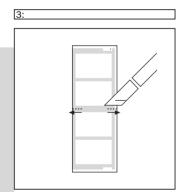
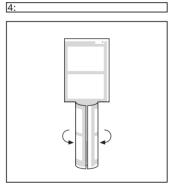
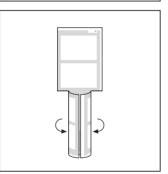


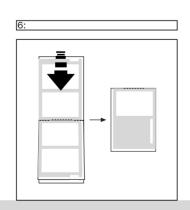
Construction



5:







- First, fold each A4 sheet in half along the vertical axis. 1:
- Using a craft knife or scalpel, cut a horizontal slot along the centre 2: dotted line of the first A4 sheet. (pages 1/2/13/14)
- Then cut along the dotted lines on all the other sheets. Make sure 3: to cut to the very edges of the paper.
- Stack the folded sheets in ascending order with the even numbers 4: 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 ${\sf A4}$ 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

14 ET



THE FACT OF THE MATTER

MONICA
ROSS
AND
ANNE
TALLENTIRE



THE FACT OF THE MATTER
Monica Ross & Anne Tallentire

www.diffusion.org.uk Series Editors: Giles Lane & Catherine Williams

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3



...the fact of the matter

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

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

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

April 1993 / March 2000

22

These are stills that I took from the VHS video.

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

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

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?

could put the mike a bit closer?

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

Lets play it low, very low, as if it is the noise within which we are actually thinking. And slow it down as well?

play it low or slow?

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

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

Exactly, because we haven't done that before.

Exactly, because we haven't done that before.

Why don't we just unpack the boxes together? Not worry about the camera or the tape recorder? Let's just go through the material?

Where do we begin?

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!2

the fact of the matter...

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. That is us having tea, yes.

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

It's impossible to do anything else.

It is impossible to do anything else

It is not background noise

No, it's definitely not

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

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

very familiar playing in the background.

We have of course got the sea.

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

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

It is very commanding

Shall we start?

I've just cleared a space on the table

The one that is recording what we are doing Shall we put the other tape back on?

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



This is the lid of the jar of caviar we had for tea. We had a very nice shopping trip for food am showing it to the camera.

that day. Do you remember there wasn't any water that morning and we brushed our teeth That photograph is interesting, I'll make a

in vodka?

That is a list of paintings in the Riga Museum.

This sketch book is going backwards.

autobiography.5

Here is my ticket back to Berlin. These are notes from Asja Lacis'

note, I'll just put possible stills. Yes?

Yes. What is that?

have it here. There it is.

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

No, but we came back together. You and John were in Sheffield doing

the same outward journey, did we?

Interruptions the week before.4 You came

directly from there. I travelled via Poland and Lithuania. We met on the platform when you arrived very early on the morning train of the

And caviar.

spoon.

Soft boiled egg on a weightless aluminium

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

line crack.

The date is the twenty fifth of the third, ninety What's the date on it?

ninety three.

Here is my ticket to Riga.

The tulips, petals from the tulips on the plate.

I remember that now.

A porcelain cup with a chipped edge and a fine

You've found some sweet papers too?

It's on the tape. It's the journalist speaking.3

Here, look, that's our breakfast. Fourth of the fourth, ninety three.

This is Riga. These pictures are amazing.

you used to bring the painted ceiling down stills of your performance with the mirrors that This one is from an installation. Here are some

Didn't you take a photograph of the ceiling as

and over again. English alphabet, repeating the alphabets over and lize. I was trying to learn how to say the of the performance work I made with Iguna These colour stills are mostly from the video Latvian alphabet and then to teach them the Yes and I gave you some of those stills

it in that room It was like a round. I clearly remember hearing

The missing ones you must have somewhere?

I'll get it out. I think there is a folder in the filing cabinet

This tape is the Baltic sea. You labelled it for

What was that?

Plums. And they asked us if we made jam.

What else have you got?

at this black and white photograph that this coast of England. It's not apparent from looking Brighton, the sound of the sea on the south me on the train. It's from the day when we went to all those beaches. And this tape is

sliding away, was it Vestrius? I keep remembering his name but then it keeps is frozen sea, frozen waves on red rocks.

I think so.

all the words to Mercedes Benz. And we did. He was the one who was always singing A Whiter Shade of Pale. He asked us if we knew

And we performed it for them sitting in the front of that abandoned car..

That had sunk into the sand

jars of fruit. sun came in like amber, caught on the glass house with the wonderful basement were the And then we went to that wooden summer-

first of April.

18 **Δ**τ



now, has a long timescale construed across As if.....' Remind me how you came to That performance, like this work we are making excerpts from dreams, events and notes 1974

But there was one photograph we rescued a long time ago which we kept in our office.

we were at the developers in Riga on the way back from Salaspils.3 Do you remember the moment when we were introduced to the technician? A small rounded elderly lady in an apron, cardigan, head scarf and green wellington boots. The floor of the darkroom was awash with water and buckets?

...the fact of the matter...

did not realise that I had not shown you the black and white photographs in the black plastic bag and I was convinced they would disappear if we looked at them, that the fix was unstable. These photographs, faded, out of focus, are random shots taken on the train from Berlin, a series of small actions at Jakob Platz, a workshop in the studio, and some from the sixth floor of the Television Station overlooking the river Düna.¹ A group of strangers trying to make work together, some

difference between it and the other photographs although they were taken on cameras perhaps an old Soviet SLR? There's no qualitative 30 years apart in technological time? They were all shot on the USSR black and white Wasn't that on a different roll and taken on film, printed on the same paper and in the

same place.

What did you think of the photographs? I have

snaps to remember it by.

always thought they were magical things because I imagined them to be inherently flawed, unstable and incapable of functioning as photographs. I believed that they could only ever be viewed for an instant, but they are intact, preserved, hidden from the light they

They make a copy of their faded resemblance that in subject to change.4

1997. Several of the black and white

They are like magical things. Seeing them again was mesmeric, as if for the first time. think I must have looked at them briefly when have become durable.2

So that can go over there. It's the woman we couldn't identify afterwards the performance workshop in the art school It's another still from the VHS tape shot during

and they haven't faded, have they? we developed in that shop in Riga by the station These black and white photographs are ones

4.

Is there one of us there?

Street." I know where they are... they're in One Way No, there isn't.

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FOOTNOTES

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- her home in Riga. Dagmar Kimele, the daughter of Asja Lacis, at Tape recordings of an evening spent with
- in Illuminations, Schocken Books.1968 The Task of the Translator, Walter Benjamin to terms with the foreignness of languages... is only a somewhat provisional way of coming "This, to be sure, is to admit that all translation

(Westdeutscher Rundfunk) based on the tapes. made a television programme for WDR. come with us to visit Dagmar Kimele. He later lodgings by chance, took the opportunity to Bernhard Pfletschinger, staying in the same

ω

- Show, March 1993 by work - seth/tallentire, Sheffield Media Interruptions – a performance and installation
- Profession) Asja Lacis. ed. H.Brenner, Rogner and Bernhard. Munich. 1972. Revolutionär bei Beruf. (Revolutionary by

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the author. Street, after the engineer who laid it through dedication: "This street is named Asja Lacis Benjamin's text is prefaced by the following One Way Street Walter Benjamin. Verso. 1985. 16 gτ



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

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

we could do that another time...?

4.

FOOTNOTES

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

> N Photographs taken by Anne Tallentire.
> Photographs of Monica Ross and Anne

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

several thousand Jewish people, firstly from eternal clock. Close by is Rumbula where between a heart beat and the ticking of an unrecognisable, pattern of interval; somewhere unfathomable sound in a regular, but rectangle of black stone resounds with an camp near Riga. In the open air a large taxi driver who drove us to Salaspils said such as Berlin, were murdered. However, the the Riga Ghetto, and then from other cities

Salaspils War Memorial: a former concentration Tallentire together taken by Norbert Meyn.

ω

nothing had happened at Rumbula.

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

extract from subject to change. monica ross,

It's not really you."

performance-video-text. 1998.

They make a copy of their faded resemblance One day a young man, who knows them well,

duplicate

cannot be seen.

and put it on the wall.

notices it.

"Oh yes" he says, as if they were joking. 'So when was it taken ? A hundred years ago? "Who's that?" he asks. " It's us " they reply.