

House of CoHit

Things Themselves Have Tears

Curated by Shelley Holcomb

Opening Reception November 7, 6-9pm – On View through December 12, 2025

House of CoHit Gallery, Hollywood Hills

Featured Artists

Daniel Adolfo, Lauren Ferajang, Salomon Huerta, Samala Meza, Christine Olowonira and Pauline Shaw

Press Release

In wartime, beauty is not frivolous. Claude Monet, as bombs echoed near his garden at Giverny during World War I, continued to paint his water lilies, immersive fields of floating light and reflection. To paint the stillness of water while the world burned was not escapism. It was a radical act of continuity, a meditative defiance against the machinery of death. The title of this group exhibition, curated by Shelley Holcomb, echoes "lacrimae rerum" (Latin: "the tears of things") from Virgil's *Aeneid*. It is a poignant expression of the sorrow embedded in the human experience, suggesting that even inanimate objects can evoke a sense of loss or sadness. In Virgil's epic poem, the phrase appears in the context of Aeneas witnessing the fall of Troy. It highlights the universal experience of suffering and the profound impact of loss, even on those who witness it from a distance.

Things Themselves Have Tears brings together works created during and in the aftermath of war, paintings, drawings, sculptures, and textiles, all gestures arising from societal fracture. Each was made not outside of conflict, but from within it, translating the weight of history into material form. Daniel Adolfo's abstractions, shaped by the dislocation between Venezuela and Mexico, render emotional landscapes where memory and displacement converge. Salomón Huerta's contemplative surfaces transform the ordinary into charged terrain, where stillness becomes both refuge and resistance. In Samala Meza's paintings, fragmented forms dissolve into color and light, reimagining modernist abstraction through the complexity of the feminine experience. Christine Olowonira reconfigures the ant—a humble, unseen laborer—into a luminous metaphor for feminine strength, using fine metals and gemstones to convey endurance as a form of grace. Pauline Shaw's large-scale felted textiles weave ancestral patterns and scientific imagery into porous landscapes of remembrance, while Lauren Fejarang's sculptural compositions, made from resin, concrete, and found materials, evoke the body's architecture and the persistence of natural forms.

In war, everything becomes precarious: language, memory, time, the body. And yet, the artist reaches for a line, a shape, a surface. It is not always clear why. Together, these artists assert that to create in the face of destruction is to affirm life itself. Their works are bound by the shared impulse to translate what cannot be spoken. Their marks insist on presence, on feeling, on continuity. To make beauty in wartime is not to deny horror; it is to carry it differently. It is to make visible the ache of what is gone and the perseverance of what remains.

Things Themselves Have Tears invites viewers to sit with this tension: to make art in wartime is not always an act of hope. Sometimes it is ritual. Sometimes it is refusal. Sometimes it is simply a way to live another day. The psyche craves evidence that not all is lost. Beauty reminds us of our humanity.