

Artist Report
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Residency Period – July 21-August 11 2016

I had written a sort of preview to my AIR residency for the website Visual Art Source (<http://www.visualartsource.com/index.php?page=editorial&aID=3478>) and as I reread it now, after my time in Krems, the largest difference from what I anticipated was in regard to my fellow participants. Everyone was very pleasant and we did do a few communal things together, but because my arrival was about a week before all the other artists in residency completed their time in Krems, and the next batch to arrive did so just about a week before I, my wife, and my daughter made our departure meant we were both too late and too early to fully share the experience with our colleagues. Of course, traveling with my family meant that I was less dependent on colleagues for companionship, but I still sense I missed out on that aspect of a community of interactive and collegial artists.

Krems and Stein made up for that. Much to our surprise (we had planned to try to visit Prague, Budapest or Munich and make some day-trips to Vienna) we fell so much into the rhythms of Krems and Stein that we stayed there all 21 days of our visit, excepting a day trip to Melk. The days developed a rhythm: work in the morning (I'm not an artist; I labored over several essays, completing two while there) a walk to Krems in the late morning or afternoon, dinner in Stein, early to bed. It is a beautiful and surprisingly varied place and, except for when in Italy, I have never walked so much in my life. The staff and amenities were excellent (though something like a sofa would be a nice addition, writers like to lie down a lot) and while our time there had that hot desultory feeling of July and August, my memories of it—though more of Stein than Krems—will center on the pastel Rococo architecture and the determined horizontal structure of the Danube. And apricots. And Kremers Schmidt. And the Pistoletto by the train station I didn't discover until the last day. And white wine. And getting into the locked and gated Jewish cemetery beyond the shopping mall. And apricots, particularly when wrapped in a marillenknodel.

I am, if I compute correctly, the thirtieth person from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago to be selected for the AIR Residency, and have spoken to enough of my predecessors to know how fortunate I was. I haven't been home a month yet and already I have chatted with a SAIC colleague who will be a AIR resident in 2017, trying to describe to her what she will discover there. But there's no need for me to do so—she'll find her Krems on her own, always the best way to do so.

James Yood