

How was the residency? Advantages and disadvantages of AIR Krems.

Being part of the residency program gave me an excellent opportunity to work in a very suitable environment and honestly, I cannot come up with any disadvantage. I have also enjoyed the reading, despite the fact that I do not speak German. It has been a great pleasure to see the vibrant cultural and literary life going on here.

What did you realize during your residency period?

I worked on a novel and Krems is the place where the final concept and the first 160 pages were born. I started planing this book several years ago and it will be my third one on societal issues. My main interest is the responsibility we have for each other as social beings. What are the mechanisms of exclusion? What can we do about marginality, deviance, poverty and racism?

The book also shows worlds which have unknown depths, regardless being discussed daily within European societies.

The story is based on real experiences. I have developed a program and method in Hungary, which have been running in a Romani settlement for the past 12 years. This place is one of the poorest in our country, where four-hundred people - two-hundred of them children - live in deep poverty. They live in fifteen houses with basically no utilities.

As a documentary film maker, I have also been focusing on marginalized groups.

I am convinced that art plays an important role in shaping society and this persuasion is the guideline of my art and beliefs.

The strands of my novel lead to slums, to the Balkan war and to a small town. The main character is constantly facing the choice of living her privileged, comfortable life or finding some other tasks? What are her options? How can she be responsible for the society, the community which she lives in?

The female protagonists have a special significance in the novel, because I focus on female characters who are no longer displayed in traditional roles and fight for their new place in society.

In Hungary, I don't have enough chance to write, but a lot of experiences and adventures waiting to be put in writing.

Thank you for the possibility. It was a great experience to work in seclusion.

What did you miss at the residency?

In the community room I found what I needed. (Maybe a larger tea cup. ☺)

But seriously, I did not miss anything. The building is spacious and quiet. The exhibitions are interesting and so as the artists who are presented here.

What do you appreciate at AIR Krems?

The conditions were perfect. The city is beautiful. The program staff is very efficient and helpful.

I was especially happy about the interest for female artists. The Hungarian literary life is quite patriarchal. My colleagues who have been here are truly among the best, but both of them are men. I suggest you to listen other creative writers who are working in the background.

I hope I will have the chance to read again in the future from my new book which I started here.