

**Blinken OSA Archivum / Galeria Centralis**  
Arany János utca 32, 1051 Budapest, Hungary  
Tuesday–Friday: 10:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.  
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**VSP@CEU**  
Visual Studies Platform

# GO WEST!

*Andrii  
Dostliev*

**February 8 – March 5, 2023**

**Opening event: February 8, 2023, Wednesday, 5:00 p.m.**

**Andrii Dostliev** (b. 1984) is an artist, curator, and photography researcher from Ukraine, based in Poland. His primary areas of interest are memory, trauma, identity—both personal and collective—, decolonial practices in Eastern Europe, and the limits of photography as medium. His art practice works across photography, video, drawing, performance, and installation. Has published several photobooks. Currently he is an artist-in-residence at the Institute for Advanced Study CEU.

On February 8, 2023, the exhibition *GO WEST!* by Andrii Dostliev, organized by Blinken OSA Archivum together with CEU's Institute for Advanced Study and Visual Studies Platform, will open at the Galeria Centralis, presenting the Ukrainian artist's artistic research project on "Ostarbeiter," the forced laborers from Eastern Europe in Nazi Germany during WW2. The exhibition will be accompanied by a presentation and guided tours given by the artist.

## **ABOUT THE EXHIBITION:**

*When I first discovered the photographs of forced laborers from Eastern Europe (so-called “Ostarbeiter”) in Nazi Germany during World War II, I became fascinated with their sincerity, visible traces of trauma, and attempts to overcome it. Small family photographs that used to support and give hope to so many people during dark times. It was so evident that these preserved images are only a minor fraction of an important and often overlooked part of the history of vernacular photography in Eastern Europe, a minor trace of the huge impact the war and the occupation had on the contents and integrity of family photo archives and also on ways of interacting with images in these archives.*

*The second part of the exhibition is based on a personal archive of one particular forced laborer who was brought in 1942 from Western Ukraine to work on a farm in Austria, and who chose to remain there after the war. Throughout his life, from the 1940s till the end of the 1980s, he exchanged letters with his family back in Ukraine—and for all this time, they tried to convince him to come back home. They begged for help, and then they tried to lure him with their newly gained relative wealth. They promised to take care of him if he returned, and threatened him if he didn’t. At the same time, his friends who had migrated further west, to the States, Canada, and Australia, were sending him letters asking him to move to them, promising a better life and any possible help with the documents and settling. And he just stayed in his village, ignoring every attempt to be moved ever again.*

**The exhibition is organized by Blinken OSA Archivum, CEU’s Institute for Advanced Study and Visual Studies Platform.**