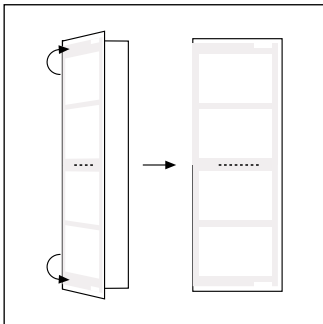
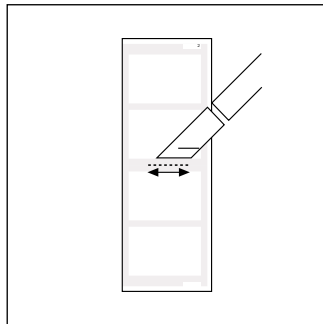


## Construction

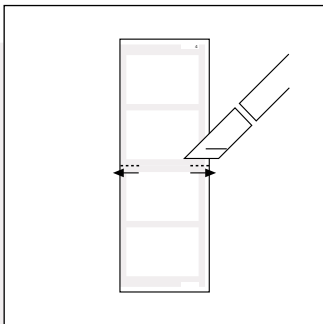
1:



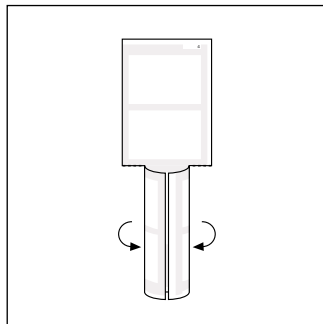
2:



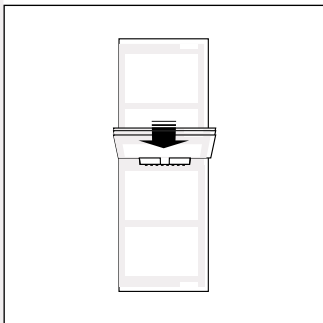
3:



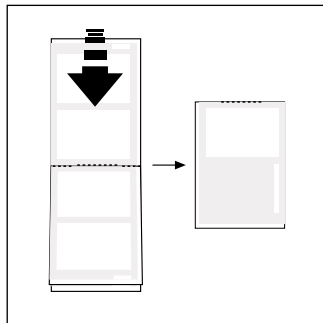
4:



5:



6:



- 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 1/2/9/10)
- 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 3/4/15/16).
- 5: Thread the curled page through the centre slot of the first A4 page. Repeat this process with the third (pages 5/6/13/14) and fourth A4 sheet (pages 7/8/11/12) 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.



I always wondered why the visitors fall in love with Salvador de Bahia. Can't they see? Can't they see the ugliness of the city? 3 million people living, for most, in slums and self-constructed habitations, plastic sheets after cardboard after timber boards after bricks after concrete... a huge and dirty building site where work is always under progress, with open air sewages, unpaved streets, garbage all over. Not much looks beautifully tropical here, rather, it looks so scarily similar to areas of Grozny, Cairo, Van, Bombay, Medellin or Free Town. Human misery puts on the same face anywhere in the world.

The ugliness of Salvador's urban design clashes with its rich relation to the sea at almost any point of its extended coastline. Salvador, full of music and laughs. Salvador, on the mellow rhythm of the tropic. languorous moves, vibrant skins, fresh coconuts and exotic fruits. The set is ready. Salvador, over exposing its negritude, its religious syncretism, its folklore, prostituting it to the tourism trade. Salvador, embracing its visitor with one arm while robbing him with the other. Salvador, making you believe whatever you want to believe.



# RESNULLIUS

## ANNE SOBOTTA

DIFFUSION *Spazio di Spazio*

**Remember to dress in red on December 4th.**  
**Remember that it is not a good day to deal with administrations.**  
**Remember to dress in white on Friday, and in pale colours (blue or yellow) on Saturday.**  
**White for peace. Yellow for wealth.**  
**Blue for happiness.**



**SPECIES OF SPACES**  
**RESNULLIUS**  
Anne Sobotta

www.diffusion.org.uk  
Series Editors: Giles Lane & Alice Angus  
© Probotocis & Anne Sobotta  
Photographs © Anne Sobotta  
First published by Probotocis in 2003.  
All rights reserved. Free  
ISBN: 1 901540 35 9  
British Library Cataloguing-in-publication data:  
a catalogue record for this publication is available  
at the British Library

**DIFFUSION ebook design by:**  
Nima Falatouri (www.NMDesign.co.uk)  
Paul Farrington (www.tonne.org.uk)

This publication is one of a series of essays commissioned by Probotocis for the series SPECIES OF SPACES – inspired by and in homage to Georges Perec’s sporadic book. The series contemplates how we live in virtual and physical, emotional and social – what Perec called the “infra-ordinary”. SPECIES OF SPACES aims to radically question the trajectory of contemporary urban existence, intervening in current debates on how the virtual and the physical relate to each other, and how technological advances affect cultural and social structures.

Supported by Arts Council England, London.  
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.

Someone had lent a flat in the Bronx. It was covered with dirt so we created clean pathways from the bed to the bathroom and to the kitchen, superimposing a new topography within the hardly habitable space. Staying home was not comfortable. Being out at night was not comfortable. We were too broke to pay for a cab back and were – even if we wouldn’t admit it at the time – so scared at the idea of walking in the deserted streets of the Bronx which we knew only from mafia and gangster films.

I remember someone all of a sudden shouting right into my left ear. I remember almost being in tears after an argument with a camera retailer. I realised this was a totally new culture to me. I had felt much in tune with the peoples of all the countries I had just left: in the Near East, Southern Europe, Latin America. I swallowed my pride and realised that I could not adjust to both the physical and social space of New York City; I was a stranger.

It was my very first time in New York City. I was 23, my head full of theories, opinions and pride like any obsessed architecture student. I had decided to dedicate the year to travel the world and see with my own eyes all those places I had read so much about. After months in lands of millenary cultures, the journey was ending in New York City, the city, the place where *all* happens, a myth; a dream coming true. I remember my friend and I arriving at JFK airport and taking the subway via Harlem all the way to the top end of Manhattan where our host was expecting us. I remember his big sweaty hug and that he cooked us Italian pasta; everything seemed to take ages. It was already late in the afternoon when we managed to escape and took the subway again to 57th street, midtown, Manhattan. I remember walking up the steps, coming out on the pavement, suddenly struck still, my eyes rose. Here they were, the skyscrapers... Around us a dense and hectic flow of people were rushing, it was awkward to be standing still. I felt like a little child, eyes wide open to an urban landscape I had never experienced before, a new sky, a new space. I felt fragile.

*Resnullius – that which belongs to no one*

Sea  
Water  
Land  
Space

“... Legal status of outer space, the moon and other celestial bodies: *General (Resnullius, Terra Nullius, Res Omnium Communis, Res Extra commercium, Internationalized Territory)*...”\*

\*World Wide Space Law Bibliography by Kuo Lee Li, published by De Gruyter Publishing Reg.

*to Zoo, in memoriam*



Salvador as a city of codes, millions of codes and secrets. Salvador is not without rules, it is only that the rules are unwritten. A city where nobody cares, but everybody watches. A social space that seems extremely permissive – and that, at the same time, observes every move, every word, every attitude. A lot happens in this complicated net of human relations, be it based on friendship, work, sexual attraction, social or religious roots. Those who see are only those permitted to; obeying the rules of the group to which they belong. Those who talk, and to whom, are only those who know how to negotiate this complex net. This flow does not happen without waves, dramas and scandals. There are leaks and failures within the system. But don't be mistaken, what truly counts, what is imperatively to be hidden, remains so, revealed to no one that isn't authorized.

It is in that constant shifting between what is and what isn't that Salvador can lead you to either loose or find your identity. As you become aware, in this precise social space, of being watched, you are drawn to self observation. It is not about assimilating the codes of the new place, as it would be in any place, it is about becoming aware of what one projects, and from where. Coming to the where, one comes to the why and ultimately to question the why. Your balance and set of behaviours is challenged to the core. No place to hide. No new rules to follow, but rather a new path to find in a place where all human features are present almost in ubiquity. An ubiquity that one is led to recognise in him/herself, possibly revealing an identity kept masked until then.



*Many times I thought of making a list of all the spaces – the beds, sofas or floors, the rooms, the houses, the villages, the cities – where I have slept since I left home. To describe them thoroughly, the physical space as well as the emotional state of mind attached to it.*

**Family houses, friend's flats, hotels, last minute spots, coaches, airplanes, motels, tents...**

**Paris, Cairo, Mount Sinai, Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Ufa, Diyarbakir, Mardin, Istanbul, Patmos, Barcelona, Cordoba, Cariz, Granada, Santarem, Portalegre, Castelo Branco, Porto, Lima, Cusco, Puno, Arequipa, New York, Grenoble, Ales, Toledo, Evora, Lisboa, Brighton, London, Tunis, Montreal, Quebec City, Sienna, Roma, Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Recife, Fortaleza, Salvador, Trancoso, Venezia, Antibes, Edinburgh, Toronto, Ottawa, São Luis, Belo Horizonte, Diamantina, Ouro Preto, Marselles...**

**Hammocks, king size beds, single beds, comfortable sofas, hard floors, perfumed beds, dirty beds, beds with insects, airplane seats (1, 2 or even 3), bus seats (1 or 2), beds with plastic cover under the sheets, bed from childhood, noisy sofa beds, futons, shared beds, designer beds, cushions, wooden floors, foam mattresses, sprung**

*mattresses, beds for love, beds for sex, historical beds, good-for-your-back beds, bad-for-your-back beds, reassuring beds, repulsing beds, beds with mosquito net, earth floors, sand.*

**As the years passed, and I travelled from one place to another through territories to which I applied the generic name 'not-home', a routine installed itself in this itinerary without routine. Every morning, emerging from darkness, I make contact with the world again, preparing a path to open the day, the body, the mind. A routine to create a temporary but grounding home-feeling. A ritual, with always the same duration, the same few and carefully chosen objects, the same steps. It is a daily need to accomplish the same moves. Teapot, laptop, yoga mat. Those have become my items of I.D. An heteroclitic yet symbolical ensemble. Water — life, cleansing. Yoga — aligning, opening mind and body. Laptop — being present to the world, connected, seeking, producing and exchanging knowledge.**

**There is here a certain fragility brought over by the frequent travels, an impossibility to settle in a local, geographical and social environment. Rather, one's net is condensed in the billions of 0 and 1 running along the cable connecting the computer to the telephone plug, a fragile, almost intangible link.**



A conception of home at the very other end of what home has started to mean to me in Brazil.

**It is been too long since I last enjoyed physical space. Now I won't let it go again. Physical space is what gives us time. We are so confused, believing we earn time with virtual and new communication devices whereas those are the biggest time-thieves of all.**

**It worked again. First days – confusion, fear, the perception of a huge distance. And then the landscape takes over. The body expands, in the heat of the day, in the unlimited space. A view wider than 180°: the flatness of the blue-green-grey liquid surface, the cranes and containers in the port, like a fantastic mechanism. The physical space penetrates the mind, brain waves becoming as flat as the waters of the bay lying under my eyes as I wake up.**

**Mad about this place. Winter fading away, the body moisture. London hast left in me mechanical and frenetic memories, an abstraction, non-loci. Salvador, life pulsing again in my veins, hours extending.**

**Exposed to this multiform society, the visitors withdraw into their own balanced, morally-directed mindset. Many just close their eyes, others are too scared by what may be revealed and turn their fear into a hate for the city. Last, some find themselves almost reborn, unveiling the hidden in themselves. Mistaken roads, illusions and disillusion, decadence or purification can follow. At the least there is the beginning of an enormous curiosity and attraction for this unknown: at the most, and maybe most dangerously, a conviction that here is home, the place of all possibilities, the place to discard the past and become a fuller, truer self. Illusions.**

An Italy swept of its people. A theatrical set with its backdrops and accessories. The concept of home reduced to a physical environment made utterly familiar by the attachment to childhood memories. It was a Manichaeistic opposition to the tasteless souvenirs of growing up in France.

**Here we are with a daily ritually, physically and spiritually grounded by the cleansing and opening of the water and the yoga practice (as if those were indispensable) to face the question brought over every morning by the computer: who am I here? We have left.**

**The answer lies in the computer brain, and may be not in mine anymore, I am those files and folders full of my work, I am the sender of those emails and recipient of those messages.**

**Before the laptop era I was reading more. I was calling my friends – as well as total strangers - and I was listening to their voices. I was going for lunch. I was ready faster in the morning. I was contemplating much more. I had the time. I was a student. I was a flâneur. I was free. I was not that good at yoga. I had other addictions. I did not know that everything, even rituals, can always change or be changed.**

**The custom officer asked: "Do you have a proof of I.D.P?" and I thought: "Yes, I have a proof of I.T."**

Often I would go back to Italy, the birthplace too early departed.

The image of an ideal Italy has remained, anchored in my deepest memories, as the place to go back to, in case of, just in case. Go back to the very land on which I was born. No matter I have no Italian blood, no matter I wasn't raised there.

Salvador misleads you, parading its exoteness before your eyes.

Salvador robs, assaults, burglars, steals, beats, murders, lies, scorns, ... Salvador challenges you, Salvador lures you, Salvador puts endless traps on your way, Salvador confronts you with the true nature of human being, with each one true nature. Everyone here is a Janus, presenting two faces at the same time, the good and the bad as we would like to classify it, if only it could respond to such a simplistic vision.

A city of provincial, ill-educated bandits – princes of insolent and supreme nobility. Repeatedly crossing all borders, under the malign eyes of the one you do not dare to name, the guardian of the crossroads, constantly shifting from one universe to another. No pre-set behaviours and rigid moral principles, but parallel worlds over crossing, sometimes to the point of chaos, sometimes in the most beautiful, divine way. A celebration of multiple identity, fusing of opposites. A universe in constant re-creation, without fixed point, the extreme confusion of an individualist society in a gregarious culture.

The road is a long one. The search for identity has begun. Nowhere to hide anymore, no secured and clearly ruled social system, but many places to get lost or mistaken along the tricky path.