

Women Who Carry the Mountain

Exhibition Dates: 17 January 2026 - 1 March 2026

Opening Sat 17 January 3- 8 pm Gillman Barracks District Wide Openings



Installation view, *Women Who Carry the Mountain*, 17 January 2026

Yeo Workshop is pleased to present *Women Who Carry the Mountain* by **Citra Sasmita**, a body of work that explores the resilience of women as custodians of balance between humanity and nature.

Rooted in the ancient Balinese creation myth of Bedawang Nala—the colossal turtle entwined with three dragons representing the earth, sea, and wind—Sasmita's works reinterpret these sacred elements that represent the world's equilibrium through a contemporary feminist lens. Their harmony ensures the earth's stability, while their disturbance brings forth earthquakes and volcanic eruptions.

Through this mythology, Sasmita reflects on Bali—an island situated within the volatile ‘Ring of Fire’ - and the community’s abiding practices of coexistence with nature’s unpredictability. Rituals, storytelling and collective knowledge become acts of both reverence and survival, within which women emerge as crucial mediators and guardians. Central to rituals and ceremonies that worship the figure of Earth-Mother, a symbol of abundance and goodness, are Balinese women who serve as bearers of ancient wisdom and tradition in upholding the balance between humanity and nature. Through painting, installation and textile works, Sasmita evokes this intricate and divine web of feminine energy, spirituality and cosmic forces that sustain the balance of life.

Occupying the centre of the space are works from the *Tribe of Fire*, suspended cowhides, first presented at the Hawai’i Triennial 2025. Encircling a central mound of charcoal, the hides bear painted female figures with leafy branches sprouting from heads, torsos and hands, illustrating an inseparable bond between human life and the natural realm. Brightly coloured beads adorn each cowhide, meticulously tracing the wrinkles and creases across the leather. These surface markings become records of memory and the passage of time, at once evoking topographical landscapes shaped by natural forces and registering intimate, bodily experience. Sasmita likens the cowhides to human bodies as vessels of memory, where folds, scars and stretch marks carry the imprints of ancestry, migration and lived history.



Citra Sasmita, Labyrinth of Revelation 6, 2025, Acrylic painting on traditional Kamasan canvas

Alongside these works, Sasmita presents a new series of paintings, drawing from the visual language of traditional Kamasan painting from East Bali to reassert the female figure as a

protagonist and decolonial voice. Mounted on ceremonial textiles and embellished with stone pearls, they reflect Sasmita's view of fabric and painting as embodiments of "body and soul." Informed by the cultural history of Balinese textiles as carriers of power, ritual and memory, these works channel an ecofeminist worldview in which nature and femininity emerge as interwoven forces of resistance and renewal.

"It is about how women hold the weight of both tradition and transformation, ensuring that life endures even as the world trembles beneath us."

– Citra Sasmita

Sasmita's *Women Who Carry the Mountain* embodies the wisdom and sensitivity involved in nurturing this delicate balance between humanity and nature. In the face of an increasingly uncertain and hyperchanging world, the artist urges us to look towards the spiritual wisdom that can be found through seeking connection with nature again.



ABOUT THE ARTIST



Citra Sasmita, Photography by Toby Coulson for the Financial Times, 2025.

Citra Sasmita (b. 1990, Bali) is a self-taught artist whose practice reimagines Balinese myth, ritual, and cosmology through a feminist and decolonial lens. Trained in literature and physics and formerly an illustrator at the Bali Post, she interrogates colonial narratives and gender hierarchies that have shaped Balinese visual culture. Working with the historically male-dominated Kamasan painting tradition, Sasmita reclaims and reframes ancient stories to centre female agency. Her expanded practice spans painting, textile, sculpture, and installation, often incorporating materials such as cowhide, hair, and ceremonial cloth to build a universe of empowered, divine cosmology.

Sasmita has exhibited widely, including the Hawai'i Triennial (2025), Sharjah Biennial (2025), Toronto Biennial (2024), Diriyah Biennale (2024), Biennale of Sydney (2024), São Paulo Bienal (2023), and Kathmandu Triennale (2021–22). In 2025, she presented her first UK solo exhibition at the Barbican's Curve gallery. Her works are held in major public and private collections internationally, including the Ministry of Culture Saudi Arabia, Sharjah Art Foundation, Hood Museum of Art, Longlati Foundation, Yan Du Collection, and Morgan Stanley.