

# Rio in Numbers

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Major Studio I - Final Project  
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Final Project - Rio in Numbers  
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## **Rio in Numbers**

*“O Rio é uma cidade de cidades misturadas”*

***Rio is a city of mixed cities***

*Fernanda Abreu, Rio 40°*



### **I. Objective:**

Rio de Janeiro is a city full of contrasts, in both social and physical ways. However, these extremes never appear together on the media. Usually, the impressions about Rio are or related to violence and corruption, or parties and tropical style. It looks that there are two different cities inside one.

In this project, I will be presenting accurate facts about my city in a very impartial style, so anyone that watches it, can create his own opinion about it. It's a motion graphic piece, which is presented on a website, along with part of the research that I did to give support to the short animations I created.

### **II. Introduction**

Rio de Janeiro offers endless alternatives to the eyes. We have beaches and mountains, richness and poverty, oldish and newish, urbanism and nature, all at the same place. And that's exactly what makes it so special, its diversity.

However, internationally, it looks like there are only the two extremes: or the violence, or the carnival. Personally, being a *carioca* (that's how the people that were born in Rio are called), I'm really bothered by this fact.

Usually, what stands out on the media is its bad side, worldwide known by movies like "City of God"<sup>1</sup> and "Carandiru"<sup>2</sup>. It also happens inside the country. The most part of our citizens don't feel safe in going to Rio, although it's considered only the 14th most violent city in Brazil.

On the other side, when we want to promote tourism, all we see are the beaches and beautiful people. On the governmental movie to apply for the Olympics, although they are an important part of our skyline, the *favelas* (how shanty town or slums are called in portuguese) didn't appear even once time on it.

Unfortunately, this is our reality: Some people trying to hide too much our flaws while others are trying to show more than what exists. Each one of them has their own audience and client, and it's their job to appeal their needs.

And this is exactly where I enter: as a designer, I decided that I would present facts about my city with no exaggeration or photoshop retouch and in a way that anyone can understand and judge by themselves. I'm going to describe Rio as someone that lives there and to take advantage of the fact that I'm neither politician nor journalist to present a real Rio, with all its qualities and disadvantages.

Surely, when someone is telling a story, it is always by his own point of view. In this case, it's not different. Since I decided what is going to be presented or not, it can still be considered a personal approach. Nonetheless, through my research and statistics, I tried to develop a scenario as impartial as possible, focusing on what I believe is more significant.

This is not a complete project, though. I hope to gradually collect more data and build a massive compilation about Rio de Janeiro and its numbers. Because about the beauty, I believe, everybody is already aware of.

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<sup>1</sup> City of God (Portuguese: Cidade de Deus) is a 2002 Brazilian crime drama film directed by Fernando Meirelles and Kátia Lund, released in its home country in 2002 and worldwide in 2003.

<sup>2</sup> Carandiru (2003) is a Brazilian and Argentine film directed by Hector Babenco.

### III. Design Questions:

- How to achieve impartiality when presenting about a theme particular to you and still be informative and interesting at the same time?

### IV. Contextualization

Basically, this is a motion graphic piece based on sociological questions. That's why it is represented with the map of Rio de Janeiro.



### V. Precedents:

Studying and leaving here in USA made me understand how americans see Rio de Janeiro. Every time that I search for a topic about my city on the web, it appears only american sites, with all the touristic information. On You Tube, I found many governmental advertising movies in english stating only the good sides and over emphasizing them. On the other hand, I still find some critiques and commentaries that don't have anything to do with our reality. Hence, these are my precedents about what I didn't want to do.

Although it can be too simple to be considered an important source, the manual instructions of Ikea really helped me thinking about how I wanted my animation to look like. They don't use any text instruction and, at the same time, it's much more obvious than any

other manual that I have ever found. It's its simplicity that makes it so efficient, and this is the result that I wanted to achieve with my project.



## VI. Rio in context:

Brazil is starting to receive more international recognition, specially Rio de Janeiro. On October 2nd, this year, we were chosen to host the Olympics in 2016, right after it was already decided that Brazil was going to host the World Cup in 2014. In addition to that, we are also elected "The Best Gay Global Destination" by a MTV related channel and "The Happiest city in the world" by Forbes Magazine.

Moreover, many intellectuals, like Steven Levitt, the author of Freakonomics, have already started to point out Brazil as one of the five biggest economies of the world in the next ten years. During 2008, when the world was facing an economic crises, the exterior investment raised in Brazil. And nowadays, we're one of the countries that are growing exponentially in the global sphere.

In such an effervescent atmosphere, it looks that everybody has something to say about Rio. Sometimes they are accurate, but in the most of the time, there is a big misconception about what happens in third world countries.

For example, on one hand, Fareed Zakaria, the responsible for the international editions at the Newsweek Magazine, recently made a critic about Brazil and the last happenings that

occurred there, like the complete blackout that we suffered and the attempt against the police's helicopter by the criminals. He is accurate and we don't have anything to do, except to agree and try to improve as a city.

On the other hand, at the same time, there are important celebrities speaking about what they don't know and influencing other many people. Jay Leno has already made some inconsistent jokes about Rio in his TV show. And Robin Williams, when asked about why Rio won the Olympics, he answered that it was because of the drugs and the strippers.

However, independently about what people say, Brazil is growing up quickly and soon is going to present an important role in the global panorama, and I want to take advantage of this scenario to develop my project. At this moment, it can be an issue related to only one person, but, probably in few years, it's going to assume a much more wide dimension.

These are some of the reasons why I believe we should start to cut out some prejudices and misconceptions about Rio de Janeiro right now.

## **VII. Constraints:**

My biggest challenge was to make an impartial explanation, since I really love Rio. I tried to make some animations with pictures that I took, but even though, they were very bright and colorful, and it's very hard to stick to the point when you have so much appeal to your eyes.

As I researched and started to accumulate data, I realized that statistics were the best way to achieve impartiality. As everybody knows: against facts, no one can stand. So I organized them in the following fields:

- dates
- general
- economy
- favelas and drugs
- violence

It is true that during the month that this project took, I wouldn't be able to collect and produce all the information that I could, so I had to nail down to one aspect, and I decided to focus on the favelas and violence. At the same time, to understand discrimination, you must know a little bit about how our society is formed. That's the reason why I decided to add

“dates” and “general” field. The fact that the slavery was abolished so late in our country, for example, it’s definitely an important factor to assimilate the favelas and our big social difference.

In addition to that, I started with the bad side, because although the statistics are alarming, they are showing that the reality is leading to be improved. Finally, we may arrive to some day when we will have only favorable data.

Now that I already had what to present, the next step was to define how to show it. Statistics are usually boring, and if I’m not supposed to use colors, it’s even more preoccupying. I should also be impartial and let people think by themselves.

My solution to that was to, literally, animate the statistics, using some representations not directly connected to the theme, but that could allow the observer to make his own allusions and thoughts.

### **VIII. Prototyping Process:**

The whole process can be divided into the following steps:

- Chose the theme: Rio, facts and fictions
- Make a survey among people from Rio and internationals
- Analyze what sections are going to be presented: favelas, violence and drugs.
- Visit favelas.
- Research: articles, newspapers, books
- Write the text
- Text how it is going to look (colors or not, music or not, pictures or draw, etc).
- Make and review the motion graphics piece
- Create a site to present them

a) survey:

I knew that I wanted to make something social and to talk about Rio de Janeiro. I always felt that I was lucky for nothing has ever happened to me in Rio and maybe that is why I like it so much. So I asked questions about violence:

- Have you already been held up in Rio? How many times?



- Had you already have to change your habits because of the violence?
- Have you already felt that your life was in risk?
- Have you already suffered other menace besides being held up?
- Do you know anyone that has been a fatal victim of the violence?

And about their relation with the city:

- Do you feel safe in Rio?
- Do you believe that Rio has more good points than bad points?
- Do you consider moving from Rio?
- Are you optimistic about the future in Rio?
- Do you believe that the International repercussion about the violence in Rio is accurate?
- Would you recommend Rio for a friend?

One hundred people answered and the result was really interesting. Basically, I discovered that 70% of the people around me has been already held up at least one time in their lives, nonetheless, 30% of them, was held up three times or more. Half of them had already felt that their lives were in risk, and only 30% feel safe in Rio.

However, at the same time, the biggest part of these same people believes that Rio has more good sides than bad sides, and 98% of them would like to recommend their city to a friend. The point is that Rio is really an amazing city with, unfortunately, many social issues that are lasting for a long time.

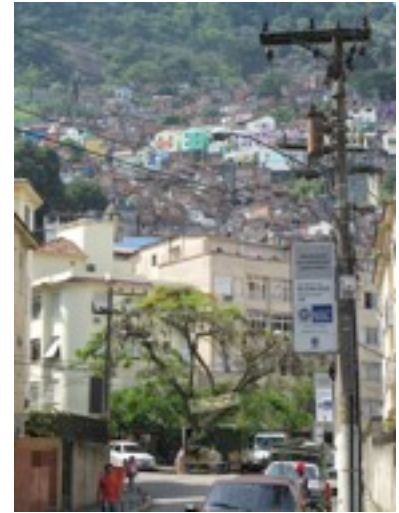
The result of the survey made me even more intrigued about Rio and interested in pursue with the theme. If even the people that has already suffered a kind of menace believed that this is a great place, it's because there is something special about it.

b) favelas:

When talking about my options with my class mates, I noticed that they were particularly intrigued about the favelas, maybe because they're part and apart of the city at the same time.

To understand better, I visited three favelas for the first time in my life: Dona Marta, Rocinha and Vila das Canoas. I went with a "tourist guide", because since these places are controlled by the drug traffic, you must know where to go, and this is the same reason why I

could take pictures inside only one of them, Vila das Canoas, which is a small favela and totally legal. Although it looks the same, politically it's very different from the others.



Rocinha

Vila das Canoas

Dona Marta

### **IX. Research:**

Although my animations are short, I made a deep research and then selected what I would present or not. Some of the information, we learn since high school, but other part I searched on more updated sources. This is a sum up:

#### a) history:

In April, 22nd, 1500, Brazil was discovered by portuguese. There is a version that says that they were trying to go to India and got lost, but the truth is that they already knew that there were more lands in this side of the planet and were looking for them. When they

arrived, there were already some indians occupying the territory, but the portuguese didn't have too much trouble in dealing with them.

Our weather was really different from Europe. The portuguese found here amenities that weren't produce there. On the contrary of United States, that was a settlement colony, where the biggest goal was to populate and create a society, Brazil was a colony of exploration. Portugal wanted everything that we could offer, without giving anything in return. It all started with the plant "*pau-brasil*", which produces a red ink that was rare and very valuable in Ink, specially to use at the monarchy clothes.

After that, they started to produce sugar. On the XVIII century, it started the look for gold. Then, the coffee production and so it goes. We were always producing for Portugal and who were mostly in charge of the hard work were the african slaves. There were many slaves for few people and this is how our big social difference has started.

Our history started to change in 1800, when the portuguese court came to Rio de Janeiro running away from Napoleon. For some inner politic issues in Portugal, Rio became the capital of the portuguese kingdom. Few years later, in 1808, our king Dom. João VI requested some skilled french to come here and take care of our architecture and education. It was called the French Mission<sup>3</sup>.

Although it's hard to believe, our independence was proclaimed by our own prince, Don Pedro, mainly because he didn't want to come back to Portugal. Besides, we were the last country in America to abolish the slavery. It only definitely happened in 1888 and you can imagine how it influenced our society, since those africans didn't have anywhere to go.

b) Social difference:

Due to our history, it is easy to understand why there is a so big social difference in Brazil. And this problem is an origin to all the others: lack of education, violence, corruption, etc. It's calculated that 10% of the richest brazilians has 50% of the total outcome of the country, while 50% of the poorest has to survive with 10% of the total outcome. In Rio de

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<sup>3</sup> The French Artistic Mission in Brazil was composed by a group of French artists and architects that came to Rio de Janeiro. The official aim of the Mission was to establish a Royal School of Sciences, Arts and Offices, which later became the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts

Janeiro, this is not different. Indeed, in Rio the poverty and richness are closer to each other than anywhere else.

c) Favelas:

Favelas exist in all third world countries. What happens in the other Brazilian cities is that these places are usually far away from the rest of the urbanization. In Rio, on the contrary, favelas are usually very close from the rich neighborhoods. One of the reasons to explain that is our geography. Rio de Janeiro is composed basically by beaches and hills. When free, the slaves didn't have anywhere to go, so they went to the hills to form their quilombos. First, because it would be harder for them to be found out there, second because it was close to the farmers where they worked.

Almost 200 years passed since then, and the quilombos became huge. Nowadays they are provided by electricity, water, schools and commercial building. However, in the biggest part, people who live there don't pay taxes as the other citizens. Actually, they were not supposed to be there because it's illegal. What happens is that there is a law in Brazil that says that if you build your house in some place and during five years nobody comes to take you from there, you are the owner of this propriety (usucaption law).

Although the favelas are usually occupied by the people from the lower class, there is social discrimination even inside them. There are some parts inside the favelas that can cost equally as in the other rich neighborhoods, like Copacabana. You can also find real buildings inside favelas. In Rocinha<sup>4</sup>, for example, we have a building of eleven floors (it's popularly called the Empire State of Rocinha). On the other hand, there are some constructions made by cardboard and wood that are really poor, and these people are not very respected by the others.

Nowadays, we have a law in Rio that allows you to legalize your home for free, but the biggest part of the dwellers prefers to remain illegal and don't pay taxes.

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<sup>4</sup> Rocinha (literally, Portuguese for *small ranch*) is the largest favela in Brazil. It is located within the South Zone of Rio de Janeiro, between the districts of São Conrado and Gávea. It is built on a steep hillside overlooking the city, just one kilometre from the beach.

#### d) Drugs

This is one of the most important factors of our violence. First of all, we don't produce drugs in Rio, we receive them from Bolivia and Colombia. However, only 15% of this amount is consumed in Brazil. The 85% left is exported to Europe and USA.

There are three commands that controls the sell of the drugs: Red Command, Third Command and Friends of Friends. Usually, each favela is controlled by of one of them, and this is where the drugs are commercialized. The drug dealers are usually respected at the favelas because inside these places the laws are different. The drug dealers provide the dwellers with everything they cannot have by the government. For example, if you live in Rocinha and your son get ill and you recur to the drug dealers, they will probably provide you with the medicine faster than if you go to a public hospital. However, it's not like italian mafia that you pay for protection. In favelas it's different, you don't need to pay for anything. It's almost an exchange of favors.

It's interesting to know that the drug industry became stronger after the dictatorship, when politicians and criminals divided the same place in the prison. One group learn from the others and nowadays the drug industry in Rio has a perfect politic administration.

#### e) UPP

It looks that things are starting to get better! On December 19th, it was installed the first Pacifier Police Division on a favela called Dona Marta, in Rio. This division is a new model of Public Security, which concerns in invading the favela and taking the drug dealers and their control out of the favela. In one year, there are already four UPP installed so far, and the fifth one is going to be installed on during december, 2009.

The index are optimistic. In one year after the UPP was installed in Cidade de Deus (City of god), the murders decreased in 82%. In Dona Marta, there wasn't any murder on the past year. The expectation is that by 2016 the contingent will have been enlarged by 60 thousand officers. And until 2010, 3.5 thousand new officers will be sent to the Pacifier Divisions.

## X. Statistics:

After the research, I started to search for more specific statistics to support what I wanted to say. Below are the statistics that I found, and by text I mean how I was going to narrate them at the animations.

### a) General:

#### - numbers:

Population: 6.000.000 (NY = 8.000.000)

area: 1182 Km<sup>2</sup> (NY = 790 Km<sup>2</sup>)

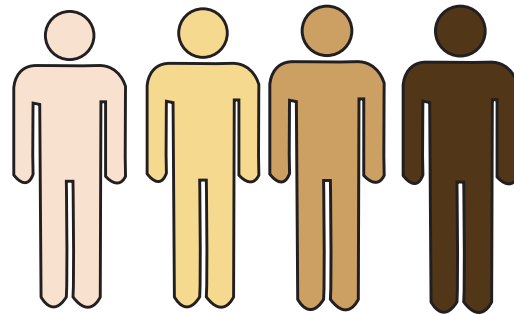
weather: between 25° and 38°C

53,6% white

33,6% mixture

12,3% black

0,5% asian and indians



#### - text:

Our population is around 6.000.000 (75% of New York) and our area is 1182km<sup>2</sup> (150% of New York). The weather is usually around 25° and 38°C . 53% of our population is white, 33% is mixture, 12% is black and the 1% left, is yellow.

### b) Dates:

#### - numbers:

1500 / January, 2nd 1502 /1800 /1888 / 2016



#### - text:

In 1500 the portuguese arrived in Brazil. In 1502, January 1st, they found what they fought it was a mouth of a big river. River of January, that's what means Rio de Janeiro in portuguese. In 1800, we became the capital of Portugal, since the court came here running away from Napoleon. In 1822 our independence was proclaimed in by the prince himself, because he didn't want to come back to Portugal and leave Rio. In 1888 the slavery was

finally abolished. We were the last country in american continent to do that. In 2016 we're going to present the Olympics for the first time in south america.

c) Economy:

- numbers:

30th biggest PIB in the world

10% of the population has 50% of the total outcome

50% of the population has 10% of the total outcome

IDH Gavea = Canada

IDH Rocinha = Gana



- text:

In 2005, Rio de Janeiro had the 30th GDP in the world. However, this richness is not well balanced among people. While 10% has 50% of the total outcome, the half of the people from Rio survive with only 10% of the outcome.

This social difference can also be analyzed by our HDI (Human Development Index). As a country, Brazil is in the 75° place. But in pieces, the differences are huge. Gavea, one rich neighborhood in Rio, presents the same HDI as Canada. On the other hand, right by its side, is Rocinha, a big slum in Rio, which has the same HDI as Gana Republic.

d) Favelas and drugs

- numbers:

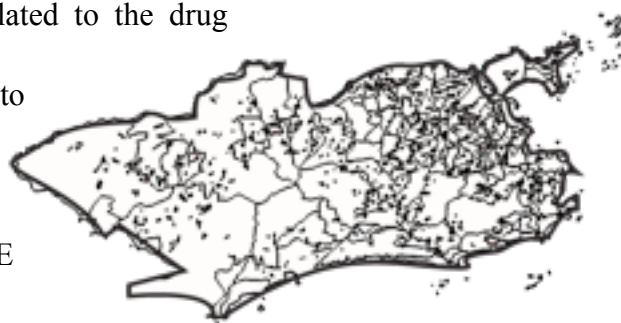
20% of the population live at the favelas

5% of the people in favelas are related to the drug traffic

10% of the total population is related to the traffic

15% of the drugs we receive are consumed in Rio

85% is exported to USA and EUROPE



- text:

Although they never appear on the map, there are almost 1000 favelas in Rio and almost 20% of the population lives there. They are usually controlled by the drug dealers. There are three different drug commands and they are always fighting between each other for more selling points. The drug arrives from Colombia and Bolivia and only 15% is consumed in Brazil. The 85% left is exported to USA and Europe.

e) Violence:

-numbers:

80 dead people by week

3,7 people the police kills per day (in whole  
USA is 347 by year)

Police only solves 3% of the murders

14° most violent capital of the country



- text:

Rio is considered a very violent city. Until 2006, we used to have 80 killed people by week. The police was responsible for 25 of them. In the whole USA, this index is not more than 7. Fortunately, in the past two years it's getting better. There are unities called UPP (something like Pacifier Police Division) that are being installed in favelas to take the drug dealers out of there stop the violence. Only in the City of God the murders decreased in 82% in the past year. However, this unities are installed in only five favelas so far. It's a long process.

### **XI. Expectations:**

Although I love my city, my goal in this project is not to prove that this is or isn't a good place. On the contrary, what I want is to offer a reasonable amount of information so people can make their choices based on accurate materials.

I want a tourist to visit my website and and be able to see that, if he wants to go to Rio, he will definitely have to take some safety procedures, but if he can do it, he will probably have



too much fun during his stay. I want a Brazilian to visit it and be proud of what we have and willing to fix the rest. I want a *carioca* to visit there and be excited with the idea and share with us his own impressions, his own pictures and comments about the city, so we can start to build many cities inside one, because that's what Rio is about: many differences that are gathered in one common place.



## **XII. Conclusion:**

Personally, this project allowed me to go deeply in some aspects that, although are part of my life, I had never given too much attention before. Visiting the favelas, specifically, made me raise many questions about social relations and physical space. Rocinha and City of God, for example, are ten minutes from my home and, at the same time they're physically close, it's a complete separated reality. It really made me wonder about the definition of borders.

That is why I believe this project has a great potential to expand. I started with the most polemic themes, like favela and violence, as an introduction. Since they are a issue so deeply infiltrated in our society, it's important to mention them along with other causes/ results, like marginalization, education and poverty, because they are all connected. And once one of these themes are explored, it opens place to many other subjects, as an endless cycle.

In addition to that, I still want to talk about carnival, culture, architecture and nature. What is the most important about it, is that I want to inspire people to do the same and in some moment, be able to compile all information in one source. It would be a reflection of Rio de Janeiro itself: a city of mixed cities.

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