Debris of a Mother Tongue
Reyhan Yazdani

November 13 – 22, 2026
salishan Place by the River
23430 Mavis Ave, Langley, BC

About the Exhibition

In its second iteration at Fort Gallery, Debris of a Mother Tongue: #2 Bombs brings together handmade pigmented paper, works on paper, and oil pastel sculptures to explore the ecology of language, displacement, and the relationship between body and land. The exhibition is part of a longer research and creation project in which Reyhan Yazdani engages with a collection of words and figures drawn from museum archives to consider diaspora, displacement, and the ways histories are collected, carried, and fragmented.

The exhibition's title, Debris of a Mother Tongue, borrows from fellow Iranian artist Gelare Khoshgozaran's Royal Debris (2022), drawing from their attention to ruin as a condition of displacement to consider what remains of language when home, body, and mother tongue no longer occupy the same place.

Building on the first exhibition, this chapter introduces new works on paper responding to the current global political landscape, marked by conflict, destruction, and displacement, and the difficulty of finding words for the fear, grief, and uncertainty experienced from a distance. Against a pale sky-blue background, dark sculptural forms inhabit a fragmented landscape, suggesting the tension between vulnerability, destruction, and what remains.

Works

The Falling, 2026
Collection of handmade paper

Before They Had Names, 2026
Collection of sculptures, pigment, various natural wax, charcoal

Witnessing, 2026
Handmade paper

Writer

dana qaddah (b. Beirut, Lebanon) is an interdisciplinary artist and organizer whose work centres themes of building from, and through, colonial legacies, environmental and economic deterioration, and the condition of being abstracted from the sense of self and place.

Hours

Monday – Saturday, 9am – 5pm
Sunday, 10am – 4pm

Events

Opening Reception
Friday, November 13, 6 – 8pm

Artist Workshop (all ages, hands-on)
Sunday, November 15, 1 – 3pm
RSVP at fortgallery.ca

Artist Talk and Tour
Sunday, November 22, 2 – 3pm

All events are free and open to the public.

Artist

Reyhan Yazdani (she/her) is an interdisciplinary artist and designer currently based in Vancouver, the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəyəm (Musqueam), Sḵwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səlilwətaɬ (Tsleil-Waututh) people. Her research-driven work migrates between a range of media including handmade paper, objects, social invitations, and creative writing to engage with ontological, material and spatial inquiries on themes of exile, linguistic displacement, and diasporic approaches to care and belonging.

Yazdani holds an MFA from Emily Carr University of Art + Design and a Master of Architecture from the University of Tehran. Her practice has been supported through grants from the Canada Council for the Arts and BC Arts Council, alongside exhibitions and artist residencies across Canada. Her work has been presented at Kelowna Art Gallery, Seymour Art Gallery, Two Rivers Gallery, Open Studio, and Centre A, with recent and upcoming residencies including Nomadisms at the Banff Centre for Arts and Creativity (2026) and Fondazione Officine Saffi in Milan (2027). Yazdani is an Assistant Professor at Emily Carr University of Art + Design.

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We acknowledge the financial support of the Province of British Columbia.

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Essay by dana qaddah

a Vessel carries as it is carried.

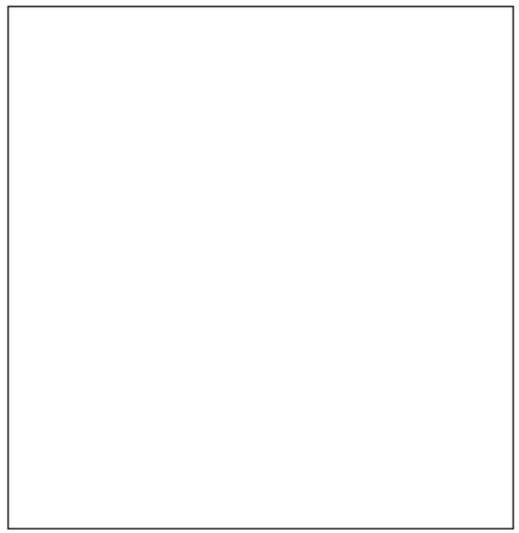
حامل و محمول

dana qaddah

"if it is a human thing to do to put something you want, because it's useful, edible, or beautiful, into a bag, or a basket, or a bit of rolled bark or leaf, or a net woven of your own hair, or what have you, and then take it home with you, home being another, larger kind of pouch or bag, a container for people, and then later on you take it out and eat it or share it or store it up for winter in a solider container or put it in the medicine bundle or the shrine or the museum, the holy place, the area that contains what is sacred, and then next day you probably do much the same again–if to do that is human, if that's what it takes, then i am a human being after all. fully, freely, gladly, for the first time"

– Ursula K. Le Guin,
the Carrier Bag Theory of Fiction.

the Object is a Vessel



the Object is woven. it is sculpted by combining what comes from earth. heated and cooled into alchemical permanence. grit turned to glass. clay turned to cup. the Object is moved. it falls. it breaks. it shatters. sometimes, it is pieced back together.

the Object is buried by the sand rustling under the flap of the Animal's wings. it set a tornado in its path towards somewhere far. it swirls a spiralling excavation. and sweeps centuries of embodied matter. rock. soil. skin. hair.[1]

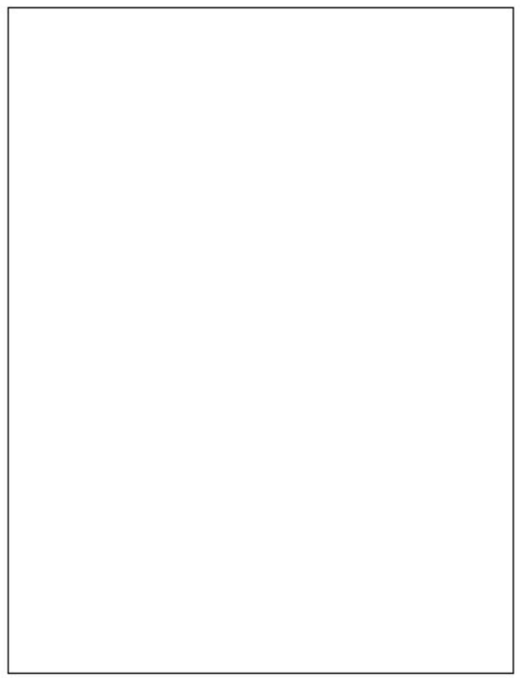
the wind moves westwards and lands on a desk to register the impression of the Object that only performs affect towards you: the one moved by it.

memory is held by the Object. the Object is the soil spirit of a place. the Object forever holds the tread of the hoof of the Animal. for the Object is shaped by infinite times of being impressed upon: by lineage, by movement, by stories sung by the Animal's breath. and no one here speaks its dialect.

the Object is held in a Vessel. the Vessel is a room full of the soil spirits of other places. the Object sings songs muted behind glass vitrines that resembles the Vessel which holds you, yourself, and your impressions in the world today. behind a glass vitrine you are seen, but you are never heard. muted, mediated, mutilated.

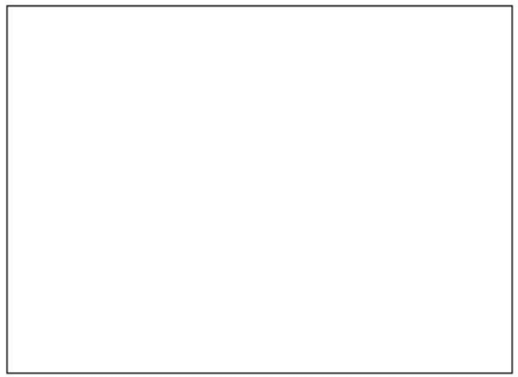
[1] *dust is made of what is shedded. sand is made of what has eroded. erosion is the persistence of impressing upon.*

the Object holds your likeness.[2]



[2] *who do you become without the Object*?

the Animal is a Vessel



there has never been a better way to witness ritual than through the Animal

project your stories onto the Animal. make meaning of your life through the Animal. find God in confrontation with the Animal. understand motherhood from the Animal. absorb peace in the presence of the Animal. design the Object in likeness of the Animal.

the Animal understands itself despite where the Animal is and who the Animal is with. the Animal performs its own excavation. the Animal does not turn to language to find itself. unlike you, who continues to imagine the Animal in many forms.

the Animal finds itself in exile, only to never return.[3]

[3] *a gesture enforced on a body becomes an impression enforced on the mind. an impression is a Mark.*

a Mark is a Vessel

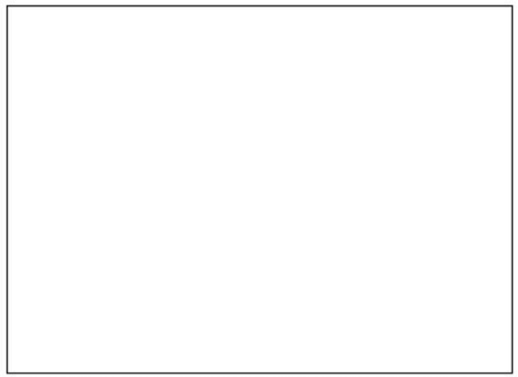


wax is poured onto the Animal, the Object, and the Vessel. it becomes the means to the end. a Mark is made through wax. a Mark is also prevented from being made through wax. wax can melt in the heat.[4]

the Animal becomes the Object becomes the Vessel. each leaving behind a lineage of Marks on the other.

[4] *being interrupted reminds you of a home.*

the first word sent from God was to read.



once again you are left to find meaning in new places. the page is turned many times over. repetition becomes a prayer. and prayer is the mothering of tongues. passing on is a practice in repetition. what passes through interruption is what can be held onto.[5]

[5] *what refuses to escape you*? *what do you refuse to escape*?

a Mark will always remember who made it.

