

FOLK MUSIC ASSUMES POWER OVER THE NUCLEAR POWER PLANT

Tradition and modern technology met at the interactive exhibition of the Paks Nuclear Power Plant. For a short time, the Kossuth Award-winning Csík Band assumed power over the virtual control console of the nuclear power plant during the Szeged Youth Days. The members of the orchestra visited the Interactive Lorry bearing the logo ‘Energy for Our Future’ prior to their concert in the afternoon. The Interactive Lorry arrived in Szeged as the sixth stop of its festival tour this year.



What would it be like if the whole of southern Hungary plunged into darkness, all homes and factories in the region were left without power and the stages of the Szeged Youth Days were muted? Members of the Kossuth Award-winning Csík Band were also looking for an answer to this question during the Szeged Youth Days at the virtual control console of the Paks Nuclear Power Plant.

After the VOLT and EFOTT festivals, the Valley of Arts, the Debrecen Flower Carnival and the Szerencs National Chocolate Festival, the interactive travelling exhibition of the Paks Nuclear Power Plant and MVM Paks II Nuclear Power Plant Development Ltd. arrived in Szeged. At the sixth stop of the festival tour of the exhibition this year, the simulator of the power plant, which accounts for more than half the electricity generated in Hungary, was the most popular spectacle. After the bands Ivan & The Parazol, Hooligans and Cloud 9+, members of the Csík Band became the operators of the nuclear power plant for a short time. The artists received an answer to the question: ‘What would happen if power supply stopped in the area of Szeged precisely during a concert due to a reduction of the output of the Paks units?’, and they also tried out how long it would take for them to be able to generate the power required for playing their instruments while riding a power-generating bike.

The Interactive Lorry bearing the logo ‘Energy for Our Future’, which made a debut this year at VOLT, then also appeared at EFOTT, in the Valley of Arts and at the Debrecen Flower Carnival and the Szerencs National Chocolate Festival with great success, is also going to take nuclear energy with it to the Nyíregyháza Vidor Festival later in the summer.

‘In Hungary, only the nuclear power plant is able to generate electricity without pollutant emissions, steadily, safely and reliably,’ said György Felkai, Communications Director of the MVM Group. ‘It can also be clearly seen on the simulator that a reduction of the output of the nuclear power plant results not only in more expensive electricity, but would also entail much higher greenhouse gas emissions in Hungary than today, assuming the Paks Nuclear Power Plant were switched to lower output. The oxygen saved by the four Paks units meets the oxygen demand of two million people; this amount of oxygen is equal to the total oxygen output of forests in our country.’ According to György Felkai, the goal of the Paks Nuclear Power Plant is to bring nuclear power plant technology – which is outstandingly safe even in international comparison and will determine the future and the competitiveness of the country for decades – close to as many young people and families as possible.

‘The songs emerging from the purity and ancient power of folk music are conveyed to the audience at the concerts by means of energy,’ added Péter Makó, a wind instrument player of the band. ‘Our modern era and traditions complement and motivate each other, and technology does not mean that we lose our culture,’ emphasised the artist. ‘Indeed, the latter would be able to fulfil its mission and reach the crowds to a much smaller extent without technology. It was exciting to experience how the price of electricity and the volume of carbon dioxide emissions in Hungary would increase with a reduction of the output of the nuclear power plant, which is free from pollutant emissions. This exhibition brings nuclear energy closer to interested young people and families, too, while it tries to answer countless questions arising in everybody. We trust that as many people as possible will visit the exhibition and will become familiar with nuclear energy in greater detail.’

The interactive exhibition has been touring festivals for the fourth year and the country since 2009; with its help, more than 200,000 people in total could already become familiar with the operation of nuclear power plants and the reason why it is important to maintain the capacity of the Paks Nuclear Power Plant from the point of view of the energy supply and economy of the country. The exhibition covers all operational nuclear power plants in the world, the most important moments of the history of the Paks Nuclear Power Plant, which has been operating safely for 30 years, the Hungarian electricity grid, as well as the colourful flora and fauna of Paks and its environs. Technical questions are answered by those who are the most competent – experienced specialists of the nuclear power plant.

Every year, the exhibition is visited by renowned guests. Ivan & The Parazol, the rock band Hooligans and Cloud 9+ have tried to control the nuclear power plant recently at the VOLT Festival, at EFOTT and in the Valley of Arts, respectively. In previous years, artists committed to environmental protection such as the singer Ákos and the musicians of Irie Maffia and Balkan Fanatik, as well as the founder of the Random Trip jam project and drummer of Turbo, Jávör Delov, tested the control console.