

## **TD 05b - Arne Bro Discussion**

### **Arne Bro**

...I guess that we... because, now I have been speaking - blablabla - so I would suggest, if you find it all right, that we would take a round because this is actually very seldom that we are meeting each other: Teachers. With the same kind of discussions the same kind of... but we might use different concepts and different methods, aiming at the same thing. I spoke to one after my speech and one would say I would look for the flaws - and I thought, well that's a better word, maybe, than fault - or another one would say, well we are looking for the mistakes. So we are, I think, in the beginning of discussion of concepts and methods and if you would please follow me, we could maybe just take a round to discuss different methods to...

And as Lotte would say, we would not in our tradition be able to ask for your trust. So, we would think that we should start ourselves - to invite you into our trust - and I should like to just talk a little bit about one of the exercises I use to meet the students, to find out where they are. And in our tradition, we would use almost a year to investigate the student. Having investigations of their home with the camera, of their best friend with the camera, of their lover with the camera, of their favourite writer with the camera, of their family - huge investigation of the family. And I should like just to talk a little bit about this lover's exercise.

I think I understand documentary myself as a very personal and very poetic... it's very similar to the writer or to the painter or to the sculptor - that it's one single person trying to understand something belonging to the world and something belonging to myself. And in the journalistic or in the fiction direction tradition, we would very seldom somebody making a diary or a painting or a poem about his or her lover. So, that might be - on one level - to come to know the student. How do you see your lover? How does your lover look? But also we think that it requires a lot of discussion - so I look at my lover, with my camera - and usually the camera will see something else than I usually see. No, if I'm in love, I'm usually blinded by love but also I'm also opened by love and if I see something with the camera I didn't expect to see, what do I do about this? Do I cut it out, in respect for the lover? Do I cut it out because I want to respect myself, or if I want to maintain my blindness... If I realise, that the camera saw something that I didn't see before, can I cope

with it? Can I forgive the flaws? And can I also travel myself from one understanding of my lover to another understanding?

So, we think that all these questions also are very quiet when we make a film about a person who is fine to us. This person is a lover in somebody else's life. This person is somebody's child, somebody's parent, somebody's friend... so, it is always a human being and how do we deal with the stuff that we see? Because it's not necessary disrespectful to see also the dirty stuff or the difficult stuff or the trouble stuff... Maybe you can have to show a deep respect for a person to also show the more troublesome sides of this personality. And we think that this exercise is extremely important. For the student to investigate their own eyes but also to understand, how do I approach the people I make a film about. And what does it matter that I actually is... emotionally involved in the person I make a film about? Because we have this from science and from journalism - we think that we should be more objective if we are not emotionally involved, but the artist would say something else.

We have a theologian in Denmark, called Grundtvig - he would say, that if we cannot love, we cannot understand. So, if this is true, no, it will put down all the universities in Denmark and in the world, because they try to avoid love. Or emotional contact or emotional... what do you call it? That you are biased. It's called biased - we call it in love. So, actually we think that it's maybe a very important discussion for a documentary maker, to realise that to be that close to a human being, to look that close into someone's life, is actually to be as close as if you were the lover. You seeing things only the lover would see, and you are by investigating with the camera, you're coming so close to every single structure of a sentence, every single small detail of movements... the face, of the mimics and so on. So we come to know more than the over we know. I should stop speaking, sorry, bla bla bla! I should ask if you would just tell us a little bit about the school you are coming from and if you would present to us the methods you use, to try to come to understand the students, or to try to invite them into what you think is important by making films, this simple way. Is it possible?

**Karin Macher, Filmakademie Wien, Austria**

Try to understand the students? We have - our school - is part of the University and we have, in the Bachelor, we have 5 classes. So we have 7 professors for 5 classes and every one of these professors takes around 4 steps of an applied course, and in the end

everyone takes about two students. So learning to know the students is - they have to give a lot of different [?] for every one of the course, so that's production, editing, scriptwriting, camera and directing. They give films they give lots of details about their lives: their favourite books, what museums they like, they prefer, what kind of music they like, so every class has a lot of questions. And so you learn to know them very deeply by a lot of paper and pictures and films they give. And then you have a meeting where you have half an hour, starting to talk to them, then you decide who's going to the next round, you work with over a week and then you go to the last round, where we sit like 12 of the professors together, half an hour... 20 minutes with a student. So when they come to the class, you know these two people already pretty well. So we have around 15 students a year, in 5 classes. And I think I know of everyone of my - I have all of them, I'm production department, so I know all of them, so... - I think we can talk on a very personal based level with the students.

Since we don't have a documentary class in specific, so Rolf Orthel is teaching documentary in bits and pieces, I think its depending, really depending, in which of the directing classes you are and depending on the real personality of the teacher - how they approach the students. But then when we try to get meetings to get together to talk about the projects of the students and the students, we are very much like knowing them on a very private basis... because we are very few, and we try to... I don't think we have an institutional approach where we all pull on the same string to think we want to get to know them very well. Since our students in the first three semester work all together in all classes, so we know them, each single, even from the other classes. And they have - a main part of our education is like that you do every... you do a project and you go to every one of the teachers and professors and you talk about this special project with them. So, it's a very intimate... which is always based on the one project you do the semester. I think that's just a system is a quite closed one. So it's not a course or not a common thing, but only how we are set up I think. I think it gives quite a close approach to the personalities of the students.

### **Delegate**

Isn't it more a question of the students knowing themselves?

**Arne Bro:**

No, I think that since we are so many, it would be nice, we are so seldom collected - we unfortunately - we would not have the time to discuss, I think it's very nice you present this and we should go on I think, because we will not have the time to discuss, unfortunately! Maybe in the break. Sorry!

**Delegate**

Oh no, I was asking myself the question.

It's a good question.

**Sean Ashley, Puttnam School of Film, Singapore**

Ok I'm from the Puttnam Film School in Singapore. We're like a 4 year degree programme. It is also quite an intimate school: We only have 70 - 80 students across 4 years - but I mean, touching on what you spoke about this morning, about personality: Our school again, we really do emphasise the idea of identity in everything they do. So the first project we give them at the end of the first semester is to do an autobiography about themselves. And it's developed over the 15 weeks, then they kind of present it to the students - the other students feed back on the exercise.

Personally for me, I teach editing, so for me the emotion is based... All I do, I talk to them - everything in terms of emotion and in terms of what things mean to them and what it means to me. It's a constant struggle to kind of get the students to open up and be kind of, in touch with those kind of things. They think my concepts are very kind of hippy and very New Age, so it does take a long time for them to kind of get used to that. They're expecting feedback like: Oh no, cut this down, take that out, move this there... I never really talk to them in those kind of terms, I talk to them really in terms of what I believe, what I don't believe - what I respond to, what I don't respond to.

And that's kind of how we encourage the students to talk to each other as well in terms of feedback. More kind of, general terms like that. Then of course, the second time, the third time, you go through it, then it's maybe a bit narrowed down to certain areas or certain things that don't work: Maybe try this, maybe consider this. But, we try to keep everything from the onset just to be just initial kind of emotional responses to things, whether it's in a group context or on a one on one kind of feedback session.

**Arne Bro** Thank you.

**Johan Ten Brink, University of Westminster**

I teach in London University: numbers are much larger than, you know, 70 or 50 people. And, very briefly, I kind of think the student is the most important person and the person has to develop themselves and actually I try shy away from any kind of heavy-handed interference in their personal life or understanding the personal life or the emotional life and so on. It's more about, let them discover themselves and I'm there to help them out, to discover themselves, but not in active way. Not in active way trying to challenge them, to... I don't need to know who they are, in a sense. If they choose to tell me who they are and what their background is, it's fine. If they don't choose to tell me who they are, I'm never going to ask them a question I can spend... Three years with a students and I don't know even where they're coming from. If they're Lithuanian, or Latvian or Estonian, I'm not really interested. If they choose to tell me the story, or they choose to tell the life story through the films, then I'll get into it and as a question.

But my approach is actually the opposite, is: Let them develop themselves, let them fall, let them fail, let them discover how to fail, because that's the best thing they can do in a film school and let them experiment and do whatever they want and I'm not going to tell them in advance: I don't think you should do A B and C, I don't think you should... I should know you so well in advance so I can tell you please don't do A B and C, because I know so much about you. So actually it's the opposite of the other ideas.

**Arne Bro:** Thank you.

**Daisy Gili, London Film Academy**

My names Daisy Gili - I'm with London Film Academy, we're a very small film school. We have maybe 12 students, twice a year and it's a multidisciplinary one year postgraduate course. I myself don't teach, I set up the school from the perspective that the teachers would be visiting - so I think the teachers themselves do their own finding but from a school I think, that a lot of our students come to us because they are career changes or doing other things and I think they... The creative arts are a very personal thing and I think it takes them a little bit of time to get to know themselves and to get to know why they're

there. So, we tend to meet with them about a third of the way through the course and then two thirds of the way through the course and at the end, to just... to talk to them about where they've come from and where they're heading, but probably more from a professional... and a sort of personal level... And what they perceive their careers to be in filmmaking and what sort of films do they want to make and how are they going to achieve it. And then, being 12, you know them all really well and they tell you when they've had babies and that's what Facebook's for afterwards. Thank you.

### **Arne Bro**

Thank you.

### **Heikki Ahola, Metropolia University of Applied Sciences, Finland**

Ok. I'm from Helsinki Metropolia University and first of all, we have two degrees - two lines. One is for film and the other is for radio and television, more journalistic. And in both there are 20 students and first year in this film degree is sort of documentary year. We start in the very beginning. When they come to school they make - two students - make portraits from each other and then we look at them and get to know the students by that. And then a lot of technical practices and documentary, I have, during the first period. For example, before Christmas Day they are going to make mockumentary films. They are always very funny... And in the Spring they make 10 documentary films in 4 person groups, so this is the film students and the radio televisions students make this in the beginning of the second year. So I'm supervising - sort of - 20 documentaries in a year. During the last 10 years I have been happy to see over 200 really nice documentary films. And in the second year, they separate a little bit: In the film department there are 5 screenwriters, 5 sound designers, 5 camera and editor persons and 5 producers - so it's separating their own interest and its camera students and editing students, they're having, during the second year, so-called subjective documentary period. 3 weeks, they are making a lot, very fast, very personal films. So, this starts on mobile phones and then goes to the more complex cameras. But the point is that they make it fast, they - for example - in the morning they write a poem, then they shoot it, edit it and will look at it the next day. So in that way you really, after the three weeks, you really know to know those persons and they're making really... In the end, they make some longer films and they are [..?] very strong and touching - they go very deep in their life. And some of them -

**Arne Bro**

What is the framework for this... the short exercises you make? What is the framework, what is the name for this project?

**Heikki Ahola**

It's a kind of subjective documentary period... I don't find I think this word. It's personal, one person. And then some of them continue make their final thesis around documentary film. Otherwise the second and third year is more fiction.

**Arne Bro**

Thank you.

**Robert Nordström, Arcada, Finland**

Ok, I'm also from Finland - I'm teaching cinematography at the Swedish Speaking University Arcada. I'm teaching cinematography for documentary and fiction. I... We have different disciplines, but I have about 5 new cinematography students every year. And I think I try to have a personal contact with them quite much and my hope is to open their eyes, start to see... I have some exercises that I do that observe things... One is I more or less force them to sit in a cafe 3 hours, and pick up a person and just do observing ... who is this... is he married, children, what he work a lot of maybe things like that. I think also I have a small conflict in my teaching because, other hand, I really would like the students to start to be sensitive about the intuition and in the other hand I say to them but question, question, question yourself. And sometimes I'm talking against myself and I also try to teach very much the cinematographer together with the director just to get the communication right. Yeah. Something like that.

**Arne Bro**

Thank you.

**Mark Carey, Northern Film School, Leeds**

Hello, I'm Mark - I'm from the Northern Film School and we don't have the tiny numbers, we have I think just under 400 students at the moment. Most are BA students, some are MA but the BA students... all of them are filmmaking: it's fiction and documentary, and they choose which ways they want to go. They're on a very vocational path in a sense that in first year they start with all subjects and they have to narrow, really quite quickly. They

drop quite a lot up to the first semester, then after the second semester and by the third year, they are only doing one specialism. I don't want to go into all the detail about the documentary - what they do - because then I feel I would my two colleagues who are sitting in this row with nothing to say.

**Dan Weldon**

No, Mark you can, because I'm not going to talk about documentary.

**Mark Carey**

But you can talk about what was coming. No, I have - there are three of us sitting here - so I feel it would be unfair on them. I'll leave them a little bit to say about how we go about it. But, there are a lot of students and so building the sort of personal connections and getting into individual stories can be a challenging area, I would say that - and also particularly with undergraduate students, because they don't bring that, perhaps, wealth of life experience that the masters students do in the same way. And that's suddenly been something I've been thinking about: About how we can break those barriers and sort of generate those stories... and... I'm going to let them pick up, so that's what it...

**Arne Bro**

Thank you.

**Vinayan Kodoth, Hull School of Art & Design**

My name Vinayan and I work at the Hull School of Art and Design - it's in Yorkshire. So... We have a programme in filmmaking, it's got about 15 students. So in year two, they do a documentary module with me, so we kind of designed short exercises. Its usually to do with the kind of recognisable modes in documentary, so we kind of... They start with choosing one subject and then trying to visualise it from specific modes - to kind of see the difference between information, experience and how the style informs the subject and stuff like that. And then they get an opportunity to make a longer film at the end of the module and I think... I mean, what we also give them as an option to make a longer film in year 3 if they want to, so...

But this year, I've been asked to also teach broadcast media students and journalism students documentary, so I think it's quite interesting the way that you talked about - today - how... you know? It's like a teacher having to read oneself in three different classes, you

TD05b - Arne Bro Discussion

know. So... I'm looking at that now and... trying to kind of really explore what's the difference between teaching documentary to journalism and filmmaking students who I'm used to teaching.

**Arne Bro**

Thank you.

**Robin Cranfield, Actuality Media, USA**

My name is Robin and I'm with Actuality Media in the US... And in a bit of a different situation from the rest of you, not for number, but because we're an independent programme that just does documentary studies abroad: always short documentaries, always about non-profits or social enterprises or people solving issues in different parts of the world - Nicaragua, Kenya or Thailand - we go to many different parts of the globe.

And our students come from all different parts of the globe too, so we end up with 12 students for 4 weeks that have mostly never met each other, usually on a crew with people that aren't from their home country or anything like that and we have a focus for the months leading up to that of: I've interviewed them online with Skype, hopefully, to try and see them and get some idea of their personality so that I know, or I can give our instructor some notes - but then introducing them to each other. Usually Facebook is a popular way for them, but email and they can share each other videos and things and try to get to know each other before they arrive - because they have, basically one day off before they start working on research and meeting people with the organisation all of that. We do take the day off to do something usually awesome like zip lining, or... some kind of group exploration that gets them actually working together without doing film work, so they're a little bit more used to each other by first day of working. And then, in those 4 weeks, for the first two weeks, they're not actually filming their project - they're researching it, planning it and all of that, as well as doing a written exercise, a photo telling exercise, a micro documentary shoot so they can get used to filming with each other - all of it to lead up to the third week, when they'll finally film and then by the end of the fourth week walk away with the, hopefully, under ten minute short documentary. And then on to the next country and another batch of 12 students.

**Arne Bro:** Thank you.

**Claire Barwell, University of Creative Arts, London**

Claire, I run... it's a film... I call it the Farnham Film School - it's a large, practical, film production course. We have about 100 students per year, more in some. So, the students have to work in groups and it's extremely difficult to get that personal relationship, but we work very hard in different ways to engender and encourage that engagement and personal exploration. In the second year I run a unit module called Personal and Political Filmmaking - well it's now called the Other Cinema, because there was a time when the idea of politics, you didn't want to... yes... for 19 year olds, no! So, it's still the same curriculum. So that is to challenge them really to think about their own definitions of themselves, so we have a lot of... a few workshops with a lot of exercises where they're having to write, come up with pictures, come up with memories, come up with preferences, we do the Bacht [???] - I like I don't like exercise - so that they can begin to think who they are and we set them the challenge to make their own film. So they all make a 3 minute film on their own which they've developed - we also give them tutorials on that. And then we have a three day festival of watching 100 films. So that's to help them be able - and to have the courage - to show something as personal, to the audience. So they're not hiding in the group, which is often the pressure that they're under. So its hard work, but I find that that gives them the confidence to fail and the confidence also then, to also explore those ideas - which sometimes they take on into personal projects in the third year.

**Arne Bro**

Thank you.

**Rebecca Ohene-Asah, NAFTI, Ghana**

Hi, I'm coming from the National Film and Televisions Institute in Ghana, Accra. Mostly... Our programme is a four year programme, so four year bachelor's programme. Now I take the entry level of the documentary programme, so what we do is at the first level you have a lot of... Maybe we have about 90 to 96 - now we have 96 students - you know, who are coming and they want to do the different aspects of film, so, you know: Directing, editing whatever - so, at the level 100, they do all this plus other liberal subjects such as like, psychology, audience communication. So they finish that, and in level 200, that is when we introduce them to documentary. So, what we do is - mostly we do a lot of, you know - like the historical progression of documentary and, at the end of the day, its all culminating to the observational, you know, little observational pieces. So with a large class like that, usually we divide them into about 15... 16 groups of 6 and then they go out and they

produce little, observational pieces. Then, in level 300 and 400 - my colleague, he will talk about it because he takes that level. So basically, that's what I'll say, so that he will continue when he gets to his turn.

**Arne Bro:** Thank you.

**Rossitza Ilieva, Bulgarian Academy of Theatre & Film Arts, Sofia**

Hello, I'm coming from the Bulgarian Academy of Theatre and Film Arts in Sofia. I'm teaching editing there in the first year, and it's a four year bachelor studies and a 1 year master degrees, with seven different classes - each with 8 students – it's approximately 60 people per year, which means 150 in total, students, in the faculty of film - because the other faculty is drama. And what we do... no, what I do - I'm trying to open them in the first year because they are scared to be themselves and they are scared to ask questions, they are scared to answer because they think that they will be stupid all the time. So, they don't have confidence in themselves, so this year, we had a course. We taught something like a green school - we took them out of the school for 10 days, out of the city - all together, it was obligatory, nobody has to miss it - it was interesting because we were ... the teachers, were all travelling with them and it starts some kind of friendship and it starts to run a little bit faster, because they start to be more confident in themselves, somehow, and in us. And I think it will be a good practice, because it starts this year, so I hope I will continue with this in the next years too. We start... The first year, we start with feature training, small exercises, and with documentary, small exercises - Which are in a way to work with characters, in a way to manage with dialogues, in a way to manage with the point of view of the cameras, in a way to composition with the shots.

So, something like small steps, try to teach them to think through those aspects and finally, to have an exercise for the year in general, for 5 minutes, for the first year, to show what they learnt through the year and to show how they think through the tools. And it's almost every year, they finish with 20 or 30 minute films. They may choose if it has been a feature of a documentary and with theoretical - because we have half - not half - 70% practice, and 30% theory - and they have to show... they have to have another work: It's a theoretical analysis of the... some aspects that they have an interest in. So, that's in greener... all. Thank you.

**Arne Bro:** Thank you.

### **Martin Harris, Northern Film School, Leeds**

I'm Martin Harris, from the Northern Film School in Leeds and I'm an editor and I also teach documentary. As Mark sort of explained we have 2 main courses, one a BA in filmmaking which has huge numbers now - which we're, as staff, coming to terms with - or trying to come to terms with - and we have an MA course which is around about 15, sometimes up to 25... that sort of numbers, so its an obviously... very different group to teach than the BA. So I teach the BA first years Documentary in their second semester and this year, for the first time, I've got 170 students, to go through. And essentially its a production unit, a production module, in which I want them to come up with their ideas, I want them to pitch, I want them to form the teams, I want them to make the films and I want them to show the films to everybody. So it's putting the ownership of the whole module into their hands. That's the aim. With the 168 students I don't know how it's going to work out, this year.

But the other idea of the stuff, with the MA has something I'd like to share with everybody, perhaps other people have done this. This last year... well a year ago, I did a module for the first semester with eh first year MA called Creative Practice. And I'd done it in previous years and I'd sort of followed what somebody else had set up. And this particular time, I decided to throw that all away and start again in the aim to sort of encourage great collaboration between the students, so not for me to get to know the students myself, but for them to get to know each other as best possible. And I decided from the outset that there would be no rules, to what they could do. There was never any negative criticism - always positive feedback - so everything that everybody did, was good. And I was really scared to do this, because I thought if somebody produces something that's obviously really terrible, how do I deal with that, how do I justify that being good? But fortunately, with this groups... there were sort of discrepancies in the work, but fortunately, I don't know whether it was because I left these gates open, but everybody seemed to rise to a challenge that they set themselves, rather than me setting it for them. And I did sort of frame it with projects, so they would start with 2 people working on a project, then 4 people and then... like that, sort of multiplying. And we also did a number of things, as many things as possible, outside of the classroom. So, I took them for drinks on a couple of times, it's quite expensive to do that... but I enjoyed it and I really realise that they enjoyed that as well.

Not just because I was paying, but because they were getting to know each other socially. So we did drinks whether in a cafe or in a bar, 2 or 3 times in a semester and I also took them on two trips outside of the film school. One to a sculpture park, where we spent a day among some short films of their choosing and another one to the theatre in Leeds, to have a workshop where they had to become actors. And you know, the whole thing about... it's not the sort of things that, you know, I think I've sort of devised and all that - but it was the... it was this idea that you actually, you're not going to do anything wrong. You can do anything you want.

The sort of main, sort of bottom proviso of that, was to say I would like you to explain what you're doing, at some point in that process. To say whether you think you've achieved what you're trying to set out to do. And I think that sort of process of self.. self ..awareness and self reflection and then the idea that there was no... You know, they would not get told off, they would not... you know... There was no consideration of a mark, even thought at the end of the session... semester, there were marks. That was sort of explained how that would work - but I felt as though, I felt as though I'm going to do that again. I'm going to sort of have this "no rules" and lots of positive feedback, no negative feedback at all - because I really felt as though that helped the group from together and realise each other's strengths as well. So, that's...

**Arne Bro:** Thank you.

**Garrabost Jayalakshmi, University of South Wales**

My name is Jaya and I'm the associate head of the school over here and... I don't want to say very much about the films school and the documentary teaching in the film school, because Chris Morris is going to do a session on it, just after this session. And also, because I'm very new here. I've been here for 7 months and although I know how it works, I actually haven't taught over here - but I'd quite like to share my experiences of Hertfordshire, where I set up the film and television degree. And there you had three pathways, you had the fiction pathway, the documentary pathway and the entertainment pathway. But the first year was a common pathway: Everyone did everything. And in the first week, what we used to was... And like everybody else from Britain I noticed, we all have to deal with very big numbers, and it was the same in Hertfordshire and it is very much the same over here. Big numbers are a reality for us I'm afraid. So they we way we did it was that in the first week people had to go off in pairs and they had an hour to find

out as much as they could about each other, and then present the other person... so if he and I went out for an hour, then I would present him to the class and he would present me to the class. So it wasn't... So it was sharing, and also this thing that you were talking about personality this morning - it was my personality meeting his personality as it were, you know - so it was... what was important to me about him and vice versa and that we found very useful.

And then in the - very early - in the first year they did 3 projects. The first one was explore one person. So you have to go away, you have to find a person and you do a three minute documentary about this one person. And then, the second documentary they made was issue based. So you had to look at issues from the newspaper - whatever issue interested you - and whatever angle you wanted tackle the issue form. And the third documentary - and I used to change this - sometimes it would be personal project, but increasingly towards the last three years, I started asking them to make a film on the perfect human, you know, that was very much based on the Lars Von Trier - the 5 Obstructions thing - but I never used to tell them that it was based on that, I would just say: Go away and make a documentary about the perfect human. And that was very interesting, because they had to explore for themselves what their concept of the perfect human was... which told you as much about the filmmaker as it did about the person or whatever they had found, you know.

And it could be hybrid, it didn't have to be a doc, it didn't have to be fiction, it could be whatever form they wanted it to take. In the second year, they had to do two adaptations, so they could take a poem and make a documentary about that, they could take a piece of fiction and turn it into a documentary, they could take a newspaper cutting and turn it - it didn't matter what, but it had to be an adaptation. That was... What we were paying with, the idea of how do you create documentaries out of stuff that already exists, around. And the second project - and these were 5 minute films - the second project was either another adaptation if they wanted to do another one, or a personal project, because in the final year they move to doing a personal project, so the second year was sort of a run up to what they would do in the final year. That's how we handle it.

**Arne Bro**

Thank you.

**Steve Mardy, Northern Film School, Leeds**

I'm Steve Mardy from the Northern Film School - ditto ditto my previous colleagues in terms of what they've told you. I don't actually teach documentary and some of the discussion that took place this morning, coming from you Arne, some of the points - I mean if I've read them correctly - I'd like to undertake a documentary project and it's this idea about the fault - well you know it's why we're here, to inspire each other - but, you know this idea about if I read it right, in terms of, you know, the fault line and structure, how to make sense and discuss this though film that are very important.

The idea of personality, you know, that's sort of crisis based on space and that's then an opportunity for the writer, the actor, the music and everything, to be, you know, put in place in order to do that. This idea about measure, which I thought was interesting, measure and sense... if ... you talked about love and the idea that, you know, with love comes sense and trust and truth and so on. And the idea that you know, we can't measure love, but we can sense it when it hits us - an you made that very articulate you know, sort of discussion and yeah: And of course the loyalty, the emphasis that's there on trustworthiness on what it is that's around, you know the information that's around for you to sort of put those pieces together and of course beauty in terms of the idea.. makes us above an easier sense from person to person about what beauty is. And when you were saying that, there was this - as we all do - this other things are rolling in your head and what immediately came to mind was something, as an adult way, was... When a journalist in the past sort of 12 months or two years - a journalist for one of these sort of friendly magazines - asked Paul McCartney - you know the, musician Paul McCartney, who I'm sure you're all aware of - asked him a question, said: "Mr. McCartney, you know, you're in your mid 70s and you've more or less done everything, what's left for you to do - is there one thing in the world you want to do?" And he said "Yes, I'd like to have spent more time with my mum." He said that, as a consequence when he was a child, a minor still, about 14, his mother died, so he was asking for that time before then, to stay at home and just to ask anything - the trivial things - but to have that intimate space. And I thought, that as a confession if you like - completely ad hoc - here's somebody who's met popes and princes and presidents and everybody in the entertainment business - what he wanted was something that he couldn't really get. But he can put that together, you know - somebody of his charisma and his talent, his connections and so on - he can start to put that together, which then, I thought - that might be useful as a project, in terms of this idea for personality for students, to actually utilise it in some way and come to some kind of project. For instance, on a

timeline, it could be somebody recent passed, but it could be somebody over a more distant pass. We're all in this position now that a century has elapsed since the First World War: There's got to be lots of photographs and artefacts at home of members of the family - even people who served, lets say in the trenches - what would be the 5 questions you would ask your great grandfather or your great grandmother in and around that time period, and as a project - and I thought that as a... certainly as part of on that personality line, that would be something that I'd like to attempt, using artefacts - you know, photographs of family from the past and so on - everything that's been left.

But it's the important thing: What would be those 5 questions? You've built an opportunity now to you know, Go in a time machine. And what would be you as a young man asked that to your grandfather as young man, or your grandmother as a young woman - what would you ask those questions - you know - what would those questions be? It's a bit of an opportunity, and that just sort of immediately came to mind and sort of cross referencing some of the things that you managed to build on your own. So Martin, there's a project there!

### **Arne Bro**

Thank you. We actually have an exercise like this! Thank you.

### **Jon Jerstad, Oslo University College, Norway**

I was - I had a question about 3 years ago about... What is the creative source, you know, looking around my colleagues and becoming quite convinced that as we become more mature in our filmmaking we become also more secure in where's the source - of course this is various - but, this...the personal angle on filmmaking. And I was interested in exploring this, so instead of making a film I wanted to make a film school - and hardly a school - but nevertheless, I was going through a very interesting process of getting the University course in Oslo to allow me to set up a course over a year. And that's what I've done now for a couple of years. My own training was again, hardly what you call teaching in the ordinary sense, that was that National Film School in the Colin Young era - so we had 3 months training at the beginning, and then 3 or 4 years of doing what you had initiative to do yourself. There could be one or two workshops... This was before the Danish Henning Camre came and... threw everybody out and... the age of efficiency. So, I like so many of the films I make, start off with saying I don't know how to makes films, I don't know how to make a film school - but... I'm interested! And so I have 9 - last two

years, there's been 9 students each year and so I kind of look at it a little myself like I'm producer - I have a colleague who does a little bit of the teaching who comes from the video art area, which is very clever woman in that sense and a very good sparring partner because that's a completely different world - from my world, which is very, you know- originally observational, puritanical, completely non-commercial filmmaking. And so, I... we have them present projects to come in... to... based on personal experiences. And so, I'm interested - yes, I'm very concerned about what happens inside them - but I'm also concerned that I can't teach directly, I have to teach indirectly. I can't say: You have a problem with your trust in yourself, so you have... You have a problem with... You know, of course I cannot do that - but I can engage in what they do, and I try to base all theory - all film history - all exploration on mistakes or triumphs, that they've had in the exercises - first basic things, and then more advanced exercises - and that's possible, because its a small group, like I suppose you do in Denmark.

You mentioned that you can be quite flexible about the personal adaptation of the teaching, so I think its a good thing that I don't know how to teach, but I know how to be enthusiastic and so, in the beginning - this is very much a part of you know, the wish to open the eyes, open the ears - you know, to listen to.. do you hear my soul when you have your microphone that far away - well actually, its going to be a very thin soul, because you're slightly too far away, ok? And so this kind of thing is theoretically, point of view, completely meanings, because it has nothing to do with theory. This has to do with a feeling that you can discover deep inside the personality that you didn't know that was there... and that's exactly it! The most obvious little daily life thing - we don't even know it's there - so that is then leading into exploration of our world and to be able tot share that. So the process of making a course was interesting because I had to justify to the authorities in the University College - huge organisation, it's terrible how education has turned out these days - and then to justify by talking about visual media is... we have become passive consumers for visual media and how to then make visual media something that actually is relevant for us and for school children - the way media is taught in schools is also a concern - to see that it is a sensible thing to explore life's questions and serious questions that are important to you though main films and that that should be an obvious thing for... and certainly media subject in Norway is not like that, so that's just trying to revolutionise that a little bit... I can do that with my tiny thing! But this is...at least this is the central place for teaching teachers as well. So they come in with a couple of years of higher training somehow in film and maybe some of them will actually discover something that's

important, you know, they discover something about exploring themselves and so exploring the world, and so maybe they will then carry on making real films. They do... we work with professional equipment, we you know, we make a half hour film, it is shown - but my emphasis is not on that, because I know that to make a good film you have to... You have to go through process and to dare to do that, of course we are all different, but this is my experience... So I want to learn about that and that's my experiment. That's what I'm doing. I'm learning [??] Gretchen [??]

### **Arne Bro**

Thank you.

### **Guido Lukoscheck, Ludwigsburg Film School**

My name is Guido from Ludwigsburg Film Academy Bayern-Württemberg, Stuttgart region. The question was how do we get to know our students? The answer I would like to give to that is we get to know them through the crisis they are having, while at our school. We don't... we are not as proactive as you described it in order to get to know them first and before we start working with them - but we... they are thrown in the work. And during the first 2 years, every student of our 14 major subjects, would work on at least 4 films a year in different positions before then the specialisation really comes through and they would become part of their departments where they have some sort of a home, but before that they don't.

And so they are in the middle of lots of productions, lots of competition and they have to deal with a high level of stress during that time and it is only when somebody, you know, really gets into problems that the school would recognise him or her during those first 2 years. That's sort of brutal, but I mean... there has been talk... I have to openly say it how it is. But then, from the third year on, they can pick their tutors themselves and there is no obligation in which way they would do that and so from that point on, they are building up a relationship that's lasting for the coming 2 or 3 years until the end of the studies, with a person who would comment on their personal development, would be in dialogue - in touch with them - about the projects and you know... And sometimes this works really well and sometimes of course it doesn't because people don't fit together as well as they thought they would but I thought, boiling it down to the principle question, I think really that learning at our institution would be something through default, things that don't work.

**Arne Bro**

Thank you.

**Sabine Bubeck-Paaz, ZeLIG, Italy / Commissioning Editor, ZDF**

Now, I'm Sabine - I'm not a teacher. I'm working... I'm helping people, I mean I'm helping filmmakers, students, to develop their projects and they are - so the only possibility for me to learn about them is through the project that they're developing - and there I think that is, for me, its always essential and crucial this question why are you doing that? What motivates you? Why are you burning for that issue, that project, that you want to spend one, two, three years on it? Because that brings us... that brings us in a way to the point where they're confronting the moment where... when that project pitched them, in a way... When that idea pitched them... And what makes them burn for it and what makes this story so crucial, so important and that brings us to the story which is below the superficial story and I think that is... that is for me the magic process which... And I think when we have touched that point, then we can work on this question: How do we get close to your main characters, what is your man character t all, to understand the story itself in a more deep way.

And that's just a process I'm going through with the students of ZeLIG, when I'm going there, when I'm invited there... We're doing that in the EsoDoc workshop when we're working 3 times a week with them on the project, from the beginning of the idea, until the pitching, so its very intense but that is... And I think, I always... I'm always - and that's why its so interesting for me how you do it and how you open this creative process with your students, because I never have... I mean I don't have this kind of didactic time to develop that and I'm always telling them you, I mean if you start to lie, I will feel that, you know. So my relationship, because in my normal life I'm a commissioning editor and when I'm feeling that somebody is not telling the truth - is not telling me when there is a problem then I will only work with them one time and never ever again, but if they come to me and tell me "I have a problem", we will go through that together, and that is something - this trust - I think its extremely important for the whole... I mean that's important in the team, its important, but I'm, as commissioning editor, you're part of the team in a way and I think that's an important relationship - I mean its so important that you give them the trust that they can be honest, you know, if not, its a lost game for everybody. So yeah, that's what I'm doing.

## **Arne Bro**

Thank you.

## **Lotte Mik-Meyer, Danish National Film School**

I'm Lotte - We teach together and I'm also a documentary filmmaker and I'm a guest teacher, so I'm not fully engaged in the National Film School but we teach a specific course, which is very much oriented towards exploring the personal language. And I think the core of this course would be trust, and how to - because this course is maybe one week, and its 60 hours in 5 days - its really, really intensive, so we work a lot with fast decision and not think too much, just do and try to appreciate what you're... you know, the first idea is probably the best idea and things like this. But from the beginning, the key is in a way to build the trust in the group and I think, when we talk about meeting the personality of the students, we also talk about meeting ourselves as teachers and this is of course quite complicated: You have the larger group, or a smaller group and you don't necessarily, as a teacher feel that you can teach them something - and the same time, the whole relationship being a teacher and a student is in a way... that this course of this is that you should teach so actually, how to, take away this teaching - how do you say - "shirt" and to meet the student, and we would very often begin with a round like this, now - its very small group, so we would be 8 people - and we would tell about all kind of stuffs and very often people think, that was really weird. Why should we hear about your divorce and then you met her - were also married - and then you met and all the children and the divorces and the infidelity - how weird! We came for this course.

But in a way, it's also kind of a key to open the trust in the group. And yeah. And then I think another key in our work is to be non judgemental. And this is also very, very important in the school system framework - that you actually... we don't judge. And it's difficult... I think it's extremely difficult because it's so much in our bodies that we should judge... at least we like to say, I really appreciate what you did. And even this is also a judgemental position, so how to sort of escape from this trap, because finally, we find it as trap for the development of language. So it's difficult for - as a teacher or as the one who is leading this course - but also its difficult for the participants and they, very often when we have - in the final day we have evaluations - and there will always be people... Couldn't you just give me...! What do you think about what I'm doing? And it's really really, yeah... So we really try to be very strict on that, to create a room which is trustful - can contain

trust - and to be non-judgmental, both from us to them and among them. So we don't allow, in this very intensive week which is... they have 2 assignments every day - we don't allow discussions among them. We don't discuss the work, they will maybe make an assignment. They have half an hour: They will deliver 2 or 4 minutes. And we will evaluate it for hours - I mean we can talk really long! You can imagine! So it will be like.. very often its like 40 minutes evaluation for 4 minutes footage. And that is...

**Delegate**

And what is the topic that they do?

**Lotte Mik Meyer**

We will read what we see... We present that we are readers...

**Delegate**

No, what topics do you give them to work on?

**Lotte Mik-Meyer**

But that's various... we have built up a course, it's various... It could be like a portrait - one character, later two characters - and they have specific time and we have... they are not allowed to interview... they are never allowed to interview, which for many participants is quite odd... How can we make these assignments if we're not interviewing? But they're not allowed to interview. They're not allowed to zoom - So we have these kind of technical... very.... restraints, constraints, or frameworks and from that we just read what we see. And what we... yeah, trying to find... to point to patterns, and we don't allow them to discuss it with us or with them, but we tell them please discuss it if you don't feel this is the right reading. Of course, there is no right reading, but we offer you a reading, so if you don't agree with this, please discuss it in the camera when you do the next assignment. Yeah.

**Arne Bro**

And we try to appreciate every single element in the picture and to try to interpret and to understand the possible meaning of all elements in the activity.

**Lotte Mik-Meyer**

Yeah. So like you would say only positive feedback, I think, this is also something that we are very occupied about - maybe not the term positive - but we really try to find elements

that we can talk and we don't say,.. no, no no, no no. We try to investigate what's there and we can talk a lot about the floor and shoes... yes.

### **Arne Bro**

But it's kind a kind of phenomenology that the shoe is there. So, it's there for a reason, or its there without reason - but it's there. There's a shoe, there's a light, there's a floor. So you can investigate and discuss possible meaning of shoe, of course. But why should we say that the shoe is bad or wrongly made... wrongly put. It's there: It's the most important thing! Thank you.

### **Terence Dimmick (?)**

My name's Terence and I don't teach in a film school and I've never been taught in a film school I went to Art College and I'm here by accident. I came in the day before yesterday to say hello to Kim Longinotto who I met in the early 80s, because I live just 20 minutes away - 20 minutes walk. And then I found out that this was going on, so I thought "Oh! Here's a good way to catch up with what's been going on in documentary film in the last 15 years." Where' I'd been hibernating, essentially. I did have a 20 year run doing community-based video here in South Wales. And it's a part of Channel 4's enfranchised workshops, in the 1980's, so documentary film is kind of in my blood but I came to it... Well I've been engaged with it more from a point of view of community communications really. I'm interested.... when I said I was interested in breaking down the walls really and giving people access to media and putting the means of production in the hands of the people who had a story to tell. And I suppose, that was probably best illustrated in a TV production that I made - I should have said I helped set up and ran a thing called Chapter Video from the Chapter Arts Centre, for about 13 or 14 years - but that business of handing over the means of production to the people who are ... have a message to get out, probably came... manifested itself in its most advanced way I suppose in the period of the miners strike when the... we had, as a workshop, had actually gone to make a portrait of a pit village in the South Wales Valleys, in a place called Penrhiwceiber, when we went there in the February, and at the end of March, the strike began and so we were there for a year. And of course like, it was the issue of the day and we found ourselves in a situation where we were talking to striking miners who had been banned from going to picket lines because of various... well, often concocted kind of excuses or charges by the police, really. They'd been banned from going to picket lines, so we turned some of them into a film production group and we made this programme about the strike from the point of view

where they were, you know, in this pit village in the kind of valley. So anyway, so that's kind of my background, you know, community TV, Channel 4, some stuff small bits and pieces with eh BBC and then - oh, funding dried up - my enthusiasm for touting around proposals to broadcasters dried up, you know, because they weren't interested... well they weren't interested in some of my ideas and they stole other ideas from me - and so, I basically packed it in and went and did something else. And I occasionally dip my toe back into to making something, but essentially, I've been hibernating for 5 years. And now I'm thinking that I'm going to come out of hibernation and set up a production company called Hedgehog Films maybe... So... Watch this space.

### **Arne Bro**

Thank you.

### **Jim Fara Awindor, NAFTI, Ghana**

When you're speaking last, you don't even know if you should trust what you're saying, but... But what my colleague said was not entirely true, because we teach... We teach together, so... but for us, it's difficult, I want to say we're still transitioning in a sense that, I come from - If you know Rabiger very well, I come from the Rabiger tradition - If you've been taught by him for 3 years, you can imagine what you'll be doing. But the whole thing is that we have... we start with this discover thing, you know, you've got to discover yourself and you know, and then we go on and on... But that's where we form the departure - we have to depart from there, because contextually, it doesn't work for us - I don't know whether what I'm going to say will make sense - but, in Africa for instance, we believe in collectivism. We're so collect... We believe in a collective, so individualism does not so play too well. So when you want to go deep, try to explore people's inner selves, peoples' selves, it seems it kind of hurts the community, the collective. So people just cut off, you know. So you don't actually get the students to come out from themselves, come out of themselves. So that is difficult and we try so much, you know, because we feel that once you're a filmmaker, you have to - even though we tend to talk about objectivity - we try to say that, look at it from the subjective point of view. Maybe that maybe you'll be able to get that objectivity, So, but again, we also want to believe that that's for us, that even apart from trying to let them understand their persons, there's this also, danger, of... they... excuse me for what I'm going to say... There's this Eurocentrism... whether it is Ameri-centrism or Ameri / Euro-centrism or whatever it is, you know! The moment you can get them to go inside, they begin to mimic that identity. Then you begin to see that its not

them, its what they see, its what they live with every day. TV, you know? DSTV and all that, that's what they mimic: That's what they try to portray. So we find ourselves in that difficulty. So that's why I'm saying that we're transitioning: We want to see how we can solve this problem without having to stifle their creativity and all that. So, I just - in fact, that's one of the reasons that we're here, we wanted to come and see how everybody does his own and then we see what we can pick to go and then also try to do something out of it. So that's the position which we are in. That's a lot, but I think I just end here. And then we can move on.

### **Arne Bro**

Thank you.

### **Yossi Balanescu-Bal, NAHEMI**

Yossi Balanescu-Bal, I'm one of the founders of the association of the UK Films Schools and Irish Film Schools actually, so we present England, Wales, very active and Scotland and Claire here is our chairman. So we have a great deal of experience of... We're very proud of the richness of all the courses and great many approaches like the old Maoist saying "Let a thousand flowers bloom." So each course is slightly different, I mean I have a long personal track record of, well I make documentaries and I set up programmes, undergraduate programmes and postgraduate programmes, first at Goldsmith's College, and then in an Art School course at John Cass in London, but I think Arne is raising some really burning questions, really deep philosophical questions, which I don't think we can answer in just a few minutes, but I think... How - you know, the questions for me, how many ways do you have to make cinema? How many ways do you have to make documentary? And it seems to me, my answer would be, that there isn't just one way. The other question is how much are the students learning from us, how much are they learning from themselves?

So, on my own courses, I always thought they learn perhaps more from each other, than from us. The other question is - and this is a really difficult one - is filmmaking an individual project, or a collective, collaborative enterprise. So, you know, whilst on a personal level I feel very close to you - because I'm actually working on a film which is about father's and sons and I'm trying to do something that works through emotion and that doesn't hide the process of filmmaking so its a sort of highly experimental, daring thing. On the other hand, I personally think the film is collective, quite a lot, like Martin was saying in Africa, but also

for all of us because we're a family. I think there are some values that we can all agree on and, perhaps, again I'm summarising very very brutally but: content. The idea of content; there should be some content in these student films. Real, life, content. The idea of emotion because film works by emotion, really... which is what you were talking about. It's not a deep left brain process, but it's all the brain and it's deeply rooted in emotion. And perhaps we can agree that honesty, integrity and authenticity - which several speakers were talking about - we believe in and perhaps, we believe more in that, as documentary makers, than we believe in the sort of classic, conventional, journalistic values of objectivity, balance, giving equal time different speakers with opposing views where all these views then balance each other out and the audience understands nothing at the end.

So, yeah... I mean, I'll try and be brief but - I mean, we have very particular problems in the UK because we have huge student numbers - we have different problems with undergraduate students and post-grads, because the undergrads are really not mature enough in a way, to make profound films - so if you're talking documentary you want to get to something very deep, very profound. And perhaps another very difficult question is what are we trying to create? Are we striving to create better films for our cultures? Individual and very particular cultures - are we striving to create better filmmakers or are we striving to create better human beings? So I would say that education in a way is about better human beings.

**"Jaya" Jayalakshimi**

I think that's also a very good note to stop on, because John's standing over there and saying...

**John Burgan**

The reaper has arrived.

**Yossi Balanescu-Bal**

But at the same time filmmakers... have to be quite selfish.

**John Burgan**

The rest of the group wishes to be reunited with you all.

**Arne Bro**

Well thank you so very much, it was extremely interesting and I am sorry that we have so little time, not to be able to discuss, but it was really interesting to hear. Thank you.