

In the museum, time becomes suspended. Inside of it, we wander from room to room as if in a state of rapture that takes us from one work of art to another, in a disconnected flow to the everyday world. Upon arriving in Krems, at the beginning of December 2021, the experience of this absence of time seemed to expand to the experience of the city as a whole. Still in lockdown due to the health crisis, the expeditions to the center of the city, following the unveiling of each historic building, or to the mountainous extremes of the urban perimeter, observing the snowy tops and semi-rural residences, today are fixed in my memory without parameter of temporality.

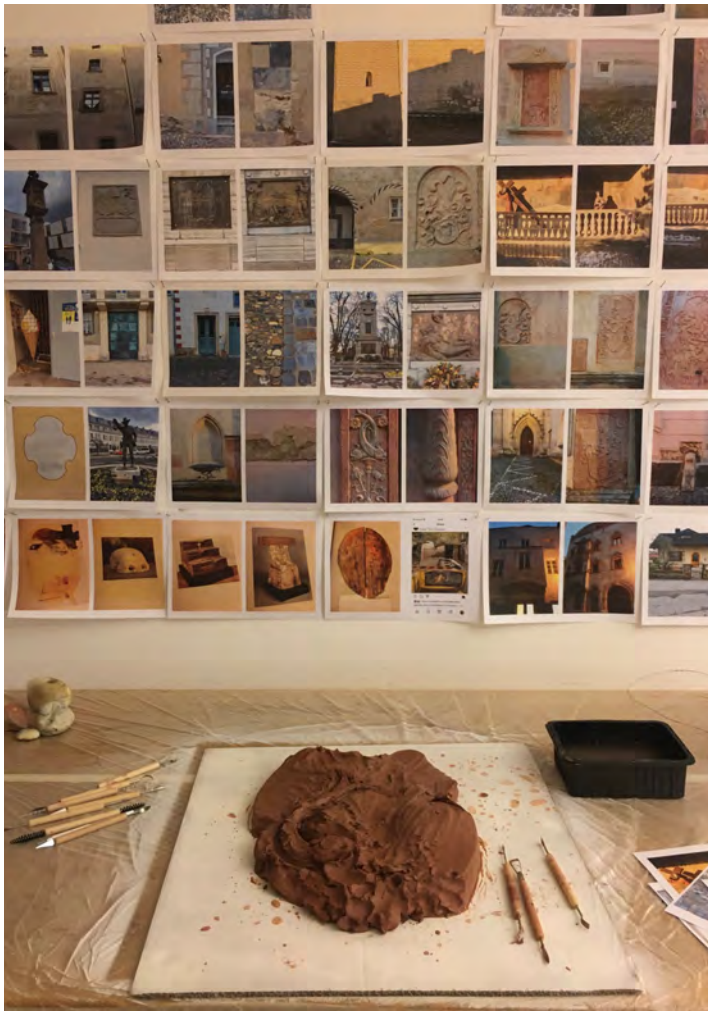
In his book 'Mirror of the City', Henri-Pierre Jeudy tells us about the museification process of European cities. The permanence of the built set would guarantee the establishment of a local identity in the face of the globalization process. In fact, the process is twofold in the sense of ensuring identity through a heritage image and at the same time projecting it to the world, since tourism is one of the industries that support and at the same time feed back historical preservation. Krems is part of this process: with a preserved Renaissance center and a punctual delimitation of its urban expansion, the city is recognized as a UNESCO heritage site and stands out as an attraction for tourist activity. In this context, art becomes one of the protagonists in the development of this attractive image. With several cultural spaces, the level of investment and professionalism of the Krems museums is impressive, and the Artist Residency is part of this circuit.





In a way, the Residency is the ideal production situation for an artist: with comfortable studios and allowances, the residency period presents itself as a moment of depressurization of the artist's unstable routine and with few resources. Coming from a precarious political and economic scenario currently in Brazil, I felt at the same time all the contentment to be able to enjoy the privilege of this experience and the concern about our role in the construction of fairer societies and in the attribution of value to the industry of culture and tourism on a global scale.

During my two-month stay, I walked a lot around the city and registered various elements and situations related to heritage, places of memory, monuments, architectural and religious constructions. The photographs were selected, printed and displayed on the wall of the studio. From there, I started a process of working on clay reliefs, with the idea of quickly producing a work in a period of two days. Finished, the relief was photographed and destroyed. Its destruction returned the material used to its original state. The same clay was then used again to make a new work. The reliefs brought fragments of heritage references from the city, such as the hands of the Second World War memorial and patterns of columns from the historic center. They also contained phrases carved into their surfaces, collected through conversations with workers and residents during the period in the city, revealing certain questions and findings in the relationship between the dynamics and belonging of people in Krems. Six reliefs were created. In the end, two of them were not destroyed and stayed in the city.



ARE YOU  
PROUD  
TO BE ...?





PROVIDE FOR  
THE  
SPIRITUAL  
NEEDS  
OF  
POPULATION

At the end of the residency, I developed another body of work with plaster and pigment, using clay modeling and obtaining counter moulds. The colors used were related to the colors observed in the city (tones of pink, ocher and green). The formats also referred to symbols and graphics of the Krems residences, especially the imitations of bricks found on several facades and the processes of deterioration present. In this sense, the two elements seem to me to be quite representative of a simulacrum movement in the architecture of the city: the painted brick refers to the brick used in the construction of the house, but its graphic dimension and its exaggerated proportion suggest that it is not a representation of the real object, but a symbol, a design, which at the same time that has a decorative function, deepens an imaginative exercise in these facades. I feel that being an artist-in-residence in Krems during these two months is somehow related to this duplicity of function and form, of the political relationship of culture in the contemporary world with the need for delight and aesthetic labor necessary for every society. Two sentences drawn from the reading of Jeudy's 'Mirror of the City' were transcribed into two reliefs from this final phase of work: 'The image of the city as identity' and 'The culture as an image to consumption'. The reliefs also remained in the city.

erica ferrari, January 2022



