

Report – Helen Anna Flanagan – September 2022

How was the residency at AIR – ARTIST IN RESIDENCE Niederösterreich?

Visits to the local art institutes, such as Kunsthall Krems to see the retrospective exhibition by Helen Frankenthaler was historically rich. I admired the spontaneity in her use of paint and her fierce attitude in exploring the medium over the decades. The Karikaturmuseum Krems was a lot of fun, notably Manfred Deix's satirical illustrations that were hilarious and offered great insight into the history and politics of Austria. His satirical drawings and observations reminded me of the characters in some of my video works – the use of exaggeration to offer a critical insight into the human condition and the political subtext of a place. Visiting Klang Raum in Krems was fantastic, especially the two spatial sound installations in the church that were pleasantly unexpected -- brilliant acoustics that offered a sensorial and transcendental quality. The visit to Klang Raum also involved a spontaneous encounter with the musician Gunther Gessert who was practicing on the analogue synthesizer and who a few days later we experienced live as part of an intimate concert. A trip to Vienna included visiting the Kunsthalle to see the Austrian filmmaker Katrina Daschner's solo exhibition, a visit to MUMOK to see a collection of works from the sixties on the thematic of collaboration, and a visit to Secession to see the shows of Jennifer Tee, Anna Daučíková and Lieselott Beschorner were all interesting. The different exhibitions offered deeper insight into the Austrian art scene, alongside discovering new work made by international artists and residents, especially the crossovers of painting, multimedia and sound.

I also thoroughly enjoyed exploring Krems – taking in the landscape as the seasons turn from Summer to Autumn, visiting several cozy and unique Heuriger and talking with several friendly locals about the region and its history. The region is distinct with its rolling vineyards, historic buildings, pebbled streets, and the powerful Danube that connects the regions. It was a pleasure to discover, serving as a unique backdrop to focus on my personal research.

What did you realize during the residency?

During my residency, I focused on reading and writing for a new video project. My research revolved around the term *corpsing*. Corpsing is used within TV and theatre when an actor breaks from character, forgets their lines or laughs uncontrollably. I see this infectious mistake, also known as a blooper in TV, as a celebratory reflection on the complexities found in language and performance, but also the physical body and affect. This 'breaking away' from character was researched further in order to discover alternative approaches in making that would allow for a more spontaneous direction in performance. As such, during my time at AIR Krems I was reading and writing small sketches/thoughts/responses that will evolve further into a

script related to the phenomenon of corpsing. The book *Animal Joy: A book of Laughter and Resuscitation* by the writer Nuar Alasdair informed my thinking about the topic, a very interesting and layered read! I have also been reading further into how humour functions in comedy with the book *What Are You Laughing At? A Comprehensive Guide to the Comedic Event* by Dan O'shannon. This preliminary research is essential for the evolution of my projects: reading, writing, experiencing and accumulating thoughts to write a script and storyboard for a film.

What do you appreciate about the residency?

I really appreciated the space and time to reflect on my project without the pressure to present any results and that the timeframe reflected this. I found the residency provided well-equipped, comfortable and private accommodation with an additional communal space to work. It is well located in Kunnstmeile Krems with different institutional spaces, as well as close to Vienna and Linz for other cultural visits. It is also near to Czech Republic and Slovakia making it a perfect location to discover new places. It was great that my partner could come stay with me for the duration of the residency and that the room was equipped for this. I found the team to be very friendly and approachable, and communication was very easy as the office is based in the same building. Another positive was having access to communal bikes, this was a great way to see other parts of the region down the Danube.

What did you miss at the residency?

Depending on the artist and the type of project, one month is a short time to create new work. Personally, this was a great amount of time for me in terms of reading/researching/writing as my films take time to develop and this happens in distinct phases. Had I more time at the residency, I would be able to develop and think about the work more in the context of lower Austria (work with local people, site-visits, start shooting, etc.) I also think it could potentially be a bit lonely for some residents if they are not independent or do not have family or their partners with them. In that sense, more opportunities to meet the other artists or with local people could be organized (exhibitions, events, dinners, etc.) to feel more connection with the different projects of the residents and the cultural landscape of Krems.

List all projects/workshops/concerts/events that you participated in:

Personal vist, Kunsthalle Krems (07.09.22)
Personal vist, Karikaturmuseum Krems (09.09.22)
Personal vist, Landsgalerie Niederosterriech Krems (14.09.22)
Personal vist, Kunsthalle, Vienna (15.09.22)
Personal vist, MUMOK, Vienna (15.09.22)
Tour at Kunsthalle Krems with the director Florian Steininger (20.09.22)
Meeting with Klaus Krobath and a visit to Klang Raum & Forum Frohner (21.09.22)

Meeting with curator Andreas Hoffer (22.09.22)

Personal vist, Succesion, Vienna (22.09.22)

Personal vist, Concert at Klang Raum (26.09.22)

Personal vist, Bratislava, Solvakia (27.09.22)

Personal vist, Danubiana Meulenstein Art Museum, Bratislava (28.09.22)

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