

Christian Helwing

Report AIR – ARTIST IN RESIDENCE Niederösterreich / September 2019

Following my AIR 2018 residency I spent the September 2019 in Krems—on invitation by the *Kunsthalle Krems*—to prepare my upcoming project in cooperation with the Kunsthalle and the City Museum Krems.

Following a one-year period of sketching, researching and building models, the work on the project continued here on site in Krems with taking measures and working out the pre-production plan. The show will feature three new site-specific works—for the Kunsthalle's *Oberlichtsaal*, the Kunsthalle's project space *Dominikaner-Kirche* and an intervention in public space.

With the recent working-title for the show—*a church is not church, a museum is not a museum*—a concept finds expression that presents the buildings and the institution of the former Dominican church and the Kunsthalle's *Oberlichtsaal* “as such.” As a liturgical structure in terms of its formal and historical design, as a historical building in a contemporary context, and thus of a representative exhibition space.

I understand presenting the buildings “as such” as an instrument and means to an end to involving Kunsthalle (museum) and church visitors and viewers in an altered perception of the sites and creating a new sense of awareness in the context of art. The large-scale carpeting and hanging curtains in the spaces is therefore at eye level with visitors and within touching distance. In contrast to architecture that is normally dominated by stone, carpeting has a material texture that is appealing yet may be irritating if, as here, it is applied as hanging sections in space. People normally walk on carpeting at their homes.

The concepts for both spaces aim to install accessible spatial installations – far from a concept of sculpture as an object to be viewed from a distance. The subject is rather to dissolve the boundaries of and extend the interface of the triad consisting of viewer, installation, and architecture laid out in my works by the medium of the exhibition.

Visitors have to situate themselves in my arrangements of real and ideal circumstances. They are physically confronted with forms of perception in which they themselves become the protagonists within art. This opens up a process of the critical revision of one's own

behavioral patterns on an intuitive and reflected level, whereby these two forms of insight are not meant to face each other hierarchically but become entangled with one another.

I am happily looking forward to realize my project and it will be opened on July 13, 2020. Meanwhile you can find detailed information about my work at www.christianhelwing.de

I have had a very productive time in Krems and a full time table concerning the project and a bunch of meetings with the Krems Kunsthalle's and Krems City Museum's team to discuss various upcoming aspects of the show.

Again Studio 25 was a perfect location for my presentations, this time with the models of the church and Kunsthalle in combination with sketches out of the working process.

At least I prepared 5 presentations:

- with the curator of the project Andreas Hoffer and Kunsthalle's director Florian Steininger, Lisa Schwarz and Helene Fehringer as production manager
- in frames of the monthly *Get-Together* with Günther Oberhollenzer, Andreas Hoffer, Isabell Fiedler, Sabine Güldenfuß, Johan Nane Simonsen
- with Gregor Kremser and Sabine Laz from the City Museum Krems
- with Heidrun Schlögl and the ORTE team
- last but not least and in frames of the pre-production with Elisabeth Kainberger, Helene Fehringer, Konstantin Rössl from the Exhibition setup team and Christian Schienerl for the graphic design.

I highly appreciated the professional opportunities of the AIR program and the fantastic studio 21. My personal needs and expectations of an artist's residency, a period of time which partly means to transfer my office, are fulfilled, as it was possible to withdraw for the project work and to focus on it in the stimulating and quiet atmosphere of the studio.

Finally many thanks go out the whole AIR team for their all-time friendly and productive support.