenous subjects, immigration and diaspora themes with sub-altern perspectives. In the last four years our major work has been with First Nation people; specifically, the Chiricahua-Warm Springs Nde' (Apache) tribe of New Mexico. We have exhibited and performed aspects from this project at SOMARTS, BLESSED UNREST FESTIVAL, GLOBAL SUMMIT and CONTEMPORARY PERFORMANCE DIASPORA; San Francisco Bay Area, and at the tribe's headquarters in Oklahoma; among other venues.

In this journal, we share the cores aspects of the play 'HOMECOMING' with you…

Thank you for joining us.

SABERS

We're always in that sacred circle of fire with them

Sabers drawn, knuckles white
Storming ferociously up the narrow, boulder lined trail

I stare
Eyes locked with the first one
Fierce, frightening

They are here to protect us
Our sacred beings
The Mountain Spirits

Of them
We are
Sacred Medicine


bicz Pade na zwierzę

TIME OF HARMONY

Blessed years, travels calm, bright green mountain meadow sloping towards our ***GUUTA*** (camp).
Lake close by, so many animals.
Our ***KUUGA*** (wickiup) is sturdy, an oak bough frame covered by smaller leafy branches, perfect this time of year.

We've completed our yearly harvest cycle, my 17th time. To celebrate, I'll wear new cloth dress at breakfast, lavender calico with tiny red blossoms. Father traded for fabric to give to his two wives and children. Mom makes dresses, I watch, first time making my own.

Mom gave me boots she had when my age, buckskin painted with dyes; mountain and sun designs for strength, protection; redone now in beads father brought from the south, much brighter, more durable. My dress matches the beadwork colors.

Our group has storage caches higher up the mountains where we keep our girl's coming of age dresses and other valuables we don't want damaged by traveling. I'll go there soon with father, some beads there I need to work with, I'm a beading apprentice with my paternal aunt, Flowers On Top.

Mornings; dark, chill, before everyone else wakes, I listen; crickets near stream, vibrant, soothing, then birds after bugs chatter, wake everyone. Hungry, I push covers back, sit up, see mom and dad; a ball of love under blankets, silly brother snoring, I giggle…they begin to stir.

I Roll my bedding, carry a ***TUS*** (water basket), to the stream, dip fingers, feel ripple's tickle, splash some on face, arms; goose bumps. Slowly rising sun warm on my back. Comb from bag, run It through hair, long loose when I sleep, tangled now. Mom will put it up, put a ***TSIIYEL*** over it as a sign I'm of marriageable age.

Dad married mom when she was eighteen, her sister when she was seventeen. Our family's looking for a **strong protector and provider,** one who will honor my mothers and I. We're a matriarchal society, its proper for my husband to join his mother-in-law's camp. Our ***KUUGA*** will be a short distance from my parent's.

Light breeze brushes my neck, feet, leaves sparkling on trees. I hear a bird's high clear song. Brother's starting the fire. I go over help him, tease about his snoring, he crinkles his face, looks really bothered, scratches his head, points at me, calls me ***YAA***; means 'BUG'…my name is ***YA***; means SKY!!

The rest are up bringing out fresh dear meat and other foods.
We've gathered in reverence; our leaders sing a **SUN RISE SONG:**

YO HEY DAGO HENAHNO OH HEY NAH
YO HEY DAGE HENAHNO OH HEY NAH
YO HEY DAGO HEHNANO YO DAGO HENAHNAH
YO HEY DAGO HEHNANO YO DAGO HENAHNAH
AH HANG NEY YAH

This being the first day at our group's favorite place in the mountains, they bless all of us and the morning fare with pollen.

Time at breakfast with cousin SWIMMING GIRL, will be so much fun, we enjoy each other's humor, don't see each other enough with all the work that needs to be done. She'll marry later this spring, has a good match. Sort of goofy before her maturation ceremony, she comports herself now with such dignity.

We girls become our tribe's sacred being, ***ISDZANNADLEESHE'***: White Painted Woman. As such, we bestow blessings on our community. Strength shown by us during this grueling seven-day ceremony (through which we enter womanhood) remains with us throughout our lives.

Before my ceremony, I played all the time, now I'm much more concerned with what I need to know to help my community.

After our morning meal, mom and I wander the hills collecting ***TLUHTALBILDAJINLNDEI*** (wild celery), baskets on backs held steady by straps across our foreheads.

Spring in the mountains, such a blessing, weather calm, breezes soft.
Sometimes I see gentle fawns with their mothers, think of how it will be to be a mother myself.

STRUGGLE

Climbing to safe vantage high above burning New Mexico desert floor.
We've scattered to meet on top; two, three at a time.

Steep incline, weary feet slip, grit beneath them.
I reach for secure hold, sharp rock slice my hand, pull myself up.
Throw my blanket down for my girl to grab, hoist her up.

Boy's with their father, whose still with us, give thanks to ***USEN*** for this, so many have lost their husbands in this ruffed journey of survival. We lost our oldest boy, my hair's cut short in mourning.
Keep my knife close, use it not just for preparing game, but have bloodied it in defense of myself, my children against the U.S. soldiers and the racists who seek our scalps for money.
Give thanks to ***USEN*** for our survival and the sharpness of my blade.

Baby's sleeping soundly, safely strapped to my back.
Thoughts of my children, only this moves me forward.
Very little water to drink, let alone with which to was ourselves.
Clothes in tatters, blankets thin, cold caves; we sleep, shivering
Children huddled between us for warmth protection.
Take turns guarding, circles of blue, fatigue…wider, darker under our eyes.

Tonight, we'll have safe harbor in a place only we know.
Can't risk our children to anyone picking up our trail, we'll move again soon
This is the story of those hunted.

We'll pray all of us together,
For strength for the next day, the next battle.

HEY YONG HEY YA HEY YO HONG OH
HEY YONG HEY YA HEY YO HONG OH
HEY YONG HEY YONG HEY YONG
HEY NEH HONG AH

We pray, all of us together, for strength for the next day, the next battle; ***USEN, ISDZANNADLEESHE', CHAZAADAA:***
"We beseech you; bless us with your love, protection and positive energy. Aid us in triumph over our enemies and the forces of evil; those ***who seek our scalps*** for money. Grant us success in the next battle: the next battle; **STANDING ROCK**

where **PEACEFUL WATER & LIFE PROTECTORS** were brutalized by predatory mercenaries hired by the **MULTI-NATIONALS** in the name of greed. The next battle Charlottesville where Heather Heyer was murdered by heartless fascists, the next battle Berkeley where racists gathered to spew **HATE SPEAK**, the next battle all stands and prayer walks and runs on behalf of all beings struggling against oppression everywhere, the environment, life.

IMPEACH TRUMP, PENCE, PRUITT…
THEY ARE UNAMERICAN CRIMINALS AGAINST HUMANITY, THE ENVIRONMENT, **LIFE!**

JOURNEY

They gather all of us they can find, 512…

BRING ONLY WHAT YOU CAN CARRY!!

On our bodies; awls, pollen bags, jewelry, combs. In baskets; food, water, ropes, sinew.
Worn blankets around babies.

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Some never seen, none ever been…on trains.
Wooden trains, metal wheels; life used gun shells. Hard wood seating, no heating; Autumn chill.
Guards with loaded guns at ready. We are the first hostages to be shipped, 1886.
Prisoners, we eat army rations; never eaten canned meats, don't know the danger…
Nibble a little, hide the rest for later, bits spoil; food poisoning combined with motion sickness…misery.
Hold our bladders, bowels hour after hour, train's facilities unfamiliar; filthy buckets, stench terrific; vomit, bile, diarrhea, rancid cloths, fetid bodies, people's dying breath.
Horrific sounds; gut wrenching dry heaves, unrelenting hacking coughs, baby's gurgling gasps, wailing.

Eyes closed, ears, noses, mouths covered with filthy blankets.
Lift our tear-filled eyes; pray to ***USEN, ISDZANNADLEESHE':***
"This train look at it now, where we are; this suffering."
Staring dazed out train window; ever changing landscape shocks, numbs us further.
We trade our precious belongings at train stations,
Where people gather to watch the "***INDIANS'*** go by, ***"LIKE DIRTY CIRCUS ANIMALS!!"***

Ten days, no medical care, another person dies.
We disembark, are herded into dank, vile, unlivable places, crowded far beyond their capacity.
We die by the score, dysentery, tuberculosis; ***CHIRICAHUA, NATVIE AMERICAN, FIRST NATION****;*
We suffer for defending our homelands, children against criminal invaders.
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Children old enough to go to school, 130 are taken from us. Our population keeps declining. In 1850, our population was 3,000, in 1886; it was 500, 1894; 300…10% of the population in 1850.
This decline in just two generation. A generation spans from when a child is born to the time it becomes a parent; 20 years…two generations; 40 years. 1894; over 90% of our loved ones have perished.

We're held prisoner of war three decades, including 15 years at Fort Sill Military Base, Oklahoma.
1913; we number 261 people **TOTAL**.
1913; 180 of us are moved to Mescalero Reservation, New Mexico; to be with the other heathens; this is called "The Parting" … 81, 81, 81 remaining…81 lonely, heartbroken people…we croon love songs for the lonely:

HEY YUN NEY HEY YUN NEY HONG AH
HEY YUN NEY HEY YUN NEY HONG AH

HEY YUN NEY HEY YUN NEY HONG AH
HEY YUN NEY HEY YUN NEY HONG AH

Beautiful melodies for our lost ones, 81, 81, 81…this is the group I'm from, I'm from, I'm from…

PROCESS: RITUAL THEATRE

By Director Rudradeep Chakrabarti

Our theater performances embrace performance behavior of all kinds and in all contexts, from everyday life to high ceremony. Our process in the studio investigates a wide range of performance behavior – dance, ritual, conflict solution, storytelling, musical performances in a variety of circumstances and cultures. We study the relationships between ritual and aesthetics, even the relationships between training and the finished performance, from culturally specific images to universal display of behavior.

THEATER ANTHROPOLOGY

In our studio, we study pre-expressive scenic behavior upon which genres, styles, roles and personal or collective traditions are based. We investigate our socio-cultural and physiological behaviors in a performance situation

CHILDREN'S STORY

Taken from our parents
Boarding schools, orphanages
Parents farm
We're home, they're not
We're taken from them

Missions vie to get and convert us
Make us other than what we are
Hard leather belts, sticks, whips
For speaking our language
To rain us its bad
What our parents share
Our traditions, culture
Are ignorant, wrong

Boy's hair cut short
We only do this when someone close to us dies

We're given the name of the dead relatives
This brings the ghost of that dead one to us
We don't disturb the dead by speaking their names
They curse us with the names of their dead

Our culture honors each of us
With a name **SOLEY** our own
A name which reflects
Who we've revealed our self to be

Turned against ourselves
Captive in the belief nothing ***NDE'*** is good
That only Christianity, being white is right

We children are trained to be
Seamstresses, cooks, manual laborers, farmers
Never doctors, lawyers, writers, medicine men
People with power

We're never taught to be
Who we are
People of power

Our hearts and psyches destroyed
Minions of missions, white American culture
We're set loose to infect anyone we can

"I was stolen by the Dutch Reformed church at Fort Sill."

To be assimilated

Assimilation
Subsumation
Forgetfulness

Violence.

FIRE

The ones they didn't think would assimilate were sent to Mescalero with the "other heathens".
Some they thought would easily assimilate…wanted to go to Mescalero to be with their families,
But were forced to remain in the Oklahoma prisoner of war area so they would not be influenced to remain **'APACHE''**;
Savage. Many who stayed in Oklahoma were Christianized; good church going farmers: ***"GOOD APACHES".***

People walkin' down tha' road by'r farm
We live in tha rickedy farm house cross from tha barn
Nah nuf money for more'n a few chickens

People walkin down that road front'r house
Pushin wheel barrows full evry worly belongin they possess
Nah much
This depression, this Oklahoma dus bowl

We ain go much
Bu we kin let em sleep nr yard
Give em a bita wata from'r well
Nah much, bu they sure seem ta preciate it

Ruff life, daddy works real hard farmin
Athletic, helps tha baseball'n bowlin teams
Gives wha he ken

SHAFTSA FIRE EATEN RAFTRZ!!!
Daddy's screamin "MO WATA!!"
Wata from the pump jes ain enuf

Neighberz'n wandrz pass buckets, pour wata onta flames
All our efferts togetha ain enuf to slacken ragin heat devourin tha barn
Fire's spreadin, s'port beams collapse…jes miss my brothuhz

Daddy's tears streamin down
Tracin brown dirt roadsa skin through soot coverin him
Desperate images flood his min
He'n mom pushin a wheel barrow fulla nuthin, nowhere
Six starving kidz straggling behin

Momza nurse, works in town
No car, takes the weekly bus, stays all week
Comes home Friday ni, she'll be here soon
"Her heart'l be broken!! Her heart'l be broken!!" dad keeps sobin

We stan, six a us, tiniest to talles
Helplessly starin at flames, r fatha
Whose face glistens red orange sweat
Reflectin greedily lickin tongue'sa fire

Daddy'n mom built tha barn with thur own hands
Neighburz; good Christians helped
Even tho we wern white

Took all their time'n money
They're still payin it down!!!
All the tools for plantin'n harvest were in there
Now any work'll havta be done by han
Means loosin a good parta tha crops

Daddy jes stanzer, shoulderz slack
Weakly wobbling to and fro
Lookin like a holla shell
Life sucked outa him by them blasted flames
He jes wa'int the same afta tha
Would get mad ova
Any lil thang

GRANDPA COYOTE

Granpa turned out pretty scabby!

Had women'n kids all over tha county an up in Mescalero. He'd still call granma trying to get her money even afta she dee-vorced him! He was like tha, if he coo get something from her or anyone, he liked it…bu, if he coo rip em off…he was REAL happy!!

My brotha'n I knew this, so we played a trick on him one time. There was a huge moth flutterin in the win outsi tha general sto. We chased it, caught it; turned outa be a handbill, looke like a dolla; green wi sum presdent onit.

"BINGO!!"…we had an idea.

We knew granpa'd come by when no one wuz roun bu us kidz.
Shur nuf, here he comes, pokin roun; lookin for sumthin, anythin
MONEY!!! a nickle, a dime, a dolla!

We ha stuffed tha sales thang in the cushions tween us, jes a lil stickin out: GREEEEEN!!!
Shur nuf, he din miss a thang…caught a glimpsa it out tha corner a his greedy lil eyes!

He wanderd roun, pokin here, there, lookin unda this, tha
Nonchalantly, like they say in tha movies…
Then, jes like ciote, he says:
"Uh, forgot my glasses in tha bathroom, be ri back."
He din even wear glasses!

He comes back, shoe untied, an ol' scuffed up work boot, bends ova real low, ri by us, hand poised like ta tie his shoe;
Looks up, gives us a wiley grin, snatches tha paper…quick stuffs it in his pocket

Says "Gotta go now."

HMMMPH!!!
He ha stole money from his lil gran kids!
CCCHHHHHHHH!!!

Well….granpa
He neva talked to us agin afta tha
No he neva did…

Cuz he knew
2 lil bitty kids had got his ass
an…YEAH WE HAD!!!

RECLAIM COYOTE

There was this Coyote, she wasn't treated very well by the people who had captured her, so she escaped.
Because of the way those people treated her she was mean, aggressive,
Would take whatever she wanted from whomever she wanted
Some call this being a good hunter
She would take anything she could from anyone she could.

She lived in a village and had taken whatever she wanted from everyone there.
Her den was full of beautiful things; handmade drums, buffalo throws, big screen, medicine rattles.
Because she was so greedy, she grew big and at first very strong. Then she got too large and slowed down. The other coyotes noticed this, decided to get together and take back what belonged to them. When she was out one day, they went to her den, inside they found their precious belonging strewn about carelessly; their mother's burden baskets, pottery, beadwork, long hair cut off for speaking their language, creations stories, their Supernaturals, their identity of being First Nation people, relationship to relatives, their legacy, memories, joy, sacred traditions and life ways…
Teeth fallen out from beatings, their children, culture, prayers, dreams and visions…
The found Leonard Peltier. Leonard Peltier? FREE LEONARD PELTIER!!!
They found earth, water, STANDING ROCK!

They gathered up everything that belonged to them.
They took back the Cosmos, the Stars, their moccasins.
THEY TOOK BACK THEIR COURAGE AND DIGNITY!!!

When that coyote got back, exhausted and famished because she couldn't catch anything…
She found her den empty! She started screaming:
"WHERE'S ALL MY THINGS??!!! WHO TOOK ALL MY THINGS??? SOMEONE'S ALWAYS TRYING TO GET MY THINGS!!"

She stormed to the entrance of her den, pointed her paw menacingly:
"YOU! I BET YOU KNOW WHERE MY THINGS ARE! YOU, I BET YOU HAVE THEM!"
"YOU, YOU BETTER TELL ME WHERE THEY ARE!!"
Her furry face red with rage, she turned her back to the town:
"WHEN I COUNT THREE, MY THINGS BETTER BE BACK HERE!!"
"THREE!!"
She spun round…NOTHING!
In an absolute tantrum, she bared her fangs, pointed a ragged claw and whined viciously:
"YOU, YOU, YOU…YOU'RE ALLLLLL THEIVES!!!!

KILLING INDIANS

Adapted from an interview with ***Benjamin I. Benavides***

I love to sing the old songs to the rhythm of the metate as I grind corn and to tell stories of the Supernaturals and creation using our ***CHIRICAHUA*** words. My grandson loves the one where a little boy kills monsters; I tell it to him this way to give him courage.

I bring him with me when I work the wheat fields gathering wheat heads and when I'm working the onion fields where we swing our hoes low to clip off the part that grows above the ground so the bulb underneath will grow round, big, tasty.

He visits when my husband, who's from Spanish lineage, is with one of his other three families.

Today my grandson's a little ahead of me wielding a stick forcefully, curious about what game this is, I call out "Grandon, what are you doing?" He yells back "I'm playing cowboys and Indians, grandma" …" I'M KILLING INDIANS!!" (FOUR GUNDSHOTS)

I feel the ground drop out from beneath me, I gasp, it's as if a brick has been hurtled at me, hit me in the chest, !!" (ONE GUNDSHOT) my heart…I fall back!

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Grandma's behind me, gathering wheat heads. I'm playing Cowboys and Indians. She calls out "Grandson, what are you doing?"

I yell: "I'M KILLING INDIANS!!" !!" (FOUR GUNDSHOTS)

I hear her gasp, I spin round, see her fall !!" (ONE GUNDSHOT)
I run over, grab her hand, cry "GRANDMA!! WHAT'S WRONG?!!"

She shakes her head as if to clear it of something, then with tears in her eyes wails:
'OH, BABY BOY, IF YOU'RE KILLING INDIANS !!" (FOUR GUNDSHOTS) YOU'RE KILLING YOUR GRANDMA!!"

I help her up, hold her hand. As we walk back to the farmhouse she tells me that she, my father and I are Indian, dazed by what she's just said, I hardly breath.

When we get back to the farmhouse, she grabs a red rag, wraps it around my forehead and declares:
"NOW, YOU'RE INDIAN!!", I echo: "Now I'm Indian!"

I was never a cowboy again after that. !!" (ONE GUNDSHOT)
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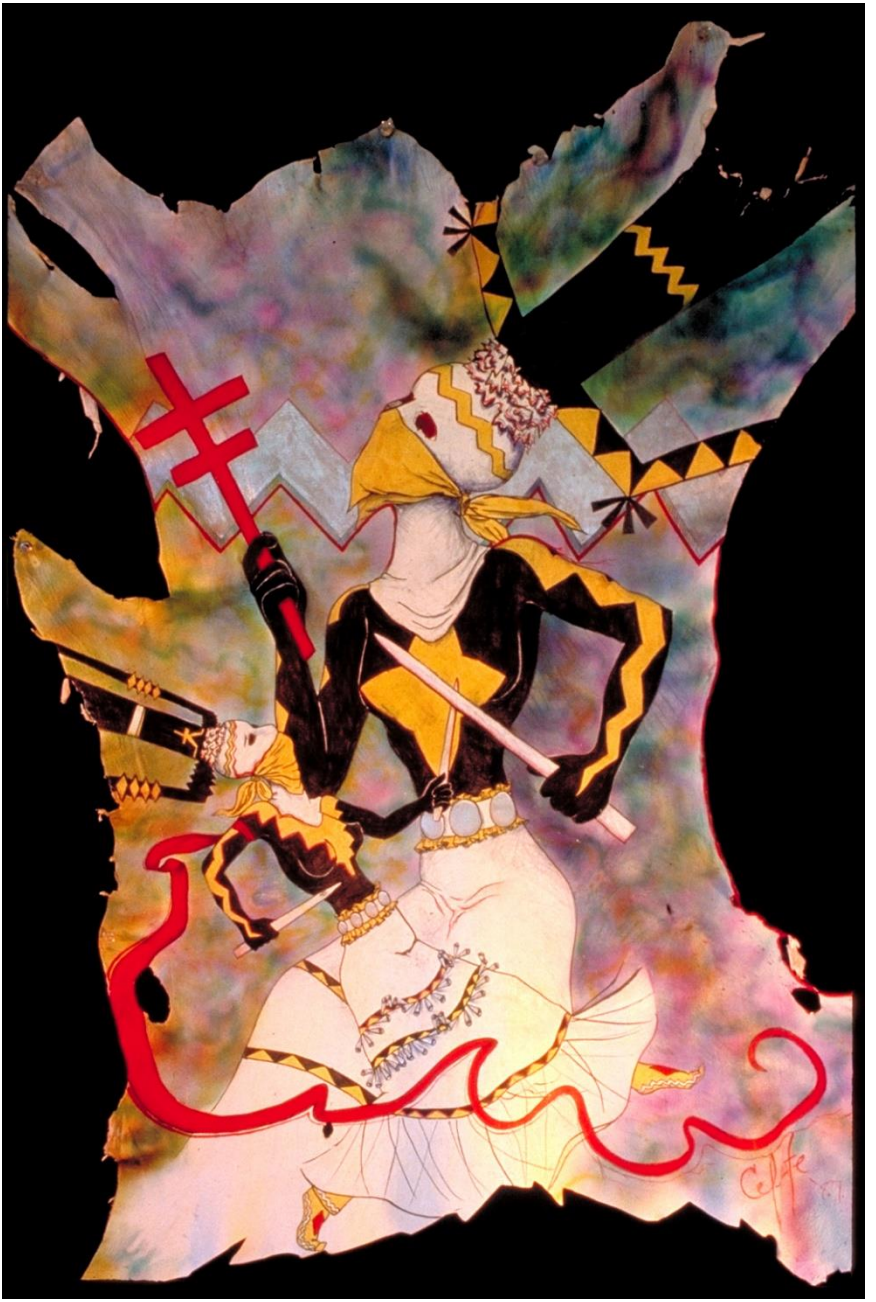

TRAINHOME

Song segment co-written with ***Miguel Garcia*** *and deCoy Gallerina*

Put me on the train, send me back my home, couldn't live without you,
I'm not trying to roam.
Put me by the window, let me see outside, look at all the places
Where all my people died, where all my people died.
Left me sad so long, had to take a stand, brings all our people together on our land.
Put me on the frontline, I hear you calling me, looking for the places
Where all our people stand, where all our people stand
Put us on the frontline, bring us back our home
Praying on the frontline, Standing Rock's our home

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We hear you calling, we hear you calling we hear you calling…come home.
Felt so sad so long, could never find a home, but home removed.
Was grieving, was grieving, was grieving for our home, we heard you calling, heard you calling, heard you calling
These feet walking a dance for you
So long away from home, our loved ones, we are with you once again, our loved ones, we speak to you.
Once so far from home, we are home, we are home, we are together again, once again together
Our tribe recently commemorated 100 years of freedom from prisoner of war status ….
YAAAAAHHHH!!! 100 YEARS!!!.....only 100 years.
We are the Chiricahua Nde', Nde' means 'The People' in our language, 'Apache" means enemy in our enemy's language. We are the group Geronimo and Cochise are from.
Our whole group, several thousand of us, were taken hostage to force the surrender of Geronimo, in that process we suffered a major unacknowledged holocaust, we lost over 90% of our people, just over f100 years ago.
We are now in the process of repatriating to our homelands in the southwest from our place of exile, the prisoner of war place at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. We've has to sue the governor of New Mexico several times to get acknowledgement that we have rights in our homelands.
WE STAND STRONG!! We stand strong with Standing Rock, Oak Flats, the Amazonians, Tibet, Lancashire. We stand strong with Black Lives Matter, the LGBTQI community, Palestine. We stand strong with the environment, and all beings everywhere struggling against oppression…external and internalized. Wes stand against hate, Fascists, Racists, Nazis.
WE HEAR YOU PRAYING, WE HEAR YOU CALLING
WATER & LIFE PROTECTORS ARE PRAYING BLACK ANAKE KILLAHZ ARE CALLING'
WE ARE STANDING STRONG!!!!
Impeach Trump, Pence & Pruitt; they are unamerican criminals against humanity and life!!!!
LALALALALALAALA!!!

(Co-written by Miguel Garcia & deCoy Gallerina as RADICAL MEDICINE)
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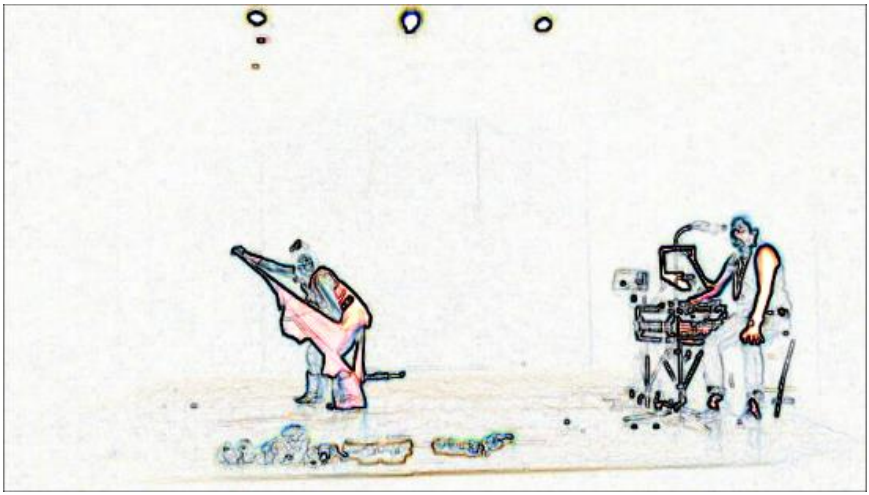

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With Musician-Composer Miguel Garcia

& Solo Performer & Playwrite of

"Homecoming; Chiricahua Nde' Odyssey"

deCoy Gallerina