

AIR—ARTIST IN RESIDENCE Report
Steve Bates

How was the residency? Advantages and disadvantages of AIR—ARTIST IN RESIDENCE.

This is my second residency at AIR - ARTIST IN RESIDENCE and it was been even more valuable than the first time I was here in 2015.

The advantages of most residencies for artists is time away from one's usual day to day life and being able to focus on one's work. This is very true for my time in Krems as well. The specific advantages of AIR - ARTIST IN RESIDENCE is that it combines a generous artist grant as well as an exceptionally comfortable work/living space. This makes the AIR - ARTIST IN RESIDENCE a time and space where one really can just focus on their work in a very supportive and comfortable way. This has the effect of maximizing one's time and ability to make work.

The other advantage of AIR - ARTIST IN RESIDENCE is the fantastic staff. Sabine Güldenfuß and Kathrin Schönfelder were amazing in their support, friendliness and willingness to assist in all manner of things including acting as amazing hosts, connecting me with local resources, and arranging for local encounters with curators and institutions. They really are a huge part of the success of this program and I thank them for their work and commitment.

I have thought long and hard regarding any disadvantages to the program. I really cannot think of any and I've worked on this as I understand suggestions for change can be useful. My apologies in this regard!

What did you realize during your residency period?

During my time in Krems, I have focused most of my work on an ongoing multimedia project I began in 2016, *Black Seas*.

Performances

During my residency I composed a new performance of my ongoing project, *Black Seas*, specifically for a group of Austrian artists with whom I have a long-standing relationship: musicians Burkhard Stangl (electric guitar), Christof Kurzmann (voice, clarinet, electronics), Angelica Castelló (electronics, tapes, paetzold), Martin Brandlmayr (drums and percussion) and Austrian video artist Michaela Grill. The piece was premiered March 23, 2018 at the Imago Dei Festival curated by Jo Aichinger.

In addition to this performance, I performed a solo set of *Black Seas* material in Vienna at Zentrale. This material became part of the radio broadcast I transmitted from the residency apartment.

Radio

From Sunday, March 25 to Thursday, March 29, from 18:00 - 21:00 each evening, I transmitted a low-power radio program made in residence which included material from the *Black Seas* archive including music, spoken words, and field recordings.

Music

During the residency I began the process of writing a collection of songs with Austrian musician Christof Kurzmann. We will begin recording this material in June/July, 2018 in Vienna. The lyrics to

the songs are all crafted from historical texts of people's descriptions of hallucinations, medical and scientific research investigating this phenomena and from literature and theoretical texts referring to hallucination.

Video

As part of Black Seas, I shot a video project in residence using the fan and curtains in my apartment. Using a guitar amplifier and the piano, I re-recorded the sound of the fan through the piano to reproduce the numerous resonant notes of the fan through the vibrating piano. Using omnidirectional microphones placed inside the piano and contact microphones attached to the piano sound board, I re-played and recorded the original fan recordings. I imagine this video may become part of a solo exhibition of Black Seas at Dazibao in Montréal in 2019.

While in residence, I also revisited a project I began in 2015 in residency but was unable to complete. *Op 314 Blues* is a single channel video work that imagines Strauss' *An der schönen blauen Donau, Op. 314* to last the number of seconds as the river is long (2,780 km).

By using a small, underwater camera, I shot various video takes of the river the length of the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra's interpretation of this famous piece of music. Taking this same music and playing it back underwater using hydrophones and placing a speaker in a waterproof case, I recorded *An der schönen blauen Donau* as it would sound under its waters. Combining this video and sound material, I stretched it to last 47:33 which is equal to the river's length in seconds.

What did you miss at the residency?

I missed my dogs during my time in Krems but nothing else related to living and working here.

What do you appreciate at AIR—ARTIST IN RESIDENCE?

I mostly appreciate the amazing staff and accommodations at AIR—ARTIST IN RESIDENCE. It has been incredibly comfortable and productive to be working here. Also, I have enjoyed getting to Krems better and to visit some of the local sites through daily walks around town.