



– Institute's Colloquium –

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The Beauties of Hunting: a 'tandem film' format for an audiovisual/sensory ethnography

For Clifford Geertz, "a good interpretation of anything – a poem, a person, a history, a ritual, an institution, a society – takes us into the heart of that of which it is the interpretation" (1973:18). For a sensory ethnography – perhaps more than for any other kind of ethnography – to go 'into the heart' of unfamiliar sensuous lifeworlds is paramount. Yet it is not enough to simply 'evoke' sensory impressions; the sociocultural structuring of sensory experience has to be addressed as well. The usual way for doing this in ethnographic film is by introducing contextual information, often in form of verbal commentaries. Another solution would be to stay close to the initial sensory experience one describes through film and let one film be a visual commentary to the other. This is what I call a 'tandem film'.

The documentary short *The Beauty of Hunting* (2016, 10 min.) is a descriptive, evocative film of one hunting situation which uses atmospheric shots of a female hunter to allow viewers to feel-into her experience of observing and waiting for the animal. With the clear focus on one hunter, this film aims at conveying the sense of immersion into the landscape combined with the sense of anticipation for game to appear which are key to understanding the hunter's vigilance.

In the accompanying documentary, *The Beauty of Hunting Revisited* (2016, 40 min.), I re-embedded the former hunting situation within the unfolding process of the whole hunting day it was taken from originally. Apart from the experiential structures that were in focus in the documentary short (the sense of immersion and anticipation), this longer film adds other layers of meaning to this hunting practice. It expands the hunting experience of the one female hunter by showing how her hunting situation evolved through previous actions of the day (how a large group of hunters and beaters gather and are distributed in an orchestrated large hunt), by showing what happened parallel to her waiting (the beaters going through the forest towards her and the other hunters) and finally what happened afterwards (how many animals were killed and how they are butchered, how the hunters come together at the end of the hunting day and eat together).

The screening of both films in the Institut colloquium is intended to open up a discussion of new formats for ethnographic film, including their coordinated presentation on multimedia websites or installations (see e.g. Castaing-Taylor's *Sweetgrass*).

Tuesday, December 19th 2017

4-6 p.m.

Institute of Ethnology
Stuttstraße 21, Raum STU 105 (2.10)

Everybody is welcome!