



### Biographies

**Tobias Putrih** was born in Kranj, Slovenia in 1972 and lives and works in New York. He has had numerous international exhibitions including *Psycho Buildings*, Hayward Gallery, London (2008) and *Forms of Resistance*, Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven (2007). Solo exhibitions include Neuberger Museum of Art, Purchase, New York (2007), Thomas Dane Gallery, London and the Slovenian Pavilion, 52nd Venice Biennale, (2007). In 2009 he will have a solo exhibitions at Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam and MIT List Visual Arts Centre, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

**MOS** are a collective of designers and architects. The two principals, Michael Meredith and Hilary Sample, teach at Harvard University and Yale University while maintaining the practice. They work all over the world, designing private houses, institutional buildings, urban strategies, research, books and installations. Through their work they engage architecture as an open system of interrelated issues ranging from architectural typology, digital methodologies, sustainability, structure, fabrication, materiality, tactility, and use, as well as larger networks of the social, cultural, and environmental. This process of participation and inclusion allows MOS to operate, producing and inflecting environments at a multiplicity of scales.

### Further Information

To find out more information about Tobias Putrih & MOS and our other exhibitions, visit BALTIC Library & Archive online database <http://archive.balticmill.com>

### Free Daily Guided Tours

From Monday 13 April this exhibition will be included in the Daily Guided Tours at 11.00 and 16.00, meeting at the Information Desk, Ground Floor. No booking required.

### BALTIC Podcasts

For further information and to subscribe (free of charge) to BALTIC podcasts visit [www.balticmill.com/podcasts](http://www.balticmill.com/podcasts)

Image credits:  
Front: *Macula B Series*, installation view 2006  
Dimensions variable, Photograph by Eli Ping Weinberg  
Courtesy of the artist and Max Protetch Gallery, New York

Back: *Venetian, Atmospheric*, 2007  
Architecture by Tobias Putrih and Luka Melon  
Plywood, OSB plates, scaffolding, PVC curtain,  
16mm projectors, digital projectors.

# TOBIAS PUTRIH & MOS

*Overhang*

10 April – 31 August 2009



**BALTIC** BALTIC Centre for Contemporary Art  
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## TOBIAS PUTRIH & MOS

### *Overhang*

10 April – 31 August 2009

BALTIC presents a new project by Slovenian, New York-based artist Tobias Putrih in collaboration with architecture and design company MOS. For the exhibition *Overhang*, Styrofoam blocks are stacked using the basic rules of equilibrium and 'maximum overhang stacking' to produce a monumental yet super-lightweight structure on the verge of collapse.

Putrih's work exists between science, sculpture and architecture and deals with the process of designing an object, from models to prototypes. Exploring the potential of an idea, his works could be considered proposals for objects or architectural spaces that may never be built. Using materials such as cardboard and sticky tape, the makeshift structures that Putrih produces have a calculated instability. The deliberately provisional nature of his sculpture offers a critique of systems of knowledge and the value of the art object. He creates an 'object that expresses its own self-doubt, questions its own existence' and offers a 'way to question the value of the art object as a category of thing in the world'.<sup>1</sup>

Fascinated with science, systems of knowledge, labs, protocols, machines and diagrams, art for Putrih must be practical in the first instance. Putrih is sympathetic to Robert Smithson's idea of the 'artist as consultant' and collaborates to produce objects and ways of working that initiate dialogue. For *Overhang*, software developed by MOS was used to calculate the maximum possible overhang before collapse. Responding to the height and scale of the space, the structure, reaching a full 7 metres, 22 centimetres was then built in the gallery.

In addition to the physical structure, the exhibition includes a computer generated 3D model that highlights the precarious nature of the project. Putrih also asks others to be involved in production. Setting the rules and determining the materials, he invites visitors to BALTIC to experiment with the blocks provided to build their own relationships. The process is an ambiguous extension of the work that asks how much freedom can be offered before the system will fail. The process questions how artists' decisions affect the rules of the game in the context of the art institution.

Putrih's approach is informed by the years of radically reduced cultural communication and exchange between Eastern Europe and the West. He analyses the practices of western modernist utopianism, from Bauhaus experiments, Buckminster Fuller and Friedrich Kiesler, to American cinemas and socialist village theatres. Putrih's projects undermine the seriousness of modernism, the apparent objectivity of science and the permanence, stability and solidity of architecture. *Overhang* at BALTIC has a particular resonance during the demolition of Owen Luder's iconic Trinity Garden Car Park in Gateshead. As Putrih suggests, every utopia anticipates a possible meltdown and every system of knowledge has its black holes.

<sup>1</sup>Thom Collins, *Beautiful Constructs: An Interview with Tobias Putrih* (2007)

Image credits:  
Right: *Mudam Studio*, 2006  
In collaboration with Sancho Silva, design by Tobias Putrih and Ales Korpic  
Plywood, Dimensions variable  
Collection Mudam Luxembourg, Musée d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean  
Photograph by the artist and Rémi Villaggi  
Courtesy of the artist and Max Protetch Gallery, New York

