

Three days at Obrzycko

The bus runs along pale yellow feedcorn fields. You enter a wide park and you go working with a great group of youngsters, in a half-timbered house then outdoor, sitting on benches all around a cone of logs that looks like a tiny wigwam.

All the others arrive and at the end of your first intense day , about 22 :30, you're thinking of going to bed but there's a barbecue awaiting you in the night, with sausages and vegetables grilling on embers and beers and Czech pear alcohol. It's delicious. One hour later, you're thinking again about going to bed but everyone gathers on the benches around the campfire, for the traditional open-fire discussion, we all present ourselves and talk in the crackling night while odd beasts are hooting and squeaking in the darkness.

Next day, the sun rises very early and you go out walking along the river to wake up. A large bright green patch of long grass looking like vegetal fur attracts you and your shoes dive joyfully into the hidden swamp under. Frozen water arises from the mud sucking your feet. You manage to escape from that trap, you climb up to breakfast and you see a playwright drinking coffee in the sun.

The second day is a instructive as the first one. During a break, you go out round the park. You walk pathes covered with ginger pine needles, pine cones and acorns are cracking under your feet, suddenly you sink into a grey bump of a molehill. Dead leaves are whispering, birds are whistling unknown songs, you step over the impressive white arms of lying giant birches and you find a wide empty stone basin, dark mud and a ghost tennis court surrounded by an ivy curtain.

At night, you enjoy the comeback of the barbecue. Zucchini's are more peppered than yesterday, the immense blaze spreads sparks to the star-filled sky, sausages are grilling at the end of pikes as long as spears, someone adds lots of logs, faces are palpitating and benches are emptying progressively while voices continue thinking together in the night. One talks differently around a campfire, at night, you realize.

On the final morning, you walk along the river full of tiny whirlpools and sky reflections. Invisible cows are mooing. You sit on a rock to listen to the fishes' splashes underwater and to the sudden fall of chestnuts rolling in the grass. You walk, avoiding green grass patches, you jump over the streams, you climb toward beautiful bricks walls and behind, there are trotting black horses. It's a village. Mountains of chopped wood. A pine forest arising from a blond grass field. Silent and still tractors.

You go back to work with the others. You say a warm goodbye and you leave with your head full of exciting sensations, questions and ideas. The bus takes the bridge over the river and runs along feedcorn fields. Your clothes, your hair and your skin smell like wood fire.

Karin Serres, september 2018