

FoundNations

We were children¹
sown as seeds,—no babies
gone to ghost. You

interred us not
in unmarked graves,
buried sins and shames
ill-covered. Readily

and rather,

we took to root
in cherished gardens.

Unearth us,
cap to cradle, these bones
ne'er forgotten, tended
tender now
by unisi hands. We are not

your foundations, stem
walls and slabs for slaughter, —
brick by brick, we
are Nations found, called
home to ever-blossom.

Jessica Mehta

¹ “We were children” was written in red paint on the doors of St. Paul's Cathedral in Saskatoon on June 24, 2021 in response to the announcement from Cowessess First Nation that 751 unmarked graves were found near the former Marieval Residential School.