



NEWSREEL

UK FILM COUNCIL
LOTTERY FUNDED

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE BRITISH FEDERATION OF FILM SOCIETIES SEPTEMBER 2006

BFFS WEBSITE RELAUNCHED

COMPLETE REBUILD FROM THE GROUND UP AT WWW.BFFS.ORG.UK

The BFFS website has been doing sterling service for several years now, but we've known for some time that we needed to update it. Over the summer BFFS has committed time and resources to a complete re-design and rewrite. Still at the same address, the website now has a completely new look and far broader coverage. We've set out to provide an easy-to-navigate one-stop shop for your information needs, showing in the process just how far BFFS has developed.

All BFFS publications are now available to download, for example, including a growing number of factsheets: you can even download the excellent BFFS Scotland-produced promotional short *Cinema for All* (as long as you have broadband). Much clearer and more extensive information about what BFFS offers, and how to access it, is found right across the site. And a simple, 'flat' structure means that you're always close to clear navigational aids.

The site is organised in twelve sections, all accessible from the always-visible top menu. These are

- **Home page** - your point of first contact
- **About BFFS** - information about the organisation, and contact details
- **Membership** - how to join, and detailed information about the developing BFFS membership structure
- **Advice and Support** - information about BFFS services - what you can get, and how you can get it
- **BFFS Awards** - the prizes, the winners, and how to apply
- **BFFS Student Group** - the student group gets its own pages
- **News** - news items relevant to film societies
- **Publications** - all BFFS publications available for download, including every issue of NewsReel (but only after members have had theirs in the post).
- **Film** - not the Film magazine of old, but

- reviews, festival reports and information about getting hold of films - so covering much of the same ground. Plus the all-new shorts market, by which we aim to give film societies direct access to the best work of independent short film makers.
- **Links and Contacts** - links to member society websites, plus a comprehensive set of links to other useful sites
- **Regional Groups** - the regional groups set out their stalls
- **Education and Training** - what we are doing now, and what we plan for the future.

Clearly, this is only a start. Every one of the sections listed above will develop markedly over the next 12 months, and where necessary, new sections will be included. But the basis is there to build on, and now we need your feedback. Let us know what you think on info@bffs.org.uk - and don't hold back on suggestions for ways of developing the site.

BFFS RELOCATES TO SHEFFIELD

From 4th September BFFS headquarters will be relocated to The Workstation, Sheffield, South Yorkshire.

Said Chairman David Miller "We are thrilled to be moving our offices to Sheffield. After several years based in Wales, BFFS is developing into a key cultural and community-based organisation and we feel this is the right time to expand our activities with the facilities The Workstation offers. The move will not only allow us to more effectively serve Film Society members across the UK but will put us at the heart of the country."

We are sad to say goodbye to Chris Hill, who is leaving BFFS at the end of this month after over two years with us. But we are very pleased that Ros Hill will be relocating with the office and will take up the new role of BFFS Administrator in the Sheffield office from 1 September.

BFFS has significant historical links with Sheffield. For many years from the late 60s, the then BFFS secretary Margaret Hancock successfully ran the organisation virtually

single-handedly from her home in Sheffield.

The move is planned to develop and enhance effective partnership opportunities and raise the profile of community exhibition across the UK, and it is seen as a great opportunity for BFFS to add another dimension to Sheffield's already thriving cultural profile.

Speaking from the Regional Screen Agency, Screen Yorkshire, Cultural Sector Development Manager, Jay Arnold said "Screen Yorkshire is delighted that the BFFS will be located in the region. Yorkshire has a proud tradition of Film Societies and a growing number of non-theatrical exhibition models offering film provision across urban and rural areas - having BFFS here will strengthen and develop this work. We hope the BFFS will also benefit from the energy and experience of other film programmers and promoters in Yorkshire - we welcome the boost to infrastructure and advocacy that the BFFS will bring."

BFFS's new contact details are given immediately below.

NEW BFFS TREASURER (BUT YOU MAY WELL RECOGNIZE THE FACE)



You'd think, he'd know better, wouldn't you. But although Jim Dempster has already served extensively as BFFS treasurer in the 90s, he's agreed to come back and do it all over again. We're delighted, of course. Jim is Royalties Manager at the British Film Institute, and BFFS will benefit greatly from the kind of acumen that such professional capability will bring.

FILMBANK IN DISCUSSIONS WITH BFFS

'CLARIFICATION OF RULES' WILL BE UNWELCOME NEWS FOR MANY

A meeting between Filmbank and BFFS representatives was held on 19 July with the aim of addressing the large number of issues with service that BFFS members had reported to us over the past months in response to our request for information in December's edition of NewsReel. Here is a brief report of discussions that took place and recommendations from BFFS and Filmbank as to how to get the best out of Filmbank's service.

- Filmbank reports that a new **standard booking form** will be available soon: this will require standard information from each film society and should make the booking process easier, quicker and less prone to error, as well as provide a common record of what has been requested and booked.
- They also tell us a new **IT system** is due to be in place by December 2006 and this is expected to further improve service delivery.
- As a commercial organisation, Filmbank says it tries to deliver a helpful, fair and efficient service to all its customers, but cannot offer a different or special service to film societies. Filmbank asserts that it cannot make alterations to its pricing policy or exceptions for film societies since it is acting within the contracts it has with distributors.

BFFS advises that for maximum service satisfaction, film societies should:

- check as much availability information as possible via the Filmbank website before making a booking
- be specific re: formats, dates, etc and have alternative titles ready in case of unavailability
- book as early as possible to avoid busy periods
- share print deadlines
- be concise and polite in dealings with Filmbank.

BFFS strongly recommends you check carefully to ensure you are obtaining the correct licence and using the correct payment system as part of the contractual agreement between your film society and Filmbank. The following rules apply to film society screenings of Filmbank titles dependent on how audience charges are made:

- If ANY charge for a screening is made, then the screening is classified as 'commercial' and thus requires Filmbank's 'Commercial licence' with a payment scheme whereby the greater of a Minimum Guarantee or a percentage of the ticket price is paid – the '%-MG' scheme. For example, a film society with a membership fee of £30 per year and a charge of £2.00 per screening to members must pay the %-MG, regardless of whether

they charge the public on the door, sell tickets in advance, to guests or whatever.

- Advertising to the public can only be carried out for commercial screenings, ie if a charge per screening is made a screening qualifies as commercial and follows the %-MG route. Any advertising of free screenings requires special studio permission which Filmbank can request on your behalf from the distributors
- The flat rate fee applies ONLY where (a) the audience consists entirely of members, (b) there is no charge for the screening, and (c) there is no advertising to the public, i.e. a 'non-commercial' screening that requires Filmbank's 'Single Title Non-Commercial licence'
- All screening fees quoted by Filmbank are for audiences of up to 200 adults only or 250 children. For audiences larger than this special terms apply and must be sought from Filmbank
- Every screening must be paid for under the appropriate payment scheme.

NB The PVS licence covers background or incidental screenings thus does NOT apply to film societies or community cinemas, whose main purpose is that of screening films.

Filmbank has made representations to distributors with whom it has contractual agreements on the issue of early DVD availability and has had some success with a couple of the studios who have committed to providing DVDs in the early window. Filmbank is not advocating the use of personal copies for screening with appropriate licence fee payment. BFFS will continue to make representations direct to distributors for these improvements.

Overall, the meeting was positive, and further discussions are planned. Filmbank appear to have heard the message that film societies are unhappy, and to be trying to do something about it. It's up to us to work with them. Make your suggestions about how Filmbank could or should improve its service to enquiries@filmbank.co.uk - but please do so reasonably and courteously. We need to ensure focus on what is after all a rather small section of their overall business, and to make BFFS's job easier in negotiating with them.

Editor's note: if you have any observations on this clarification of Filmbank's position, please let us know. This is only the start of what we expect to be an extended dialogue, and we shall be presenting your views in future meetings.

FAREWELL, COMMONWEALTH FILM FESTIVAL

David Miller writes: I had the great pleasure of attending the Commonwealth Film Festival held in Manchester over the period 28 April to 7th May. It was the first time I am aware of that BFFS had been invited to attend this festival, and much of the credit has to go to our friends in the Brighton International Film Club (BIFS).

Following a meeting with the organisers of the CFF, BIFS were invited to nominate a title for inclusion in the festival. Rather than do this on their own they involved all BFFS members, and the eventual winner, *Pather Panchali*, was duly screened as a special attraction.

BFFS was then invited to form a jury and select a winner from the Contemporary Commonwealth Cinema section. This strand had some excellent feature films – *A Simple Curve*, *Faith's Corner*, *Widow* – but the standout winner was the Canadian film *The Novena* (*La Neuvaïne*).

BFFS also took part in a panel debate, chaired by a UK Film Council representative, to consider how film societies could make a greater contribution to film festivals and vice versa.

The Festival attracted many guests from overseas and featured an excellent selection of titles across a wide range of topics and genres. It is to be hoped that audiences appreciate what is on offer and that CFF can muster enough funds to continue to develop. I certainly look forward to the continued involvement of BFFS.

Interested readers are recommended to visit: <http://www.commonwealthfilm.com/default.asp>

Coda: it with great sadness that I have to report the demise of the CFF. Their website remains open but the festival is no more.

SPECIAL OFFER SHORTS DVD FROM BITESIZE CINEMA LOOKS VERY TASTY

Following the successful reception of the Best v Best Vol. One shorts (NewsReel April 06) BFFS has been busy developing more opportunities for members to get hassle-free access to outstanding short films on DVD with full screening rights to an audience. Here is a round-up of shorts now available to BFFS members.

BEST V BEST

This excellent selection of 6 award-winning shorts from around the world has proven so popular that we have arranged for the deadline for orders to be extended to end March 2007. For £80 incl p&p your film society can show each of 6 shorts twice in a twelve month period and you keep the DVD. For further information on each short go to www.bestvbest.com

NEW! BITESIZE CINEMA SPRING 06

is now available to members, courtesy of filmmaker collective Leapfrog Entertainment. This compilation of 5 exceptional shorts is yours to keep after screening to your audience up to twice in a twelve month period - and all for £70 incl p&p. Synopses and tasters of each short can be viewed at www.bitesizecinema.com. An advisory Cert. '15' applies to the collection. Here are brief details of the shorts included:



A Message from Fallujah (Dir. Richard Gibson, Australia, 2005, 12 mins)

Awards: Best Cinematography Rhode Island FF

Summary: An American civil engineer nearing the end of a three month stint trying to rebuild war-torn Iraq, stays for one final cup of habibi. Little does he know, the horror that is about to creep up on him. Shocking, and visually brutal, this powerful short will be forever engraved in your memory.

Antonio's Breakfast

(Dir. Daniel Malloy, UK, 2005, 15 mins)

Awards: BAFTA Best Short Film 2006

Summary: A teenaged boy struggles between juggling looking after his invalid father and the temptations of hanging out with his friends. A film that challenges all our pre-conceptions, and expectations



A Supermarket Love Song

(Dir. Daniel Outram, UK, 2006, 13 mins)

Awards: Sundance FF, Official Selection 2006

Summary: A teenage girl on community service takes an old man to the supermarket. A charming tale of cross-generational social interaction and communication.

Cuco Gomez-Gomez is Dead

(Dir. Francisco Lorite, US, 2005, 8 mins)

Awards: Official Selections LA, Hong Kong, Manhattan, Miami, San Diego, Aspen Short FF

Summary: The neighbours know exactly what happened, sort of. Cuco Gomez-Gomez had just been found in bed - DEAD! And every single one of his meddling neighbours in the live-in hotel has a theory on whodunit and why...



Lucky (Dir. Avie Luthra, UK, 2005, 17 mins)

Awards: BAFTA Nomination 2006, Winner Best Short CINEQUEST 2006

Summary: Lucky is an AIDS orphan desperate to leave his rural Zulu village for the

bright lights of Durban. He is full of excitement and hope but Lucky has to learn about life the hard way, not through school or education ... but through an unlikely bond with a racist Indian neighbour



To order either of these DVD compilations contact Ros Hill at the BFFS office on 0845 6037278 or email info@bffs.org.uk

NEW! BFFS SHORT FILM MARKET

In a new initiative BFFS has developed a unique opportunity for film societies to get directly in touch with independent shorts film makers. The new BFFS website has a special section where individual film makers can advertise their short films and details of how film societies can access them for screening to an audience. see www.bffs.org.uk for full details, or contact Ros Hill at the BFFS office on 0845 6037278 or email info@bffs.org.uk

First featured film maker is Scotland-based Jessica Langford who has made her animated short film *The Gift* available to BFFS mem-

ber film societies with the rights to screen to an audience for the special price of £12 incl vat and p&p. Beautifully animated in sand, *The Gift* is the story of a young girl who visits an undersea palace but on her return discovers she

has been away for many years, her family is long gone and her home is in ruins. *The Gift* is due to be shown at the SW viewing sessions in October, and on Channel Four later this year, and has been selected for numerous international film festivals including Edinburgh, Berlin, Zagreb, Hiroshima, Rio de Janeiro and Palm Springs. See www.bffs.org.uk for full details.

**ARE YOU A FAN OF
EXTREME CINEMA?
UNIVERSITY
RESEARCHERS NEED
YOUR HELP.**

Film researchers at Aberystwyth University are anxious to engage film society members in their research into responses to extreme cinema. If you have seen any of the films listed to the right, and feel up to completing a questionnaire, please visit <http://www.extremefilmsresearch.org.uk>, and check out what's involved.

**A MA SOEUR
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NEW FILM DISTRIBUTOR AIMS TO BE FILM SOCIETY FRIENDLY

In what is either an act of blind faith or reckless foolhardiness, a new venture has been set up aiming to secure the rights to distribute films to the film society market. Dealing exclusively in digital rights, Films for All will seek out neglected works, particularly those by independent film makers, which are likely to be of interest to film societies, and set about making them available in a more rational and flexible way than most distributors seem to be able to manage.

Doing away with the bugbears of 'non-theatrical' terminology and percentage minimum guarantees, Films for All will charge a flat rate for all rentals, no matter how exhibited.

The germ of the idea was sown at the 2006 Tromso Film Festival, when Czech film-maker Sasha Manic suggested that his documentary *The Shutka Book of Records* would be well-received by UK film societies. Since the UK rights for this film had already been acquired by Edinburgh documentary specialist Docspace, discussions ensued which resulted in the formation of Films for All, and an agreement to bring selected Docspace films to the attention of UK film societies.

Films for All will be working closely with BFFS to bring you the first six films in the Films for All catalogue (outlined to the right) - for more information go to the Film section of the new BFFS website.

THE SHUTKA BOOK OF RECORDS

Dir: Aleksandar Manic
Czech Republic, 2005, 78 mins
Shutka - 'Happy Valley' - is a small, secret place in Macedonia, a self-assured, self-ruling Romani capital. This documentary takes a look at a world usually closed to outsiders. In an environment considered by many to be among the poorest in Europe, a man's wealth is not determined by money, but by whether he knows how to reinvent himself.

IN SEARCH OF MOZART

Dir: Phil Grabsky
UK, 2005, 128 mins, Col, PG
This is a story we can all relate to - a man struggling for expression, recognition, money to keep a roof over his head, pursued by a demanding father, falling in love, rejected, grieving the loss of his mother and child, achieving success, and finding that success brings its own problems. In the Mozart tricentennial year, a fascinating insight.

THE DEVIL'S MINER

Dir: Richard Ladkani & Kief Davidson
Germany/USA, 2005, 82 mins
The story of 14 year-old Basilio Vargas and his 12 year-old brother Bernardino working in the Bolivian silver mines of Cerro Rico, which date back to the sixteenth century. We encounter a world where survival is all and homework is a treat, for only education can provide an escape route. But old gods and devils need tribute...

THE SWENKAS

Dir: Jeppe Rønne
Denmark, 2004, 72 mins, Col/B&W
South African working men who every Saturday night leave their grimy overalls behind and don their finery to impress the weekly selected judge. But the group has to restructure when after their leader's demise, they have to find a new chief. Slowly the deceased leader's son, 31 year old Sabelo, is being prepared to follow in his father's footsteps.

HOW ARNIE WON THE WEST

Dir: Alex Cooke
UK/France, Year, 80 mins, Col
The campaign for the Governorship of California from the moment Schwarzenegger announced his candidacy through to his victory. With so many candidates - a panoply of Californian extremes - the circus really did come to town. Doubly relevant as Arnie's re-election campaign gathers pace in the aftermath of Bush's Iraq excursion.

MCLIBEL

Dir: Franny Armstrong
UK/2005/85 mins
McDonalds famously loved to use the libel laws to suppress criticism. In the longest trial in UK legal history, the "McLibel Two" - gardener Helen Steel and postman Dave Morris - represented themselves against all the tricks of Mc-Donalds' £10 million legal team, and won. Here's the whole story, made with the assistance of a certain Ken Loach.

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BOOK REVIEWS

The Cinema of France, Ed. Phil Powrie, Wallflower Press 2006 £18.99 (pbk)*

Italian Neorealism, Mark Shiel, Wallflower Press 2006 £12.99 (pbk)*

* (special BFFS offer 20% off - see advertisement below for details)

I'm so used to thinking of Wallflower Press as a small publisher that it came as something of a shock recently when I learned that they had just published their 100th book. *The Cinema of France*, one of their more recent offerings, is not entirely characteristic of their output.

The book suffers from something of an identity problem. Its editor, Phil Powrie, is an academic (Professor of French Cultural Studies at the University of Newcastle) and so are most of the contributors. The format, a collection of essays, suits the temper and habit of more academic writers, and some of the content reflects this, in contrast with Wallflower's excellent little book on *Italian Neo-Realism*. This is a single essay, and while its author, Mark Shiel, is unquestionably also an academic, he steers well clear of the kind of self-referential language that rob so many such books of any pleasure for the reader.

So how does *The Cinema of France* measure against such subjective criteria? Well, because of its essay format, the reader knows right away that the book is not trying for definitive status: we are into sampling, and this opens up some potential for fun. Fun for yours truly, in particular, as I sample the samples, starting naturally enough with the essay on *Les 400 Coups* - not the best choice, as it turns out.

Starting with an unnecessary 2-page plot synopsis, T. Jefferson Kline (a Boston professor) undertakes a classic lecture-note survey of critical perspectives, neglecting one small thing. By the end of his essay, you are no wiser about his own response to the film than when you started.

Oh well. Perhaps Graeme Hayes on *Du Rififi Chez les Hommes* will fare better.

Thankfully he does, in a meaty little essay which will enhance my next viewing of the film, for sure. Much the same can be said of Dayna Oscherwitz on *La Haine*, and, to an extent, of Powrie's own essay on *Nikita*.

The book is substantial (280+ pages), but the package has some anomalies. Most of the essays are not properly 'academic' in content or style: they are intended for a more popular market. Many of them deliver the mix of engaged analysis and common-sense appreciation which suits film-lovers with inquiring minds. But the book also has some of the trappings of a proper-

ly academic work (referenced notes, indices, a full filmography), which suggest quite another intent.

To *Italian Neorealism*: it's hard to explain why the subject matter of this book resonates quite so strongly for a film society readership, but resonate it does. Part of the reason for this lies in the fact that the films themselves have lost little of their power, 50 or more years after they were made. The first thing the book achieves is to remind us just how extensive the neorealist filmography is, and just how ridiculously hard it is to get hold, even now, of key works like *Bitter Rice*. Shiel is good on context - intellectual, cultural and political - and also on individual films: I read the analysis of *Cronaca di un amore* and immediately wanted to see it again.

In fact, the only thing I didn't buy completely was its central thesis, 'Rebuilding the Cinematic City'. Shiel is right to explore the link between neorealism and left politics and modernist architecture, but he is at his strongest when analysing individual films. In all, his book absolutely serves its purpose, which in my case has been to send me back to the films with a little more knowledge, a little more understanding, and the prospect of more pleasure to come. Wallflower Press seems to specialise in film books which achieve this.



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THE CINEMA OF FRANCE

Edited by Phil Powrie
Preface by Michel Marie

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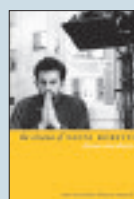


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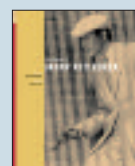
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8TH INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF FILM SOCIETIES FILM FESTIVAL AND CONFERENCE REPORT

REPORT BY DAVID MILLER, BFFS CHAIR

This event took place in Matrea, Italy over the period 12–17 June 2006. Some 100 participants representing 40 nations attended (a list of participant nations is shown below). The event is an opportunity to meet delegates from around the world, to discuss common concerns through two forums, and to watch a selection of films and documentaries. Most of the interactions and establishment of contacts happens in the cafes and over meals. IFFS funds all delegates, so no BFFS central funds were used to support this activity.

Organisation

The event takes place under the auspices of the International Federation of Film Societies, but is organised by the Italian Federation of Film Societies. Accommodation and all meals took place in a religious complex situated some 15 minutes walk from the cinema/media centre. For those screenings that did not provide English subtitles, simultaneous translation was provided in English. Italian translation was also provided for all screenings not in the Italian language. During the forums the translators could additionally cope with French, Spanish and Portuguese. All dele-

gates are expected to be able to understand and communicate (at a basic level) in English.

This year also saw the inclusion of a General Assembly. The General Assembly is open to all delegates but only those nations that have paid the IFFS annual fee over the preceding two years can vote. At present there are 17 nations eligible to vote.

The General Assembly reached very few of its intended objects. The minutes of the previous Assembly had not progressed beyond the draft stage and had not been made available to delegates in advance of the meeting, so the assembly rejected them and sent them back to the Executive Committee for revision. The financial report was also subject to much disquiet amongst delegates as it too had not been circulated and initially comprised only a verbal overview with limited reference to present balances and no reference to the detail of income or expenditure. However after much intervention by the French, a set of bank statements was produced and this item reached a conclusion.

The main business of the assembly was to debate a revised constitution drafted by the Executive Committee. After much discussion, the revised draft constitution was sent back to the Executive Committee to be rewritten. A long-awaited revision of the

IFFS fee structure was similarly returned to the Executive Committee for further review. A revised structure for the General Assembly was agreed and all vacancies filled. The meeting concluded by accepting in principle an invitation from the Moroccan Film Federation to host the next General Assembly. However, without the benefit of a film festival, it is hard to see what attendance such an Assembly would achieve, and the issue is further clouded by the likelihood of an IFFS film festival being hosted in Italy at a different point in the calendar.

Conclusion

BFFS is seen as a lead organisation, and there is a strong feeling that IFFS want us to do more. Previous BFFS representatives are well-remembered, and the fact that English is our native language raises the expectation that BFFS can do more to help develop IFFS. The International Federation delivers one biennial opportunity to shape the organisation, and an annual opportunity for the global film society movement to get together. The Executive Committee meets, at attendees' own expense, two or three times a year, and the next meeting is likely to be in Paris (although Brazil and Bangladesh may well feature in the future given the composition of the newly elected committee). What IFFS actually achieves is rather remarkable given the circumstances and BFFS should continue its membership.

BFFS STUDENT AWARDS TAKE OFF

In November 2005, BFFS held its regional viewing session in Sheffield. As part of the proceedings, we held a student seminar, with the aim of taking soundings about how to proceed with developing the BFFS student group. One outcome was a positive response to the idea of introducing a system of student awards, to recognise the contribution that student film society activists make to the student community.

Soon after Christmas 2006, BFFS Executive Committee members were considering an award scheme, which was put into effect sufficiently rapidly for it to be possible to accept entries in Spring 2006.

For those who have not encountered it, the BFFS Student Award is open to any activist who has undertaken voluntary work to make a student film society happen. It is not a competition, but a recognition of a contribution, and because contributions vary in extent and quality, it is awarded at Silver, Gold and Platinum levels. If you would like to know what criteria

are applied, there is more information in the Awards section of the new BFFS website.

Applications are made by a film society, not by individuals, and they must be endorsed not only by the society committee, but also by the institution's Student Union. In 2006, the scheme attracted seven applications, all of which were made properly and carried the requisite endorsements.

In order to ensure that the criteria were properly applied, an awarding panel consisting of Jim Dempster, incoming BFFS Treasurer, and John Salisbury, BFFS Publications and Education consultant, sat at the British Film Institute, and scrutinised each application. They were satisfied that all applications were in order, and they made seven awards, across all award categories.

It's early days yet, and we are hoping that this valuable means of recognising students' voluntary efforts will in due course become much more widely used.

Countries represented

Great Britain	Uruguay
Ireland	Cuba
France	Ecuador
Germany	Colombia
Switzerland	Mexico
Portugal	Iran
Italy*	Philippines
Estonia	Indonesia
Ukraine	Malaysia
Norway	Singapore
Lithuania	South Korea
Catalonia	India
Cape Verde	Pakistan
Croatia	Bangladesh
Serbia	Nepal
Bosnia	Mongolia
Egypt	Afghanistan
Morocco	China
Tunisia	
Burkina Faso	
Brazil	
Argentina	

*Italy also had representatives from Sicily, Sardinia and other regions of the country.