



### Final report

The feelings I have about my stay in Krems are not easy to describe. For a long time, it had been my dream to reside there. The idea of a stay in a region full of history, beautiful nature, art shows and cafes on the bank of the Danube at the foot of the hills covered with vineyards and monasteries while being able to paint there was almost surreal.

The reality turned out to be completely different. The project I had prepared for the residency did not want to come to life. The town, galleries, cafes and people went into lockdown. Everything was upside down in the first month and my artistic attempts were all very poor. The original plan had been to devote myself to a particular issue I have been interested in. My standard artwork focuses on the relationship between colours, particularly in painting. This also relates to spatial designs, which is what I had intended to focus on. In Krems, however, I had to return to painting. On one of my trips home to get yet more material I brought back a painting with me. That was a very important moment, as if I needed a specific piece of work to see how very different Krems was and how my own work has been developing. This is just one small detail, and I could add many more examples. If I were to name that difference, I'd choose the word 'strictness'. That's something I saw as quite obvious in Austria, starting from how people communicate to, for example, architecture. I feel that some of the strictness entered my work.

I am also very pleased that I had the opportunity to be in Krems in the time of covid-19. The town and its surroundings were completely devoid of life. Medieval architecture, winter, the flow of the Danube. All that was slowing me down at first became something truly interesting. Art has to be sufficiently powerful to live through such times. I don't know exactly how to best describe it – perhaps, that to cultivate art, leading a dialogue is a necessity. Landesgalerie absent curators were

replaced by thick walls of small houses; the shows in galleries I couldn't see were swapped for urbanism of gothic streets and the fortification of surrounding castles. Thanks to the perspective gained during my rambles in the surroundings of Krems that allowed me to think quietly, I managed in the last two months to revisit my initial intention of searching for a boundary between a painting and an object.

The character of the studio made me resign from producing a final piece of work, that is an object in its perfect form. I could just create, draw and make notes. It was time to create, not to make art. I had not experienced that for a very long time. So while it definitely can't be said that I created perfect masterpieces in Krems, the stay enabled me to anchor many ideas I am going to continuously develop back at home in Czechia. I hope that the need for firm decisions, which was a key feeling in Krems for me, will not evaporate too fast.

With many thanks to the whole team, so patient in tolerating my excesses,

Břetislav Malý