

May 28, 2008

Krems A.I.R. Report - Alexis O'Hara

It was wonderful to have the opportunity to return to Krems as an Artist in Residence after my great experience there last October. I felt spoiled to be set up in Top 25 with so much room to move around in and such a great view of Krems.

Again, the staff was helpful and kind, I regret that I did not have more time to spend with them, though the afternoon at the Vienna Art Fair was great fun. I was happy to make acquaintance with fellow A.I.R.s Aimee Faiman, Toni Wirthmueller and Kazuko Miyamoto. The connections I made with them will be lasting ones.

Once again having been invited by the Klangraum, I was happy to have the opportunity to conduct a sound workshop. I had developed a workshop that could work within the short time frame (5 hours) and the potential language barrier between myself and the Austrian students at HAK Krems. I asked the students to choose short stories that we would turn into radio dramas. During the workshop, I taught them to use a simple audio editing program, Audacity, and introduced them to online audio FX sites where they could download sound effects. Although I could not help them with intonation and delivery, due to my lack of German, we managed to make solid narrative tracks. I was very impressed by the seriousness and dedication of these students. Due to the time constraints, only one of the three groups finished their projects that day, though I am told that the other two groups finished them later. Everyone was very proud and happy with their work.

In the following weeks, I set up a studio in my residency and worked on some new compositions, two of which are likely to appear on my next CD. I also did quite a lot of administration work, finishing two grant proposals and doing a lot of research into various sound art, music and performance festivals.

In late April, my collaborator D.Kimm arrived in Krems. We spent many late nights rehearsing for our performance at the Donau Festival. Our experience performing at Donau was incredible. We did not even realize to what extent we were spoiled until we hit other festivals in May. I can now vouch for the fact that Donau fest is one of the best festivals in Europe as far as variety of programming, artist support and overall organization is concerned.

Once again my time in Krems was very productive and rewarding. My sincere thanks go out to Jo Aichinger, Tomas Zierhofer, Elke, Sabine and Hartwig in the A.I.R. offices and all the technical crew of Donau. I hope to have the opportunity to work here once again!

Alexis.