

House of CoHit

I am a Shell

Curated by Mamali Shafahi

May 15 - May 31, 2025

Opening Reception Thursday, May 15 from 5 to 9 PM

House of CoHit Gallery, Hollywood Hills

Featured Artists

Asma, Justin Fitzpatrick, Pauline Guerrier, Alice Guittard, Jacopo Pagine, Zoë Paul, Chulayarnnon Siriphol, Shagha, Thom Trojanowski

Press Release

House of CoHit is pleased to present *I am a Shell*, a group exhibition curated by artist Mamali Shafahi with works by ASMA, Justin Fitzpatrick, Pauline Guerrier, Alice Guittard, Jacopo Pagine, Zoë Paul, Chulayarnnon Siriphol, Shagha, Thom Trojanowski.

I am a Shell brings together a constellation of artists whose practices are linked by personal memory, ancestral techniques and the storytelling of material – where haberdashery, intimacy, vulnerability, and symbol are intertwined.

The title is a painting by Thom Trojanowski; this becomes a threshold area between the human and nature, a site of change where the body is not fixed but fluid, enacted by internal memory and external forces. This metaphor serves as a way for the exhibition to question how we contain identity, history, and change in physical form. Evoking houselike forms, each artist with their material approach and gestural language meditates on art's dual function: as protective shell and porous membrane.

Designed and hosted to reflect the spirit of House of CoHit, a space tucked into the Hollywood Hills, the exhibition relates to the venue's idiosyncratic nature – intimate, atmospheric, sensorial. Shafahi views the show more as a foyer than an exhibition – a welcome into a space between one's home and one's art space, between craft and the everyday. House of CoHit is not a white cube – it is a lived-in, breathing environment that lends itself to slowness, conversation, and contemplation. The show has the feel of a rite, which the viewer is drawn to as if by an angling mirror, navigating him or herself into the textures and feeling landscapes of individual works.

Thom Trojanowski's (b. 1988) emotive paintings envision bodies in communion with the natural and spiritual worlds. His brushwork is instinctive and intimate, translating personal mythologies and earthy tenderness into scenes that seem both very ancient and up to date.

Alice Guittard (b. 1986) hand-crafts marble inlay to produce quiet relics: stone surfaces that contain ephemeral moments. Her particular accuracy even makes memory a physical scratch, an indentation etched into the material body.

Zoë Paul (b. 1987) is a multidisciplinary artist who examines the overlap of craft, architecture and the body, with a focus on ancient methods and domestic rites. Her bead curtains allude to ghostly figures or dismembered bodies, inspiring slowness and meditation, while her clay pots suggest ancestral vessels — ingestible, respiring shapes that dissolve the barrier between use and spirit.

Jacopo Pagin's (b. 1988) paintings are lustrous with mysterious narrative. Drawing from surrealism, mysticism and cinema, he opens portals into dreamy interiors where feeling and image ironized like a mirage.

Shagha Ariannia (b. 1984) has a tender, but deeply political, voice, turning experiences of displacement into tender forms of care — acts of remembering as resistance.

Pauline Guerrier (b. 1990) stitches with time. Her work with straw, silk and fabric is nothing less than an act of devotion — each thread a record of labor, ritual, and ancestral presence.

ASMA (b. 1990, b. 1994), the Mexico City-based duo, combines object, myth and architecture in mysterious sculptural assemblages. Their art walks a tightrope between dissolution and regeneration, borrowing from the symbolism of the natural world and the visual language of devotional images.

Justin Fitzpatrick's (b. 1985) complex paintings are deeply layered with symbols, merging the arcane with allegory and biology to create dense, visually tactile images, which explore the echelons of the body, power and spiritual metamorphosis.

Chulayarnnon Siriphol (b. 1986) combines Thai mythology, speculative fiction and ritual performance in his dreamy video *Birth of the Golden Snail*. The piece unfolds as a magic, slow-moving vision of birth and becoming — with themes mirroring the show's focus on metamorphosis, mythology, and the sacred in everyday life.

In *I am a Shell*, the personal and the universal converge: craft and body, memory and nature, delicacy and resilience — these are brought together to invent a place for contemplation, a place where transformation is still happening.