



Elaine interviewing Linda Watson, tutor at INSEAC in Guingamp

Elaine: So I'm at the prison in Guingamp, but not as an in-mate or ...(?) to see an exhibition that's been set up by Linda Watson. Linda, I believe you're an English teacher at Inseac?

Linda: That's right, yeah, umm, I've been teaching English here, umm, since the institute was opened, err, which was in September of last year.

Elaine: And how many students do you have?

Linda: Well at the moment we've got 2 different groups of students, umm, the first, the first group, umm, are what we call a Back plus one, umm, and that was a small group of 5 students and they're doing a qualification, umm, to work, umm, in art and culture. It's called an agent d'accueil so that would be to act as an exhibition assistant or perhaps to work in reception at a gallery or a museum something like that. But the people that you've come here today to see, they're masters students and they're doing the first year of their Masters degree here. So we've got students, there are around 25 in the, in the group and we've got 2 groups, I teach one and my colleague Chris teaches another group. And they're from all different parts of France and in fact different parts of the world, for example one of our students is an Iranian, he's an Iranian film-maker.

Elaine: That's what, umm Zahlihatta

Linda: Zahlihatta?

Elaine: Zahlihatta was telling me.

Linda: Yeah I mean so there's a great mix of people from different regions and even from different countries and they study a lot of different subjects here, all connected to the transmission of art and culture in education. And what me and my colleague Chris do we do the English modules, the English element and we see our job as to de-dramatise if I can use that word the communication skills so we try to encourage them to communicate in English even if they're not perfect, to us that's not the end of the world, that's not the objective, and so the reason that we set up this exhibition project was for our students to communicate with artists, to invite them to come to the exhibition, to talk to them about the number of pictures and how the exhibition would work, and also to greet visitors like yourself.

Elaine: We didn't know I think coming today we knew it was going to be an art exhibition with 12 artists contributing.

Linda: That's right, yeah.

Elaine: We weren't sure exactly how it would be worked. So each one that you've got her today, you've got how many did you say?

Linda: The students?

Elaine: Yes, the students.

Linda: Well unfortunately we've got some absences because of covid, but there are about 20 students here today. Altogether we've had about 20 visitors, umm so and 12 artists and we've still got a bit more time so perhaps we'll have some more visitors, and, umm, so it's only really been an afternoon event, but I think it's given us a lot of ideas for the future and you know at this point in the day the students have been speaking English for the last 2 hours non-stop. They are absolutely delighted. Yeah, I mean you can just see how much ...

Elaine: I think that's the thing but as you said they are mature students in a way aren't they.

Linda: Yes

Elaine: They've done the previous degree or ...

Linda: Yes absolutely.

Elaine: Or work or something, so they're not like a 15, 16 year-old.

Linda: No, they are young adults.

Elaine: They're young adults. And they do appear to be confident, and very approachable, you know, that sort of thing. So this is the first project that you've set up?

Linda: Yes absolutely. So we are, we are learning all the time and it was a, it was a very looking back we only started to think about this in January, it's only March and it was very ambitious and yeah I think there are some things we would have done differently if we'd had more time, but honestly from my point of view as a teacher I think they've done a fantastic job today. I think they've made the visitors and the artists feel really welcome and I think they've learned a lot so this is the first project but it's not gonna be the last.

Elaine: So do you have any idea what you're doing next?

Linda: Well, we've got another semester with this same group from, err, from September so I hope that over the summer I'll be developing the course with my colleague Chris and so I hope that we'll be able to do another project, this time starting in September to deliver a project in December.

Elaine: Is it art-based?

Linda: Yeah, it will definitely be, everything we do here is based around the transmission of art and culture.

Elaine: Yes, that's what err ..

Linda: That's what Zahlihatta?

Elaine: Yes Zahlihatta was saying.

Linda: The students they come from very different backgrounds. For example, there's one student who can't be here today because she's in Barcelona doing a residence, she's a dancer.

Elaine: Fantastic

Linda: There's Zahlihatta who you spoke to who DJ's, so some of the students are more, are very interested in music, in theatre, not just in painting, but in textiles, in photography, spoken word, so lots of and lots of interests

Elaine: All to do with communication

Linda: All to do with communication, yeah. So I feel very lucky actually because I learn so much from the students, I think I learn as much from them as they learn from me.

Elaine: Excellent. Lovely job.

Linda: Yes, it's a fabulous job.

Elaine: Do they live on, is there a campus they live on?

Linda: No, not here. They , some of them live quite a distance away and they come in every day, but yeah that's something that they've got the life outside the institute.

Elaine: Excellent. Well best of luck

Linda: Thank you

Elaine: What a beautiful day for it.

Linda: It's been gorgeous, yeah.

Elaine: It's stunning. I came the last time before it was renovated

Linda: Oh, okay I bet you've seen an enormous difference.

Elaine: And at the time we thought what a beautiful building.

Linda: The bones of it, the structure.



Elaine: It would make lovely apartments. I almost chose one

Linda: Well we can try and lock you in the cell today if you'd like that.

Elaine: But I think it was the first prison that they had individual cells?

Linda: I believe so, yeah. I think Jan talked about when she gave the the little tour earlier on, but yeah so I mean I found out things today about the prison as well so it's been brilliant

Elaine: We are gonna find out a lot lot more about Guingamp, everywhere through your students.

Linda: Absolutely, yeah, yeah, I wouldn't swap it for the world.

Elaine: Well, best of luck.

Linda: Thank you.

Elaine: Well done today.

Linda: Thank you.