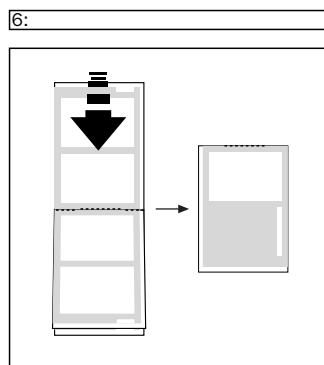
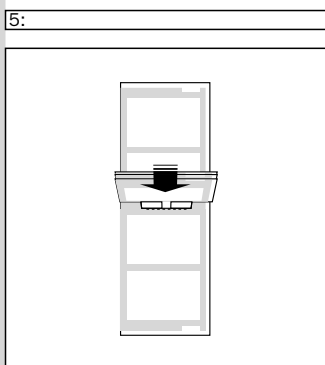
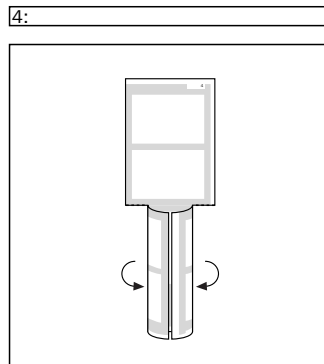
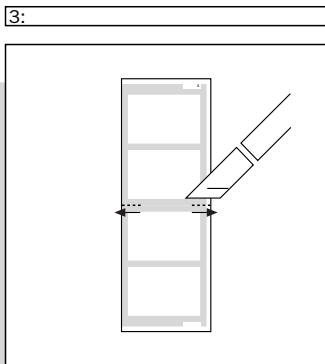
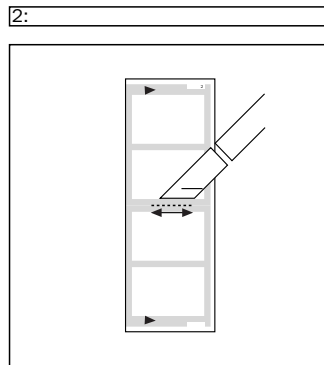
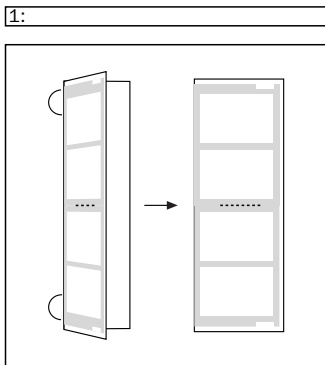


## Construction



- 1: First, fold each A4 sheet in half along the vertical axis.
- 2: Using a craft knife or scalpel, cut a horizontal slot along the centre dotted line of the first A4 sheet. (pages 1/2/13/14)
- 3: Then cut along the dotted lines on all the other sheets. Make sure to cut to the very edges of the paper.
- 4: Stack the folded sheets in ascending order with the even numbers at the top. Curl the bottom half of the second A4 page (pages 3/4/23/24).
- 5: Thread the curled page through the centre slot of the first A4 page. Repeat this process with the third (pages 5/6/21/22), fourth (pages 7/8/19/20), fifth (pages 9/10/17/18), and sixth A4 sheet (pages 11/12/15/16) with the even pages in ascending order.
- 6: When all the pages have been threaded through, check the pagination. Finally, fold the booklets in half along the horizontal axis.



THE FACT OF  
THE MATTER  
MONICA  
ROSS  
AND  
ANNE  
TALLENTIRE

DIFFUSION



THE FACT OF THE MATTER  
Monica Ross & Anne Tallentire

[www.diffusion.org.uk](http://www.diffusion.org.uk)

Series Editors: Giles Lane & Catherine Williams

© Proboscis & Monica Ross & Anne Tallentire

First published by Proboscis in 2000.

All rights reserved.

DIFFUSION Print design by:

Nima Falatoori ([www.dlutofia.co.uk](http://www.dlutofia.co.uk))

Paul Farrington ([tonne@scantone.easynet.co.uk](mailto:tonne@scantone.easynet.co.uk))

DIFFUSION Interaction design by:-

Noel Douglas

This publication is designed to be freely available to download and print out. Under no circumstances should any version of this publication, whether print or electronic, be sold by any third party without prior permission in writing from the publisher.

ISBN: 1 901540 13 7

British Library catalogue-in-publication data: a catalogue record for this publication is available at the British Library.

Proboscis gratefully acknowledges the support of the Arts Council of England and the CRD Research at the Royal College of Art in making DIFFUSION possible.





## ...the fact of the matter

On March 6th 2000 Monica Ross and Anne Tallentire returned to the material they had kept from a journey made to Riga in response to an invitation to make work with the artists and associates of The Creative Institute 9IR between April 2nd and 8th 1993.

"I want to write a description of Moscow at the present moment in which 'all factuality is already theory' and which would thereby refrain from any deductive abstraction, from any prognostication, and even within certain limits from any judgement..."  
Walter Benjamin, *Moscow Diary*, ed. Gary Smith, Harvard University Press, 1986.

Many thanks to Uriel Orlow for his assistance in digitising the video material and stills.

April 1993 / March 2000.

These are stills that I took from the VHS video.

I took something out of my box, now you have to take something out of your box.

It's too loud for you? Maybe turn it lower? it's loud at this point because we are all laughing.

Is that too loud for you? Maybe turn it lower? it's loud at this point because we are all laughing.

Yes. A Journalist from German TV. We're discussing whether the conversation should be in French or German.

Was there someone else there?

Maybe the volume up a tiny bit more?

I could put the mike a bit closer?

Maybe that will give us too much distortion. And the mike won't pick it up.

And slow it down as well?

Lets play it low, very low, as if it is the noise within which we are actually thinking.

play it low or slow?

Are you going to put a tape on? The knife is over there.

I was worried about these tapes getting damp.

I think maybe it is a bit loud.<sup>1</sup>

That is us having tea, yes.

It is us having tea. I realise I have put the second tape on. I can't stop listening to it.

it's impossible to do anything else.

It is impossible to do anything else.

It is not background noise.

No, it's definitely not.

The good thing is that I can understand what is being said now.

Are you going to be able to focus, is the tape going to distract you? We could have something

## the fact of the matter...

Where do we begin?

Why don't we just go through the material?

Not worry about the camera or the tape recorder? Let's just go through the material?

Exactly, because we haven't done that before.

Exactly, because we haven't done that before.

Do we leave these photographs in the black bag till later? Or do you want to look at those now?

Yes, lets leave them till later. What occurs to me about these tapes is that we could use them not so much as background noise or sound that is not being listened to, but more like a buzz or a hum, an air? Maybe we could

looking at the material... This material is also very interesting, but is it only interesting to us? How do we make what we do interesting to someone else? The eternal question!<sup>2</sup>

very familiar playing in the background.

We have of course got the sea.

That meeting was an extraordinary experience. It wasn't planned. When we arrived we had no idea that Dace, who we were staying with, was a friend of Dagnars.

The compulsion to attend to the sound of this tape is absolute.

It is very commanding.

Shall we start?

I've just cleared a space on the table.

Shall we put the other tape back on?

The one that is recording what we are doing now?

Is the DV CAM on automatic or manual focus?

I've set it on manual.

If we have that other tape on while we are



Yes. What is that?

That photograph is interesting, I'll make a note, I'll just put possible stills. Yes?

water that morning and we brushed our teeth in vodka?

tea. We had a very nice shopping trip for food that day. Do you remember there wasn't any

tea. I am showing it to the camera.

There it is.

I have it here.

It wasn't breakfast, remember? it was supper?

And caviar.

Spoon.

A porcelain cup with a chipped edge and a fine line crack.

Soft boiled egg on a weightless aluminium

I remember that now.

The tulips, petals from the tulips on the plate.

Fourth of the fourth, ninety three.

Here, look, that's our breakfast.

autobiography.<sup>5</sup>

This sketch book is going backwards.

Here is my ticket back to Berlin.

Lithuania. We met on the platform when you arrived very early on the morning train of the first of April.

directly from there. I travelled via Poland and

*Interruptions* the week before.<sup>4</sup> You came

No, but we came back together.

the same outward journey, did we?

So you were already there. We didn't go on

ninety three.

The date is the twenty fifth of the third, ninety

What's the date on it?

Here is my ticket to Riga.

You've found some sweet papers too?

It's on the tape, it's the journalist speaking.<sup>3</sup>

me on the train. It's from the day when we

went to all those beaches. And this tape is

at this black and white photograph that this

is frozen sea, frozen waves on red rocks.

I keep remembering his name but then it keeps

I think so.

He was the one who was always singing, *A*

all the words to Mercedes Benz. And we did.

front of that abandoned car...

That had sunk into the sand.

house with the wonderful basement were the

Plums. And they asked us if we made jam.

What was that?

This is Riga. These pictures are amazing.

This one is from an installation. Here are some

Didn't you take a photograph of the ceiling as

Yes and I gave you some of those stills.

of the performance work I made with Iguna

and Ize. I was trying to learn how to say the

and over again.

It was like a round. I clearly remember hearing

The missing ones you must have somewhere?

I think there is a folder in the filing cabinet.

What else have you got?

This tape is the Baltic sea. You labelled it for







extract from *subject to change*. monica ross, performance-video-text. 1998.

duplicate  
They make a copy of their faded resemblance and put it on the wall.  
One day a young man, who knows them well, notices it.  
"Who's that ? " he asks. " It's us " they reply.  
"Oh yes" he says, as if they were joking.  
"So when was it taken ? A hundred years ago ? It's not really you."

a surface of stone carved into arabesques. They take photographs but there is a fault in the loading mechanism and the film does not roll. This photograph, sent to them later, is all that remains. But something has slipped in the fix. No sooner do they take the photograph from its envelope, than it begins to disappear. Until their black coated figures are almost all that is left of the print. Just them, and the trace of their look, looking at something which cannot be seen.

2 Photographs taken by Anne Tallentire. Photographs of Monica Ross and Anne Tallentire together taken by Norbert Meyn.

3 Salaspils War Memorial: a former concentration camp near Riga. In the open air a large rectangle of black stone resounds with an unrecognisable sound in a regular, but unrecognisable, pattern of interval: somewhere between a heart beat and the ticking of an eternal clock. Close by is Rumbula where several thousand Jewish people, firstly from the Riga Ghetto, and then from other cities such as Berlin, were murdered. However, the taxi driver who drove us to Salaspils said nothing had happened at Rumbula.

4 *remains*  
Several years later and ago, maybe more or less, they walked there. It is a grainy black and white photograph. The two women are centre frame, walking in step, side by side, heads arched at the same angle, their faces turned upwards to the left. They are looking intently at something. They are looking at an exquisite detail of the street's architecture. Every tall, turn of the century, Jugendstil house has a unique facade of elaborate balconies.

photographs were taken by someone else providing us with photographs of ourselves together. I'm glad we have that record. What fascinates me most is that, as you say, we were all strangers and these photographs return a strange image of ourselves to us. It is as if our images have been absorbed into a different strata of technological time. They are the photos of that now, there, then. Another 1993 to the one we had travelled from. These very ordinary moments are somehow compelling because they are drenched in distance.

We were going to talk about the train journeys weren't we... ?

we could do that another time... ?

#### FOOTNOTES

1 The widely reported struggle, in 1991, for control of the Television Station was a key event in the establishment of Latvian Independence from the USSR.