

ROBB PUTNAM

Website: robbputnam-art.com

Contact: robukun@yahoo.com

ABOUT

Robb Putnam is a sculptor working primarily with textiles and mixed materials. His work explores themes of vulnerability, protection, and the shifting boundary between interior and exterior states. Earlier bodies of work drew on animal-like forms—hybrid, fragile figures that suggest both emotional exposure and resilience. More recent work, including the Exiles series, moves toward abstraction while maintaining a material language rooted in fabric, accumulation, and surface transformation. Across these works, Putnam investigates the tension between structure and softness, containment and release.

EDUCATION

Mills College, Oakland, CA — Master of Fine Arts, Art, 2008

Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore, MD — Bachelor of Fine Arts, Summa Cum Laude, 1993

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2025 — Exiles, Walter Maciel Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

2023 — Visitors: A Mid-Career Survey Exhibition, Walter Maciel Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

2020 — Unattended Creatures, Walter Maciel Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

2019 — Robb Putnam, Gail Severn Gallery, Ketchum, ID

2017 — Interlopers, Walter Maciel Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

2015 — Robb Putnam, Gail Severn Gallery, Ketchum, ID

2015 — Loiterers, Walter Maciel Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

2014 — Foundlings, Rena Bransten Gallery, San Francisco, CA

2012 — Castoffs, Walter Maciel Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

2010 — Orphans, Rena Bransten Gallery, San Francisco, CA

2009 — Strays, Walter Maciel Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

2000 — Recent Mixed Media Work, Gallery Ginza Ichome, Tokyo, Japan

GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2025 — And the Beat Goes On... 20 Years / 26 Artists, Walter Maciel Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

2025 — Red, White and Blue, Walter Maciel Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

2024 — Faces / Places / Traces, Walter Maciel Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

2023 — Textile Tango, Walter Maciel Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

2022 — History / Tragedy / Imagination, Walter Maciel Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

2022 — Future Patchwork, Walter Maciel Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

2021 — Paper Cuts, Walter Maciel Gallery, Los Angeles, CA

2020 — In the Groove: Persistence and Endurance, Walter Maciel Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
2019 — Encounters: Honoring the Animal in Ourselves, Palo Alto Art Center, Palo Alto, CA
2019 — Peace on Earth, Museum of Art and History, Lancaster, CA
2018 — Go Figure, Walter Maciel Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
2017 — New Threads: Perspectives in Contemporary Fiber Art, Laband Art Gallery, Loyola Marymount University, Los Angeles, CA
2015 — Sew What?, Children’s Museum of the Arts, New York, NY
2015 — Bird in the Hand, Palo Alto Art Center, Palo Alto, CA
2014 — Reigning Cats and Dogs, Rena Bransten Projects, San Francisco, CA
2012 — Threading the Needle, Walter Maciel Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
2011–2012 — Travelers: Objects of Dream and Revelation, Bellevue Arts Museum, Bellevue, WA
2011 — Big Ass Sculpture Show, Rena Bransten Gallery, San Francisco, CA
2010 — Elements of Nature, Contemporary Art Center, New Orleans, LA
2010 — Identity Based Vertigo, Pacific Design Center, West Hollywood, CA
2010 — Inspiration Unlimited, Pacific Design Center, West Hollywood, CA
2009 — Improvised Branches, Art@TheOakBook Gallery, Oakland, CA
2009 — Laugh It Off, Walter Maciel Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
2009 — Narrative Thread, Lyons Wier Gallery, New York, NY
2008 — Bay Area Currents, Oakland Art Gallery, Oakland, CA
2008 — Creature Feature, Rena Bransten Gallery, San Francisco, CA
2008 — Mills College MFA Exhibition, Mills College Art Museum, Oakland, CA
2007 — Buy Me While I’m Cheap, Blankspace, Oakland, CA

PUBLICATIONS, REVIEWS, AND INTERVIEWS

2018 — Carolina A. Miranda, “Date Book: Art about memory, sculptural bears and a show devoted to art crime,” Los Angeles Times, January 5
2015 — George Melrod, “Artist Profile: Robb Putnam,” art ltd., September–October
2014 — Jesse Hamlin, “Bay Area arts news,” SF Gate / San Francisco Chronicle, September 10
2010 — Kenneth Baker, “Sorell’s prints enhance the mysteries of poems, Putnam’s Orphans,” SF Gate / San Francisco Chronicle, August 14
2010 — Hayley Barker, “1–2 Punch! Robb Putnam’s ‘Orphans’ at Rena Bransten Gallery,” hayleybarker.wordpress.com, July 30
2010 — Michael Leaverton, “Diamond Dogs, review of ‘Orphans’ at Rena Bransten Gallery,” SF Weekly, July 14
2009 — Alison Gibson, “Laugh It Off at Walter Maciel Gallery,” DailyServing.com, July 31
2009 — “Oakland artist receives Joan Mitchell grant,” Artweek, April 2009, Volume 40, Issue 3

2009 — Stephanie Cash, "Awards & Grants: Joan Mitchell Foundation," Art in America, February issue, p. 152

2009 — Cameron Woo, "Lost and Found," The BARK, Jan/Feb 2009, Issue 52 (three-page artist interview with photos)

2008 — Reyhan Harmanci, "Bay Area Currents 2008: 12 emerging artists," San Francisco Chronicle, October 16

2008 — Mills College MFA Exhibition Catalogue, foreword by Jessica Hough, with essay by Glen Helfand

AWARDS

2008 — Joan Mitchell Foundation Painters and Sculptors Grant

2008 — Headlands Center for the Arts Graduate Fellowship Finalist

2008 — Herring Prize for Excellence in Studio Art

2007–2008 — Graduate Art Trefethen Award

COLLECTIONS

Oakland Museum of California

Palm Springs Art Museum

Frederick R. Weisman Art Foundation