

Martina Peters

AIR Artist in Residence Niederösterreich

February 2021

Introduction

I'm Martina Peters, a comic artist living and working in Duisburg, Germany.

I was invited for a one-month residency at AIR NOE in Krems by Gottfried Gusenbauer, artistic director of the Karikaturmuseum Krems, which is right next door to the AIR NOE building.

This was my first residency experience ever. As comic artists aren't often seen as „artists“ in a classical sense I was a little confused at first. To be honest after arriving here I fought with some hefty impostor syndrome for the first few days asking myself why I'm allowed to enjoy such a great opportunity.

The air-team is very professional but also kind and open if there were ever a problem to arise. The same kindness goes for the other members of the Karikaturmuseum and Kunstmeile I met as well as the other artists. After meeting some of them and talking with everyone else via video at the presentation the nagging question if it's „okay“ for me to be here quickly subsided and I was able to fully concentrate on my projects.

The fact that everything was so well taken care of put my mind at ease to just work day in and day out. Most of the time I forgot to take the walks I had planned to do to enjoy the beautiful landscape around me.

Due to the unfortunate pandemic we're in right now of course meeting anyone face to face was a struggle if possible at all. Generally I'm a very solitary artist and the spacious, comfortable apartment provided by AIR NOE gave me all I needed to work on my projects. Still it was a little sad seeing the large common room completely desolate.

Even so I, too, just went there when I needed to print something. The pandemic really does weird things to all of us.

Projects

While staying in Krems I worked on two projects simultaneously. For one I did the

storyboard of an entire chapter of the next part of my comic-book series „FOCUS 10“ as well as inking a large part of that chapter and finishing up the tones on the chapter



before.

While working on the storyboard I met up with Gottfried Gusenbauer of the Karikaturmuseum Krems. At our first meeting Gottfried quickly showed me around the current exhibitions of the Karikaturmuseum - which was in the middle of setting up the „Treasures spanning 20 years“ exhibition which is why he didn't have much time that day.

After he left me to my devices I wandered the upper halls of the museum and let myself sink into the exhibition about Rolf Kauka's works.

A few days later we were able to finalize my participation in the Christine Nöslinger exhibition in Fall. Initially I had planned to start working on my pieces for the exhibition within my month of staying in Krems as well, but that would have been biting off a lot more than I can chewing, as I was already working on another project besides the last chapter of „FOCUS 10“ volume 9.

As a manga artist I usually work in black and white only for comic-pages. Color only occasionally comes into play for covers, posters or advertising material. However I wanted to try my hand at a fullcolor short-comic while staying here. My stay here gave me the time and peace of mind to try my hand at that and I'm rather satisfied at what I

could accomplish.



Doing a fully colored comic is certainly different than black and white and this experience broadens my horizons immensely. I might do more full-color comics in the future as I realized color gives my works a very different feel from the usual black and white. Depending on what my intent is with a story I'll most likely will decide on color or black and white in the future.

I think the only thing I really missed while being here and working here was the tiltable table or at least a height-adjustable one as I am a very small person. So while I'm

sitting here writing my feet are dangling ten centimeters off the ground but what else is new.

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