

During the summer, there were also numerous festivals and special events that are well worth taking part in!



### **Lasting Impressions**

The city of Weimar is of great historical and cultural significance. An essential part of its cultural topography are the collections that have grown over centuries, the historic buildings and, of course, the esprit of the classical poets, which the city has successfully managed to keep alive. For

culture lovers, Weimar is an incredibly inspiring place with a lot to offer. The internship was a great opportunity to delve deeper into German literature, especially Goethe, and to get interesting ideas for future research projects. I am looking forward to work on them and am very thankful to the Klassik Stiftung and the Forschungsverbund Marbach Weimar Wolfenbttel for this opportunity.

## **KULTURINO**

---

[Sasha Harden, Balliol College, Second Year Undergraduate, BA History and English, In-person internship](#)

### **Work Projects**

I worked for three weeks as a camp counsellor/ English teacher at Kulturino, an amazing summer camp in Thuringia for German-speaking children between the ages of 11-17. My role was very varied: it involved leading workshops with the children, speaking as much English as possible to them, providing pastoral care for some of the younger ones and completing practical tasks such as cooking and cleaning around the campsite. Each camp was a week long, with a team of 4-5 adults to approximately 10 children; the interns were responsible for planning each day of entertainment.

Some of the things we did with the kids included going on hikes and night walks; completing short music video projects in teams; writing, directing and filming a production of Romeo and Juliet in English; playing a variety of drama-based and outdoor games; and getting to know the children one-to-one through private English conversations. Katrin and Alex, the camp leaders and founders of Kulturino, provided practical and emotional advice and support to us interns, disciplined the kids (when needed), cooked meals, and provided structure to each day.



### **Daily Life**

The camp is situated in a beautiful, remote area of Thuringia covered in forest. It's also super historically interesting, as the village was an old DDR holiday destination and is extremely atmospheric. Settling in took a bit of an adjustment for me as a city dweller, but in a good way - there's no WiFi and not

much data or signal, and you'll be spending a lot of time outdoors (I was sleeping in a caravan!).

Alex, Katrin and their kids essentially acted as my host family for the month, so we spent a lot of time getting to know each other (going on walks, helping plan activities, etc) and ate meals together every day: they were incredibly lovely and hospitable. They even arranged opportunities for me to go exploring outside of camp time, so I travelled to visit the medieval East German town of Muhlhausen with Katrin on a day off, which I really enjoyed. The wildlife around the area was an added treat: I saw creatures including wild deer, snakes, salamanders, bats and fireflies during my time there. During camp weeks, the working day would begin at 8am and end at 10pm, so required a lot of stamina (and coffee!).

My day always started with walking down to the local bakery with the kids to collect the bread rolls for breakfast. We'd eat with the children at 9am, 1pm and 7pm every day, and at mealtimes the language was English. Each day was incredibly different and relied a great deal on the weather, which was very changeable: we had one week of beautiful sun and one of freezing rain. When the weather was good, we'd play outdoor games like capture the flag, go on long rambles or arrange scavenger hunts; when it was bad, we'd do things like

tie-dyeing T-shirts, rehearsing for Romeo and Juliet, and playing Werewolf. At 5pm we'd have an hour of 'private teatime', when the children were allowed to go on their phones, and I would select one or two to have a private English conversation. After the kids went to bed, we'd usually have a quick chat/round-up about how we thought the day went.



### **Lasting Impressions**

Interning at Kulturino was a magical and at times crazy experience. I learned a lot, improved my German, had a ton of fun and would love to go back. It definitely confirmed to me that I hope to work or study in Germany after I graduate from Oxford. At the same time, there were

certainly challenges: each camp week was extremely full-on, and dealing with homesickness and bullying among the kids was especially difficult when there was a language barrier involved. The internship certainly taught me a lot of transferable skills that are useful in any career, including leadership skills, developing good working relationships in a team, multitasking, dealing with conflict and adapting to changing situations. It's an unimaginably different experience to being at Oxford and I would certainly encourage anyone whose interest is piqued to apply!

### **What practical advice would you give to future interns?**

Only apply if you enjoy being outdoors and being around children, and are open to the unexpected! This is definitely an experience where the more you put in, the more you get out. Some planning in advance also goes a long way.