

Zaal Art Gallery announces "Daddy (Tongue Remix)," a duo exhibition of works by Reza Shafahi (b. 1940, Saveh, Iran) and Mamali Shafahi (b. 1982, Tehran, Iran), opening on February 11, and continuing through March 3, 2024. The third exhibition in a series of conversations and collaborations between father and son, "Daddy (Tongue Remix)" follows an installation in "City Prince/sss" (Palais de Tokyo, Paris, 2019) and "Daddy Sperm" (duo exhibition, Club Rhubarb and Situations, New York, 2021).

Mamali and Reza Shafahi's work has been widely exhibited by Dastan and Zaal Art Gallery, dating back to 2014 when Dastan's Basement hosted "Broken SD," a solo exhibition of works by Mamali Shafahi. Their work was most recently included in "Soft Edge of the Blade Vol. 2", the inaugural show of Zaal Art Gallery (October 2023), and in Art Toronto 2023. Conceived as a space nested within the venue, Focus Room is an initiative by Zaal that reimagines the gallery layout on each iteration. "Daddy (Tongue Remix)" is the first in a series of exhibitions hosted at Focus Room.

Mamali and Reza Shafahi have been collaborating since 2012. Initiated by Mamali under the working title "Daddy Sperm", the project explores the complexities of family dynamics, using a variety of media including drawings, sculptures, and video installations. "Daddy Sperm" and its evolution were initially inspired by Mamali's fascination with how children are conceived, or in his own words, "how a drop of the liquid becomes a human being". This led to an exploration into his relationship with his father, Reza, a retired professional wrestler who at the time, in his early 70s, was recovering from a gambling habit. Mamali persuaded his father to make art, and Reza became increasingly captivated by drawing and painting.

"Daddy (Tongue Remix)" focuses on the tongue, both as a metaphor for language, speech, and verbalization and as the primary organ for the sense of taste. The exhibition explores the mechanical and figurative aspects of the tongue, looking at it as a vehicle for the articulation of thought, communication, and expression, as well as its metaphorical connotations and contexts, such as its sexual allusions.

Moreover, in the artists' native Farsi, '[Zabān]' is the primary word to describe both language and the tongue as an organ, and they have found means to playfully address this (lack) of distinction, as well as language's definition characteristics in distinguishing different cultures.

Mamali Shafahi (b. 1982, Tehran) graduated with a BA in Photography from Tehran University of Art (2002) and studied at ENSAPC (École Nationale Supérieure d'Arts Paris). He is a filmmaker and video installation artist. His practice, varying from installation to sculpture and film, includes a deep fascination with the impact of emerging technologies on life and art. His early work in France, at the Paris-Cergy School of Fine Arts, focused on performance. He then produced several video installations, in which he investigated the relationship between past, present, future, and new technologies. Mamali is based in Amsterdam and Paris, and his work is regularly exhibited in international institutions and galleries, including most recently, his solo "Phantasmagoria: Daddy Kills More People", at The Breeder Gallery, Athens, 2023, and the exhibition "Some Seasons: Fereydoun Ave and the Laal Collection", Art Jameel, Dubai, 2023.

Reza Shafahi (b. 1940, Saveh, Iran) is a painter who works and lives in Tehran. He began his artistic career in his 70s after overcoming a gambling addiction with the encouragement of his artist son, Mamali Shafahi. Disconnected from his family for many years, he found solace and creative redemption through art when his son invited him to participate in a daily drawing exercise. His art reflects personal experiences and emotions, showcasing a unique style characterized by vibrant colors, bold brushwork, and expressive compositions. Reza Shafahi's story is a testament to art's transformative power and the human spirit's resilience. Reza Shafahi is based in Tehran, Iran. His iconic work has been included in numerous shows, including most recently in "Some Seasons: Fereydoun Ave and the Laal Collection", (Art Jameel, Dubai, UAE, 2023) and "Soft Edge of the Blade Vol. 2", (Zaal Art Gallery, Toronto, Canada, 2023).