

## **Truth is stranger than fiction, artist's book by Masha Wysocka**

In September 2020, I received a Visegrad fellowship. Still, I could not come to Budapest due to the Hungarian government's decision to close the national borders to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

This "suspended time" between September 2020 and July 2021 allowed me to reflect on my project proposal, familiarize myself with archive documents available through the online collection and meet my supervisor via Zoom.

### **Creative process:**

I went through the following stages of my project (July 26th-September 5th 2021):

**week 1-2:** Examining of 10.000 photographs from Private Photo and Film Foundation - the collection of OSA - HU OSA 320 and 3500 texts from RFE/RL's Information Items (field reports) - the collection of OSA - HU OSA 300-1-2-1

**week 2-4:** Selection of texts and photographs

**week 4-6:** Editing, sequencing, printing

### **Final result:**

This artist's book is a fruit of the research at the Blinken Open Society Archives.

Research is not limited to academic writing. Through my artist's book, I was eager to give another format to a research-based project. I was interested in creating a dialogue between two different collections of the same archive. Moreover, I was eager to generate discussion about truth and lies during the Cold War period in Hungary.

Book: 13x20 cm

Pages: 144

Photographs: 72

Texts: 28

Fonts: Adobe Garamond Pro/Cabrito Didone

Five copies of the book were printed by Digitalpress in Budapest. One copy of the book was donated to the Blinken Open Society Archive.

The following pages are the excerpts from Truth is Stranger than Fiction (2021)



**Truth is  
stranger  
than fiction**









ITEM No 645

9 June 1951

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HUNGARY

LABOR - STAKHANOVISME

STAKHANOVITE BRICKLAYER'S WALL TUMBLES DOWN

Not long ago, a Russian stakhanovite builder arrived in BUDAPEST to show Hungarian workers how to erect a wall. At the time of the demonstration, Hungarians handed him the bricks and the mortar and he just put them together and quickly built his wall. His rapid "Achievement" was widely publicized in the country. But it did not last long. The next day, in fact, the wall tumbled down. The Hungarian workers who participated in the demonstration were arrested, accused of sabotage. It was said, that they had mixed the mortar badly, leaving something out of it.

DATE OF OBSERVATION: Spring 1951

EVAL. COMMENT: Source: Usually reliable  
Information: Confirmed

2-3 months old story, already used by the BBC etc. No newsworthy material.





THIS AREA  
UNDER 24 HR.  
CLOSED CIRCUIT  
TV SURVEILLANCE  
FOR THEFT AND  
VANDALISM.

Violators will be prosecuted.





KE-81-42