

Exhibition Title: The Tale of The Magic Donkey Inn

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Venue: Longtermhandstand, Budapest

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Photo: Áron Weber

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Text: Peter Bencze

The Tale of The Magic Donkey Inn

In the heart of an ancient forest, where the trees whispered secrets to those who would listen, there stood an inn like no other. This was **The Magic Donkey Inn**, a place where lost souls, weary travelers, and curious adventurers found refuge. The inn was no ordinary tavern; it was a haven of mysteries and magic, where each room held a story, and every guest became part of a living fairy tale.

One warm summer evening, as the sun began to dip behind the trees, a peculiar group gathered at the inn. The innkeeper, a kindly figure known as **The Most Sympathetic Human**, welcomed each guest with a gentle smile and a comforting word. His eyes twinkled with a wisdom that made even the most troubled traveler feel at ease.

Among the guests was **Anna**, a young woman with a heart full of curiosity, accompanied by her mischievous friend, **The Jester**. They had been traveling for days, chasing a rumor that the inn held the secret to eternal happiness. As they entered, the inn seemed to come alive, its walls pulsing with a warm, golden glow.

In a shadowy corner of the inn sat a peculiar contraption known as **The Wicked Orrery**. This mechanical model of the cosmos spun slowly, its planets and stars casting strange, shifting patterns of light across the room. The Orrery had a mind of its own, and its movements were said to influence the fates of those who dared to gaze into its swirling depths.

At another table, a group of old **Hags** huddled together, cackling softly as they passed around a well-worn **Tarot Deck**. Their cards foretold of distant lands, hidden treasures, and the importance of a simple gift—a humble **Piece of Bread**. According to the Hags, this bread held the power to nourish not only the body but also the soul, and it could guide its owner to their heart's true desire.

Outside the inn, perched on the crooked signpost, was a dull-horned **Unicorn**. Once a majestic creature, the Unicorn had lost its luster, but it still held a quiet dignity. It spent its days watching the comings and goings at the inn, waiting for the day when it might regain its former glory.

As night fell, the inn's atmosphere grew more vibrant. **Clowns** tumbled into the main hall, their colorful antics filling the room with laughter. Nearby, a solitary **Spider** spun its delicate web, a quiet observer of the merriment. The inn seemed to stretch and shift with each new arrival, its wooden beams creaking as if in approval of the joyful chaos.

Later that night, a mysterious figure stumbled into the inn—a **Drunk Man**, his eyes bleary as he fumbled with his house keys. He paused, transfixed by a **Thistle** growing outside the inn's door, its purple petals glowing in the moonlight. In that moment of stillness, the Drunk Man felt a profound connection to the earth beneath his feet and vowed to find his way home, not just to his house, but to himself.

As the night deepened, the inn's guests gathered outside to witness the spectacle of **Chasing the Sun**. The Jester, always one for theatrics, leapt onto the inn's roof and mimicked catching the last rays of sunlight as they disappeared beyond the horizon. The guests cheered, their faces glowing with the remnants of daylight and the warmth of shared companionship.

As the inn quieted, a **Night Bus** rumbled down the forest path, its headlights cutting through the darkness. It was said that the Night Bus could take its passengers anywhere they wished to go, even to the realms of their wildest dreams. But tonight, no one was in a hurry to leave. The Magic Donkey Inn had cast its spell, and the guests were content to stay a little longer.

In the early hours of the morning, as dawn approached, a flock of birds fluttered down from the trees, their wings whispering secrets to the **Bachelors** who lingered in the inn's garden. These men, who had wandered the world in search of something they couldn't name, found solace in the birds' songs. Perhaps, they thought, the answers

they sought were not in distant lands, but here, in the quiet corners of the forest, at The Magic Donkey Inn.

And so, the tale of The Magic Donkey Inn became one of joy and contentment, where the weary found rest, the curious found answers, and the lost found their way. As the sun rose on a new day, the inn stood ready to welcome a new set of travelers, each with their own story to tell and dreams to fulfill.

And as the legend goes, those who left the inn carried a piece of its magic with them, a reminder that happiness is often found in the most unexpected places, if only one takes the time to look.

Peter Bencze