

artbellwald.ch end report
Sarah Horowitz- August-September 2017

I came to artbellwald.ch for two months with the original objective of creating large-scale landscape drawings. I brought a large range of paper from long rolls to small sheets along with all kinds of ink. I was looking forward to artbellwald.ch as a time for thinking, absorbing new surroundings, and taking risks in my work.

In the beginning of the residency, I spent time exploring and hiking in the area. It was August and the weather was warm. The lower meadows were so full of flowers and insects that buzzed and jumped with every footstep. Higher on the alp, I found blooming thistles, heather, and blueberries. I was particularly inspired by the trees- one I think called 'ebe eschen' and the larches. I began by making watercolors of the flowers and ink drawings of branches- the leaves were eaten by caterpillars and looked like delicate puzzle pieces. Drawing the unique flora in Bellwald helped me find a connection to the area.

The relief of the landscape around Bellwald was stunning, and I was excited to try to draw it. I took advantage of the Bellwald chairlifts and the gondola up the Eggishorn, then hiked to the best viewpoints. The wind up high made my work challenging. It blew my paper around like a handkerchief, and I had to use rocks to hold it down. Also I had a few unexpected visitors including curious sheep and helicopters. The experiences were intense and exhilarating, and in the end very successful.

My stay at artbellwald.ch was very productive, both in the work I accomplished and the challenges I took on. I completed eight watercolor studies, thirteen larger drawings, two 2.5-3 meter landscape drawings, and a journal documenting daily observations. I am excited to continue some projects inspired by my time in Bellwald, including an artist's book with images based on the Wallis landscape and architecture (the old storage sheds on posts and rocks like the artbellwald.ch studio), and the continuation of my large-scale landscape drawings.

Other benefits from my stay at artbellwald.ch included participating in the 'Von Wurmforst' exhibition in Gletsch. It was rewarding to meet other artists from the region. I also enjoyed meeting several artists (including the current Brig artist-in-residence from Armenia), artbellwald.ch members, and people from the local community at my open studio event. My Swiss German improved as did my connection with Switzerland (my mother's country of origin).

Unlike most of the previous artbellwald.ch artists-in-residence, my family joined me for the residency period. I originally expected to have just my 4 year old daughter with me while my husband and parents alternated helping me with her care, as well as having her in childcare nearby. Over the year and a half from applying to actually coming, plans and situations changed. Having my daughter and husband there was wonderful. They were able to connect to the area and share in my experience. I still had considerable time to work but without the stress of trying to find childcare or of being separated from them.