



**Family:  
Jenny Yankton, Leo  
Yankton & Family**

**Artist:  
Santiago Cal**

“My three legged brother,” was the statement Jenny Yankton expressed, fondly recalling the coyote that lived near her home at Pine Ridge. As she recounted the resilient being, it seemed a perfect parallel to her life. Jenny has had numerous health afflictions, but yet is the strong matriarch of the family. I additionally chose the coyote because of its important role.

“After two days of dancing I fell ill; the wungalackas were talking to me.” Jenny also recounted this occurrence and I felt it was the true subliminal experience. Wungalackas are rocks that have a long history in the Lakota culture both as “before man” in idea and integral in function to the practice of “sweat.” I was attracted to this image because I grew up hearing the term “if rocks could talk,” not ever imagining the potential of its actuality.

The video reflects the function of Jenny within her family; she is the respected bond. It starts with her home in Lincoln then moves to images – video of the family – then ends with footage of the Badlands. The intermittent, repeating clip of Jenny threading a bead seemed metaphoric of the role she has within the family. As an artist interpreting the stories of the Yanktons, I decided to select only a few key verbal images from the dialogue and have them wrap around the family. These are stories that she tells her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. They are icons within their beliefs.

Santiago Cal

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## **Family: Leo Yankton, Jenny Yankton & family**

### **Artist: Santiago Cal**

Leo Yankton is from the Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota, but he is equally at home in Lincoln. He and his siblings have grown up in the nurturing home of his grandmother, Jenny Yankton. But Mrs. Yankton's caretaking doesn't stop with her family. She has organized JOURNEY, a way for young people to learn about Native arts and culture. In learning Lakota art forms, language and tribal customs, these young people learn about their descendants, the family of Native people who first traveled throughout the Great Plains.

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