

January 30, 2014.  
Krems an der Donau

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*on art, pin-pong and other stories*

Thinking about the potential of residencies, one can notice that it has been variously used and debated within the works of artists, theorists and curators. Having a *place* in another environment, a notable support and material conditions to freely work (*to do whatever we want*) can be a double edged sword. Is it possible to be at the same time in this safe (and warm!) paradise and still stay true to our *artistic freedom*? Can we really talk about freedom or is the artist anyway part of the globalized artistic production? Further on, the city of Krems and the surrounding Wachau region as a heritage tourism destination, offers - for both tourists and artists - a space to relax, to clear the mind and to be inspired by the landscape. In this place, it is very easy to cling into the comfort of the fabled landscape and to be inspired by its vernacular culture and traditions. Is it possible then to avoid the touristic gaze and the *romantic* experience of the picturesque? Once we are being isolated from our own social context, is it possible to focus on interactivity, social (and/or political) engagement and working within social networks? There are lots of open ended questions that are creating this vicious circle of dualism from which is hard to get out if once we try to answer them. One thing is sure - the significance of a residence can be seen in this wide variety of *interpolations* - but, the most important one is the mutual influence between fellow artists and the people we are surrounded with.

Being surrounded by an inspiring group of international colleagues was a unique daily learning experience. I see the AiR Krems as a laboratory which encouraged face-to-face collaborations and that provided opportunities for artistic and social practices to intertwine. For me, the most valuable part of the residency was the opportunity to risk more and to develop new practices for reinventing the relationship between art and the *everyday*. Our flexible timetable offered us a chance to *Play*. We turned the conference table into a ping pong table which became our regular daily exercise routine. As an endurance-based *performance*, ping-pong matches can be seen in a form of a *home workout* where we trained our consciousness with set of strict rules and concentrated on our relationship with the body and the phenomenology of all the *pings and pongs* that echoed throughout the studio 25. (And of course, we were filled up with endorphins that improved our creativity.) Collective dinner parties were also part of the AiR *laboratory*, where the composition of ingredients and cooking techniques that were used played with the construction of an *(inter)national* cuisine. Using food as a cultural product, leads to the transformation of the act of cooking to an act of cultural processes (Levi-Strauss): through the cook (the artist!) as a cultural agent, natural/raw food becomes cooked food that goes through a process of socialization. Therefore, we used food as a tool for cultural diplomacy, and as an approachable way to encourage a conversation about larger and more challenging topics. As an outcome of this time, place and people, we also realized a temporary (domestic) exhibition and a pseudo-curatorial research on the Artothek's collection and its renting practices. We took up the role of a curator *in situ* and conducted a *fieldwork*: we re-collected (excerpted) its collection.

Beyond this, other personal highlights included the dishwasher (thanks to Eduard for showing me how easy it was to use); the village disco and the customs free internet shoppings (thanks to Dorotas fensy EU credit card); the *intertextual* late night talks (thanks to Robert); finding equal rivals at *tischtennis* (thanks to Katja and her friends); recording Daniels heartbeat with a help of a sound amplifier (thanks to Dafne); having a dog to cuddle (thanks to Andrea and Pupava); stealing Christmas cookies (thanks to Sabine and Alexandra); learning new curatorial practices (thanks to David); and of course the fact that a family member could stay with me throughout the whole duration of the residency. AiR Krems as a place (*laboratory!*) created a very generous environment for all of us, in which it was easier to create personal relationships based on mutual confidence and sympathy which are beyond the `trade rules` that can be felt in other cultural institutions.

And maybe the table-tennis can be seen also as a metaphor for my time spent here. As once it was described in a movie: "The man who said *I'd rather be lucky than good* saw deeply into life. People are afraid to face how great part of life is dependent on luck. There are moments in a match when the ball hits the top of the net, and for a split second, it can either go forward or fall back. With a little luck, it goes forward, and you win. Or maybe it doesn't, and you lose."<sup>1</sup> This time, I was lucky enough to get the opportunity to be here.

\*\*\*please scroll down for the documentation of the projects I have worked on\*\*\*

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<sup>1</sup> Opening line of the movie *Match Point*, by Woody Allen, 2005.

## **Außenseiters /excerpting the Artothek's collection/**

Featuring works by: Gerhard Kaiser, Robert Kabas, Matias Hammer, Werner Hartinger, Johann Fruhmann, Karl Grabner, Anton Wichtl and Clemens Stecher.

In cooperation with **AIR-ARTIST IN RESIDENCE** and [ARTOTHEK](#), curated by Katja Blum, Eduard Constantin, Andrea Palašti and Dorota Walentynowicz.

*Außenseiters*<sup>2</sup> - excerpting the Artothek's collection, is a temporary (domestic!) ad-hoc exhibition and a pseudo-curatorial research on the Artothek's collection and renting practices. Taking up the role of a curator *in situ*<sup>3</sup>, we conducted a `fieldwork`: reflecting on and re-collecting (excerpting!) its collection. As a research project, we wanted to explore the role of the Artothek as an institution. Having in mind the great technical and stylistic diversity of the numerous artworks of the collection, we wanted to know which artworks are the most rentable ones and the ones that had never been rented before – what are the differences in the medium, shape and/or color. By trying to explain which formal conditions are affecting the domestic display ideas, we turned our attention towards the artworks which were never rented before. Therefore, we rented the artworks that were never rented and proposed an *exhibition*: a *place* for the activation and interpretation of these images.



Installation view - detail, Studio 25, AiR Krems, December 2013.

<sup>2</sup> The title was borrowed and re-formulated from the work of Werner Hartinger: *Außenseiterdasein* (1984).

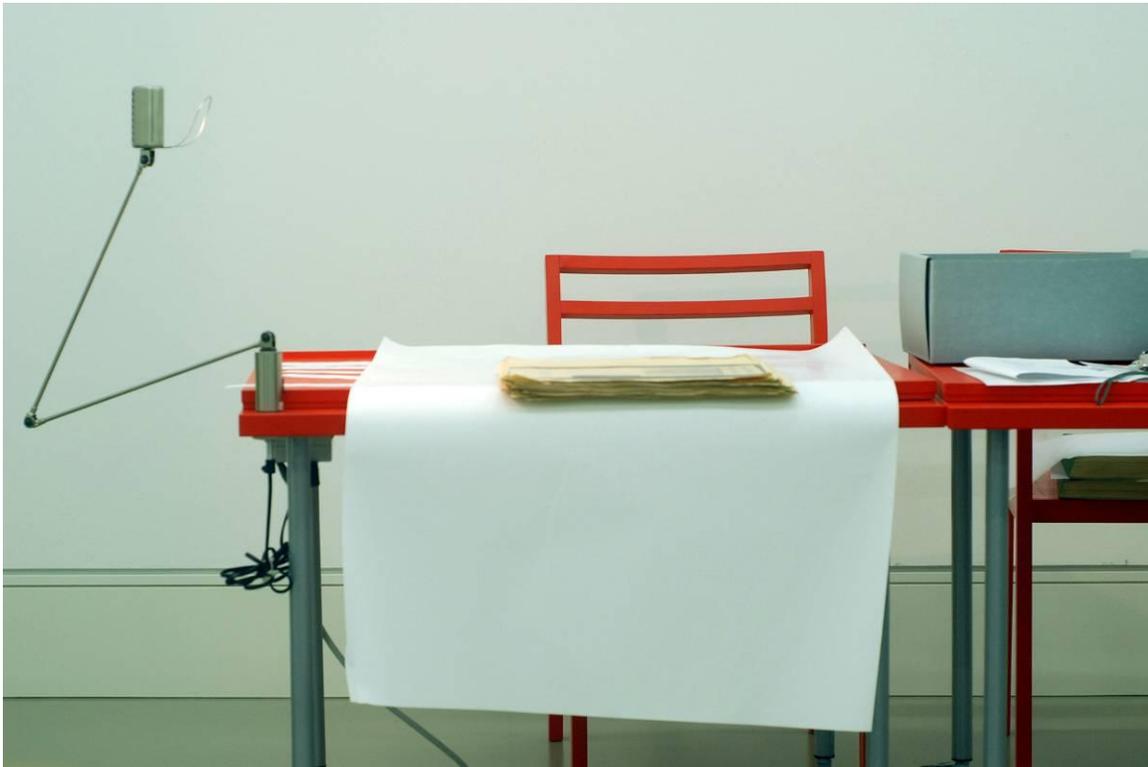
<sup>3</sup> As Artists in Residence in AIR Krems, we are `sharing` the same building with the Artothek.

### **The Contemporary Archive – a special collection**

Preparation of the theoretical text for the exhibition that will be held on 4<sup>th</sup> of April, 2014, at the [Archiv der Zeitgenossen](#), Krems. The project was conducted during September – October 2013, as part of the Artist in Residence program *Campus Culture* of [Danube University Krems](#) and in cooperation with the Archive der Zeitgenossen.

*The Contemporary Archive – a special collection* is a quasi-archival research on the Contemporary Archive and its Collection of Artistic Bequests. It is dealing with the archive as *territory* – a technological space of deposition (Derrida), where things are hidden in a state of stasis, pervaded with mystery, power relations and value.

The exhibition takes the *interior* and the *inventory* of the archive as its ostensible subject, highlighting the space and the material itself in which *memory* is literally `preserved`. *The Contemporary Archive – a special collection* comprises of a series of photographs that depict a collection of individual, decontextualised `treasures` - objects that are found in the archive records and also objects that never went into the official historical narrative as a representative, but which are still marked their trace in the space. Borrowing the methods of representation and working methods from scientific recordings and documentations, the objects have been indexed and taken out of its original settings in order to create a fictive archive – *a special collection*.



Detail of the workplace, Archive der Zeitgenossen at Danube University Krems, January 2014.

## Shock gallery / Shock Cooperative

Preparing the new website and the exhibition program (2014) for the Shock gallery (Novi Sad, Serbia) that is part of [Šok Zadruga](#) (Shock Cooperative).

The **Shock Cooperative** is a successor of the most prominent art activist phenomena that marked Serbian art practice during ex Yugoslavia war and post war time – **The Led Art** (1993 – ). As a representative and supporter of art gild, **MMC LED ART** is contextually renaming **Art Clinic** (Art Klinika, 2002-2012) into a Shock Cooperative (Šok Zadruga). **Shock Gallery** has been part of Art Clinic since its inception (2002) as a constitutive part of the utopian concept that art cures and changes the world.

With an area of only 2m<sup>2</sup>, it is the smallest gallery in the Balkans designed for only one visitor. It is a place of an intimate encounter between art and audience. As a specific and unique exhibiting space, Shock Gallery is doubly proscriptive. On the one hand, in the choice and manner of presenting an art work, since it insist on the border areas of art, it encourages and requires original and brave concepts, artistic provocation. On the other hand, this gallery signifies a particular type of art work reception and the atmosphere in which that work is presented is constitutively included in that reception. During the past years, dozens of young artist have exhibited in Shock Gallery and it has become an emblem of Art Clinic – now Šok Zadruga – and a cult place for promoting contemporary art practices.

Therefore, the detailed exhibition program for 2014 is turned towards new concepts of art activity: demonstration of life processes and/or intervention in the everyday, border areas of art, society, politics and/or culture, provocation as the starting point in the thematic and performative/demonstrational aspect.



Šok Zadruga and Shock gallery, Zmaj Jovina 22, Novi Sad, Serbia. Foto: Zolt Kovac

## Home workouts

Working on my new series that is based on working at and/or from home.

[Home workouts](#) is a work in progress, and it consist of different single *workouts*, which are conceived as communication exercises and workout routines that can be easily achieved with minimal equipment, time and/or effort and that can be exercised with(out) family members at/from home.



Installation view, part of the project Home workouts, Studio 24, Air Krems, January 2014.