

# Budapest & Vienna Weekly Top 4 (#7)

Four exciting exhibitions currently in Budapest, including some of the oldest photographs taken of Hungarian people

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As a reminder, if you are in Budapest this weekend, please consider [joining](#) my 5 minute tour of the Museum of Fine Arts (Szépművészeti). I will speak about Budapest's place in Austria-Hungary, the cultural rivalry between Vienna and Budapest, and some of my favorite paintings in the permanent collection. Hope to see you!

**1. OFF-Biennale Budapest:** When I was in Paris, I saw an exhibition at the Beauvais curated by Melanie Bouteloup, who told me after the show that she was hoping to bring it to Budapest for the [OFF-Biennale](#). I am glad that this semi-annual contemporary art event has gained international recognition since its 2014 launch, especially because it is a completely “bottoms-up” initiative, the labor of local curators (all of them women) and private sponsors.

This year, about a hundred artists – mainly Hungarian but also foreigners – were invited to reflect on the themes of safety and security. The artworks are spread across more than a dozen Budapest venues and feature installations, paintings, and video. I recommend that one visit the central location at [Merlin](#), in the city center, for a representative cross-section (or peruse the [event calendar](#)).

The quality is somewhat inconsistent, but I enjoyed, for example, Dorottya Szonj Koltay's Dadaesque installation: it comprises a pile of bricks laid out on a cart – a visual representation of the burden of family traumas. She invites visitors to also “unload” and free themselves. Merlin is open Wednesday through Friday (4 p.m. to 8 p.m.) and on the weekend (10 a.m. to 4 p.m.). The OFF Biennale ends on June 15th.



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