

## Final report AIR – ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

### Literaturhaus Niederösterreich, March 2018

When coming to Krems for a month, I had set several goals for myself. Admittedly, when setting them, I considered the fact that I would be spending most of the time with my two-year-old (and quite active) son. When spending time with him, we have a fairly strict routine of discovering local children-friendly cafés, taking long walks and napping. As I am used to both (obviously) spending time with him, but also finding time to work while taking care of him, I knew what to expect: During our long walks I usually let my mind float and my thinking take its course, until I “discover” something that can later be used for a current (or any future) project. Although one usually doesn’t associate productive work with time spent with a small child, I have actually discovered that the time spent at home with my son Theo has been a great opportunity to think. For this, Krems has shown itself being ideal: The banks of the Danube River were ideal for our long walks after having breakfast in our favorite “bio” café. Finally, during naps I have time to do some actual writing.

Knowing this, my goal was to keep elaborating the plot and ideas in a novel I have been working on. This is a text about a woman whose father is diagnosed with a serious mental illness when she is a child. The idea I find interesting is a loss of a close person through mental illness (as my last novel was primarily about a loss of a parent through death). Not surprisingly, another important issue of the planned book is motherhood. The quiet room with the view of the river enabled me to put some thoughts down.

Furthermore, I have been keeping a diary part of which have already been published (Glosolalia magazine), and publication of further parts is planned.

During my stay here, I have also written a text about the picture of eating disorders in two relatively recent novels, namely *The Vegetarian* by Han Kang, and *The Little Life* by Hanya Yanagihara. This article will be published in the next issue of the Glosolalia magazine (<https://www.glosolalia.sk/>)

On March 14, I was glad to have a reading in the Slovak Institute in Vienna. This was the first time I heard my text read in German – thank you to Sylvia Treudl who gave my book her voice. As the German language is for various reasons close to my heart, it was nice hearing something I had written in German.

As the *Leipziger Buchmesse* took place during the month I spent in Krems, and as I had been invited to present the German translation of my book there, I travelled to Leipzig on March, 15 and planned to return on March, 17, with my arrival being delayed due to car problems. During my stay, I personally met Andrea Reynolds, the translator of my book. I dare to say that we had spectacular time together, talking of our work and our families (curiously, we share several details of our lives). Together with Ines Sebesta, a translator of several known works from German into Slovak, and with Daniela Humajová from the Slovak Literature Center (LIC) we participated in a discussion about Slovak female writers. Afterwards, together with Andrea Reynold, we presented the German translation of my book. Last but not least, the evening was dedicated to yet another informal reading in a Greek restaurant.

Another thing worth mentioning is that during the months spent here, there were massive political and social changes happening in Slovakia (a tragic murder of a young investigative journalist and his fiancée followed by huge demonstrations that lead to the resignation of the Minister of internal affairs and of the prime minister). As I live in Prague, being in Krems

strangely enabled me to be closer to these events than being at home. During my stay in Krems I gave a short interview for the German TV station sat3 ( <http://www.3sat.de/mediathek/?mode=play&obj=72361> - the link that was only active for a limited amount of time).

I don't see any disadvantages to my stay here. Even the weather cooperated and I have had a chance to experience both white winter with temperatures of below freezing and the beginning of spring with sunny warmer days. All people who make our stays possible deserve huge thanks!

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