

# Baptism By Fire

## Semi-Finalist

Tamara Deedman  
Art & Design  
Master's program  
Image location: Graduate Printmaking Studio,  
University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta



## Image Description

My research is situated in the processing and transforming of my family archives – simultaneously treasured collections and hoarded trash – to wrestle with the phenomenon of object attachment as a survival mechanism. Through an autoethnographic lens, I am exploring notions of human attachment to objects that hold both physical and emotional space, and how these occupy memory, identity, and grief. On a much more personal level, through my parent's separate archives, I question what objects can tell us about coping with embodied trauma. In "Baptism by Fire", I position myself in conversation with what is remaining of my mother's belongings to explore how one "recognizes the embedded vulnerabilities of memory, inhibition, human existence, the precariousness of home, and the politics of belonging" through inherited objects. As I navigate my father's absence and the surplus of his objects, as well as the recent loss of my mother's home, I explore how these polarizing archives: one of abundance, and one that could fit in a single grocery bag materialize relationships within domestic spaces. More importantly, I consider how they mark endurance, trauma, and coping mechanisms; every collected item is a signifier and a reminder of generational resilience, addiction, and substance abuse.