

GUY KLUCEVSEK

AIR/KREMS RESIDENCY (MUSIC), FEBRUARY 2012, FINAL REPORT

My reason for requesting a residency at AIR/Krems was to put together a duo with Isabel Ettenauer, a toy piano virtuoso and pianist from St. Pölten. We had worked together recording a score of mine for a theatre production in April of 2011, and we both so thoroughly enjoyed the experience that we wished to create a live performance duo.

We were fortunate to book a concert at the 13th International Akkordeon Festival in Vienna for March 2, 2012, and my February, 2012, residency provided us with the perfect opportunity to prepare a concert's worth of material.

During my residency, I traveled to St. Pölten at least 15 times to rehearse with Isabel, during which we assembled a program 70 minutes in length, from scratch.

Our duo, The Hymnopedists, had its premiere on March 2, 2012, at the beautiful Ehrbaar-Saal in Vienna, and was a major success.

Some very nice unexpected things happened during my residency as well:

¥ Vienna-based composer/accordionist extraordinaire Otto Lechner invited me to join Das Zieharmonische Orchester Wien on February 18th to play my composition, "Spinning Jennie" with the orchestra, and also to join in several other pieces from my "Accordion Tribe" project partners, Lars Hollmer, Otto Lechner and Bratko Bibic. Bibic was also a guest on the concert, so that we had a lovely reunion of 3 of the original members of the Accordion Tribe.

The concert, a preview event to the main accordion festival, was held in the Kuppelsaal in the Technische Universität Wien, a room with stunning architecture, bowed wooden beams on the ceiling, looking like the bottom of a 19th century ship, as viewed upside down from the top!

¥ Also unexpected was an invitation from Otto Lechner to travel with him to the Accordion Museum in Melk, a private collection put together by legendary singer, actor, accordionist, Hannes Thanheiser. Otto is beginning a new project--a combination book and cd--in which he invites accordionists from around the world who are coming to the area to come to the Museum, record a piece of music on one of the instruments from the collection, and then to record Hannes giving the story of that instrument. It is a lovely and wonderful sounding project, and I was delighted and honored to be the first accordionist invited to contribute to it.

Again, this would not have been occurred but for the residency.

* Isabel Ettenauer asked me to be a guest on the annual "Carnival" concert which she presents with her piano students at the music school where she teaches in St. Pölten, which I did on Feb. 20, when Isabel and I played one of the duo pieces from our repertoire.

I consider my residency a resounding success. The advantage, and what I appreciated the most, was that I was free to pursue my work, using the residency apartment as a home base, and collaborate with an Austrian musician to a degree that would have been impossible without the residency. It

provided me with time to fine-tune the music and arrangements, and to rehearse with Isabel Ettenauer sufficiently enough to produce a debut concert which to me felt like we had been performing the music for months together.

The apartment provided to me by AIR/Krems was spacious, well-laid-out, and perfect for my needs.

The one-and-only suggestion I would offer to make the program even better is to provide a forum for more interaction between the resident artists and between these artists and the local artistic community. In fact, one of the other resident artists I never even met! This, to me, seems a shame, to have international artists gathered in one place who do not get a chance to interact socially.

Because there are no shared meals or events, like there are at most other Artist Colonies I have been in around the world, there is little chance to co-mingle on a regular basis. What I would suggest is that AIR/Krems arrange some small socials once-a-week, informal, between staff, and artists, and perhaps others associated with the institution, to provide the artists with a way to meet and hang out with each other, and to meet some other people from the local artistic community.

Otherwise, I found the program to be perfect for my needs, and want to thank everyone who made it possible.

And I wish to tell you that I publicly and personally thanked AIR/Krems and the NOE Festival during my announcements during the March 2 concert.

In particular, I wish to thank Jo Aichinger and Paula Haslinger of the NOE Festival for making my residency possible and providing me with transportation and equipment support during my stay, and to Sabine Gueldenfusz at AIR/Krems, for her enormous and invaluable help with the day-to-day logistics of the residency.

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