

Report – Silvia Amancei and Bogdan Armanu AIR – ARTIST IN RESIDENCE Niederösterreich  
January – March 2019

Dear AIR – ARTIST IN RESIDENCE NIEDERÖSTERREICH board,

We, Silvia Amancei and Bogdan Armanu, artist couple living and activating in the city of Iasi, Romania, are happy to have been granted a three month residency fellowship by AIR – ARTIST IN RESIDENCE NIEDERÖSTERREICH.

Starting with the beginning of January 2019, we had the chance to pursue our research and practice interest in Krems, making use of the available support and fostering the conversation with the fellow residents and local cultural workers.

We consider that this experience was fruitful for our practice and development, meeting with professionals with whom we believe we will continue collaborating in the future, therefore extending our professional network.

Throughout the duration of our residency stay we have worked on different projects continuing our heterogeneous approach towards practice.

## **1. Video Practice**



Video still – “The Pearl of Moldova”, experimental documentary, 17’35”, 2019, Slănic Moldova/Romania & Krems/Austria  
Preview link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gjihekBG5Kw&t=1s>

Throughout the residency we have continued our video/film practice. “Video-Manifestos - the adaptation of politics to the volatility of contemporary knowledge movement” is our ongoing project started in 2014. Through this project we try to share our political subjectivity using the medium of video. In the same time, it assures our intellectual subsistence in a world where the political decisions are made by economic factors. In order to gain more visibility for our political manifestos we have created a YouTube channel where we share them.

In the first month of the residency we have finished editing “The Pearl of Moldova”, experimental documentary that focuses on the situation of Slănic Moldova, resort town from Romanian, and the history of its natural resources and their privatisation. In the same time we had the opportunity to present this new video in one of the art gatherings to our fellow residents and cultural workers of Krems, providing us the chance to receive a feedback.



Video still – A fiery Dream, 2'45", 2019, Krems/Austria

Preview link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hr1GYFJcTqk>

Also in the framework of the residency, we have produced “A Fiery Dream”, a short video that starts with “a recurrent dream of the artist couple (Silvia & Bogdan). Under the torment of life under late capitalism, the idea of burning the rich finds place in their subconscious, fuelling the artist's dreams. In one of these dreams the 740 Park Avenue apartment building is covered by flames that illuminate the path for the future in common.”

Another video project that we filmed but is still in post-production is “Redheaded” (temporarily named as such).



Screen shot from "Redheaded" video

Parallel with these works, we have filmed multiple scenes that will become part of a future experimental film project.

## 2. Solo exhibition



IF THEN WHAT AFTER – installation view, Kunstverein Baden, 2019, photo credit: Silvia Amancei & Bogdan Armanu

Another positive factor of the residency fellowship was the possibility to produce together with David Komary our first solo exhibition in Austria. After a very pleasant collaboration and exchange of ideas with David Komary we have developed together the concept and title of the exhibition, "IF THEN WHAT AFTER", that could be visited from 15<sup>th</sup> of February until 17<sup>th</sup> of March in Kusntverein Baden, Baden bei Wien.

Starting with David Komary's selection of our past drawings and two recent video documentary works ("Doru"/2018 & "Mitrita & Silvia sr.)/2018) we composed a trans-media installation looking to merge these heterogamous works together. Through the understanding and collaboration of Kunstverein Baden, we were able to create a site specific mural intervention on the gallery walls, extending and maximizing graphic elements from our drawings and building/designing the exhibition furniture for this installation.

In the same time, we have produced a new series of digital photographs in order to mediate the relation between our video and drawing practice linking the multiple reading paths and theoretical structures of the exhibition/installation.



IF THEN WHAT AFTER – 3 digital print photography, Krems ab der Donau, 2019, photo credit: Silvia Amancei & Bogdan Armanu

### 3. Artist-Book Project

The artistic project with which we applied for AIR – ARTIST IN RESIDENCE NIEDERÖSTERREICH was an artistic research that would eventually be materialized as an artist book. Under the title of "The Possibility and Impossibility of Art to become Politics" we proposed to compose a small research where, under the protective and harmless position of the artist, we will deconstruct the meaning of critical and political art, gravitating around introspective and self-reflective thoughts on the art world, society and ethics.

Throughout the residency stay in Krems we have developed the initial sketchy idea and developed it into a project that has overcome the three-month time framework of the fellowship. We have invited a selection of cultural workers / thinkers to take part in our project in order to widen the perspective on the issue of the possibility and impossibility of art to become politics. Therefore, we had the pleasure to receive essays, texts and interviews from friends that we have invited. With these new bodies of ideas and subjectivity, we need to

devote more time and attention to this artist-book that we couldn't manage to materialize in the framework of the residency.

Parallel with inserts with our past manifesto texts and new essays, the artist book will have contribution from: Cătălin Gheorghe (Romania), Rado Ištók (Slovakia), Sanjeev Khandekar (India), Edith Lazar (Romania), Maximilian Lehner (Austria), Cristina Moraru (Romania), Danilo Prnjat (Serbia), Dmitry Vilensky (Russia).

In the same time, the artist book will have interviews with: Nebojsa Milikic (Serbia), Diana Marincu (Romania), Dan Perjovschi (Romania) and a conversation with David Komary (Austria).

#### **4. Activity within the residency**

Throughout our three-month residency stay we had the pleasure to attend several cultural activities where with the guidance of AIR – ARTIST IN RESIDENCE NIEDERÖSTERREICH team we have been introduced to the local art organizations and events. Of special importance were the monthly gatherings organized by the Art and Education program, where we had the chance to get in touch with our fellow residents and their practice.

We also had the nice pleasure to have our residency stay overlap with the grand opening of Landesgalerie Niederösterreich and a new exhibition in Kunsthalle Krems and be introduced to the Ernst Krenek Forum, Susanne Wenger Foundation and Artothek NIEDERÖSTERREICH.

## **Feedback**

We consider that the residency was a productive time and we are very pleased with the people we have met and worked with in Krems.

Nonetheless, we understand that in managing this type of programs, feedback is a crucial element in continuing to develop the program at the highest level and provide the best experience for the both the residents and the management.

From the position of the resident, we would like to suggest that the common studio and its kitchen should be equipped with an oven and other electric appliances that the private studios don't have this being much cheaper than equipping them all with blender, mixer, oven, so on and so forth. This aspect is not connected with the creative aspect of a residency but we think that in the case of longer residency stay, two/three months, these kitchen appliances would be very welcomed, making the stay more comfortable. Regarding the cleaning, even though it is provided by the institution we think that a broom/mop set should be added in the common area especially when the atelier is used (but also for some in between schedule cleaning in private studios). We would add that this recommendation comes also from conversations had with other residents.

Working with digital photography and video we often do not have access to a studio where one could film, record audio or do photography. Since we had a spacious studio, we could improvise a studio where to do some of the works, making use of the room lamps as light equipment. We think that this lack could be easily solved by arranging a small room and equipping it with a couple of lights, a tripod, and a green and black screen. This is just a suggestion and not a must, taking into consideration the popularity of the medium of photography/video, we consider that a lot of artists would find this very useful.

We found a store that is not in the list provided but think that it can be useful for future residents (office supplies store but things like canvases, acrylics, "creative" supplies are also sold): Wr. Str. 60, 3500 Krems an der Donau (Pagro Diskont)

We would add that the bicycles really helped us in discovering the area and maybe this should be highlighted for residents especially in the warmer seasons even if it is considered a risk, the entire area is to be visited and enjoyed.

**IF THEN WHAT AFTER**  
- photo documentation -







