

This really is the best residency I have been on. Every detail is carefully considered, so that all your energy can be put into what it is that you want to do. During the first week I made the most of this: relishing the light, space, view, quiet and the ability to move between work and the domestic so fluidly. After a week of solitude and focus, craving some human interaction, I had a fortuitous knock on my door at noon from Ema (artist from Oakland) asking for some help with photographing her work. A thank you lunch with Martin (architect from Pernek) and Ema's friend Vero that began at 3pm ended after 3am. A unique bond was formed with the consumption of a significant amount of a home brewed 'natural' beverage and a jointly made single fried egg. Many shared meals, hikes, saunas and a memorable sunrise walk along the Danube were to follow. The things that were interrogated and shared between artists from different countries and disciplines were effortless, nourishing and illuminating. It was remarkable to go from the intensity of these encounters to that of a tranquil focused space. Each made the other seem more improbable and time felt like it had expanded to house all possibilities. The quality of the experience was luxurious in the way that unwinding seemed to aid the ease with which the work came.

I had not come to Krems with a project in mind. I wanted to respond to the place and the experience of the residency. The only material I brought with me was Spirulina powder, which I had been experimenting with previously. The discovery of a 20m roll of paper in the common studio led to my first work. I mixed the algae with water and used a pipette to drop the liquid at regular intervals, by eye, to form a grid. This repetitive exercise requires a particular concentration to release the pipette at a precise point on the paper. With practice, a rhythm develops, which can be helpful, but it must be observed because it cannot be sustained. The grid absorbs all miscalculations of time or placement and unanticipated movements of the body. The repeated action of releasing the pipette cannot be exactly the same each time and each drop, once dry is different. Dropped from a distance the liquid would hit the paper to create a large flat drop, but dropped gently close to the paper the wet drops sit like glass beads on its surface. As the water evaporates, the drop flattens and shrinks in size; the centre is the last to lose water. The concentration of algae is greater around the edges where a darker ring of colour can be observed. This organism that has changed little in 3 billion years is various blues and greens in colour depending on the ratio of algae to water and the temperature of the water. The water affects the form of the paper: a subtle topography emerges. Once the end of the roll is reached (three weeks from its start) the work is complete.

Alongside this daily performance, the discovery of some orange graph paper led to another work. I had an immediate attraction to the colour and sheen of the paper and began to create stitched forms into it with white thread that bounces light off its surface just like the Danube that I watch from my window. The stitched lines are influenced by the surrounding landscape and architecture. Gradually I accumulate white and orange material, both natural and synthetic that I collect from the studio/flat, food, plants and walks in the Wachau to incorporate into the piece. The materials range from an orange rubber band that I found on some leftover oats, pine needles from a walk, to a piece of plasterboard joining tape that had attached itself to something I brought from my London studio. Organic materials that would die to become part of something else, or manmade materials that would be discarded or recycled into new forms, find themselves joined with the graph paper. The orange lines are sometimes used to create the added forms, or become a structure that has some relation to that which is added. Focusing attention on materials with these specific characteristics from my daily activities increases my observation of finer and finer details, both within repetitive or mundane activities and my exploration of the region. It took me some time to realise that both pieces incorporate the grid.

During the last weeks of the residency I proposed a project to The Archives of Contemporary Arts in Krems that emerged from a chance encounter with the space (thank you Martin), which was accepted. Over the coming year I will develop a site-responsive work to be shown in the autumn of 2017. I look forward to the project, which will elaborate elements begun in my London studio and extend the work created during the residency.

My eclectic reading list included amongst other things: Marion Coutts, *The Iceberg*, Agnes Martin, *Writings*, Michel Foucault, *Madness and Civilization: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason*, Janna Levin, *How the Universe Got Its Spots*, Orhan Pamuk, *The Museum of Innocence*, Peggy Guggenheim, *Confessions of an art addict*, Boris Groys, *In the flow*.

My time in Krems was made even more memorable because of the people I was lucky enough to spend time with. I would like to thank Sabine, Stefanie, Verena and David for these wonderful two months. A special thank you to Sabine and Verena for their kindness, good humour and amazing generosity of spirit. Verena was very generous with her time and support. On hot days Sabine would come up to draw the blinds and open the windows upstairs to cool us down. These and many other thoughtful acts don't go unnoticed. Thank you to Alexandra and Katia at Das Weisse Haus for introducing us to their work, artists and for their hospitality. And thank you especially to Ema, Martin, Liz, Marta, Sophia and Dan, I hope our paths will cross again!





