

# ELZARA OISEAU

CV Portfolio  
selected

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## BIOGRAPHY

Elzara Oiseau is Ukrainian contemporary artist with Crimean Tatar origins. Because of the deportation of Crimean Tatars – indigenous people of Crimea, by Stalin she was born(1989) and grew up in exile, in the Caucasus region of Russia. In 2000 she finally moved with her parents to Crimea, where she graduated school and then studied monumental art in Simferopol (2005–2011). In 2014 when Crimea was annexed, she moved to Kyiv and then to Irpin. Following the full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Elzara fled alone to Zurich, carrying a large roll of paintings from her studio in Kyiv. These paintings were shown in a solo exhibition at La Galerie Philosophique in Grandson, Switzerland, in August 2022.

Since April 2022 Elzara lives and works in Zurich. Elzara has completed artist residencies in Switzerland, Greece, and Denmark. Her artworks are part of private collections across the globe, including in Ukraine, Switzerland, Greece, Brazil, Portugal, and Australia.

Elzara is a member of Visarte - the association of professional artists in Switzerland since 2024.

Is a member of Zurich artist association *Künstlervereinigung Zürich* since 2025.

## STATEMENT

Elzara's practice examines displacement, identity, and collective memory, situating personal experience within broader historical and political contexts. Born into exile as a Crimean Tatar, her work addresses questions of belonging, forced absence, and cultural continuity. Since the annexation of Crimea in 2014 and the following full-scale invasion of Ukraine, her practice has increasingly focused on the psychological consequences of war and displacement. Working primarily with large-scale painting, text, and abstraction, she explores the mental and emotional landscapes shaped by conflict, trauma, and prolonged instability. The notion of home is central to her work. Through the use of the Crimean Tatar language and cartographic references to Crimea, she investigates the relationship between territory, memory, and identity in a context marked by historical repression and ongoing occupation.

In parallel, her practice engages with the intersections of visual language, sound, and rhythm, translating structures of experimental music into abstract and calligraphic compositions.

## EDUCATION:

2005 –2011 –Crimean Engineering –pedagogical University, Faculty of Fine Arts, specialty: Monumental Art. Simferopol, Crimea, Ukraine.

## SOLO EXHIBITIONS:

2025 - *Sea of words*, personal exhibition, Go-Green Art Gallery, Erlenbach, Switzerland.

2023 - *Jazz Lines*, collaboration with Nik Bärtsch, personal exhibition + concert, Zentralwäscherei, Halle. Zurich, Switzerland.

2023 - personal exhibition for charity concert for Ukraine, organized by Nik Bärtsch, Exil club. Zurich, Switzerland.

2022 - *Lettres*, curated by Jorge Canete, La Galerie Philosophique. Grandson, Switzerland.

2021 - *Expressions*, Angar off-space, Kyiv, Ukraine.

COLLECTIVE EXHIBITIONS:

2025-2026 – *Room for a View*, a group exhibition curated by Bahay Contemporary x Flat in Zermatt, Zermatt, Switzerland.

2025 - *Werkschau 2025*, collective exhibition of The Zurich Artists' Association in the Photobastei, Zurich, Switzerland.

2025-2026 - *Nun, da Himmel und Erde und Winde ruhen*, collective exhibition within the project *Found in Translation*, Helmhaus Zurich, Switzerland.

2025 – *Earthly Things-Ghostly Matters*, collective exhibition curated by Agency for Curating Complexities, Zeughausareal, Uster, Switzerland.

2025 – *Einsichten*, annual collective exhibition by Visarte Zurich, Kupper Modern Gallery, Zurich, Switzerland.

2024-2025 – *Grenzen /Frontières/Borders*, collective exhibition during *Regionale25*, Städtische Galerie Stapflehus , Weil am Rhein, Germany.

2024 – *Neue Wege* collective exhibition by Künstler Vereinigung Zürich, Galerie Art & Business, Zürich, Switzerland.

2024 – *Planting Roots* collective exhibition, curated by Bahay Contemporary, private residence, Geneva, Switzerland.

2024 – *Einsichten* collective exhibition by Visarte Zurich in Kupper Modern Gallery, Zurich, Switzerland.

2024 – project *Conversation* for collective exhibition *Resonanzkörper* in WASCHRAUM space, SBB Wekstatte, Zurich, Switzerland.

2023 - 2024 –*Cosmogony of Senses*, collective exhibition, The Korsak's Museum of Modern Ukrainian Art. Lutsk, Ukraine.

2023 – *Mother.Land*, project for Oerlikon Dream House, collective exhibition, curated by Matteo Kramer & Floyd Bolliger. Zurich, Switzerland.

2023 – *Le Racinage*, project-collaboration with swiss visual artist Nathalie Diserens, GK3 space. Zurich, Switzerland.

2023 – *SORE LAND*, collective exhibition, Zentralwäscherei.space. Zurich, Switzerland.

2023 – *loslassen-loswerden*, wall painting project *Fragile* for WASCHRAUM, Werkstadt Zurich Altstetten. Zurich, Switzerland.

2022 –2023 *Wenn die Erde bebt*, curated by Barbora Gerny, Go Green Art Gallery. Erlenbach, Switzerland.

2022 – *KUNST take away*, curated by Maria Baenziger, Stadt Baden, Kunstraum Baden. Baden, Switzerland.

2022 – *Mirror*, international group exhibition, held by Transcarpathian Regional Art Museum named Yosup Bokshay, Uzgorod, Ukraine.

2022 – *Yesterday was the day before today*, curated by Kebikollectiv. Zurich, Switzerland.

2022 – *CHILDREN for UNICEF*, collective auction, Ukraine in XRONOLAB gallery. Zürich, Switzerland.

2022 – *Resistance*, collective exhibition, Baroque App. Kyiv, Ukraine.

2022 – *War time. Reflections*, collective exhibition, the gallery of contemporary art Dzyga, Lviv, Ukraine.

2022 – *Stand With Ukraine*, collective exhibition by UART + NYC Art movement group, ONE ART SPACE GALLERY. New York, USA.

2022 – collective auction in Xanadu Gallery. Warsaw, Poland.

2022 – *MAKE ART NOT WAR*, collective exhibition, CAM Contemporary Art Museum, Naples, Italy.

2022 –*Transit zone. Exit gate 2022*, collective exhibition, organized by art researching platform MOKONSHU. Mitec Gallery, Kyiv, Ukraine.

2021 – now *The Way of Crimea / Yol Qirim*, project at Crimean House., the project is supported by Ukrainian Cultural Fondation, Kyiv, Ukraine.

2021 – *Your names, Ukraine*, collective exhibition, The Korsak's Museum of Modern Ukrainian Art, Lutsk, Ukraine.

2021 – Online exhibition *Digital Week of Women in Art 2021*, Georgia.

2021 – *Geography of Ukrainian writing*, International festival of literature of Ukraine Book Arsenal, exhibition. Kyiv, Ukraine.

2019 – International festival of literature of Ukraine Book Arsenal, the corner *Letter*. Kyiv, Ukraine.

PERFORMANCES:

2023 – *Le Racinage*, project-collaboration with swiss visual artist Nathalie Diserens, GK3 space. Zurich, Switzerland.

2025 – *40 minutes of Exile* – worldwide tour of performances. 11 performances, Denmark, Poland, Greece. The performance is created and developed in [Nordisk Teaterlaboratorium Odin Teatret](#), Holstebro, Denmark and is part of the EU project Meeting Point, which is a 2-year residency exchange program co-financed by the EU's Creative Europe Program.

ARTIST IN RESIDENCY:

2024 - *Meeting Point Project* - co-funded by the Creative Europe Program of the European Union, ArtSpace Fabrica Athens Multiactive Art Group, Athens, Greece.

2024 - residency funded by Bahay contemporary in Zermatt, Switzerland.

2025 - *Meeting Point Project* - co-funded by the Creative Europe Program of the European Union, Nordisk Teaterlaboratorium Odin Teatret, Holstebro, Denmark.

Upcoming 2026 - Ateliers in the Cité Internationale des Arts in Paris funded by Fachstelle Kultur Kanton Zürich.

PUBLICATIONS:

2023 - Religion & Gesellschaft, Kultur, article *Zwischen Sarkasmus und Mitgefühl. Ukrainische Kunst in der Amplitude des Krieges*, by Vita Susak.

RGOW 1-2/2023, 51.Jahrgang, p. 22-27.

2023 - Book *loslassen-loswerden*, by Nadine Jäger, Alicia Olmos Ochoa, Andrea Ramseyer, Pia Simmendinger, Zurich, Switzerland [link](#).

2023 - Book *Cosmogony of Senses*, by Victor Korsak, Lutsk, Ukraine.

2023 - podcast for СНОБИ/SNOBS in Ukrainian. [link](#)

2023 - ArtHouse, Ukrainian Contemporary Artists, issue 24.02.2022. 4:55. WAR, Lviv, Ukraine.

2022 - Culture, article by Olga Smolnytska, СУРМА, N°13, 07.09.2022, p. 28-29. USA, Ukraine [article link](#)

2022 - *Wo bist du, mein Kind?*, article by Vita Susak; Ukraine Stimmen, 27.08.2022, Germany [link](#)

2022 - Interview for RTS Radio Television Swiss, *A Voix Haute avec Manuela Salvi* in French. [link](#)

2022 - Russia-Ukraine, art and culture. *Où es tu, mon enfant?*, article by Vita Susak, Le Temps, 11 August 2022/N°7392, J.A.1209 Geneva/ [link](#)

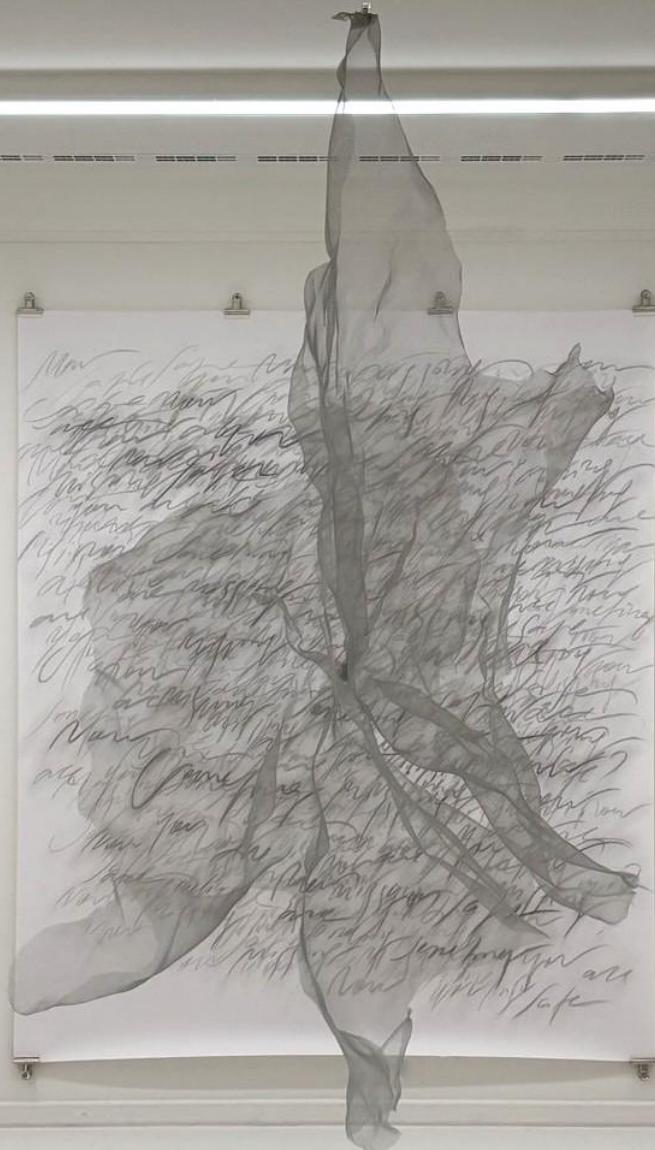
2022 - ArtHouse, Ukrainian Contemporary Artists, issue N°8, 2022, Lviv, Ukraine.

2021 - Book *How to became the Name*, by Victor Korsak, Lutsk, Ukraine.

2021 - *From the studying to experiments*, Catalogue of Ukrainian modern calligraphy, publishing house Artiya,

2021 - Professional Women Artists Catalogue 2021, Georgia.

2021 - Boomer Magazine, The New Artist first edition 2021, London.



project [Duality](#)

*Duality of Words*  
paper, pastel.  
230\*200cm.

*Duality of Worlds*  
Aluminum net approx.  
150\*100cm.



Black Birds and I can't breathe there have no air 2022, acrylic on canvas, 160\*210cm.

Earthly tings Ghostly Matters the group exhibition , Zeughausareal, Uster, 2025

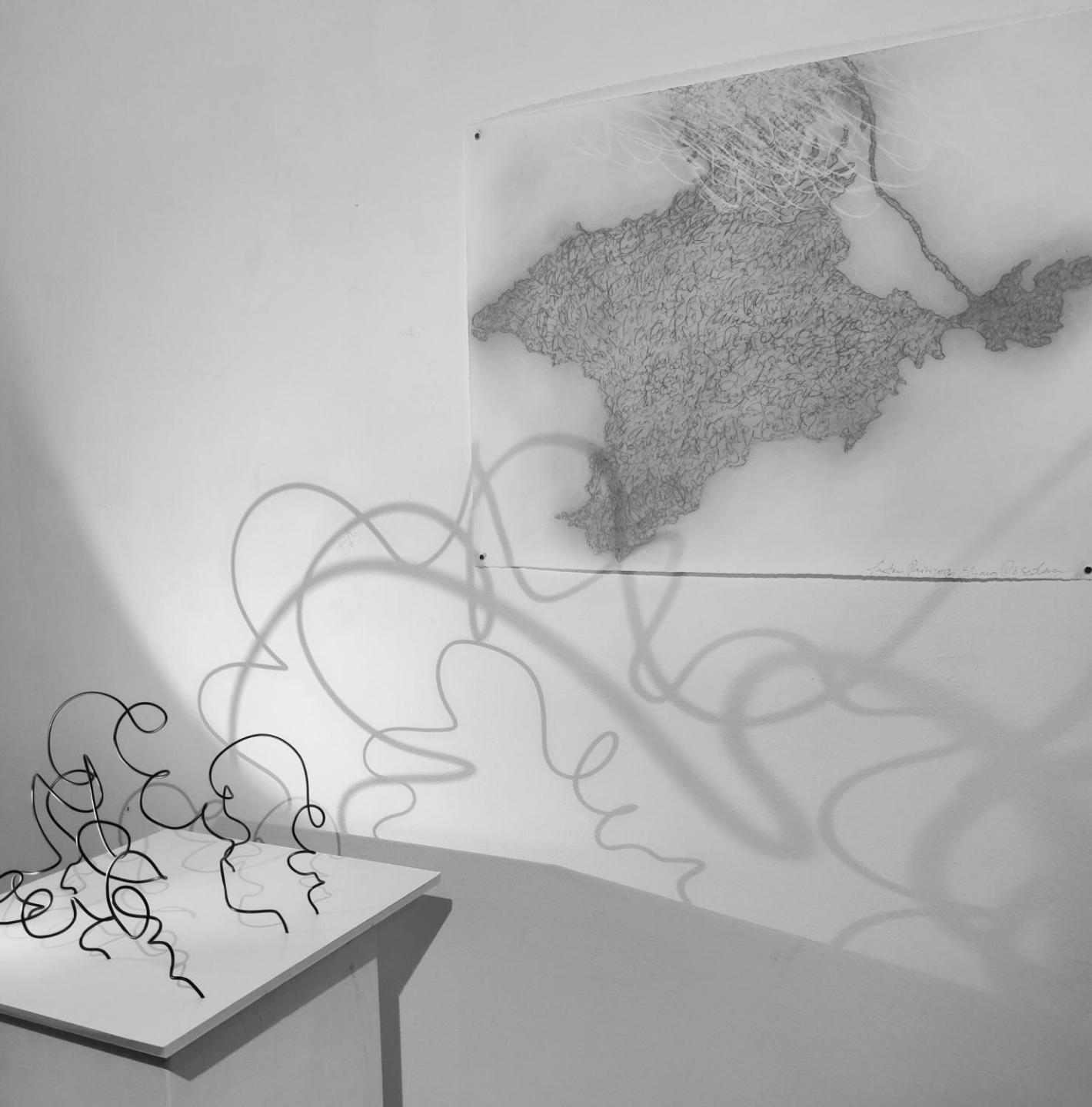


Presentation of [Sürgünlik](#) project at solo exhibition [Sea of Words](#) in the Go-Green Art Gallery in Erlenbach. February 2025

[Sürgünlik](#) (Exile from Crimean Tatar language) is an installation supposed to consist dozens of sculptural objects (made from self-dry clay) of geographical shape of Crimean peninsula transformed in a shape of bird which is searching for a freedom and deliberation from the constant repressions. Dedicated to 81th anniversary of the Deportation of Crimean Tatars (18.05.1944) from their native land.



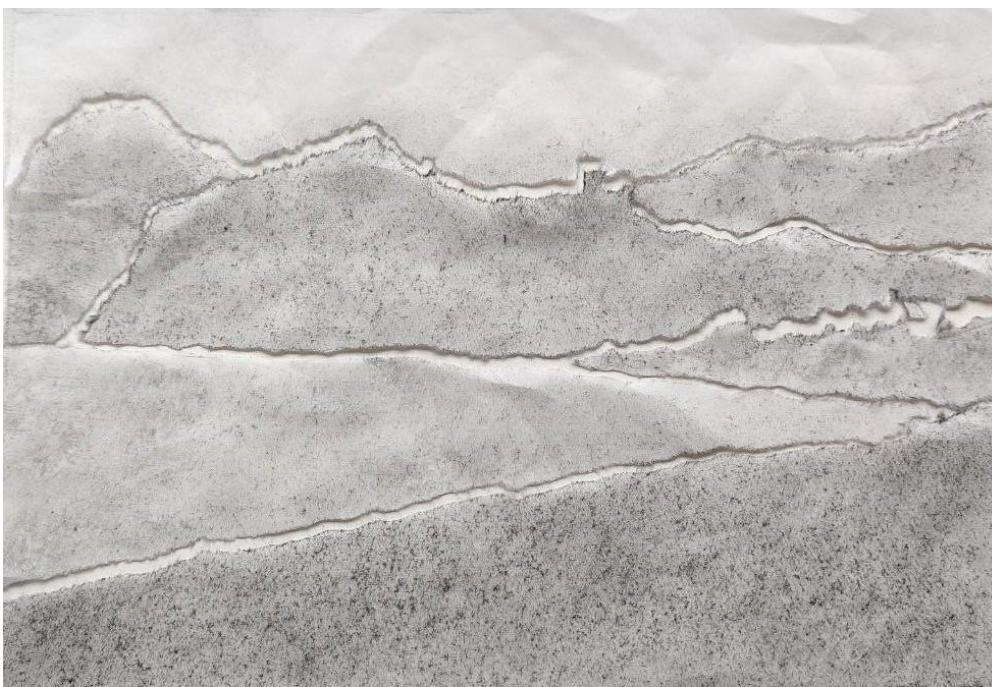
A sculptural wire installation *La Mer* (2024) created specially for the exhibition *Planting Roots* by Bahay Contemporary, exploring the wordplay in French between *la mer* (the sea) and *la mère* (the mother), which sound exactly the same and have very similar writing. These words hold deep personal significance, as the sea symbolizes my parents' home, family, and the years spent in my homeland - Crimea, which I hope to regain, lost due to occupation in 2014 and full-scale invasion in 2022. Previously explored the theme *Homeland, Mother*, through different mediums and languages, now transformed into sculptural forms. The installation, made of wire constructions, will mimic waves of words and the movement of sea water. By playing with light and shadow, I aim to create visual imitations of lines and words that reflect the image of the sea in a poignant and expressive way. Through these works I try to keep a non-verbally connection and caressing the hope to feel the scents of the Black sea, to hear its sound some day at my favorite seacoasts in Crimea. To hear the voice of my mother finally since the last few years in real life.



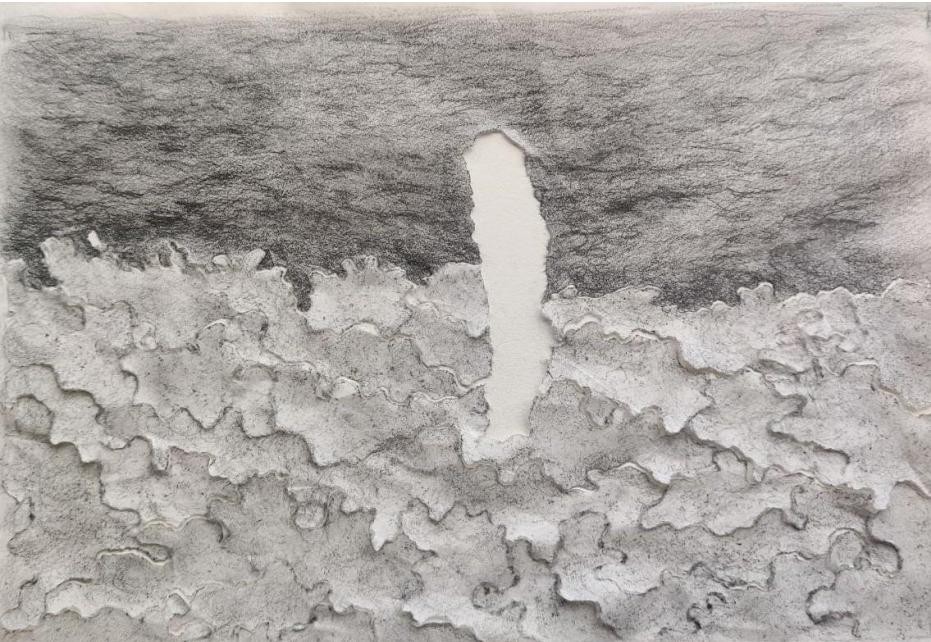
*Phantom Pain.* 2023. Paper, pencil,  
48\*64cm.

*Das Meer.* 2024  
Wire installation, 40\*40\*30cm.

At Neue Wege collective exhibition by  
Künstler Vereinigung Zürich,  
Zürich, Switzerland,  
october 2024.



*Lost Landscapes. Crimea. Sudaq.*  
Genoese Fortress.  
Series of applications and  
drawings. 2024  
Paper, pencil, 18\*27cm.



*Lost Landscapes. Crimea.*

Series of applications and drawings. 2024 Paper, pencil, ~18\*27cm.

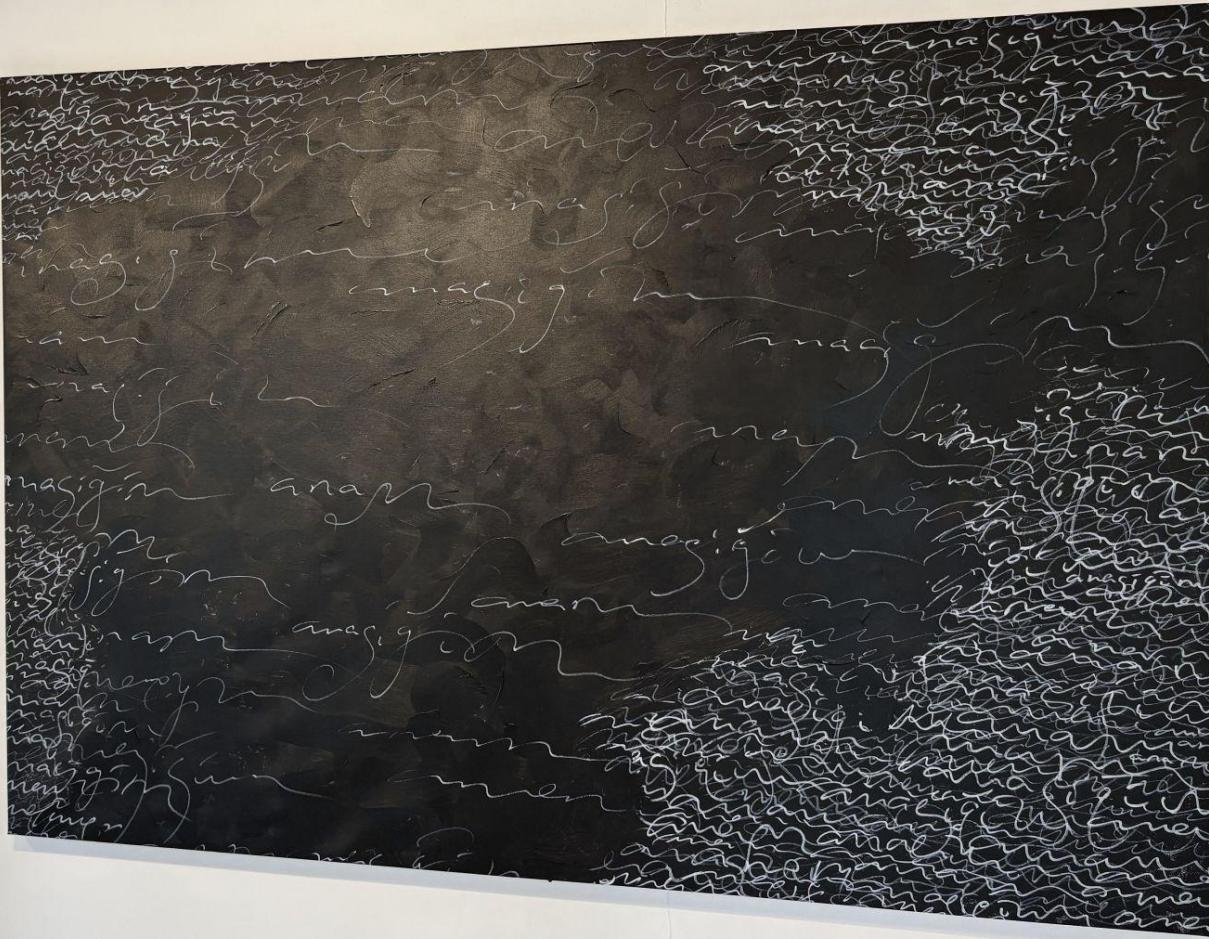
A series of Crimean landscapes based on my own photographs, depicting the scenery of my homeland—now without me since 2014. These landscapes are slowly fading from my memory, so I am trying to preserve them.

In the essence of this project lies Crimea – my native land, a land marked by a turbulent history of loss and fortitude. A narrative that deeply resonates with me and explains some aspects of my individuality. Crimea's past is marred by painful chapters through the centuries. In this project, I portray Crimea's beauty and history through its landscapes. The peninsula, with its rich cultural heritage and stunning vistas, Crimea's story is a tapestry woven with threads of diverse influences. From the legacies of Italian craftsmanship and Greek mythology to the echoes of Turkish traditions, each culture has left its mark on Crimea's heritage. These marks were attentively erased from the history during last 3 centuries, and everything that left and even had a chance to be included in UNESCO heritage (like ruins of Greek city Hersonissos for example), since 2014 is out of control, occupiers build commercial centers, hotels and attractions on these territories.

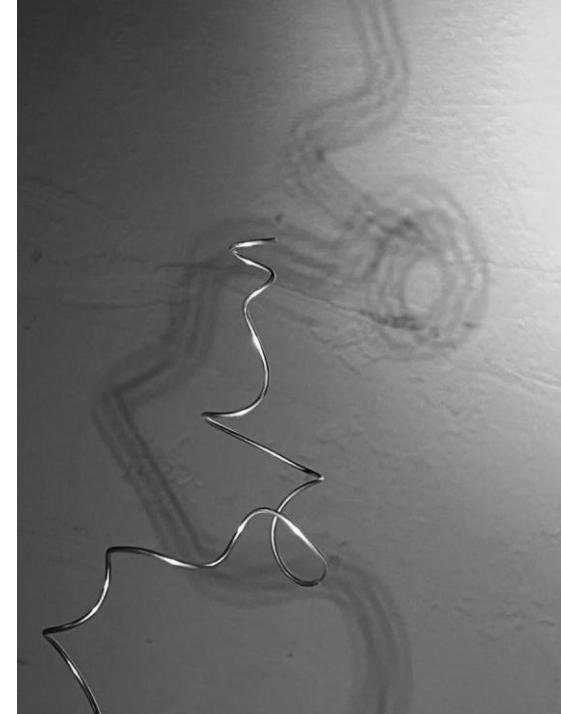
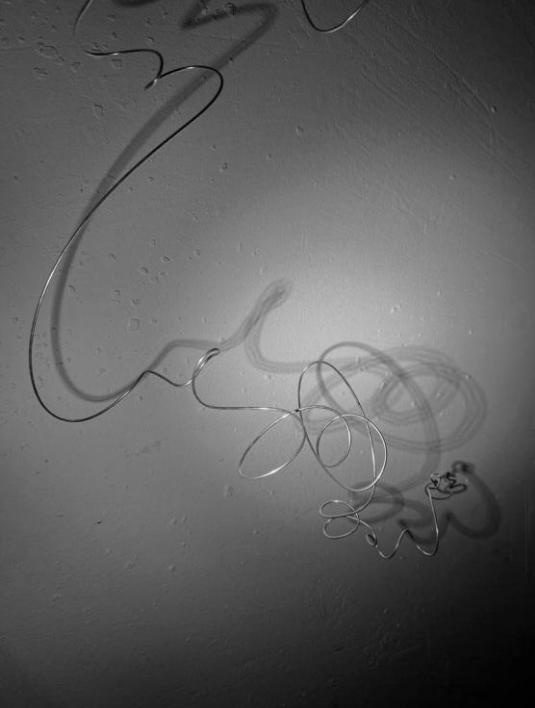


[Regionale25, Städtische Galerie Stapflehus.](#)

*Anaçığım, Anam* from Crimean Tatar language means Mother, Mom  
work that deals with the personal and geopolitical borders of Crimea and addresses the emotional and physical separation from one's homeland. The using a map of Crimea and the writing in my native language, Crimean Tatar, to represent home and memory.  
The word Anam is multiplied by imitating the waves of the Black Sea.



[Sea of words](#) - personal exhibition, Go-Green Art Gallery, Erlenbach, Switzerland, 2025.



Conversation. 2024. site-specific installation for *Resonanzkörper* in [Waschraum](#)

[video](#)

[video](#)

[video](#)

[video](#)





### *Conversation, 2024*

The site-specific installation for the exhibition *Resonanzkörper Sound und Skulptur im Raum*, in June 2024 in a very unique space, Waschraum (Bathroom), which is located in a building owned by the Swiss railway company SBB but is also protected by the city of Zurich as a historical heritage site. The space consists of a vast hall with bathrooms and shower stalls entirely covered in tiles, giving it a remarkable fragility and intriguing sound resonance.

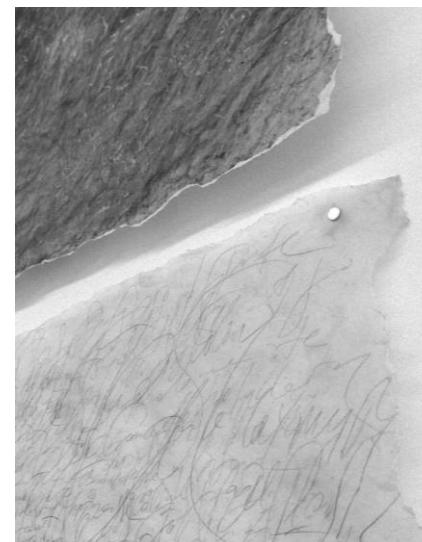
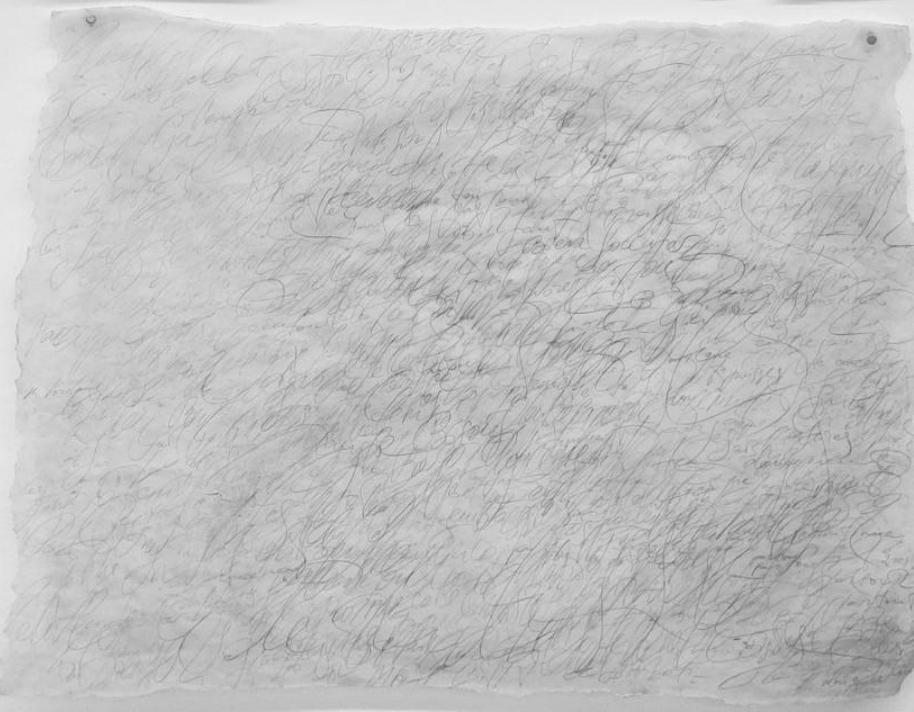
Selected artists were tasked with creating works that would integrate into the space and highlight its specificity, complexity, history, and charm.

*Conversation* is a deep exploration of the synesthesia between music and visual art. Influenced by Nik Bärtsch's intricate rhythms and dynamic energy, I transform sound into visual forms. My artistic language shapes these musical elements into captivating visual expressions, inviting the audience to engage in an intimate dialogue between the echoes of sound and the fluidity of lines.

Large site-specific non-transportable installation in a separate darkened room covering ~20 square meters. The installation was arranged around the entire perimeter, but especially closer to the ceiling, to create the effect of the lines hanging in the air, conveying the lightness and weightlessness of the melody. Visitors were invited to enter the complete darkness that I established in the room. At the entrance, torches were provided, allowing the visitors to personally discover elements of the installation accompanied by Nik Bärtsch's music, and to set the movement of shadows to their own rhythm.

[elzara.studio/conversation](http://elzara.studio/conversation)





*Ineffable. Series 2023-2024*  
Transparent paper, pencil, scratching  
approx. 45\*65cm each



## FRAGILITY 12 meters wall painting for *loslassen-loswerden* WASCHRAUM 2023 [video](#)

This project *Fragility* was created in march 2023 for the exhibition *loslassen-loswerden* for a very special space, Waschraum (Bathroom), which is located in a building owned by the Swiss railway company SBB and is also protected by the city of Zurich as a historical heritage site. The space is a large hall with bathrooms and shower cabins, entirely covered in tiles, which gives it an extraordinary fragility and very interesting sound resonance.

Selected artists had a chance to create works that would integrate into the space and emphasize its specificity, complexity, history, and charm.

Since I primarily work with words and languages, I decided to choose a word that would describe this space while also resonating with my own state of being in exile under difficult conditions and simultaneously drawing attention to the state of my country, which is currently extremely vulnerable and fragile.

I used the four languages I speak or am beginning to speak: Ukrainian, French, German, and English, pointedly excluding Russian, which I truly wish to forget.

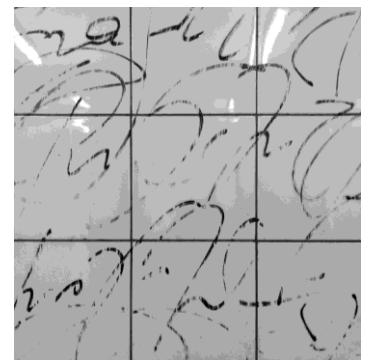
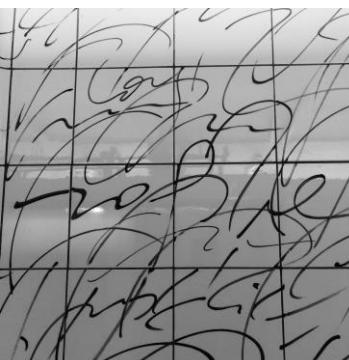
Text from a book publication that came out a few months after the exhibition (translated from German) (Book *loslassen-loswerden*, by Nadine Jäger, Alicia Olmos Ochoa, Andrea Ramseyer, Pia Simmendinger, Zurich, Switzerland, [link](#)):

"A word can unite, a word can distance. It can be the beginning of a war or the start of a new life. A word has power. We think with words, we can express ourselves simply by using language, words. Everything has its word. Even this room with beautiful fragile tiles has its word: *fragility* - says Elzara.

The installation *Fragility* visualizes Ukrainian artist Elzara Oiseau's strength of the word. The calm rhythm of narrowing symbols and the aesthetic of black symbols on white tiles are expressive and beautiful.

Abstract calligraphy is the central element of Oiseau's artistic expression. She believes that nothing is more expressive than words, but at the same time, she lives in an environment where she does not master the local language. She builds a bridge using abstract calligraphy and emphasizes the immense power of language. This is noticeable at the exhibition, but also tangible, as the words are written on a 12-meter tiled wall and thus have a significant presence in the room. The tiles have their word: *fragility*. This word is endlessly repeated in abstract calligraphy, designed for the bathroom.

Oiseau's artistic approach, focused on abstract calligraphy, is a sensory experience. "Fragility" encourages us to think about the power of words and how they affect our relationships, our society, and our personal experiences".



Performative removing of the painting by the end of exhibition, online streaming

