

Report about my stay at the the Literaturhaus in Krems - Iva Pekárková

First of all, I'd like to thank the foundation and all the people involved for first inviting me here, and then doing their best to make my stay very pleasant and fruitful.

The room or, rather, small apartment I was put into surpassed my standards in every way imaginable. I had no idea I would have, among other things, a washing machine all for myself! I didn't miss much at all, besides, of course, my partner who stayed in London. And, I must admit, a wall clock, as, for some reason, I always feel better in a room when there is a clock on the wall. I was planning to get one for the house, so to speak, as I would not be able to carry it with me when I leave, but the ones I could find were all rather expensive. A cheaper one at the local supermarket only had one hand (a strange phenomenon I haven't seen before). The only thing I did not like at all was the two-hours-only-cut-off-without-warning Internet connection which made it rather difficult to get immersed in any on-line work as the work progress could disappear any time, often impossible to retrieve.

What did I realize? Well, I realized many things. For instance, that it can be mood-enhancing and conducive to work (creative work, at least) to live within view of a beautiful and mighty river such as the Danube. When the weather was sunny and not too cold, I enjoyed sitting on the roof (in the place accessible from the Common room) at that charming wooden picnic table, and writing in longhand. The maximum security prison at the other side of the Literaturhaus was, for some reason, also mood-enhancing and conducive to creative work. The very fact that I am not one of the inmates in such a God-awful building made me enjoy my life and freedom much more.

When it comes to the work I have done here, I must say that I was working hard! I am in the middle of a longish and rather difficult novel based on a true story which requires a lot of research and interviews with people as well as actual writing. Under normal circumstances, I am usually less able to concentrate - just like everybody else, as there are too many other things to do, places to attend, friends to talk to. In this setting, however, I was rather cut off from my normal life, and therefore could concentrate harder. While this is hard to tell since the book is a work in progress and changes will be made, I believe that I have finished some 100 standard pages here, which is much more than I would have done at home in the course of one month.

For which I would like to thank your Literaturhaus again, as well as all the people who took care of me here.

Wishing you all the best, Iva



(c) Iva Pekárková