

# Basalt

September 12 – October 27, 2024



## The Layers of Oblivion

Photo: Tourinform Badaacsony



**Galeria  
Centralis**

On the 70th Anniversary of the Closure  
of Forced-Labor Camps in Hungary

## **Basalt. The Layers of Oblivion**

### **On the 70th Anniversary of the Closure of Forced-labor Camps in Hungary**

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The history of the forced-labor camp in the Badacsony basalt mine is missing from history books, and its documents have disappeared. Many people remembered its existence, and the oldest still do, but it seems to be a dark stain on the past of a town that once flourished from basalt mining. The history of some of the labor camps in Hungary, modelled on the Soviet Gulag system in the 1950s, is well known, while others are only known from indirect sources or from literary and fictional reappraisals.

On the 70th anniversary of the closure of the labor camps, the Blinken OSA Archivum's research unearthed fragmentary sources, interviewing surviving Badacsony basalt miners and members of a new generation committed to uncovering the story. Our exhibition attempts to reconstruct the functioning of the labor camp, its human relations, but also the mechanisms of forgetting and the absence of memory. To explore the layers of memory and forgetting, it draws on the recollections of the writer György Stirling, who was imprisoned in the camp, and the film *Nyár a hegyen (Summer on the Hill)* by Péter Bacsó, shot on the site of the camp, while also examining how these works were created, how the political environment tolerated them, and how they found an audience.

The exhibition design by **Péter Szalay** depicts these islands of memory and forgetting, **Tamás Zányi**'s multi-channel, immersive sound installation evokes acoustic images, **Zsuzsa Debre**'s documentary film features a witness of the times, and **Lenke Szilágyi**'s photographs present the visual world that welcomes visitors to the ruins and the abandoned basalt mine today.

Opening event: **September 12, 2024, Thursday, 6:00 p.m.**

Opening remarks by **Iván Székely**, curator of the exhibition

Opening speech by **Rudolf Ungváry**, writer