

## Marjetica Potrc

SHE BUILDS BETTER WORLDS.



**MARJETICA POTRC** has made some important art: she's built dry toilets for Latin American slums and promoted a water jug

for Africa that can also absorb the force of land mines. She's taken the idea that art can change the world and made it come true. Sure, her art-world actions don't do that much actual good. Instead, they do what art does best: they talk about how the world might be better.

"I believe in art. People need art to negotiate their world," Potrc says. And the depth of that belief may be this artist's true contribution.

Potrc (pronounced "PO-turtch," with Marjetica sounding close to "Mari-EH-tee-tza") was born in 1953 in Ljubljana, Slovenia, where she still lives. She got her start in architecture, but began making building-themed art about 15 years ago.

A typical Potrc begins with a structure or situation she finds in a distant place—say, Venezuela or Rajasthan, India—then tweaks to make more livable. "We should respect people in *favelas*, and learn from them, and their living conditions." Other work comes closer to sculpture, as she mashes up constructions: in a big installation at MIT called *Hybrid House*, Potrc set down a wild building that hybridized features of buildings from Caracas, the West Bank, and West Palm Beach. By colliding three such different visions, Potrc achieves a surrealist edge that also embraces the real.



Hybrid House

