

Dear Colette,

Now that I have had a few days to readjust to life here, some thoughts on the SFAV event.

I felt honoured by the event and by my association with SFAV, through which you have pioneered visual anthropology in France, along with making your own films and conducting your famous seminars. (I wonder if anyone will ever start them up again -- they were so important to so many of us.)

In retrospect, I thought the day went very well, although I was still somewhat weakened by my bout of food poisoning. Thank you for preparing rice for me. That, and the beautiful yogourt, really kept me going! It was just bad luck that the gastric disaster hit me when I was still not fully recovered from flu. Usually I take good health for granted because I am rarely ill.

I enjoyed meeting the array of people you invited to the BNF. Alain seems like a rising star, and I think he has the interest and energy to keep the role of film prominent at the Bibliotheque. I enjoyed meeting Eva and really appreciated her help with the translations. I was very glad to see Jean-Paul again, whom I like personally and whom I haven't seen for a long time. I was glad to see Laetitia again, because I served on an RAI jury with her in Manchester, and we agreed completely about all the films we saw. I had seen Peter Crawford just recently at Gottingen, but I was glad he could come and put in his adroit comments. I was very touched that Metje Postma came such a long way just for the morning session. Quite a number of other people spoke to me about anthropological film-making, and many seemed to have a passionate interest in its possibilities.

Although I find the architectural style of the BNF rather inhuman and intimidating, the cinema where we met was really a pleasant and comfortable one. Although it holds quite a few people, it seemed like a friendly space. It's a good place to hold events like this one, so I hope you can make use of it again.

So, Colette, my thanks go out to you. I was rather too tired to express myself on the day, or the next morning, but I really enjoyed and was affected by this "hommage". It is nice to receive recognition for one's work, but it is even more important to do so in the presence of old friends and others who really connect with the films. The films are at the heart of it. That is best of all.

Now all your thoughts must be on your filming, so I hope it goes very successfully. As for the "hommage" as well, I think we both did pretty well !

Love,
David