

Report of my stay in Krems an der Donau from mid-August to the end of October 2021.

I must say that I really appreciate my representation on the Artist in Residence program. I also appreciate the fact that I was able to spend two and a half months on this place concentrating on my work. I spent a wonderful time here.

The organization of the entire residence works very intensively and together with other residents, we were involved in local events, which I really appreciate.

A visit to the Art Center in Gugging at the end of August stuck in my memory the most. Here I discovered for myself new positions of Art Brut art. I was very excited about the management of the gallery and the way of presenting the individual authors in separate large spaces. I myself previously considered the art brut of the work to be the predominant naivism and decorativism in drawing or painting, but in this exhibition I met very new distinctive painting positions, which with their authenticity and distinctive roots also bear a strong painterly expression.

I also had the opportunity to visit and meet the artist Adriana Affourtinati, who lives in Krems, and I thank the AIR Niederösterreich organization very much for inviting me to visit her studio. Adriana and I also met a few times after the visit and there is nothing better than meeting someone who actively creates and lives directly in Krems.

I visited many exhibitions during the residence. I name the art collection in the Landesgalerie Niederösterreich, Christian Helwing's installation in the Dominikanerkirche. Krems' location is also convenient for connections to Vienna, where I and other residents visited the Pararell Vienna art festival, where I had the opportunity to see the current scene with its pros and cons. Additionally I had the opportunity to get familiar with Regös' photographic work, whom I met at the residence.

I used the bikes available in the common room a lot and rode around Krems, which allowed me to get to know the Wachau location with vineyards and adjacent small towns and villages.

Project – Hotel in the mountains

I came to Krems with a vision of this project, so I had an idea of what I was going to do. The project is not limited to works created in Krems, but they have a broader direction towards a larger cycle of paintings, which I will continue in Prague. It will be a painting cycle, which aims to create a kind of pictorial story script with individual paintings. For a long time, I have been painting sections of the landscape with an emphasis on color and color relationships with a tendency to abstract and reduce. I create by mind and the places I paint often find themselves in remote locations, in nature and in the mountains. The hotel is a kind of opposite element with which I enjoy working both in terms of the organic nature of the forms of nature and the technical geometry of architecture, ie in terms of aesthetic diversity and in terms of emotional contrast, which brings people and noise crowded hotel and quiet nature. However, it will not only be a landscape painting, but I also want to focus on the interiors of architecture with an emphasis on a past, the latent story.

At the residence in Krems, I had the opportunity to occupy a large space for creation and gradually created about 9 paintings of larger and smaller formats. In the new paintings, I focused, among other things, on the formal problems of delimiting the image area, where the action can take place at the edge of the painting or halfway behind it. I enjoyed working with opposing elements in painting and developing multiple positions of painting in a single work. In this I was also supported by consultations with David Komary and my colleagues, which I appreciate. I am glad, David Komary is familiar with this phenomenon and I want to continue working with him.

AIR – ARTIST IN RESIDENCE Niederösterreich
Petr Gruber

This residence is great for 5 people, which is already a small group, so you can have fun socially and you are not cut off from the outside world. At the same time, it is really great to have your own apartment and the common studio and therefore you can have company at any time and at the same time have your own peace. I will remember the location of the AIR building in a quiet location like Krems for a long time, as I am returning to the big city.

At this residence, in 2.5 months I had the opportunity to make new friends from different parts of the world and I had the opportunity to talk to them about my work and get feedback in another country with a different context, which also helped me to realize, what I am doing. I spent a beautiful 2.5 months here and thank you from the bottom of my heart to all the people I met here.

Petr Gruber, Krems an der Donau 25. 10. 2021