

# ***Loam***, 2018

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*Loam* – another term for fertile earth – is a dynamic, mixed-media installation created in homage to the history, environment, and character of Abbotsford.

Embedded in modeling paste, native and foreign plant seeds form both abstract and symbolic motifs atop sustainably sourced maple panels. These panels resemble the knot pattern of dip nets used for fishing, holding many stories for viewers to seek with layers of textures and imagery. The bustling backdrop aims to spark remembrance of the richness of the land as well as the cultural heritage of its caretakers, originating with the Stó:lō First Nations. Tiered blue, green, and golden segments aim to recreate the river, earth, and sky in one interpretation of the glorious views seen around the Fraser Valley. Vibrant coloured pencil illustrations of several signature plant species showcase the abundance and variety of the area's agriculture while historical photos celebrate the dedication, cultural diversity, strength, sacrifices, and legacies of Abbotsford residents.

By catching a glimpse of ourselves in an assortment of mirrors, we are invited into the patchwork – overlapping and including the stories of our own lives. It is my hope that this installation will keep memories and gratitude alive while inspiring us in the present to contribute our hands and hearts in mindful maintenance of this land and community.