
Can I have your autograph?

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My Erasmus time in Prague began in a very unusual way: I got to act in a real Czech movie by Alice Nellis. I received an email saying they were looking for two Scandinavian people to play small parts in a film, so I let them know I was interested and sent them a picture of myself. After that I got some phone calls and information about the film shoot - we were to be in the shoot only for one day.

The day started in the morning, when my alarm clock woke me up at five o'clock. By ten to six I was on the street in front of my house waiting for a ride. The project manager of the movie came and picked me up. We drove to other side of Prague to one of the institutions where they take care of mentally ill people. The area was a huge, park-like, and it was fenced and guarded throughout. We shot the scene in some kind of plumbing or heating building that was full of old-fashioned pipes.

After arriving on set we got to eat breakfast and get to know the people, who were all very nice. Then they took me to the costume and make up bus. As soon as I had climbed in, the costume designer began to spin me round and try different kinds of scarfs around my neck. Then the director came and seemed to have a clear vision of what my character should look like. They all spoke only in Czech so I didn't understand a word, but everyone smiled encouragingly so I sat down on the make-up artist's chair.

We began to shoot the scene before eight. It was about making a music video for an old men's band, and I was playing the music video director. The other Finnish person, Aleksi Korpijaakko, was playing the camera man. In the film we were supposed to be quarreling about some video-making issues in Finnish because it sounded so funny to the Czech people. There were people everywhere doing last minute technical preparations like lighting and scenery, or putting more make-up on the actors etc. The place was full of cameras, monitors, lights and miles and miles of cable. At first it was scary to be in front of the camera with all the people watching, but soon it turned out to be so much fun. I liked the director Nellis, she was really nice and knew how to do her job.

We shot a few scenes in the morning and more in the afternoon. There was some filming going on all day, except for lunch time. When we weren't needed, we just waited outside. The shooting day ended approximately at seven o'clock and I was exhausted when I got home. The working days are really long for these actors and camera men.

All in all the experience was awesome. We got to be part of something as big and as wonderful as a real movie. It was eye opening to see how a film is actually made and how many people there really are behind the scenes. Of course there were many things we didn't understand because of the language, but often there was someone who translated what was happening to us. I think it's funny that the actors who we worked with are actually famous here in Czech Republic, but to us they could have been anyone. I'm very thankful for this experience because I learned a lot. I can't wait for the movie to come out. So be aware of the next film by Alice Nellis ... there might be some silly Finnish people in it!