

Merlin Little Thunder, Tulsa, Oklahoma

Southern Cheyenne Painting



Merlin Little Thunder was born at Clinton Indian Hospital to George and Connie Little Thunder. He is an enrolled member of the Southern Cheyenne tribe who has painted professionally since 1980. His art is based on his memories of growing

up in the Cheyenne community of Fonda, on family stories, and his involvement with the Cheyenne ceremonies.

Little Thunder has painted professionally since 1980, winning numerous awards for his work, especially in the miniature category. His work can be divided in two subject areas: realistic landscapes with images of Cheyenne people from the turn of the century; and medicine paintings dealing with spiritual matters.

“It takes a long time to learn beauty, its process, its principles, its mechanics. When you’re a toddler, and you see something beautiful, it stops you in your tracks, but you don’t understand it. Only later do you start to understand what goes into it.”

Articles on the artist have appeared in *Southwest Art*, *Native Peoples*, *Oklahoma Today*, and on several book covers. He is one of the featured artists in *A Life Made with Artists: Doris Littrell and the Oklahoma Native art scene* (2015). Museum collections include the National Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C., the Fred Jones Museum in Norman, Oklahoma and the National Cowboy Hall of Fame in Oklahoma City.

