

Elmira Iravanizad, AIR 2018-2019, Report

I spent two months as an AIR in Krems from December 2018 to January 2019. As it is usual for arriving at unknown places I was unsure what to expect before my arrival, how it would be and how the conditions would impact my artistic work. So I was very pleasantly surprised to find a light and spacious studio flat for me and a cosy duplex shared studio for me and the other residents upon arrival. Besides, I was very warmly welcomed by all members of the AIR programme.

While I initially set out to work mostly on paintings and drawings in Krems I changed my plan shortly after my arrival: Andreas Hoffer, curator of the AIR programme, proposed to me to have a duo exhibition with the Viennese artist Krasimira Stikar, to be opened at the end of January 2019 at *Kunstraum Arcade* in Mödling, a renowned project space at the outskirts of Vienna and a frequent cooperation partner of the AIR programme. I gladly accepted. In order to develop a coherent artistic concept fitting for the exhibition space and the joint exhibition I decided to produce several lacquered objects out of clay.

One of the few disadvantages of the AIR location is that art supply and equipment is limited – for clay and lacquer I had to go to Vienna and I had to take the objects to a separate firing place in Krems. Yet, the AIR team was most helpful and supportive in facilitating a solution. In the end, I could finish all works for the exhibition as planned. Parallel to the creation of sculptures I was working on paintings with oil on paper, influenced by my daily walks along the Danube; I enjoyed the silence and the experience of nature – a sense some of the organic forms in my paintings are reminiscent of.

Apart from my artistic work I enjoyed the events, gatherings and meetings organised by the AIR programme or associated to it: I saw the exhibition at Kunsthalle of Per Kirkeby (once with a guided tour by the director of the Kunsthalle Florian Steininger), of the former AIR Perrine Lacroix, and attended an opening at the Galerie Stadtpark. I also attended a concert by a resident musician in Vienna. I found the monthly presentation meetings a great chance

not only to present one's work and current projects and receive feedback on it, but also to get to know the other resident artists better. While the scope of activities in Krems is certainly limited, particularly in wintertime, the AIR programme is doing its very best to make exchange and experiences possible which I very much appreciated. It was very helpful and nice how friendly and diligently everybody from the AIR programme was acting throughout my whole residency time to provide the right balance between freedom and structure for the residents.

The opening of my exhibition was simultaneously the end of my residency (pictures from the opening below). It offered the chance to get in touch with various people, from local representatives to local artists and artlovers. It was a very positive end of my time in Austria. Overall, I am looking back to a truly enriching residency time in Krems; gratitude for everything remains, and the hope to return one day.

