



The REYKJAVÍK GRAPEVINE



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THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO LIFE, TRAVEL & ENTERTAINMENT IN ICELAND

IN THE ISSUE Issue 2 • 2011 • February 4 - March 10 2011

+ COMPLETE CITY LISTINGS - INSIDE!

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WIKILEAKS IS NOT THE POINT!

The info-wars have begun, and Iceland is begging to be the legislative battleground.

Indeed, the so-called info-wars are raging, and Iceland is getting a piece of the action. Learn the story of Iceland's tryst with WikiLeaks and their love-child, the Icelandic Modern Media Initiative, whose plan to make the country into a transparency and information haven might put us back on the map. **PAGE 10**

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Illustration:
Hristbjörnsson - this.is/trendy

Editorial | Haukur S. Magnússon

Haukur's 36th Editorial

FUCK YOU, NEW YORK TIMES TRAVEL SECTION
But not really. More like: fuck all of us.

A regular day at Grapevine HQ entails lots of trying to keep folks happy, at least trying to avoid angering them. See, Reykjavík is a pretty vibrant city, and there are lots of people staging lots of events that all need and deserve our attention/promotion, to ensure all you readers out there know about them and perhaps attend them.

So we get anywhere between ten and fifty emails every day asking our help publicising an art show or concert or theatre performance or new puffin shop or whatever. This is fine; this is why we're here: to serve Iceland's amazing community of artists, performers and entrepreneurs, and to ensure you know about all the cool stuff that they're doing. We strive to serve our purpose, and we strive to provide equal exposure to everyone out there—although we do seem to favour some of the work being done by our friends and/or relatives, as is the style in Iceland (c'mon, that was a joke. Lighten up!).

In any case, I was working on something or other the other day when I got one of those emails. This one was from 'concert hall and conference centre' Harpa's recently appointed PR representative, enquiring whether we wouldn't like to publicise the house a bit, as it was opening soon and all. "Sure," I responded, "maybe a bit closer to when it opens this spring, though, as we are running a really short issue in February."

She replied saying that was fine, but it would be cool getting something on our website at least. Maybe we could write something about The New York Times travel section naming it a 'MUST SEE' attraction when they dubbed Iceland one of their '41 Places To Go In 2011' article (who travels to 41 places in a year, though?). She attached a link to the piece in question.

I got a little excited. New York Times has a gigantic readership, and it's a pretty cool newspaper. Maybe them pointing to Iceland as a cool place to visit will mean more tourists visiting, which means more advertising, which translates to more pages per issue for us to write about everyone that's staging events in Reykjavík, which means fewer angry glares from artists and event promoters when I go out drinking.

So I clicked through and scrolled down the page (we're number four, after Santiago, Chile; San Juan Islands, Washington and Koh Samui, Thailand). I am not easily offended, especially on behalf of my nation (in fact, I quite enjoy offending my nation given the chance), but their headline offended me. It said:

4. Iceland
Where a country's hardships are a visitor's gain

The opening paragraph read: "Iceland's economic crash has had an upside, at least for tourists. After the

devaluation of the krona that followed the country's 2008 financial crisis, the breathtakingly beautiful island is a lot more affordable, meaning that a hotel room that was \$200 before the crash might cost \$130 now."

I was sorta outraged. "HOW DARE THEY?" I thought as I ground my jaws. "Are we enduring mass unemployment and severely painful cutbacks to essentials like healthcare, education and welfare [not to mention the most joyless, soul-killing discourse known to humankind] all so some fancy New York Times reader can save \$70 on his or her hotel room? Fuck you, New York Times travel section. Fuck you very much!"

I relaxed a little. "Why would anyone revel in large groups of people's disadvantaged position anyway, just because it benefits them financially? There's something awfully wrong and distasteful about that mode of thinking. Shouldn't they at least pretend to be down about it?" I mumbled to myself.

Filled with righteous indignation, I angrily closed the tab on my browser and clicked through to a link someone posted had posted on Facebook. "APPLE'S CRIME AGAINST HUMANITY", the link said, and it took me to a story about workers at the FOXCONN factory in Shenzhen, China, and how they suffer abuse, injury and insane work hours so we can save money on sexy designer electronics.

I read about the inhumane conditions at the factory where my MacBook and iPod were made by workers as young as 12-years old. And even though I had known all about conditions at factories in places like China and India—where most of our non-digestible consumer goods are manufactured—for a long time, I still died a little inside.

My mind raced, and suddenly I recalled all the disposable clothes I have bought at places like H&M through the years. Items that I damn well know are made by disadvantaged people under horrifying conditions, items that I still bought because I feel like I can never afford anything and 2.000 ISK for a pair of jeans is just such a great price!

I thought about every article I ever read in Icelandic media recommending some far off destination or other because it was cheap, because they are poor, because they are undergoing (or live in a constant state of) 'hardship'.

And I thought: "Sorry for judging you, New York Times travel section. I guess most of us deserve a big ol' FUCK YOU."

Present company included.

SOME WWW.GRAPEVINE.IS EXCLUSIVES

- *Cuz we can't possibly fit all this awesome stuff on our pages
- What is Crealism?
- Interview with Luis de Miranda, father of the 'Crealism' movement.
- Jónsi GOES LIVE
- show review
- Apparat Organ Quartet release bash
- show review
- Marc Vincenz examines Iceland in the international media
- Ryan Parteka tackles Reykjavík's weird traffic culture
- Explorer extraordinaire Louis Philippe-Lonke interviewed in depth
- More BEST OF #CABLEGATE
- LOTS OF NEWS
- LOTS OF HOT TIPS
- LOTS OF EVERYTHING ELSE



TRACK OF THE ISSUE

Sin Fang: Always Everything

Download the FREE track at www.grapevine.is

Sin Fang Bous used to be the solo vehicle for Sea-bear's Sindri Már. It still is, except now it's called Sin Fang (which is a cooler name anyway). Now, don't worry, the music is still really, really good. You readers may confirm this by hopping on over to www.grapevine.is and downloading 'Always Everything', this issue's TRACK OF THE ISSUE. The track comes from Sin Fang's forthcoming album, 'Summer Echoes' (to be released on March 4 via Morr Music/Kimi Records). It is a fine display of why so many people have fallen for Sin Fang's sound. It is adventurous, yet curiously conservative. It is heartfelt, yet distant. A whispered scream, if you will. We look forward to the full-length, and so should you.

www.myspace.com/sinfangbous

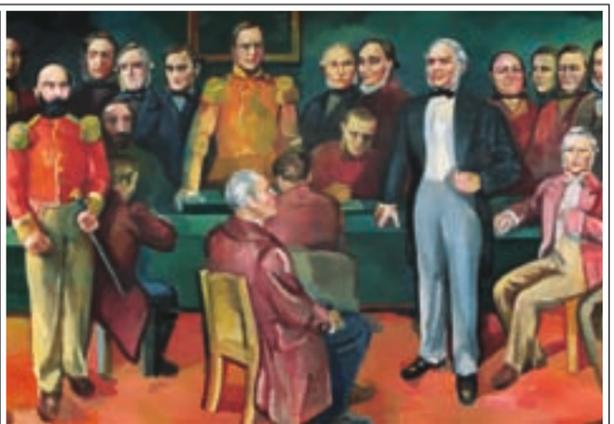
Comic | Lóa Hjalmtýsdóttir



ICELAND :: FILM – Berlin – Copenhagen – Reykjavík
Icelandic Filmmaking 1904-2008



MEDIEVAL MANUSCRIPTS – EDDAS AND SAGAS
The Ancient Vellums on Display



CHILD OF HOPE – Youth and Jón Sigurðsson
Tribute to the leader of the Independence Movement



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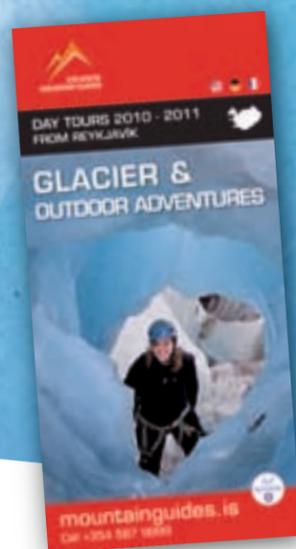
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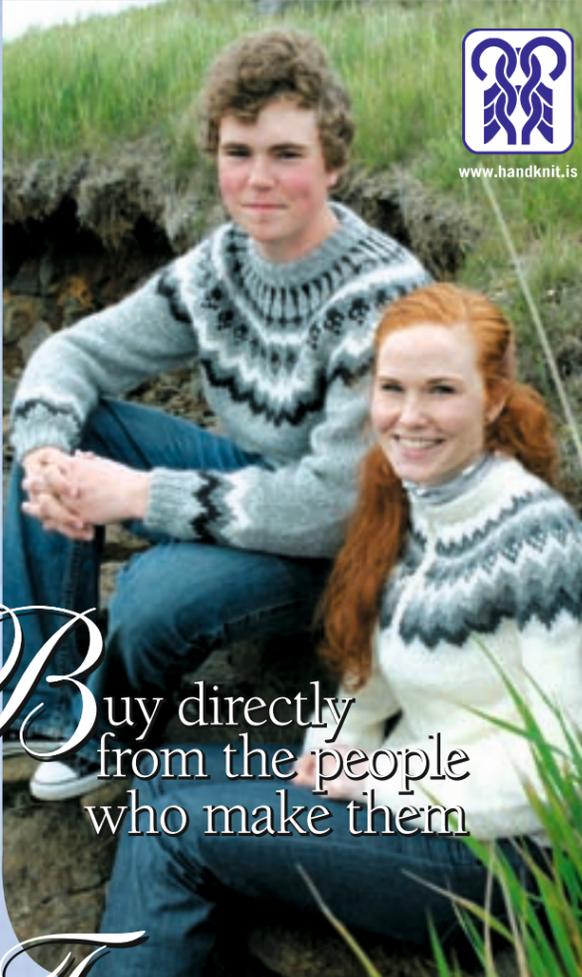
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4 Letters

MOST AWESOME LETTER:

Dear Grapevine,

I am an Australian who has just arrived in Reykjavik for the first time (and have been an avid Grapevine reader from abroad for a while now). I am ostensibly here to study on exchange, but my real goal and ambition is to start an UNDERWATER RUGBY team in Iceland and spread awareness about the sport.

Underwater rugby is an amazing sport of endurance, speed, underwater-agility and teamwork. It is the only sport in the world that is truly three-dimensional - you can pass the ball up, down, left, right, forward and backwards! (youtube it!) It is most commonly played in Germany and all the other Nordic countries, except Iceland.

I was hoping you may be interested in doing a short story for the Grapevine about this "most Nordic of Nordic sports" and why Iceland, a real Nordic high-achiever and benchmark-setter,

MOST AWESOME LETTER

Two free pizzas from our very awesome pals at Gamla Smiðjan

Pizza is great. Everyone loves pizza. What's better than a pizza? TWO pizzas. But what in the world might be better than two pizzas? Yup, you got it, two FREE pizzas. And guess what! Our prize for this issue's MOST AWESOME LETTER is, indeed, TWO FREE PIZZAS from our good friends at Gamla Smiðjan.

If you wrote that MOST AWESOME LETTER (and you can prove it, sorta), then you should write us another letter claiming you did. We will in turn hook you up with the good people of Gamla Smiðjan, who will provide you with some pizza after you show them a secret handshake that we'll teach you. You can have any two pizzas off the menu, just so you know. Want the pepperoni/banan/chili one? Go for it!

Now, if you're in the market for free goodies next month, write us some sort of letter. Give us your worst: letters@grapevine.is

has been missing out!

Please let me know if you might be interested.

Kveðja,

Bobby Chen
S: 774 7992

Dear Bobby,

Welcome to Iceland! And good luck with starting that 'UNDERWATER RUGBY team' you keep going on about. It sounds both interesting and fun, in equal measures.

Hope you don't mind us printing your phone number. We thought: maybe some reader out there will be interested in playing rugby underwater for whatever reason, so if we print Bobby's number then maybe that reader can call Bobby directly and enquire about playing underwater rugby.

Not sure about underwater rugby being the only truly 'three dimensional' sport around, though. Hmm. We don't follow a lot of sports, but most of the non-video game ones seem to be pretty three-dimensional.

Also unsure about Iceland being a Nordic high-achiever, either. This is where some KREPPA joke or other could make an appearance, but we're sort of sick of those. Maybe a handball pun would be in order?

Anyway, Bobby. Hopefully you will succeed. Underwater rugby seems like a fun, pointless thing, and there are never enough fun, pointless things around. We apologise in advance if you are besieged by crank-callers going "are your balls wet, Bobby?" at all hours. That would be most unfortunate. However, our readers are very sophisticated, so that probably won't happen. And if it does, your FREE PIZZA will hopefully help you get over it.

Dear Sindri,

Where did you learn to write musical critiques? Your assessment of Friðrik Dór's album was so childish and unprofessional, I'm amazed that you actually have this job. Let me explain:

"Okay, I know how this is gonna sound, but I'm sorry, Friðrik Dór just isn't black enough to pull this shit off. I'm sorry, there's simply no other word for it."

Really? You had no other words to describe the production value or basic sound of this release? Maybe you should be doing something else then, because your blatantly tasteless descriptions really aren't going to cut it. Throughout reading your poorly crafted paragraph, I couldn't even tell if you were actually being serious about this statement:

"Who knows, maybe Friðrik will 'blacken' with time... I mean, look at Justin Timberlake."

Lol. You're so clueless.

Gleðileg jól,

Jasmine

Hello Jasmine,

First off, I did "describe the production value and basic sound of this release" in completely race-free terms, as the portion of my review you didn't quote will show, and I know my paragraphs are poorly crafted: that's why I'm writing music reviews on mediocre R&B instead of penning soaring, genre-spanning epic multinational bestsell-

ers. I did not "learn to write musical critiques" and the reason I have this job is because I wanted it and no one told me I couldn't have it. I'm sorry if I sound defensive, but bad paragraph construction is a weakness I have, and you kind of struck a nerve. I have no delusions about being more qualified to do this than anyone else, but here I am doing it, despite five years of people I don't know telling me I shouldn't be.

Now. My review of the Friðrik Dór album is my honest opinion, and I made use of the Grapevine's no-punches-pulled critical policies to print what I am fully aware of is a somewhat risqué implication: that being raised in a predominantly "black" environment provides one with certain musical sensibilities that are not in abundance in suburban Iceland, a predominantly "white" environment whose musical roots, Norse/Northern European folk music, do not offer much variety when it comes to danceable beats, soulfully ad-libbed vocals and other features traditionally associated with R&B, funk and hip-hop, all of whom trace their origins to African-American communities. This is exactly the kind of music Friðrik Dór aspires to make, and, being neither raised in the environment which established this form of music as a popular genre, nor being blessed with the ability to affect said upbringing in a convincing manner, fails at his first attempts.

Human society needs to rise above the insipid folly that is racism, but still acknowledge the fact that different communities will always produce different people, and we cannot overcome this fact by simply ignoring it and saying "everyone is equal and different" and

consider that the end of the issue. I'm not saying everyone who is of a certain skin tone is prone to behaving in a certain manner, I'm just saying that music traditionally associated with white people is not the same as the music traditionally associated with black people. It's not an important distinction, but it's there, "politically incorrect" as it is. It's lamentable, true, and in an ideal world one would not include race as a factor when reviewing music (if Friðrik Dór where black and still made piss-poor R&B, I'd just say he was "lame" and not "white"), but we do not live in an ideal world. Music cannot simply be music: try as we might, we cannot disassociate the artist from his work.

That's pretty much what I meant. I could have printed the above paragraphs as my review, and in retrospect, I probably should have. I'm just sick of music reviews that use long, complicated words no-one in real life uses to make a point that could just as easily be made with a conversational tone, and if that tone offended you, I'm sorry, but chances are you're going to stay just as mad at me: just because I made my point in a more literate, round-about way, doesn't mean you're going to agree with me.

Thank you for your letter, it encourages me to do a better job next time.

Yours,

S. Eldon

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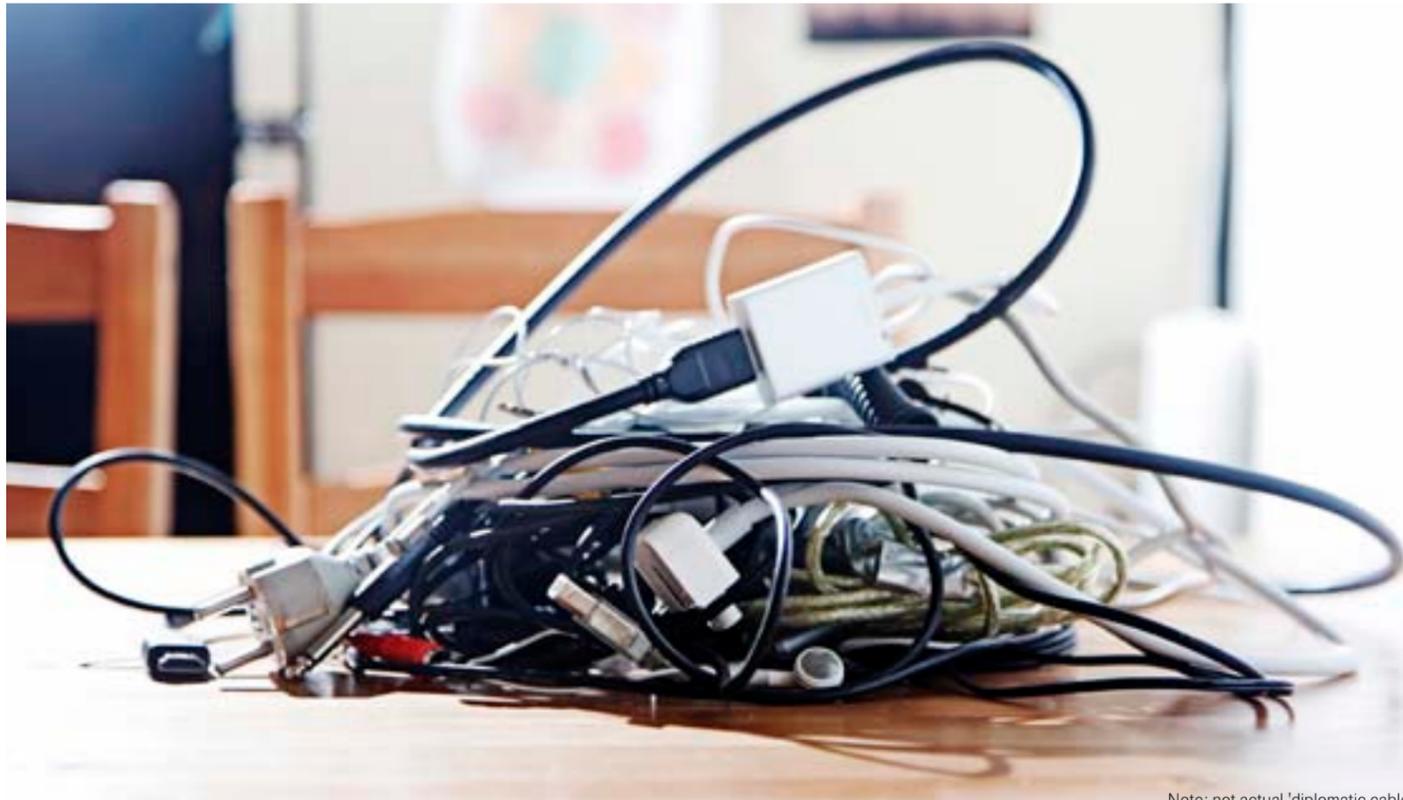
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ICELAND DIPLOMATIC CABLES EXPLORED



Note: not actual 'diplomatic cables'.

IMF Urged “Debt Restructuring Outside Courts”

Words

Sam Knight

Photography

Hörður Sveinsson

According to one of the American diplomatic cables released by WikiLeaks, Mark Flanagan, chief of the IMF team in Iceland, advised the Icelandic government to encourage the restructuring of private sector debt outside of the legal system.

In a December 2009 cable entitled 'ICELAND NEEDS FINANCIAL AUSTERITY', Sam Watson, the former charge d'affaires and current DCM at the US Embassy in Reykjavík, reported to the State Department that Flanagan implored Iceland “to look at ways to facilitate debt restructuring outside of the courts.” In Watson's words, Flanagan offered the advice due to “the small size of the court system,” in which 48 judges preside over all cases.

When asked to specify what sort of proceedings Flanagan was referring to and why he believed them to be necessary, an IMF spokesperson refused to comment, saying that it was rare for staff to comment on leaks.

Despite Flanagan's concerns over the number of judges within the Icelandic judicial system, according to nationmaster.com, Iceland has the 16th highest number of judges per capita in the world; the United States—the country with the largest prison population in the world—is ranked 22nd on the same list.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

With the majority of Icelanders equating the IMF to the institutional version of a stranger with candy, it would come as little surprise if Flanagan's advice raised a few eyebrows. Already sceptical of the IMF's priorities, Icelanders are bound to wonder what Flanagan intended by advocating “debt struc-

turing outside of the courts,” especially when considering that the protracted legal battle over foreign currency indexed loans was awaiting an important judgment at the time the cable was wired.

But for whatever reason Flanagan dished the wisdom in question, the government may have taken the advice to heart. Prior to the completion of the IMF's most recent review—its fourth since credit lines were opened in 2008—the government announced plans to allocate additional resources to encourage debt-restructuring negotiations between troubled debtors and creditors. Typical debt restructuring scenarios include “bondholder haircuts”—when creditors agree to scale back interest payments to ensure the debtor's financial solvency—and debt-for-equity trades, whereby creditors downsize interest payments in return for a share of profits if the house or business is sold.

In a letter to the IMF, the government detailed these plans, which are aimed at bringing heavily indebted households, small and medium enterprises and their respective creditors to the bargaining table. To prod heavily burdened households towards non-litigious deliberations, the government has expanded funding for the Debtors' Ombudsman, and had the banks agree to offer a write-down of mortgages to 110% of the mortgage asset's value. As far as troubled-but-viable small and medium enterprises are concerned, the government intends to incentivise debt restructuring. While it did not detail how it intended to enact such a plan in its letter to the IMF, the government stated that legislation concerning unpaid taxes resulting from debt and tax liabilities related to debt-write-down was imminent. The government also intends to offer a mortgage payment subsidy to lower income households in distress, which will be financed by a levy on financial transactions.

“MORAL HAZARD”

While such an agenda seems innocuous and forthright, it may not allay concerns that the deck will be stacked in favour of the banks when considering

the legal challenges that may arise in the coming months. What might debtors lose by rushing into a quick settlement? If judges find that fraudulent acts perpetrated by bankers affect the status of certain loans, will squeezed households and businesses rue a hastily mediated settlement? And what if there are further rulings, which broaden the number of unlawfully issued foreign currency loans? Will households and small businesses regret dashing to restructure interest payments then?

In the view of the IMF (and the government), expedited voluntary settlements are crucial to Iceland's recovery because the situation is complicated by the fact that certain individuals and businesses are in arrears with a multitude of institutions. Moreover, Flanagan warned against the “moral hazard” of aiding “nonviable borrowers.” But while it can't be doubted that certain households acted irresponsibly and don't deserve any assistance, couldn't the same be said for the old banks and their foreign creditors who have succeeded them? Is there not moral hazard in forcing heavily-indebted households to pony up cash when banking executives' significant obligations vanish into thin air? And what ever happened to due diligence? Is a bondholder haircut the best way forward when bondholder chemotherapy isn't even on the table?

“VOLUNTARY” AGREEMENTS

The government and IMF believe that “across-the-board write-down of debt, case-by-case restructuring, reductions in loan-to-value ratios across-the-board restructuring” would be “too costly and ineffective”. Yet they are also bent on recapitalising the banks, despite the fact that many MPs believe that the financial sector is still too large. Unsurprisingly, the government, intent on “fully restoring the health of the banking sector,” consulted the “corporate and banking sectors” when formulating its plans. Expect an Icelander with ties to the Social Democrats to own West Ham United by 2014.

Whether IMF officials stir in their beds at night worrying about the welfare of Icelanders and the stability of Iceland, or whether they actually intend

“Whether IMF officials stir in their beds at night worrying about the welfare of Icelanders and the stability of Iceland, or whether they actually intend for the government to corral debtors into “voluntary” agreements when the law may have otherwise reduced their hardship, the Icelandic people could be forgiven for suspecting that the latter scenario is closer to the truth.”

for the government to corral debtors into “voluntary” agreements when the law may have otherwise reduced their hardship, the Icelandic people could be forgiven for suspecting that the latter scenario is closer to the truth. With a litany of legal complaints surrounding matters related to debt and a public weary of close ties between the state and big business, it wouldn't be a stretch to predict that many households will take their chances with further litigation. Certainly this leak does nothing to improve the IMF's reputation as an opaque debt collector for multinational financiers, despite the best efforts of the IMF external relations department.

It's only natural for institutions to tiptoe around their skeletons; the manual for standard operating procedure at Guantanamo, for one, instructed guards to deceive the Red Cross. However, if dirty secrets exist, combing through records might reveal more than expected. Like Julian Assange said in a recent interview with The Guardian: “Any form of large-scale abuse must be systemised.”



The Good, The Bad And The Ugly

By now, probably many of our readers have at least perused the diplomatic cables made available on WikiLeaks. We read with great interest the ones that came from the US embassy here in Reykjavík, and overall there are few surprises. But that doesn't mean there isn't some hilarious, heartbreaking, and fascinating material to be found. The following are some of the snippets that made us drop our jaws, provoking either laughter or sober pause.

Iceland and America – BFFs 4 LYFE

“Iceland is reaching out with increasing desperation to any available source of help as it confronts one of the most trying crises in its history. Assistance from the U.S. at this crucial time would be a prudent investment in our own national security and economic well being. The Icelanders take fierce pride in their flawless history of paying back their debt. Whatever the financial turmoil and uncertainty of the moment, it's a good bet that this economy of highly-educated, imaginative, and sophisticated people will take off again. And when it does, and when the competition in the High North really gets underway, it may be more important than we can yet suppose to have the Icelanders remember us as the kind of friend who stands by in fair weather and foul.”

–September 2008

On Iceland coming to terms with the base closing, the embassy offered this metaphor

“If the universal stages of mourning are denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance, then some members of the Icelandic intelligentsia have now entered the anger stage. Arguably Reykjavik had been in denial from 2003 (or even earlier) until March 15. Post still anticipates eager Icelandic entry into bargaining as soon as a U.S. negotiating team can come to Reykjavik.”

–March 2006

Oh the irony

“There is no question that certain imbalances have emerged in the Icelandic economy, including a high current account deficit, high inflation and high private sector debt levels. It remains an open question, however, whether these imbalances render Iceland particularly vulnerable to an economic crisis. Financial analysts have articulately argued both sides of the case.”

–April 2006

How to win friends and influence Icelanders: get them drunk and talk about sports, apparently

“Cultural programming is a key element of Embassy Reykjavik's public outreach, which aims to foster a positive image of the U.S. among Icelandic citizens and, especially, elites. ... Even sophisticated, worldly Icelanders act immensely flattered by an invitation to be the Chief of Mission's guests, and by all appearances they leave such events in a haze of warm feelings about transatlantic relations. [...] What we tend to end up doing most often is in effect to stretch our budget by providing duty-free alcohol for receptions at exhibit openings and art festivals. Because alcohol is highly taxed in Iceland, our gifts of wine for receptions strike Icelanders as far more generous than they actually are. In return for these gifts we get thanked on invitations and publicity materials prepared by the event sponsors, and we get invitations for our staff to attend events along with high society. Then we use the events to hobnob, make connections, and talk up U.S. policy. [...] We spend a lot of time trying to explain U.S. policies, for example, in the war on terror. But with many audiences—especially an Icelandic audience that has no personal experience of terrorism or war—these days, no amount of explaining is going to win support or even sympathy for these policies. Sometimes it seems like the best we can do is distract people from policies they find repugnant with marvellous cultural and sports programming that focuses them on America's ongoing spectacular contribution to world heritage.”

–December 2005.

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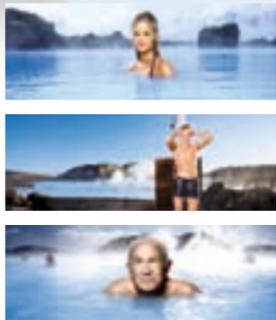
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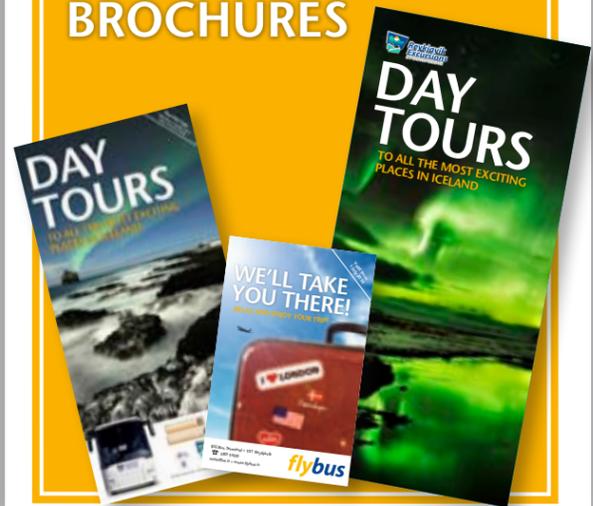
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Farce | Magnús Sveinn Helgason



A FAILED ATTEMPT TO DISPIRIT ACTIVISTS

The Reykjavik Nine farce leaves Iceland's activists strong, organised

While a verdict is still pending in the trial of The Reykjavik Nine, it's safe to say that the prosecution has lost the case in the court of public opinion. The decisive blow came during the court hearings in January, delivered by the prosecution itself.



The state prosecutor, Lára V. Júlíusdóttir, had called to witness numerous police officers, parliamentary security guards as well as the bureau chief of parliament, Helgi Bernódsson. The plan was no doubt to have the witnesses attest to the violent nature of the supposed attack and the determination of those accused to inflict harm, to prove that the accused were members of a conspiracy to compromise the “independence and sanctity” of Alþingi, a crime carrying a minimum sentence of one year in jail.

“WE DO NOT LET THESE KINDS OF PEOPLE INSIDE”

What emerged from the testimony of these witnesses was a completely different picture. It was revealed that the

staff of the Parliament had deleted most of the footage the security cameras recorded that day. Only about four minutes had been preserved, while everything that transpired after the police arrived at the scene has been lost, meaning it is impossible to get a complete picture of what happened. This is all the more serious, as several of those accused have described scenes of police brutality, and everyone (including the police) has described the scene as “chaotic”. Under questioning, none of the police officers could say who had been in charge of operations, nor could they say if the guests present had been given a clear order to evacuate the building. What they could say was that they received a message from Alþingi that the house was “under attack,” a message that seems to have prompted every available officer in the greater Reykjavik area to rush to the scene without any clear idea of what was really going on.

The police officers and security guards admitted that none of the accused—or the larger group of people who attempted to visit the public

benches that day—had been armed, that in fact none of them had carried anything that could be used as a weapon. So why had their visit been flagged as an “attack”? The parliamentary security guards said that the people had not hung up their coats, and one of them remarked that they “do not let these kinds of people inside,” without further explanation.

CLASSIC BUMBLING OVERREACTION AND INCOMPETENCE

Far from depicting a careful anarchist conspiracy to attack Alþingi, what transpired was a classic picture of the kind of bumbling, unnecessarily brutal overreaction and incompetence that characterises the way governments react when the public seeks to exercise its constitutional right to protest.

News accounts of the trial focused on the lost footage from the security cameras and descriptions of police brutality, as well as one of the judicial precedents the prosecution referenced. Arguing that the supposed attack was an organised criminal act—and it was therefore unnecessary to establish

exactly how each of the accused had participated in the ‘attack’—the prosecution pointed to a judicial precedent where a gang of Polish criminals had recently been sentenced for a brutal attack in one of Reykjavik’s suburbs.

Of course Lára was not arguing The Reykjavik Nine were a Polish criminal gang. Nevertheless, this was seized upon by the press and the public, who saw in this an apt illustration of how the government had overreacted in this case, and how the prosecution had lost all sense of proportion. Commentators pointed out that the entire case and the revelations during the trial about “lost” security camera footage had seriously damaged the image of Alþingi, and that the entire trial was a farce.

THEY HAVE MOST CERTAINLY FAILED

We have yet to see whether the judges view the case in this light; whether they were convinced by the prosecution that the nine had indeed conspired to attack Alþingi, in the process attacking policemen and parliamentary guards. Or, whether they were swayed

by the defence, which argued that the nine had only wished to exercise their constitutional right to visit the public benches, and that the supposed violence amounted to scuffles resulting from the chaos caused by the overreaction of police and guards.

No matter the impending verdict, the supporters of The Reykjavik Nine were jubilant at the last day of the trial. A large and diverse network of activists had formed during the course of the trial. This grassroots movement had organised support concerts, written countless newspaper articles and blog posts, and then live-blogged the entire trial proceedings on January 18-20, the first time a trial had been live-blogged in Iceland. The supporters had also managed to get the attention of international media and activists. At a nearby café, which had served as a makeshift centre for the supporters, the air was celebratory.

If the aim of the authorities had been to squash protest and dispirit activists by prosecuting The Reykjavik Nine, they have most certainly failed. 🍷

Dairy | Skyr

Gettin’ Siggí Wit It

Americans nostalgic for Icelandic-style skyr find fulfilment in Siggí’s



A life without skyr is a life half lived. As a writer for the Grapevine in 2008, while doing research for the “definitive guide to mjólk,” I discovered Iceland’s most delectable culinary secret. With few dietary options as a vegetarian in the country (has anyone invented vegan svið yet?), the thick, delicious yogurt became my go-to breakfast, lunch and dinner. Since flying back to the States, I became growingly wistful

for that creamy, protein-packed treat. Would I ever be able to enjoy it again? Fortunately, a brilliant Icelandic entrepreneur, Sigurður ‘Siggí’ Hilmarsson, brought the confection across the pond and made the Nordic staple ubiquitous in the States.

Siggí had a similar yearning for his homeland’s delicacy when he moved to the US to attend business school. He grew disillusioned by the sugar-laden American-style yogurts and decided to take matters into his own hands. Hilmarsson created his own signature batch, dubbed as Siggí’s Skyr, in his cramped Tribeca apartment in 2004. In the years since, the product attracted a loyal following and has become made widely available at Whole Foods and many other natural/health food stores throughout the United States. Hilmars-

son describes the process of coming up with his own distinctive flavour as arduous. “I went through endless batches at first... many that failed or that were sub-optimal! I was finally satisfied with the flavour and began selling the skyr about a year and a half after I started experimenting.”

Siggí comes in a plethora of flavours including grapefruit, acai, pomegranate-passionfruit, blueberry, orange ginger and vanilla. Peach and strawberry are reportedly coming soon.

The overwhelming success of Siggí’s Skyr surprised Siggí. “From the beginning, the reception to our product was much more positive than I anticipated—people are becoming more and more aware of how food is made, paying attention to the ingredients, and caring about where their food comes

from. There is also increasing interest in yogurt and different kinds of dairy products in the US. This combined with the move towards eating less sugar and more protein; I think people just understood that there was a market for a healthy product like ours.” Hilmarsson attributes much of the success of his product with the access Whole Foods provided. “Whole Foods was definitely a feat. It really helped us to get on the map in a lot of places where we didn’t have exposure. Right now, we are in more than 1500 stores all over the U.S., and we are lucky to be growing that number every day,” he says.

Siggí’s Skyr is now produced at Evan’s Farmhouse Creamery in upstate New York, in my own hometown of Norwich. “It was important for our farms to fit the certain criteria we were

looking for—hormone-free cows that are given access to pasture. These are local, family farms that support humane animal treatment—no factory farming.”

While Hilmarsson still misses the taste of Icelandic milk, he hopes to continue to spread the healthy side of Iceland’s cuisine across the States. “I think the values of Iceland—at least in regards to diet and nutrition—can have an impact on American culture in this move towards more healthful eating, incorporating a lot of the classic Icelandic diet such as fish, healthy dairy and in general, minimally processed foods.” 🍷

✍️ JAMES CRUGNALE
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What do y'all think? Will the IMMI laws be passed by Alþingi? Will Iceland be the world's haven from libel laws and gag orders? Will it rescue us from KREPPA? Leak your thoughts to letters@grapevine.is (also, if you're interested in leaking actual documents to us, we wouldn't mind printing that stuff).

Information Without Borders?



Iceland, WikiLeaks and the electronic frontier

The info-wars have begun, and Iceland is begging to be the legislative battleground. In the wake of the international controversy made mainstream in part thanks to WikiLeaks' highly-publicized and continued release of leaked documents from around the world, Iceland remains curiously relevant to the debate raging globally about transparency reform, information freedom, and the future of journalism. The Icelandic Modern Media Initiative (IMMI), founded last year in tandem with a proposition to drastically overhaul the country's freedom of information laws, is responding to the new info-climate by proposing a legislative framework that could effectively make Iceland into an international transparency safe-haven.

An amalgamation of legal provisions from around the world dealing with source and libel protection, freedom of information and transparency, the IMMI proposal has garnered international attention as the most comprehensive legislative protection package for investigative journalism and free speech that the world has seen to date. Notably, three of the five primary authors of the Parliamentary proposal—Julian Assange, Rop Gonggrijp, and Birgitta Jónsdóttir—are among others being probed by the U.S. Department of Justice as part of the ongoing criminal investigation into WikiLeaks' disclosure of thousands of leaked State Department cables beginning in November 2010.

Yet for many freedom of information activists following the transparency movement—WikiLeaks is not the point.

"This is a much more complicated story than just WikiLeaks," says Smári McCarthy, co-founder of the Icelandic Digital Freedom Society, ex-WikiLeaks volunteer, and one of the authors of the IMMI proposal who as of yet is not visibly under investigation by the DOJ.

"To focus on them is like to focus on one grain of sand on a very big beach."

THE IMMI REVOLUTION

Smári and others in the core organizing group of the IMMI describe WikiLeaks as the "crowbar" of the information freedom movement—the wedge that opened the floodgates—propelling the issue into mainstream discussion.

"I've been doing this for a lot of years," says Smári, "and I've always had to start off by explaining what the hell I'm talking about. Now I don't have to explain that anymore. Now I just have to figure out a way to make it seem less antagonistic."

But in Iceland that battle may already be close to being won, especially since the IMMI proposal was passed unanimously by Alþingi in June of last year.

"[We started talking about IMMI] just after the big National Assembly [in 2009], where 'integrity', 'equality' and 'honesty', were sort of the key words" says Birgitta Jónsdóttir, the proposal's chief sponsor in Parliament.

"I realised that if there was a time

"The economic benefits to being the safe-haven for free speech are very well known, because the last country that did it is still the dominant empire on the planet."

for Iceland to take a specific route or direction, this could fit into that sensation that the nation had."

An Icelandic MP and the founder of The Movement (formerly of The Citizen's Movement), a political party devoted, as she puts it, to "changing the way we do business in Parliament," Birgitta considers the freedom of information debate to be central to the questions Iceland struggles with as it begins its slow recovery from the economic collapse.

"I've read the Shock Doctrine," says Birgitta, "and that implies that when nations are in crisis, very damaging legislation is often pushed through because people are simply in too much shock to realise what sort of impact it can have. But during that state of shock, you can also do very positive things."

"If you live in a democracy," Birgitta says, "and don't have freedom of information, it's not a democracy. And people have to understand that if you don't have freedom of information online, it's not going to be offline, either."

Underlying their emphasis on the importance of freedom of information (or *foi* as some of them really do call it), in particular with regard to legislative reform, the philosophy of the IMMI organisers seems to be based in the shared belief that information is central to a functioning democracy.

"When Iceland's economy collapsed," says Smári, "what we saw was that every single failing that caused that collapse was a lack of information flow. The regulators, the banks, the auditors, everybody throughout the chain either had insufficient information, or whoever was supposed to be regulating them had insufficient information. So the entire thing can be to some degree understood as just a failing in information flow. And of course if you don't have the information you don't have accountability, you don't have any of the safeguarding structures actually

functioning. So in essence you do not have anything that is in any way akin to a democracy, if you don't have information."

ANTIDOTE TO SECRECY

The idea for Iceland as the "Switzerland of bits"—the information-focused equivalent of a tax-haven—was first brought up to members of the IMMI at an Icelandic Digital Freedom Society conference in 2008. The suggestion came from John Perry Barlow, an American cyberlibertarian and one of the founders of the Electronic Frontier Foundation. The following year, the DFS invited WikiLeaks to speak at their annual conference. Reiterating Barlow's sentiment of an information Mecca, WikiLeaks also did him one better, providing the members of IMMI with a list of laws regarding press and source protection that had proven useful to them, a list that would become the blueprint for the IMMI proposal.

"We cherry-picked all the best laws from around the world that are dealing with the issue of freedom of information, speech and expression," says Birgitta. "And what we did was not only cherry-pick the best laws, but the laws that are actually functioning as the best laws. They don't only look good on paper. The reason for that is that if our law would come under attack, because we're a relatively small nation, then it would be an attack also on the law in Sweden, or Belgium or the United States, or France."

Julian Assange—who helped draft the proposal and also to present it to members of Parliament prior to the vote—wrote in a blog entry on the Guardian website the night before it was filed, that he hoped that "Iceland could be the antidote to secrecy havens."

"It may become an island" said Assange, "where openness is protected – a journalism haven. Sleet Street 2.0"

THE IMMI PROPOSAL

The IMMI proposal combines statutes from around the world—Sweden, Belgium, the United States and France, among others—dealing with source and libel protection, freedom of information, and transparency, in the hopes of creating comprehensive legal protections for media organizations, newspapers, journalists, and sources alike—globally.

The proposition was passed unanimously by Alþingi on June 16th, 2010, and has thus become parliamentary policy, though as of yet it has no legislative value. All of the proposed improvements to at least 13 laws in four different ministries have yet to be passed, and the estimated time for the entire IMMI package to be legislated is about one year.

The proposal's primary sponsor in Parliament was Birgitta Jónsdóttir who, along with Julian Assange, Smári McCarthy, Herbert Snorrason and Rop Gonggrijp, was also one of the proposal's primary authors.

Birgitta says it would be "bizarre" if the overwhelming support shown for the proposal by Parliament in June of last year wouldn't translate when the laws have been written and are ready to go through the Parliament.

NO INFORMATION LEFT BEHIND

The question of how best to facilitate information flow, and how to do it responsibly, is a key and contested question brought into the public eye by the actions of WikiLeaks over the past few years.

Herbert Snorrason is one of the primary spokespeople for OpenLeaks (www.openleaks.org), a whistleblowing alternative that launched its site late last month and that advocates a more egalitarian approach to the distribution and release of leaked documents. Herbert ended his stint as a WikiLeaks vol-

Words

Valgerður Þóroddsdóttir

Illustration

Hörður Kristbjörnsson

unteer in September 2010, right around the same time as several other key names, including Birgitta Jónsdóttir, Rop Gonggrijp, Smári McCarthy, and Julian Assange's ex-right-hand man and current OpenLeaks spokesman Daniel Domscheit-Berg.

"There was some drama," says Smári. "The split was of course rather dramatised in the media. But it wasn't necessarily bad drama. The divergence is just healthy, really. It means that you get this proliferation of different approaches to the same goal."

The OpenLeaks approach, says Herbert, is to "function as a mere conduit between a whistleblower and an organisation of their choice."

"We will operate in a content-neutral manner," says Herbert. "Making editorial choices is not our place. We're not functioning as a journalistic organisation, and in some sense I think that's where WikiLeaks started to go wrong."

WikiLeaks' high-profile approach and global-impact emphasis, says Herbert, leaves a lot of valuable leaked information untouched or underused.

"With the policy of maximizing impact it seems fairly obvious that the leaks that are most likely to be chosen are the ones that are the easiest to use in order to have an impact," says Herbert.

"Yes, WikiLeaks does make everything available publicly, which is a good thing. But at the same time it does mean that there's this massive archive of things that hardly anyone has looked at. And because it's public, no journalist is interested in looking at it because they can never be sure that they won't get scooped by somebody else. And that means it just sits there."

OpenLeaks, meanwhile, expects that the documents flowing through their system will be related mostly to local issues, though the organisation itself will be working globally.

"Local impact is better than global attention," says Herbert.

OpenLeaks hopes to be able to function as a mere middle-man, helping to direct information from leakers to the organisation of their choice, by providing a mechanism that ensures anonymity.

This approach is at its core quite distinct from that of WikiLeaks, at least as far as how the organisation sees itself; WikiLeaks' slogan, after all, is "we open governments," but the OpenLeaks approach hopes to be much more egalitarian.

"Our goal is to help as many people as possible to provide resources for whistleblowers," says Herbert. "So our goal is not in any sense specifically to pressure change in governments or other organisations, it's simply to make sure that other people are able to get their information out there. What the long-term consequences of that are is quite debatable. The immediate consequences are quite likely to be that organisations that need to keep secrets will try to be even more secretive. But I don't think that is sustainable in the long term. Eventually they will have to adapt to a more transparent environment."

A more transparent environment in general—this is the same philosophy emphasised by the IMMI and other information freedom advocacy groups such as the Digital Freedom Society and the Electronic Frontier Foundation.

The OpenLeaks platform, says Herbert, was thus largely sculpted by what he and others witnessed first-hand as the shortcomings of working with and within the WikiLeaks organisation.

"OpenLeaks is going to be having a considerably more transparent structure," says Herbert. "Both financially and organizationally. And there is absolutely no place whatsoever for any sort of unilateral decision making. The problem with that is that it's called dictatorship. Which is not the most efficient way to run things, especially if you have an organisation that needs to grow quite quickly. That I think is really the largest failing of WikiLeaks, that



Smári McCarthy - Photo: Hörður Sveinsson



Birgitta Jónsdóttir - Photo: Julia Staples



Herbert Snorrason - Photo: Árný Herbertsdóttir

although it has a lot of volunteers, it's very difficult to make any efficient use of those volunteers because you have a single person who wants to be aware of everything that's going on."

CLIMATE CHANGE

Another of the IMMI's underlying principles is that the benefits of reacting proactively to the changing information climate are systemic—they include the possibility of true transparency, responsible politicians and responsible journalists.

"There is so much need to set laws

"There is absolutely no place whatsoever for any sort of unilateral decision making. The problem with that is that it's called dictatorship."

that are in line with the fact that information doesn't have any borders anymore, in our world," says Birgitta.

But in Iceland, perhaps the biggest sell for the IMMI legislative framework is the ways in which the country could be benefited financially.

"The economic benefits to being the safe-haven for free speech are very well known" says Smári, "because the last country that did it is still the dominant empire on the planet."

"Well, kind of."

"If you look at how the U.S. did things in the early days," he continues, "they basically ignored European copyright and patent laws and just said, 'well, we want people to innovate here.' They took a very interesting stance towards information freedom. Iceland can do that. And we can do it a lot faster."

The compelling need for proactive legislative reform, says Birgitta, is largely apparent in the state of the media, particularly in Europe and especially in the U.K., "where it is actually much worse than most people are aware of."

According to her, the changing media landscape threatens not only the integrity but also the very existence of investigative journalism.

"Most of the media is moving onto the Internet and since investigative journalism is very expensive, it is very weak, and it needs legislative protection in order for it to carry on thriving. The way we could help with investigative journalism for example is if we could create the legislative environment so that there are not as many prior restraints and super injunctions on these stories so that they actually get published.

"I think the biggest problem we're faced with when it comes to freedom of information is the altering and falsification of our current history. And I've seen that very clearly in the British media. The reason why I'm concerned about the British Media is that there are all these very respected media with qualified journalists and good reputations—BBC, Independent, Financial Times, Guardian—and most other media outlets go there to recycle stories, particularly online."

In the U.K., Birgitta says, libel laws

in particular are so bad that "you can actually go back to the first days of the Internet and pull things out of the historical record. And this is what's happening, stories are being taken out, because the media outlets can't afford the time or the money to deal with the libel lawsuits," particularly by large corporations trying to protect their image and interests.

"The same with super injunctions," she adds. "That is such an incredible thing. I couldn't believe it at first, but I've actually gotten it confirmed by a lot of journalists who have been victims

of it. Super injunction means that, say you're writing a story about BP, and they find out. BP talks to the head of the BBC or whatever, and say 'were going to sue you if you do this.' Then you reach a settlement and the settlement includes a gag order, a super injunction, which means that you can't tell anyone that you can't write the story. And then if accidentally you find out that I'm under super injunction, you are automatically, as a journalist, under super injunction too. It's unbelievable. And this is Britain."

LOST IN TRANSLATION

But the problem is systemic, and Iceland is no exception to the rule. In August 2009, state TV station RÚV was slapped with an injunction minutes before airing a story about Kaupthing bank's 'large loan book'—a package of documents leaked by WikiLeaks revealing hundreds of billions of ISK that were essentially funnelled from the bank to its own shareholders in the form of loans just before its collapse. In January that same year, prior to the document leaks, competing TV station Stöð 2 was hit with a similar gag order while preparing to air a story about the relationship between Kaupthing and Robert Tchenquiz, a property entrepreneur who was later implicated in the loan book scandal. The program, Kompás, was not aired, and its entire staff promptly fired.

Kristinn Hrafnsson, a current spokesman for WikiLeaks who worked on both stories, describes the Icelandic media as "sheepish" and investigative journalism in Iceland as "virtually dead."

"Very few journalists had the drive or the means to carry out proper investigative journalism before the current economic crisis hit the country," says Kristinn. "Since then there have been massive layoffs and cuts hitting most media organisations, [resulting] in the decline of investigative journalism in Iceland at a time when it is badly needed."

"We are in a really big dilemma in Iceland because RÚV is not doing what it needs to be doing," Birgitta says. "And I don't see much investigative journalism. Here we have this financial

mess, and it's complicated, and the experts in the field speak a language that most of us don't understand. The job of a good journalist is to translate that into a language that we understand. For me, that should be the role of RÚV."

Indeed for many of those familiar with the state of the media in Iceland, the suggestion that the country could become a lifeline for investigative journalism, a Mecca for freedom of information, seems quite ironic.

"I was speaking at the Association of European Journalists earlier [last] year," says Birgitta, "and there's nobody from Iceland in this union. It's been going on for 56 years, and never have we had any Icelandic journalists in that. We're very passive when it comes to journalists understanding that they're part of an international community."

"Journalists have a big responsibility," Birgitta says. "It is not only about having the freedom [of information], you have to be able to translate it so that the rest of the people can share or have access to it in such a way that they actually care."

But good journalism cannot exist in a vacuum. There is a vital interplay between demand and supply, and a cultural change in the understanding of the role of journalism, seemingly must follow.

"Well, the Icelandic media are rather pathetic," says Smári, "but I think that they're starting to realise this. Whether that will drive them to become better, I don't know. But I don't really think this is so much about Icelandic media, as Icelandic society as a whole. Because it isn't just the media that needs to be reformed."

He continues: "The general public needs to realise that information freedom is absolutely worthless if people are going to be turning a blind eye to all of the bad things that are going on."

In the end, much like WikiLeaks and, tentatively, OpenLeaks, the IMMI is meeting a global demand, although the impact may turn out to be local.

"Even if this is a contradiction in a sense," says Birgitta, "or a paradox, that we have a shabby culture of journalism, and yet want to make Iceland into a Mecca for freedom of information. Since information doesn't have borders, it doesn't really matter where the Mecca is."

"There are so many facets to this," says Smári. "And some of them are more hack-ish, more crypto-anarchic, and some of them have suits and look nice towards the government, and you have the entire spectrum in between. But if you look deep enough it's actually all the same people. Some days I wear suits and some days I break into things... Well, except for Julian Assange. He always wears a suit, especially when breaking into things." ☞

A BEACH OF BITS

The backdrop against which the history of IMMI and of WikiLeaks is set involves the complicated history of the Internet, and the up-until-recently-underground discussion regarding transparency and information freedom on the electronic frontier.

"The world has been kind of in flux the last couple of years," says Smári McCarthy, "and this is definitely adding a lot of fuel to that fire. But this isn't the revolution, by far."

In fact, Smári tells us this isn't even the first 'cyber war'. The first war was waged through the last decade of the last century, he says, and ended with a Supreme Court ruling whereby encryption was taken off the U.S. Munitions List. 'Bernstein v. United States' decreed written software code as a form of speech protected by the First Amendment; prior to 1999, cryptography had the same export restrictions as nuclear warheads, meaning that one had to be licensed by the State Department as an arms dealer before one could "export" software code by posting it on the internet.

"Basically if you lived outside the U.S. you didn't have access to good crypto," says Smári. "And if you lived in the U.S. you didn't really use good crypto anyway because you might accidentally export it and land yourself in jail for a long time. In 1999 that barrier dropped and suddenly e-commerce became possible. The fact that we can buy stuff online is a direct result of the hackers winning the first cyber war. So imagine what good it could do for the world if we win the second one."

How winning will be defined in the current 'war', including where and by whom, is a question that information freedom activists and whistleblowing organisations like WikiLeaks continue to struggle with. What remains to be seen is how governments, organisations and societies as a whole respond to the changing conditions of the as-yet-largely-undefined paradigm of the Internet, wherein information no longer has any borders.

The most pressing question, at least to the organizers of IMMI, is what to do when the war has been won.

"We need to figure out what is going to happen if victory happens," says Smári. "How are we going to restructure society? This means we need to look at how infrastructure works, we need to think about how government models work. We need to make sure that if society changes we have figured out what we want it to change into."

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- Bakkus**
21:30 Croistanz Concert
24:00 DJ Unnur Andrea
- Boston**
22:00 DJ Kári
- Café Oliver**
22:00 Ladies Night. Dj Maggi & Brynjar Már
- Café Rosenberg**
22:00 Concert: Rúnar Þór, Megas and Gylfi
- Den Danske Kro**
22:00 Live music. Sing-along night
- Dillon**
22:00 Gutl. '60's Night
- Dubliner**
22:00 Live music
- English Pub**
17:00 Live music
- Esja**
22:00 DJ Hlynur Mastermix
- Faktorý**
21:00 Muck, Mammút, Sudden Weather Change, Swords Of Chaos & Me, The Slumbering Napoleon. 1000 ISK
- Gerðuberg**
12:15 Classical music for lunch
- Hressó**
22:00 Jj's band followed by DJ Elli
- Háskólabíó**
20:00 The Icelandic Opera: Svanasöngur by Franz Schubert
- Kaffibarinn**
22:00 Kari
- Prikið**
22:00 DJ Gísli Galdur
- Sódóma**
22:00 Concert TBA + DJ until 5am
- Stofan**
20:00 Poetry readings
- Trúnó**
21:00 Champagne Night
- Vegamót**
22:00 DJ Jónas

5 SAT

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- B5**
22:00 DJ Leifur
- Bakkus**
22:00 DJ Hunk of a Man
- Boston**
22:00 DJ Unnur Andrea
- Café Oliver**
22:00 Ladies Night. Dj Maggi & Brynjar Már
- Café Rosenberg**
21:00 Gleðisveit Guðlaugar
- Den Danske Kro**
22:00 Live music & Sing-along night
- Dubliner**
22:00 Live music
- Esja**
22:00 DJ Hlynur Mastermix
- English Pub**
22:00 Live music
- Hressó**
22:00 Mars followed by DJ Fúsi
- Kaffibarinn**
23:00 Alfons X
- Prikið**
DJ Addi Intró
- Sódóma**
22:00 Klassart + DJ until 5am
- Vegamót**
22:00 DJ Símon

6 SUN

- Bakkus**
15:00-20:00 Bakkus Flea Market. DJ Sævar Markús. Whiskey Sunday
- Café Oliver**
22:00 Live music
- Den Danske Kro**
22:00 Live music
- Dubliner**
22:00 Live music
- English Pub**
22:00 Live music

- Gerðuberg**
13:15 Classical music for lunch
- Prikið**
22:00 Hangover Movie Night. Free Popcorn
- Trúnó**
14:00 The Day After: cold drink specials and relaxed music

7 MON

- Bakkus**
21:00 Movie Night: 'Phi Ta Kon: Ghosts of Isan'
- Café Oliver**
22:00 Margarita Mondays: 2 for 1
- Café Rosenberg**
21:00 Blúsfélagið (live blues)
- Den Danske Kro**
22:00 Live music & Shots night
- Dubliner**
22:00 Live music
- English Pub**
22:00 Live music
- Prikið**
Red Wine & Cheese night: wine and cheese for 2 at 1000 ISK
- Trúnó**
21:00 French Night: French wine, music and films

8 TUE

- Bakkus**
22:00 DJ duo Siggi & Ívar
- Café Oliver**
22:00 Karaoke Night
- Café Rosenberg**
21:00 Haraldur Reynisson & band
- Den Danske Kro**
22:00 Live music & Beer Bingo night
- Dubliner**
22:00 Live music
- English Pub**
22:00 Live music
- Prikið**
21:00 Gagnaugað shows alternative documentaries

9 WED

- Bakkus**
22:00 Djöfullinn er Danskur
- Café Oliver**
22:00 Live music
- Café Rosenberg**
21:00 Live jazz
- Den Danske Kro**
22:00 Live music & Pop-quiz night
- Dubliner**
22:00 Live music
- English Pub**
22:00 Live music
- Faktorý**
20:00 Classic Pub Quiz
- Kaffitár café**
20:00 Tango Milango
- Kaffibarinn**
22:00 Extreme Chill
- Prikið**
Traditional dancing with Accordion-Þórður. Þorri beer and dried fish on offer
- Trúnó**
21:00 RuPaul's Drag Race
22:00 Jocks Night

10 THU

- B5**
22:00 Vignir Snær & Hreimur

- Bakkus**
22:00 Two Step Horror
- Boston**
22:00 DJ Andrea
- Café Oliver**
22:00 Ingó Troubadour
- Café Rosenberg**
21:00 Lights on the highway
- Den Danske Kro**
22:00 Live music & Scandinavian night
- Dillon**
22:00 Live bands: Markús followed by My brother is pale
- Dubliner**
22:00 Live music
- English Pub**
22:00 Live music
- Esja**
Loungy Thursday
- Kaffibarinn**
23:00 Alfons X
- Prikið**
22:00 DJ Matti
- Sódóma**
21:00 Tribute Night - The Jimi Hendrix Project
- Thorvaldsen**
20:00 Salsa Night
- Vegamót**
22:00 DJ Jónas

11 FRI

- Austur**
22:00 DJ Jónas
- B5**
22:00 DJ Leifur
- Bakkus**
21:00 The Dandelion Seeds album release concert with Just Another Snake Cult
23:00 DJ Ákni
- Boston**
22:00 DJ Rósa
- Café Oliver**
22:00 Ladies Night. Dj Maggi & Brynjar Már
- Café Rosenberg**
22:00 Greta Balkan jazz
- Den Danske Kro**
22:00 Live music & Sing-along night
- Dillon**
22:00 Live Bands: Caterpillarmen, Bob and Coral
- Dubliner**
22:00 Live music
- English Pub**
17:00 Live music
- Esja**
22:00 DJ Hlynur Mastermix
- Faktorý**
22:00 DJ Dans Hans
- Gerðuberg**
12:15 Classical music for lunch
- Hressó**
22:00 Silfur followed by DJ Fúsi
- Kaffibarinn**
23:00 Mar & Nielsen
- Prikið**
22:00 DJ Árni
- Sódóma**
22:00 XXX Rottweiler + DJ until 5am
- Vegamót**
22:00 DJ Símon

12 SAT

- Austur**
22:00 DJ Símon
- B5**
22:00 DJ Jónas
- Bakkus**
21:00 DJ Ófull

Music & Entertainment | Venue finder

Amsterdam Hafnarstræti 5 D2	Celtic Cross Hverfisgata 26 E4	NASA Þorvaldsenstræti 2 E3
Apótek Austurstræti 16 E3	Dillon Laugavegur 30 F5	Nýlenduvörverzlun Hemma & Valda Laugavegur 21 E4
Austur Austurstræti 7 E3	Dubliner Hafnarstræti 4 D3	Næsti Bar Ingólfstræti 1A E3
B5 Bankastræti 5 E3	English Pub Austurstræti 12 D2	Óliver Laugavegur 20A F5
Babalú Skólavörðustígur 22 G5	Glaubar Tryggvagata 20 D2	Ólstofan Vegamótastígur E4
Bar 11 Laugavegur 11 E4	Highlander Lækjargata 10 E3	Prikið Bankastræti E3
Barbara Laugavegur 22 F6	Hressó Austurstræti 20 E3	Rósenberg Klapparstígur 25 E4
Bjarni Fel Austurstræti 20 E3	Hverfisbarinn Hverfisgata 20 E4	Sódóma Reykjavík Tryggvagata 22 D3
Boston Laugavegur 28b F5	Jacobsen Austurstræti 9 E3	Sólón Bankastræti 7A E3
Café Cultura Hverfisgata 18 E4	Kaffi Zimsen Hafnarstræti 18 D3	Thorvaldsen Austurstræti 8 D2
Café Paris Austurstræti 14 E3	Kaffibarinn Bergstráðstræti 1 E4	Vegamót Vegamótastígur 4 E4
Balthazar Hafnarstræti 1-3 D2	Karamba Laugavegur 22 F4	Venue Tryggvagata 22 D3

Boston
22:00 DJ KGB

Café Oliver
22:00 Ladies Night. DJ Maggi & Brynjar Már

Café Rosenberg
22:00 Þórdís: French Coffee-house Jazz

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music & Sing-along night

Dubliner
22:00 Live music

English Pub
22:00 Live music

Esja
22:00 DJ Hlynur Mastermix

Faktory
22:00 Prins Póló release concert

Hressó
22:00 Penta followed by DJ Fannar

NASA
24:00 Páll Óskar: 10th Anniversary Concert Series. 1000ISK. 500 ISK beers

Prikið
22:00 DJ Danni Delux

Sódóma
22:00 Smutty's Rockabilly Party + DJ until 5am

Tjarnarbió
20:30 Kristján Kristjánsson (KK). 2500 ISK

Trúnó
22:00 Saturday Night Fever with DJ Gimmer

Vegamót
22:00 DJ Benni

13 SUN

Bakkus
Whiskey Sunday

Café Oliver
22:00 Live music

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music

Dubliner
22:00 Live music

English Pub
22:00 Live music

Gerðuberg
13:15 Classical music for lunch

Prikið
22:00 Hangover Movie Night. Free popcorn

Trúnó
14:00 The Day After: cold drink specials and relaxed music

14 MON

Bakkus
21:00 Movie Night: Sævar Markús presents 'Valerie and Her Week of Wonders'

Café Oliver
22:00 Margarita Monday: 2 for 1

Café Rosenberg
21:00 Pub quiz

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music

Dubliner
22:00 Live music

English Pub
22:00 Live music

Prikið
Red Wine & Cheese: for 2 at 1000 ISK

15 TUE

Bakkus
21:00 Kinosmiðja Fundraiser! 16mm found footage films.

Café Oliver
22:00 Karaoke night

Café Rosenberg
21:00 SOS light jazz

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music & Beer Bingo

Dubliner
22:00 Live music

English Pub
22:00 Live music

Kjarvalsstaðir
20:00 The Reykjavik Chamber Group plays music by Joaquin Turina and Franz Schubert

Prikið
21:00 Gagnaugað shows alternative documentaries

16 WED

Bakkus
21:00 DJ duo Futuregrapher & Steppi

Café Oliver
22:00 Live music

Café Rosenberg
21:00 Sniglabandið

Kaffitár café
20:00 Tango Milango

Prikið
Traditional dancing with **Accordion-Þórður**. Þorri beer and dried fish on offer

Trúnó
21:00 RuPaul's Drag Race
22:00 Jocks Night

17 THU

B5
22:00 Vignir Snær & Jogvan

Bakkus
20:00 DJ Einar Sonic

Boston
22:00 DJ Andrea

Café Oliver
22:00 Ingó Troubadour

Café Rosenberg
21:00 Sniglabandið

Esja
Loungy Thursday

Prikið
22:00 DJ Kalli

Sódóma
21:00 Purrrkur Pillnikk Tribute Concert

Thorvaldsen
20:00 Salsa Night

Vegamót
22:00 DJ Símon

18 FRI

Austur
22:00 DJ Símon

B5
22:00 DJ Leifur

Bakkus
21:30 Saytan - Nolo concert
24:00 DJ KGB

Boston
22:00 DJ Unnur Andrea

Café Oliver
22:00 Ladies Night. DJ Maggi & Brynjar Már

Café Rosenberg
22:00 Leikfélag N-Ping

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music & Sing-along night

Dillon
22:00 Three live bands from the Westman Islands: **El Camino, Súr** and **Foreign Monkeys**

Dubliner
22:00 Live music

English Pub
17:00 Live music

Esja
22:00 DJ Bogi

Faktory
22:00 90's party!

Gerðuberg
12:15 Classical music for lunch

Hressó
22:00 Silfur followed by DJ Fannar

Kaffibarinn
23:00 Alfons X

Prikið
22:00 DJ Danni Delux

Sódóma
20:00 concert TBA + DJ until 5am

Trúnó
Sushi Extravaganza (reservations at 567-7500 or truno@truno.is)

Vegamót
22:00 DJ Jónas

19 SAT

Austur
22:00 DJ Jónas

B5
22:00 DJ Símon

Bakkus
21:00 Nicolasaurus Rex & Rebeccadactyl
24:00 DJ Hunk of a Man

Boston
22:00 DJ Biggi Maus

Café Oliver
22:00 Ladies Night. DJ Maggi & Brynjar Már

Café Rosenberg
22:00 Live theatre: **Kæri Hjónabandsráðgjafi**

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music & Sing-along night

Dubliner
22:00 Live music

English Pub
22:00 Live music

Esja
22:00 DJ Bogi

Faktory
22:00 DJ KGB

Hressó
22:00 Dalton followed by DJ Elli

Kaffibarinn
22:00 Daddy's Weekend: Gísli Galdur & B Ruff

Prikið
22:00 DJ Addi Intro

Salurinn, Kópavogur
17:00 Tíbrá: Bjarni Thor and Ástríður Alda. 3500ISK

Sódóma
16:00 Endless Dark plus guests: All ages show
22:00 Endless Dark album release concert + DJ until 5am

Stofan
21:00 Live Music

Thorvaldsen
22:00 Saturday Night Fever with DJ Kristján

Vegamót
22:00 DJ Danni Delux

20 SUN

Bakkus
22:00 Whiskey Sunday

Café Oliver
22:00 Live music

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music

Dubliner
22:00 Live music

English Pub
22:00 Live music

Gerðuberg
13:15 Classical music for lunch

The Nordic House
15:15 CAPUT, memorial performance for composer Isang Yun

Prikið
22:00 Hangover Movie Night. Free popcorn

Trúnó
14:00 The Day After: cold drink specials and relaxed music

21 MON

Bakkus
21:00 Movie Night: Simon Barker presents 'The Rollerblade Seven'

Café Oliver
22:00 Margarita Monday: 2 for 1

Café Rosenberg
21:00 Pub quiz

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music & Shots night

Dubliner
22:00 Live music

English Pub
22:00 Live music

Prikið
Red Wine & Cheese night: for 2 at 1000 ISK

Trúnó
Golden Oldies: music from the 50's & 60's

22 TUE

Bakkus
21:00 Foosball Tournament

Café Oliver
22:00 Karaoke night

Café Rosenberg
21:00 Concert: Birdcage, KK and Myrra Rós

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music & Beer Bingo night

Dubliner
22:00 Live music

English Pub
22:00 Live music

Prikið
21:00 Gagnaugað shows alternative documentaries

23 WED

Bakkus
22:00 Two Step Horror

Café Oliver
22:00 Live music

Café Rosenberg
21:00 Shadow puppet show with **Bysans Balkan music**

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music & Pop-quiz night

Dubliner
22:00 Live music

English Pub
22:00 Live music

Faktory
20:00 Classic Pub Quiz

Kaffibarinn
22:00 Extreme Chill

Kaffitár café
20:00 Tango Milango

Prikið
Traditional dancing with **Accordion-Þórður**. Þorri beer and dried fish on offer

Trúnó
21:00 RuPaul's Drag Race
22:00 Jocks Night

24 THU

B5
22:00 Vignir Snær & Hreimur

Bakkus
Mr. Silla - We Are All Romans (USA)
21:30 DJ Boas

Boston
22:00 DJ Andrea

Café Oliver
22:00 Ingó Troubadour

Café Rosenberg
21:00 Svarar knútur

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music & Scandinavian night

Dubliner
22:00 Live music

English Pub
22:00 Live music

Esja
Loungy Thursday

Kaffibarinn
23:00 DJ Yamaho

Prikið
22:00 Surprise night!

Den Danske Kro

• Mondays •
Shot's night - all shots ISK 400.-

• Tuesdays •
Live music and Beer Bingo night

• Wednesdays •
POP- QUIZ night (special offer on drinks) & Live music

• Thursdays •
Live Music / Scandinavian nights

• Fridays •
Live music / Sing-along nights

• Saturdays •
Live music / Sing-along nights

• Sundays •
Hangover & Live music night Really good prices on drinks

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MUSIC

CONCERTS & NIGHTLIFE IN FEBRUARY & MARCH

Sódóma
21:00 Rökurro + guests

Tjarnarbió
20:30 Skálmöld album release concert.
2900ISK

Thorvaldsen
20:00 Salsa Night

Vegamót
22:00 DJ Danni Delux

25 FRI

Austur
22:00 DJ Símon

B5
22:00 DJ Jónas

Bakkus
24:00 DJ Benson is Fantastic!

Boston
22:00 DJ Maggi Legó

Café Rosenberg
22:00 Hjaltalín

Café Oliver
22:00 Ladies Night. DJ Maggi & Brynjar Már

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music & Sing-along night

Dillon
22:00 Live bands: Morgan Kane followed by Finnegan

Dubliner
22:00 Live music

English Pub
22:00 Live music

Esja
22:00 DJ Hlynur Mastermix

Faktorý
22:00 Hjálmar
24:00 DJ Biggi Maus

Gerðuberg
13:15 Classical music for lunch

Hressó
22:00 The fabulous band followed by DJ Elli & Mars

Prikió
22:00 DJ Danni Delux followed by Addi Intro

Sódóma
22:00 Concert TBA followed by DJ until 5am

Trúnó
20:00 Queer Beer Night

Vegamót
22:00 DJ Hannes

26 SAT

Austur
22:00 DJ Bogi

B5
22:00 DJ Jóhann Valur

Bakkus
22:00 DJ KGB

Boston
22:00 DJ Tætur

Café Rosenberg
22:00 Hjaltalín

Café Oliver
22:00 Ladies Night. DJ Maggi & Brynjar Már

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music & Sing-along night

Dubliner
22:00 Live music

English Pub
22:00 Live music

Esja
22:00 DJ Hlynur Mastermix

Faktorý
22:00 DJ Hunk of a Man

Kaffibarinn
23:00 Maggi Lego

Hressó
22:00 Mars followed by DJ Elli

NASA
Ensími: 10th Anniversary Concert
Series. 1000 ISK - 500 ISK beers

Sódóma
22:00 Sin Fang + guests + DJ until 5am

Vegamót
22:00 DJ Símon

27 SUN

Bakkus
Whiskey Sunday

Café Oliver
22:00 Live music

Café Rosenberg
21:00 Einar Scheving Jazz

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music

Dubliner
22:00 Live music

English Pub
22:00 Live music

Gerðuberg
13:15 Classical music for lunch

Prikió
22:00 Hangover Movie Night. Free popcorn

Trúnó
14:00 Queer Family Café

28 MON

Bakkus
21:00 Movie Night: Sigtryggur Berg Sigmársson presents TBA

Café Oliver
22:00 Margarita Monday: 2 for 1

Café Rosenberg
21:00 Pub quiz

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music & Shots night

Dubliner
22:00 Live music

English Pub
22:00 Live music

Prikió
Red Wine & Cheese night: for 2 at 1000ISK

1 TUE

Café Oliver
22:00 Karaoke

Café Rosenberg
21:00 Sniglabandið

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music & Beer Bingo night

Dubliner
22:00 Live music

English Pub
22:00 Live music

Prikió
21:00 Gagnaugað shows alternative documentaries

Trúnó
21:00 Queer Music & Movie Night

2 WED

Bakkus
22:00 DJ duo Frikki & Steini

Café Oliver
22:00 Live music

Café Rosenberg
21:00 Sniglabandið

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music & Pop-quiz night

Dubliner
22:00 Live music

English Pub
22:00 Live music

Kaffitár café
20:00 Tango Milango

Prikió
Traditional dancing with Accordion-Þórður. Þorri beer and dried fish on offer

Salurinn, Kópavogur
20:30 Improve Concert with Jón Ólafsson and special guest Páll Óskar

Trúnó
21:00 RuPaul's Drag Race
22:00 Jocks Night

3 THU

Bakkus
22:00 DJ Einar Sonic

Boston
22:00 DJ Andrea

Café Oliver
22:00 Ingó Troubadour

Café Rosenberg
21:00 Concert: Heima

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music & Scandinavian night

Dubliner
22:00 Live music

English Pub
22:00 Live music

Esja
Louny Thursday

Faktorý
22:00 DJ Rökurro + guests

Salurinn, Kópavogur
20:30 Improve Concert with Jón Ólafsson and special guest Páll Óskar

Sódóma
21:00 Byrnjar Már Valdimarsson

Thorvaldsen
20:00 Salsa Night

4 FRI

Bakkus
22:00 DJ Árni Sveins

Boston
22:00 DJ Rósa

Café Oliver
22:00 Ladies Night. DJ Maggi & Brynjar Már

Café Rosenberg
22:00 Haraldur Reynisson & band

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music & Sing-along night

Dillon
22:00 Guttl: CCR tribute night

Dubliner
22:00 Live music

English Pub
17:00 Live music

Esja
22:00 DJ Hlynur Mastermix

Gerðuberg
12:15 Classical music for lunch

Hressó
22:00 The Fabulous band followed by DJ Fúsi

Sódóma
22:00 Nirvana Tribute Concert + DJ until 5am

Trúnó
20:00 Serata Italiana: Italian wine & beer, music and films

5 SAT

Bakkus
22:00 Hunk of a Man

Café Oliver
22:00 Ladies Night. DJ Maggi & Brynjar Már

Café Rosenberg
22:00 Haraldur Reynisson & band

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music & Sing-along night

Dubliner
22:00 Live music

English Pub
22:00 Live music

Esja
22:00 DJ Hlynur Mastermix

Hressó
22:00 Mars followed by DJ Fúsi

Kaffibarinn
23:00 KGB

Sódóma
22:00 Wacken Metal Battle + DJ until 5am

6 SUN

Bakkus
21:00 Board game night & Whiskey Sunday

Café Oliver
22:00 Live music

Café Rosenberg
21:00 Ghostwind

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music

Dubliner
22:00 Live music

English Pub
22:00 Live music

Gerðuberg
13:15 Classical music for lunch

Prikió
22:00 Prikió Hangover Movie Night. Free popcorn

Trúnó
14:00 The Day After: cold drink specials and relaxed music

7 MON

Bakkus
22:00 Movie Night: Solveig Pálsdóttir presents: 'Whatever Happened to Baby Jane?'

Café Oliver
22:00 Margarita Monday: 2 for 1

Café Rosenberg
21:00 Blúsfélagið (live blues)

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music & Shots night

Dubliner
22:00 Live music

English Pub
22:00 Live music

Prikió
Red Wine & Cheese night for 2 at 1000ISK

Trúnó
21:00 Music Divas

8 TUE

Café Oliver
22:00 Karaoke night

Café Rosenberg
21:00 Brother Grass

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music & Beer Bingo night

Dubliner
22:00 Live music

English Pub
22:00 Live music

Prikió
21:00 Gagnaugað shows alternative documentaries

9 WED

Café Oliver
22:00 Live music

Café Rosenberg
21:00 Skúli mennski

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music & Pop-quiz night

Dubliner
22:00 Live music

English Pub
22:00 Live music

Kaffibarinn
22:00 Extreme Chill

Kaffitár café
20:00 Tango Milango

Prikið
21:00 Traditional dancing with **Accordion-Pórður**. Þorri beer and dried fish on offer

Trúnó
21:00 RuPaul's Drag Race
22:00 Jocks Night

10 THU

Bakkus
22:00 Djöfullinn er Danskur

Boston
22:00 DJ Andrea

Café Rosenberg
21:00 Live music

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music & Scandinavian night

Dubliner
22:00 Live music

English Pub
22:00 Live music

Esja
21:00 Loungy Thursday

Salurinn
20:30 Improve Concert with **Jón Ólaf** and special guest **Björgvin Halldórsson Thorvaldsen**
20:00 Salsa Night

ONGOING

Restaurant Reykjavík
20:00 Let's Talk Iceland: Comedy Show.
2200ISK. *Everyday*

Iðnó
Cellophane Comedy show
20:00 *Thursdays*



Singing Goddess Graces Iceland

Eivör Pálsdóttir in concert

Austurbær, Snorrabraut 37, 105 Reykjavík
3.300 ISK

It's always a treat to have Eivör Pálsdóttir in Iceland. It's a treat because Eivör, a singer/song-writer from neighbouring Faroe Islands, has an exceptionally beautiful voice. Her voice is so beautiful that it won her 'Best singer' and 'Best performer', at the 2003 Icelandic Music Awards. This is despite her not being an Icelander. So, if you haven't heard her sing, she is definitely worth checking out at the Austurbær culture and music house on March 6. On that night she promises to sing Icelandic favourites such as, 'Ég veit þú kemur' in addition to a number of new and undoubtedly beautiful songs.

AA



Go Muck Yourself:

Muck, Mammút, Me The Slumbering Napoleon, Sudden Weather Change & Swords Of Chaos at Faktory

Faktory, February 4, 21:00 1000 ISK

Muck need some money to record their album, so go help them out, and see some of Reykjavík's finest strut their stuff in the process, as it seems pretty much every hip young band in Iceland has decided to help them out.

SE



Spears Shall Be Shaken, Shields Shall Be Splintered

Porrablót at Fjörukráin

January 21 - February 20

Fjörukráin, Strandgata 55, Hafnarfjörður, Price vary. www.fjorukrain.is

If you're looking to imbibe some 'traditional Icelandic cuisine' ('Porramatur'), you're in luck, because this is about the only time of year sane people do it. This year, the week-based Old Icelandic Calendar dictates that the month of Porri will be between January 21 and February 20, and it has been tradition for about 130 years or so for a feast of "sour food" (like pickled ram's testicles) during said month.

This is all supposedly in honour of deity Thor, who, while being a god of thunder and battle, capable of destroying practically anything with his 1d8/2d6+5 magical war hammer, apparently couldn't cook for shit.

If you'd still like to try some of it, we can recommend no better experience than the one offered by Iceland's own Viking Disneyland, the Fjörukráin restaurant and hotel in Hafnarfjörður. They're offering a sour food menu, a rambunctious schedule of Scandinavian musicians and performers, as well as weekend group rates for night stays and a sour food buffet feast for the brave, all set in their Meduseld-like dining hall, complete with Viking props and décor.

SE



A New Reign of Terror Over Iceland

Skálmöld record release concert

Tjarnarbíó, Tjarnargata 12

February 24 at 20:30. 2.900 ISK

A relatively new group of Vikings calling themselves, Skálmöld, plan to terrorize Tjarnarbíó with their big bad, Viking metal on February 24. The occasion? They're celebrating the release of their inaugural album, 'Baldur'. In Norse mythology, Baldur is the son of Odin, who is killed by his blind brother, Höður, who is tricked into the deed by Loki, who is the god of mischief. In fact, Skálmöld tell the whole story in their album. So, if you're fond of the idea of having a Viking saga belted at you, Skálmöld may be worth the gander. Also of note, Tjarnarbíó was arguably everyone's favourite venue at last year's Iceland Airwaves, offering comfortable theatre seating and plenty of room for rocking out.

AA

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Sundays 18:00-22:00

MAP

Places We Like

1 Deli

Bankastræti 14

Getting a good slice of pizza on the go can be an utter ordeal. If you're not careful, you'll frequently wind up paying good money for a cardboard wafer that has been sitting in a heater box for a week. Not at Deli, however. Their slices are consistently awesome and fresh, the topping selection is intriguing and tasteful and, best of all, they're really cheap.

2 ÁTVR (Liquor store)

Austurstræti 10A

In Iceland, alcohol isn't sold in grocery stores or gas stations. You can only buy alcohol over 2.5% in the state-owned liquor stores named ÁTVR, usually called 'Ríkið.' Twelve stores are operated in the capital area and one is located in the city centre. Common opening hours: Mon.-Thu. 11:00-18:00, Fri. 11:00-19:00, Sat. 11:00-18:00.

3 Trúnó

Laugavegur 22

Located just below Barbara, Trúnó is the most recent addition to Reykjavík's straight-friendly gay scene and swings between cosy café by day and lively bar by night. Generally relaxed atmosphere but given to hosting special events and spinning the drinks wheel. AK

4 Vitabar

Bergþórugata 21

Located on the corner of Vitastígur and Bergþórugata, Vitabar (Lighthouse bar) is the place to go when you're in the mood for a slightly soppo yet delicious burger served up with thick French fries and a little of that local pub feeling. In addition to their legendary Gleym-mér-ei (Forget-me-not) blue-cheese burger, they do steaks, egg burgers, beer and schnapps. Good service, fair prices. AK

5 Svarta Kaffi

Laugavegur 54

If you're looking for a hearty, warming lunch at good value then head down to this cosy café for a bowl of their yummy soup. Doing away with dishes and bowls, the soup comes served in a hollowed out loaf of wholewheat bread, and the best bit is that it's refillable if you're still hungry. Sweet! And, when you're done you can enjoy some people watching on Laugavegur below. EF

6 Nonnabiti

Hafnarstræti 9

Delicious and relatively cheap considering how massive and filling their sandwiches are. The Luxury Sub, with salty pork, veggies, sauce and pineapple is a brilliant combination of flavours for late-night munchies. It's just as satisfying and filling during more civilized hours as well. And the service is fast if you're in a rush. CF



7 Eymundsson

Skólavörðustígur 11,

Eymundsson is a chain with several outlets but the one on Skólavörðustígur is the best in town. Housed on the ground floor of what was once a Spron Credit Union, the building has a solid institutional feeling—cosy if that's your bag. The premises are equipped with a coffee shop, tables and sofas to lounge in and the all-glass exterior lets in a lot of light, which is good for reading real books, not facebooks. This Eymundsson also regularly hosts book readings, signings and other small events such as concerts and art exhibitions, organized in a pleasantly spontaneous and laid back way. AK

8 Dillon Rock Bar

Laugavegur 30

Dillon lives up to its full name and is not known to mess around with House or Electronica. Led Zeppelin, Iron Maiden and Black Sabbath is what you'll often hear, along with more local and recent spin offs as well as the odd live show. But if you have other requests, they are accepted and considered by resident DJ, Amma Rokksins, Iceland's grandmother of rock, still spinning her stuff on Saturday nights. AK

9 Hemmi & Valdi

Laugavegur 21

The "colonial store" Hemmi and Valdi was probably 2008's most surprising crowd pleaser. The cosy hangout advanced from being a toasty retreat, where you could get cheap beer and have a quiet chat, into being a chock-full concert venue and an all-night party place. And believe me, the new atmosphere is brilliant. SKK

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Yes, The Reykjavík Grapevine finally has a T-shirt all of its own. Pick up a copy of this sweet, limited edition item at www.grapevine.is. And do it now. For the children.

Raggi from the band Árstíðir is the unstoppable...

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THE ENGLISH PUB
Austurvöllur





For a map of outside downtown Reykjavik visit www.grapevine.is or the Icelandic phonebook website www.ja.is

If you have an iPhone, check out the cool **Locatify** app in the AppStore. It's got a **FREE** guided audio tour of the downtown area, courtesy of your pals at Grapevine.

NEW IN TOWN

UNO cucina Italiana
Hafnarstræti 1-3, 101 Reykjavík

For a relaxed setting and world-class Italian food, UNO cucina italiana purports to have it all. Recently opened on Hafnarstræti (and already a big hit with locals), UNO cucina italiana blends Icelandic ingredients into Italian dishes. They've got an extensive tapas selection and impressive main courses at reasonable prices. And the pasta is made fresh everyday. Want proof? Stop by and watch them make it by hand. Open 'til 23:00 on weekdays and midnight on weekends. -SG

13 Kaffismiðja Íslands
Kárástíg 1

Old fashioned charm is the style of Kaddismiðja, in everything from the decor to the coffee grinders. Off the beaten track, this popular coffee shop is a great spot to sit and read or have a chat with friends. The owners Ingbjörg and Sonja take great pride in the beans they use and the coffee is top notch. You can buy fresh grounds too, in case you just cant get enough. EF

14 Kolaportið
Tryggvagata 19

Reykjavík's massive flea market is a wonderful place to get lost for a few hours, rummaging through stall upon stall of potential treasures. There are heaps of used clothing, knitwear and other yard-sale type goods from decades of yore, and a large food section with fish, meats and baked goods. Check out the vintage post cards and prints at the table near the army surplus. CF

15 Sushibarinn
Laugavegur 2

Sushibarinn is reputedly the best bet for sushi in town since it opened in 2007. This little shop is the most authentic option for sushi in town, with the widest selection around. The price per piece ranges from around 140 ISK to 600 ISK, and they also have good choice of trays and set menus options. If you can't get a set, you can also order from Kofi Tómasar next door and grab a seat there. EF

16 Grænn Kostur
Skólavörðustíg 8b

Serving healthy organic vegan and vegetarian food for well over a decade, Grænn Kostur is the perfect downtown choice for enjoying light, wholesome and inexpensive meals. Try any of their courses of the day, or go for the ever-pleasing spinach lasagne.

17 Handprjónasambandið
Skólavörðustígur 19

The Handknitting Association of Iceland's official store, Handprjónasambandið, sells wool products of uncompromising quality. The store features pullover sweaters, cardigans, mittens, touques and other wool accessories. They're also equipped to answer all sorts of wool-related questions.

18 Café d'Haiti
Geirsgötu 7b / Verbúð 2

The first time I entered this exotic little joint, meaning to buy myself a take-away espresso, I ended up with two kilos of freshly roasted coffee beans due to some language complications and way too much politeness. Since then I have enjoyed probably way-too-many wonderful cups of Haitian coffee, but they're always as nice, so the two kilos were definitely worth it. SKK

10 Hressó
Austurstræti 20

You know, Hressó is basically the only place I go for coffee. Why? Their coffee is decent to excellent, but their forte is surely their wonderful patio, where you can enjoy the spring breeze in the sun, wrap yourself in a blanket beneath an electric heater in January and at all times: smoke. They boast of quite the prolific menu, but I'd reconsider the playlists to tell you the truth, too much of Nickelback really hurts. SKK

11 Bakkus
Tryggvagata 22 – Naustarmegin

Bakkus serves up reasonably priced beer, a really impressive selection of international vodkas and an atmosphere unlike any other in town. An eclectic mix of patrons, regular live music and movie nights keep this place interesting and always inviting. Expect dancing on tables and to-the-death foosball battles. CF

12 Mai Thai
Laugavegur 118

Located across from Hlemmur Bus Station, Mai Thai imports and sells all sorts of products from South East Asia, particularly Thailand and the Philippines. Depending on the day, you might find fresh coriander, mint, chilies, bean sprouts, exotic fruits such as Durian, Carambola or Coconut, as well as year round products such as frozen spring rolls, various kinds of rice sold in bulk bags, sauces and spices galore, egg and rice noodles, Asian snacks, clothes and other knick-knacks. In short, a wide array of what are still considered rare delicacies in Reykjavik. AK

Cinema No2
Icelandic volcano and nature films in the loft at Fisherman's Hut No 2. Just 5 minutes strolling distance from the Reykjavik Museum of Art!

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ART

GALLERIES & MUSEUMS IN FEBRUARY & MARCH

COCKTAIL PLEASURES AND VISUAL STIMULATION

How to use the listings: Venues are listed alphabetically by day. For complete listings and detailed information on venues visit www.grapevine.is

OPENINGS

002 Gallerí

February 5 & 6, 14:00
Ragnar Kjartansson and Snorri Ásmundsson exhibition

Gallery Crymo, Laugavegur 41a
Ömmukaffi fyrir Gróu (Grandma's coffee for Gróa)

Visual arts exhibition by Halla Birgisdóttir
February 4, 20:00
Runs until February 14

Gallery Fold

February 7 & 8, 18:00
Art Auction

Kjarvalsstaðir

February 5
50 Years Of Icelandic Art At The Venice Biennale

Runs until April 25
February 6, 15:00
Libia Castro & Ólafur Ólafsson discuss their exhibit at the Venice Biennale

Kling & Bang

February 26, 17:00
A Learning Project
Project focusing on sensory experiments and intuitional learning

The Living Art Museum

February 26, 20:00
Kjarvalsdeilin
A groupshow featuring the work of 14 artists from around the world
Runs until March 26

The Nordic House

February 12
I Vesterveg
Nordic Contemporary Art
Runs until March 12

Reykjavík Art Museum

Hafnarhús
February 17, 20:00
Design Lecture in collaboration with the Iceland Design Centre

February 20, 15:00

Without Destination

Artists' talk with Kristinn E. Hrafnsson and Inga Þórey Jóhannsdóttir
February 5

Kjarvalsstaðir

Venice Works
Workshop in conjunction with the exhibition 50 Years of Icelandic Art at the Venice Biennale
Runs until April 25

Skaftfell

February 20
Rhubaba Collective
Runs through March 14
March 6

Icelandic Academy and the Deiter Roth Academy exhibition
Runs through May 2

ONGOING

Artótek, Nordic House

Oil paintings by Freyja Ónundardóttir
Runs until March 6

ASÍ Art Museum

Installation by Ingibjörg Jónsdóttir
Video art by Hildigunnur Birgisdóttir
Both run until February 6

Archetypes

Textile doors by Ingibjörg Jónsdóttir
Electrical Fingerprints by Hildigunnur Birgisdóttir

The Art of Games

All run until February 6

The Culture House

Medieval Manuscripts - Eddas and Sagas

Some of Iceland's medieval manuscripts on display
On permanent view

ICELAND :: FILM

A look at the past 100 years in Icelandic filmmaking

Child of Hope - Youth and Jón Sigurðsson

Exploring the life of Icelandic national hero, Jón Sigurðsson, made accessible to children, families, and school groups
Flora Islandica by Eggert Pétursson
271 drawing of flowers in Icelandic nature, is on display.

See My Black Ass

Exhibition of the book See My Black Ass, featuring art from the book and odds and ends from Icelandic folk heritage.
Runs through February

The Library Room

Displaying books of Icelandic cultural history dating from the 16th century to today. Works include oldest published versions of the Sagas, Eddic Poems, and

more.

On permanent view.

Gerðarsafn, Kópavogur

Face of the land: Water, Earth, Sea and Sky

Paintings, watercolours, drawings and photographs by Daði Guðbjörnsson Gunnlaug Scheving, Jóhannes Kjarval, Rúri and Vilhjálmur Þorbergur Bergsson.
Runs until February 20

Gerðuberg

Ormurinn Ógnarlangi (The Fearfully Long Worm)

Tales From Norse Mythology by Kristín Ragna Gunnarsdóttir
Runs until March 13

Hafnarborg

Fragments Of Nature

Eiríkur Smith's abstract paintings 1957-1963

Kjarvals

Stefán Jónsson's 3D reworkings of Jóhannes Kjarval's landscape paintings
Both run until February 6

Iðnó

Cellophane

Sundays and Thursdays, 20:00
Comedy show.

Kling & Bang

Mundi-Morri-Ragnar Fjalar

MoMS Penetration Installation
Runs until February 13

Mokka

Fish / Fiskar

Exhibition of fish drawings by Eduardo Perez Baca
Runs until February 17

Museum of Design and Applied Art,

Garðatorg 1, Garðabær

Harpa Design Competition

Exhibition of the Harpa Concert Hall furniture design competition entries, including the winning entries by Kristín Alda Guðmundsdóttir and Helga Sigurbjarnadóttir.
Runs until March 6

National Gallery of Iceland

Karl Kvaran Retrospective

Runs until February 13

Áfangar/Strides

Permanent exhibition of Icelandic modern painting at the turn of the 20th century

The National Museum

The Photographer Bárður Sigurðsson

Carved Chests & Coffers

Runs until August 31
Make Do & Mend
Repaired objects from the collections of the National Museum
Runs until June 30

Nordic House

Landscapes

Graphic art exhibition by Jens Damkjær Nielsen
Runs until February 13

Church Dresses

by Herder Andersen
Runs until February 6

NYLO/The Living Art Museum

'VIDEORHIZOME' by Marcellvs L.
Runs until February 6

Nútímalist Galería

Photography Exhibition by Valdis Thor

Reykjavík Art Museum

Ásmundarsafn

"I choose blossoming women..."

Woman as Symbol in the Art of Ásmundur Sveinsson

Thoughts In Forms

Informative recreation of Ásmundur Jónsson's art studio

Sleep Light

Lighting installation by Ráðhildur Ingadóttir
All run until April 17

Hafnarhús

Without Destination: Various artists contemplate tourism in Iceland
Runs until April 10

Erró: Collage

Runs until August 28

Hop Hopsi (part of D19 project)

by Hulda Rós Guðnadóttir

Runs until February 27

Erró: Assemblage

an extension of Erró - Collage

Runs until April 10

Kjarvalsstaðir

New Acquisitions 2005-2010

Exhibition of some of the 800 new art acquisitions

Kjarval - Key Works

Runs until April 25

Reykjavík Museum Of Photography

The Light of the Righteous Shines...

Photos of 2008 protests in front of Althingi by Karl R. Lilliendahl
Runs until March 9

Spark Design Space

The Secret Shop/Salakauppa

Finnish designers, Johan Olin and Aamu Song, founders of Company, open their secret shop.
Runs until March 15

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Hressingarskálinn (Hressó) is a Classical Bistro, located in the heart of the city at Austurstræti 20.

Food is served from 10 until 22 every day. On Thursday, Friday and Saturday nights, after the kitchen closes Hressó heats up with live music. Weekends, DJs keep the party going until morning, with no cover charge.



ART & MUSIC

IN FEBRUARY & MARCH



The Merchandise Of Venice

50 Years of Icelandic Art at the Venice Biennale

Exhibit with artist/curator talks and symposiums on select Sundays

February 5 – April 25, Kjarvalsstaðir, Miklatún, 105 Reykjavík, Free.

For the three months leading up to this year's International Art Exhibition in Venice, the Reykjavik Art Museum will be offering a unique retrospective on Iceland's contributions to the Venice Biennale throughout the years. It will be located in Kjarvalsstaðir and feature photos, documentaries and actual pieces by the score or so of delegates we've had, five of whom will be giving special artist talks during the course of the exhibition. This offers a fascinating must-see for any art enthusiast, Icelandic or otherwise, as the Biennale has been home to some of the most accomplished and dedicated artistic visionaries of the century. Visit www.artmuseum.is for more details.

SE



Hjaltalin and other stuff at Café Rosenberg

February 25 and 26, 22:00

Café Rosenberg, entrance usually 1.500 ISK

Café Rosenberg may not be this town's hipster mecca. To be sure, the atmosphere there is more reminiscent of bars in even smaller town Iceland. You may not have the honour of lining-up in the freezing rain to have your toes trod upon or your freshly dry-cleaned jacket drenched in beer, and you may even be forced to hold your own in a semi-audible conversation. But Rosenberg's indoor line-up is worth expanding your cool radar for. They've gradually raised the bar for live music, while still making room for smaller acts for a while now.

This month, Rúnar Þór and Megas will perform at Rosenberg on Feb. 4, and Hjaltalin over the weekend of Feb. 25 - 26, offering us a chance to enjoy big sounds in a little, cosy space. Rosenberg also hosts a bunch of live jazz and blues nights if that's your thing. And other stuff. It might sometimes look like the haunt of a 30+ kind of crowd, but at least they don't do minimum 25, dress code or VIP pretence. At least I don't think so.

AK



Kjarval Division:

Not Just Another Kjarval Tribute

Opening, February 26 at 20:00, Free

The Living Art Museum, Skúlagata 28

His name is Jóhannes Kjarval. Born in 1885, he is arguably Iceland's most renowned landscape painter. He also had a knack for hiding trolls and other mythical elements in his paintings, not unlike those 3D optical illusion prints. There is a museum in Reykjavik named after him and he's been paid his due. But as Snorri Ásmundsson, an artist involved in the forthcoming tribute to Kjarval points out: "He never painted animals and so we have painted them for him." Kjarval Division is the title of the exhibition taking place at Nýló, The Living Art Museum, and it involves fourteen artists, foreign and local, who share a certain 'spiritual vision' regarding Kjarval. The exhibition will be mixed media and involves paintings, performances, video and slideshows. **AK**

Art | Venue finder

ART67
Laugavegur 67 | **F6**
Mon - Fri 12 - 18 / Sat 12 - 16

Artótek
Tryggvagata 15 | **D2**
Mon 10-21, Tue-Thu 10-19, Fri 11-19, Sat and Sun 13-17
www.sim.is/Index/Isenska/Artotek

ASÍ Art Museum
Freygata 41 | **G4**
Tue-Sun 13-17

Árbæjarsafn
Kistuhylur 4

The Culture House
Hverfisgata 15 | **E4**
Open daily 11-17
www.thjodmenning.is

Dwarf Gallery
Grundarstígur 21 | **H6**
Opening Hours: Fri and Sat 18-20
www.this.is/birta/dwarfgallery/dwarfgallery1.html

The Einar Jónsson
Eiríksgrata | **G4**
Tue-Sun 14-17
www.skulptur.is

Gallery Ágúst
Baldursgata 12 | **F4**
Wed-Sat 12-17
www.galleriagust.is

Gallery Fold
Rauðarástígur 14-16 | **G7**
Mon-Fri 10-18 / Sat 11-16 / Sun 14-16
www.myndlist.is

Gallery Kaolin
Ingólfsstræti 8 | **E3**

Gallery Kling & Bang
Hverfisgata 42 | **E5**
Thurs-Sun from 14-18
this.is/klingogbang/

Gerðuberg Cultural Centre
Gerðuberg 3-5
Mon-Thu 11-17 / Wed 11-21 / Thu-Fri 11-17 / Sat-Sun 13-16
www.gerduberg.is

Hitt Húsið - Gallery Tukt
Pósthússtræti 3-5 | **E3**
www.hittusid.is

i8 Gallery
Tryggvagata 16 | **D2**
Tue-Fri 11-17 / Sat 13-17 and by appointment. www.i8.is

Living Art Museum
Skúlagata 28 | **F6**
Wed, Fri-Sun 13-17 / Thu 13-22. www.nylo.is

Hafnarborg
Strandgötu 34, Hafnarfjörður

Mokka Kaffi
Skólavörðustíg 3A | **F4**

The National Gallery of Iceland
Frikirkjuvegur 7 | **F3**
Tue-Sun 11-17
www listasafn.is

The National Museum
Suðurgata 41 | **G1**
Open daily 10-17
natmus.is

The Nordic House
Sturlugata 5 | **H1**
Tue-Sun 12-17
www.nordice.is/

Núttímalist Galleria
Skólavörðustígur 3a | **F4**

Restaurant Reykjavík
Vesturgata 2 | **D2**

Reykjavík 871+/-2
Aðalstræti 17 | **D2**
Open daily 10-17

Reykjavík Art Gallery
Skúlagata 28 | **F6**
Tuesday through Sunday 14-18

Reykjavík Art Museum
Open daily 10-16
www listasafnreykjavikur.is

Ásmundur Sveinsson Sculpture Museum
Sigtún Hafnarhús
Tryggvagata 17 | **D2**
Kjarvalsstaðir Flókagata | **I7**

Reykjavík Maritime Museum
Grandagarður 8 | **C3**

Reykjavík Museum of Photography
Tryggvagata 16 | **D2**
Weekdays 12-19 / Sat-Sun 13-17 - www.ljosmyndasafn-reykjavikur.is

Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum
Laugarnestangi 70

SÍM, The Association of Icelandic Artists
Mon-Fri 10-16
Hafnarstræti 16 | **D3**

Spark, Design Space
Klapparstíg 33 | **E4**
www.sparkdesignspace.com

Listasafn Reykjavíkur
Reykjavik Art Museum



Erró -
Assemblage



Erró -
Collage



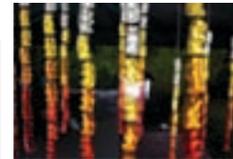
Without Destination -
Þorgerður Ólafsdóttir



Ásmundur
Sveinsson



Kjarval -
Key Works



Hulda Rós
Guðnadóttir -
D19



50 Years of
Icelandic Art
at the Venice
Biennale -
Ragnar
Kjartansson

Reykjavik Art Museum

Hafnarhús

18 Sept 2010 - 28 Aug 2011
Erró - Collage

20 Jan - 10 April
Without Destination

20 Jan - 28 Feb
D19 Hulda Rós
Guðnadóttir

20 Jan - 10 April
Erró - Assemblage

Hafnarhús
Tryggvagata 17
Open daily
10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Thursdays 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.

www.artmuseum.is

Kjarvalsstaðir

3 May 2010 - 25 Apr 2011
Kjarval - Key works

5 February - 25 April
50 Years of Icelandic Art
at the Venice Biennale

5 February - 25 April
Venice Works - Workshop

Kjarvalsstaðir
Flókagötu
Open daily
10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

artmuseum@reykjavik.is

Ásmundarsafn

1 May 2010 - 17 Apr 2011
"I choose blossoming
women ..." - Woman as
Symbols in the Art of
Ásmundur Sveinsson

20 May 2010 - 17 Apr 2011
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Chinese And American Food

New restaurant critic Madeleine T goes international



“For the best burger west of Vatnajökull, I know where to return”

Since its television debut, Hamborgarafabrikkan has been all the rage in Reykjavík. With interminable waiting lists and queues out the door, I have been expecting a punchline from an outdated Seinfeld rerun, and the hype to simmer down to a reasonable wait. Instead, this burger craze continues into yet another season. A burger joint is not the place for one to make a reservation, not now, not ever, regardless if Ferran Adria himself is flipping burgers. Simple principle, full stop.

Almost a year on, they must be doing something right. Curiosity piqued and expectations high, I gave the table wait another go. Greeted by loud dance music, I thought I was in the wrong queue. This was early Thursday evening, and we are told it would be a 45-minute wait for a table for two. Hoping this was an exaggeration, I thought we would wait ten minutes, otherwise leave. No burger is worth waiting longer than ten minutes for, is it?

The waiting area spills into the lobby of that carbuncle of a building

that scars the Reykjavík skyline at Borgartún. This is your chance to experience Icelandic architecture at its worst. We wait in the company of a nursery of toddlers floundering about for lack of colouring books, parental guidance, or batteries for their portable game systems. The acoustics of the unfinished open concrete lobby are amplified, and after 15 minutes, I am ready for a sedative. Was it the lack of a proper waiting lounge that brought out my impatience? The stiff office lobby furniture felt like a long wait for a boring job interview or legal deposition, not a dinner.

The dance beat carries on, and I loosen another button on my collar. My anxiety oscillates between hunger, and the thought of this empty tower being as structurally sound as the apartment blocks on Skúlagata, the ones with the tiles constantly blowing off. I am far enough away to only hear the kick of the bass drum, imagining the tiles loosening with each beat, but I am close enough to smell the burgers. Perhaps I should have brought a book, ‘In Search of Lost Time’.

Hamborgarafabrikkan

Höfðatún 2



I enjoy a good burger, but I also value 45 minutes. And I already know that hands down, nothing can beat the reindeer burger at Hamborgarabúllan in Egilsstaðir. How close to Egilsstaðir would I be had I decided to drive there instead? Plus, my neighbourhood bodega already makes the best burger west of Vatnajökull, and it would be digested by now. So what is all of this buzz about? My name is called.

The place has the look and gimmick-laden feel of an American chain restaurant, except the staff is not wearing goofy hats or constantly bothering you. The ‘Eyes Wide Shut’ lighting on the ceiling is a nice touch, but not when reflected off the golden mirrored tabletops. Is anyone this vain to want to look at themselves while eating? I was afraid that if I ordered a Coke, the waiter would rail up some

Food & Drink | Venue finder

3 Frakkar Baldursgata 14 G4	Balthazar Hafnarstræti 1-3 D2	Geysir Bar/Bistro Aðalstræti 2 D2	Icelandic Fish & Chips Tryggvagata 8 B2	E4	Sjávarkjallarinn Aðalstræti 2 D2
Aktu Taktu Skúlagata 15 E6	Bæjarins Beztu Tryggvagata D3	Garðurinn Klappastígur 37 F4	Indian Mango Frakkastígur 12 F5	Nonnabíti Hafnarstræti 9 D3	Sólón Bankastræti 7a E3
Alibaba Veltusund 3b D2	Brons Pósthússtræti 9 E3	Glaetan book café Laugavegur 19 F5	Jómfrúin Lækjargata 4 E3	O Sushi Lækjargata 2A E3	Sushibarinn Laugavegur 2 E4
American Style Tryggvagata 26 D2	Café Cultura Hverfisgata 18 E4	Grái Kötturinn Hverfisgata 16A E4	Kaffi Hljómaland Laugavegur 21 E4	Pisa Lækjargötu 6b E3	Sushismiðjan Geirsgötu 3 B2
Argentina Steakhouse Barónstígur F6	Café d'Haiti Tryggvagata 12 D2	Grillhúsið Tryggvagata 20 D2	Kaffifélagið Skólavörðustígur 10 F5	Pizza King Hafnarstræti 18 D3	Svarta Kaffi Laugavegur 54 F5
Austurlanda-hraðlestin Hverfisgata 64A F5	Café Loki Lokastígur 28 G4	Habibi Hafnarstræti 20 E3	Kaffitár Bankastræti 8 E4	Pizza Pronto Vallarstræti 4 E2	Sægreifinn Verbúð 8, Geirsgata B2
Á Næstu Grösom Laugavegur 20B E4	Café Paris Austurstræti 14 E3	Hamborgarabúlla Tómasar ("Bullan") Geirsgata 1 B2	Kaffivagninn Grandagarður 10 A1	Pizzaverksmiðjan Lækjargötu 8 E3	Tapas Laugavegur 3B D2
B5 Bankastræti 5 E3	Café Roma Rauðarárstígur 8 G7	Híðla Bátar Ingólfstorg D2	Kofi Tómasar Frænda Laugavegur 2 E4	Prikið Bankastræti 12 E3	Thorvaldsen Austurstræti 8 D2
Bakkus Tryggvagata 22 D2	Deli Bankastræti 14 E5	Hornið Hafnarstræti 15 D3	Kornið Lækjargata 4 E3	Ráðhúskaffi E2 Tjarnargata 11	Tíu Dropar Laugavegur 27 E5
Ban Thai Laugavegur 130 G7	Domo Pínghóltsstræti 5 E3	Hótel Holt Bergstaðarstræti 37 G3	Krua Thai Tryggvagata 14 D2	Santa Maria Laugavegur 22A F5	Tívoli Laugavegur 3 E4
Basil & Lime Klapparstíg 38 E4	Einar Ben Veltusundi E2	Humarhúsið Amtmannstígur 1 E3	La Primavera Austurstræti 9 D2	Shalimar Austurstræti 4 D2	Vegamót Vegamótastígur 4 E4
Babalú Skólavörðustígur 22A G5	Eldsmiðjan Bragagata 38A G4	Hressó Austurstræti 20 E4	Lystin Laugavegur 73 F6	Sifur Pósthússtræti 11 E3	Við Tjómína Templarasund 3 E2
	Fiskmarkaðurinn Aðalstræti 12 D2		Mokka Skólavörðustígur 3A	Vitabar Bergþórugata 21 G5	

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lines on our mirrored table, as it was fitting to the music.

I stuck to a water, and the simplest of burgers, the 'Morthens'. All of the other burgers are complicated melodies of toppings that seem like they are either arranged to disguise a mediocre burger, or frustrate the chef with endless customizations. There should just be an option to design your own burger, like a pizza pie, right? I choose the self described, most honest and straightforward of all of the burgers, named after legendary pop star Bubbi Morthens. With 39 solo records credited to his name, one might expect as many toppings, but this burger seemed the most basic of the bunch.

It arrives, looking like a Whitecastle

in Chernobyl, novelly square in shape, but twenty times the size. I double fist it, an overdue anticipation draws it towards my salivating mouth, and juices run down my arms before I can even tear the flesh, close my mouth, and fully swallow. Steamy. Charred to perfection. Well worth every second of the wait. I retreat into a gluttonous ecstasy where time slows and all sounds disappear like a winter's night. My date mouths something inaudible. I am oblivious to all surroundings. The sensory deprivation is short lived, derailed by a bingo call announcing yet another birthday. I knew this sensation would not last forever.

This is a great place for an awkward date where conversation is un-obligatory

or your romance has not quite reached that intimate level of talking yet. The table doubles as a mirror to check for gristle in your teeth, sauce on the beard, or smudged lipstick. For a good honest burger in an equally humble setting, I will stick to my neighbourhood bodega. For the best burger west of Vatnajökull, I know where to return. And like the savvy traveller, I will come prepared for delays, armed with good headphones to cancel the cacophony of noise, perhaps a good book, and an inflatable neck pillow for the wait.

MADELEINE T
HVALREKI



“It would be a pity for anyone to miss this”

I must have walked by this place a hundred times since it opened on Lækjargata in September, learning of its existence only through word of mouth. I usually cringe at the mention of Chinese takeaway because it always tends to be a desperate last resort at some obscene hour when you are either not ready to put your clothes back on, or it is the only menu that has not found its way into the recycle bin. But this is Reykjavík and not Manhattan. This is the first time I have even seen Chinese takeaway in Iceland. Is this really a first? Or, did the previous wave come and go overnight, washing over Reykjavík like the great bagel craze of 2002? Regardless, there are more choices in an American election than options for Icelandic carry out, so I welcome everything new: rollerblades, stone washed jeans, Chinese takeaway.

A fantasy of Szechuan Hotpot and hundred year old eggs danced through my head before entering this basement hideaway, but the modest, familiar decor kept my expectations at a pedestrian canter. I glanced at the bleak, laminated menu before asking the proprietor to just surprise me. I like surprises. I actually like when a chef prepares whatever they feel like cooking, as if the meal is for the family. You either taste the love, or you taste the leftovers that the restaurant is about to

toss. My request was a gamble anyway since I usually order the wrong thing when it comes to Chinese takeaway. I eat half, and then live with the guilt of tossing the rest while there are starving children in China.

Proprietor Ying Li, wife, and young son disappeared into the kitchen. I sat alone in the restaurant, watching footwear pass-by, guessing the sounds of what vegetables were being chopped. Something crisp, something fresh. Woks sizzled, and smells emanated. If only this aroma could reach the streets there would be queues. All three emerged with enough boxes to feed us all, yet packed them away for their lone customer of the evening and her unseen companion. Details were given about each container, and which sauce is to accompany each dish, with the reassurance of no MSG. But, was this really just for two people at hotdog prices? I was eager to get home with my bounties.

We began with homemade dumplings of fresh pork seasoned to perfection, tucked inside a fresh rolled pasta pouch, and lightly sautéed. There was no need for the sauce. I could have made a meal out of the dumplings alone. The other dishes were cooked as if we were foreign dignitaries at a Chinese Trade Summit. A lamb dish with hints of Szechuan pepper and a

Kína Flavour
Lækjargata 10



variety of fresh seasonal vegetables, a dish of twice cooked pork, and another of fried shrimp. Each dish carried an authentic, homemade signature. This was not garden-variety bottled china sauce found at a grocery store, but a family recipe. We spent the weekend eating this, and look forward to plenty more.

It would be a pity for anyone to miss this, and without a proper sign or cooking with the door open to lure in the passer-by, this gem may just go unnoticed. Hopefully, word will carry, and Kína Flavour will become a permanent option when one considers takeaway in Reykjavík.

MADELEINE T
HVALREKI

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The Sugarcubes

World Domination Or Death!

Scoring a 'Single of the Week' in the English music press doesn't necessarily mean the instant access to the big time, but in The Sugarcubes' case it did. After 'Birthday' got the honour, One Little Indian Records was swamped with interview requests and offers from record companies, both indies and majors. In the same week in October 1987, The Sugarcubes graced the front covers of both *The NME* and *Melody Maker*. As would become customary, Björk was put in the forefront while the band stood in the back, a bit out of focus. As music from Iceland was an exotic novelty, most of the interviews became a tourism promotion for Iceland—"Such a strange country, they eat puffins and drink Brennivín all the time, etc., etc..." This would be the standard style of Icelandic music coverage for decades to come.

SURREALISTIC POP

As was to be expected, the attention from abroad increased the band's Icelandic fan base. The venues were suddenly packed with hipsters when the band played local shows. All kinds of wild record deal offers were dutifully covered by the Icelandic media, and Elert B. Schram, editor of the newspaper *DV*, wrote an outraged editorial when the band declined an offer that amounted to "a brand new trawler". For years to come Sugarcubes bassist Bragi Ólafsson would send Elert postcards from all over the world, relaying made-up excess stories of the band on the road.

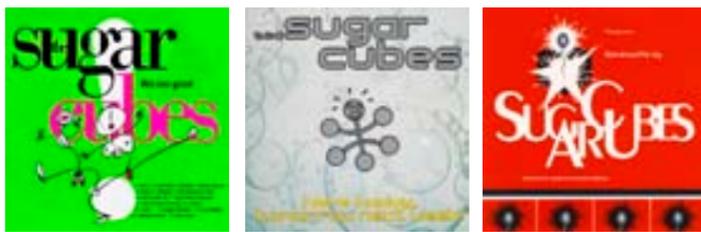
Eventually, as "artistic freedom" was regarded over cashmoney, the expanding One Little Indian Records went on to sign the band for Europe while Elektra Records got the American deal. The Sugarcubes' first album, 'Life's Too Good'—a title derived from poet Jóhannar's sigh of enjoyment after a hearty meal—was released in April 1988 and scored glowing reviews in Europe. The album contains such classic surrealist pop songs as 'Cold Sweat', 'Deus' and 'Motorcrash', which were all released as singles. The video for 'Motorcrash' featured the slick American sedan cars that the Sugarcubes had spent some of their record deal advance on. The video was directed by Björk's new boyfriend, Óskar Jónasson, who would later direct videos for 'Planet' and 'Regína' as well. In other love affair news, the new girlfriend of guitarist Þór Eldon, Margrét Örnólfsdóttir (of *Risaöðlan*), turned up on keyboards that the summer, completing the band's line-up.

Besides spending their new found pop money on American cars, The Sugarcubes were always very kind and supportive to up-and-coming Icelandic bands. They released their music on their Smekkleysa imprint and brought some of them along on tour, like my own band *S. H. Draumur*, which supported them in England in May 1988. Later, *Ham*, *Risaöðlan* (*Reptile*) and *Bless* (me again) would take baby steps on foreign soil with support from Smekkleysa, playing for more than the usual crowd of 200 Icelanders and having their records released abroad under the far-fetched war cry of "world domination or death!"

SHOOT THE SINGER!

After Europe, The Sugarcubes went to conquer America. The highlight of the tour was undoubtedly in September of 1988, at New York's *The Ritz*. David Bowie—who had jokingly been put on all of Kukl's guest lists—finally showed up, and Iggy Pop—an old favourite—did too. At the time, 'Life's Too Good' had sold about 100,000 copies in England and 350,000 in America. Eventually the album would sell well over a million copies. Finally, after decades of struggle and starry-eyed expectations, Iceland had its first universally known—even famous—rock band.

At this point in time The Sugarcubes



were put in rock star mode with endless tours all over the globe. The second album saw release in October of 1989. It was released in English as 'Here Today, Tomorrow Next Week' (quoting Toad from 'The Wind In The Willows') and in Icelandic as 'Illur arfur!' ("Evil Heritage!"). It was the Sugarcubes only Icelandic language LP, even though the band always sang Icelandic when they performed back home.

A new album meant more touring. "Around this time we turned into a rock band machine and lost sight of the creative side," Einar Örn later admitted. The second album sold a bit less than the debut, and in the English media the backlash hit full force. Einar especially got the brunt of the UK press' ire—*Melody Maker*'s John White went as far as suggesting the singer should be shot so his yap would stop. All the endless touring got on people's nerves, so after the band finally reached Iceland in May 1990, it took a well-deserved break.

MY HEAD WAS ABOUT TO EXPLODE

In retrospect the band was mentally finished at this time, but still it would dangle on until 1992. During their break, Björk sang Icelandic fifties pop songs on the 'Gling Gló' album with The Guðmundur Ingólfsson Trio (an album that keeps selling to this day, and remains her bestselling album in Iceland), and her and most of the other 'cubes got together in a 14 strong big band, Konrad B's Big Band ('Konrad B' being Bragi the bassist on drums). The band's cantor was Sugarcubes drummer Sigtryggur, appearing as "Bogomil Font". After the Sugarcubes, Bogomil would lead his own band, *The Millionaires*, performing mambo, salsa and cha cha cha, gaining a considerable local following. One of few Sugarcubes gigs at this time was at their old hangout, tiny club *Duus Hús*, where they played at the request of the French president Jacques Mitterand and French Culture Minister (and Sugarcubes fan) Jacques Lang.

Björk was especially tired of the status quo. "The Sugarcubes were a group of people that met at my place," she said in a 1990 interview. "We were different people, did not have much in common musically, had very different ideas of how to do things, but decided to form a pop band as a joke. We thought this was very funny, but we were always in the process of forming other bands. Accidentally this hobby thing just became the main thing. I realised last

year (1989) that all of my time was being spent on a hobby."

Björk's musical search led her towards the electric scene. She made some music with 808 State in Manchester just to get it off her chest. "I had to do it 'cos my head was about to explode," she later remarked.

BONO CALLS

There was still one more Sugarcubes album to be made according to their contract. Recording commenced in May of 1991 in a studio in Woodstock, New York. Björk tried to get her electric ideas across, to little avail. The recording process was a tiring chore and after the album was finished, Björk decided to quit the band. However, she agreed to do a few promotional tours beforehand.

'Stick Around For Joy' came out in February 1992 and included still more happy pop, with one of the songs, 'Hit', sailing to #17 on the English chart, matching Mezzoforte's chart success of 1983.

Offers for American support slots came in from The Cure and The B-52's, but it wasn't until U2 called that The Sugarcubes said: "OK, let's do it." So during October and November of 1992, The Sugarcubes appeared in 17 of the 'Zooropa' concerts across America, performing for a total of 700,000 people. A remix album, 'It's It', (some members referred to it as "It's Shit") was released before Christmas 1992, and the band played its final concert at Reykjavík club *Tunglið* at that same time. No death certificate was issued, but the band was no more (at least not until their 2004 comeback gig in Reykjavík).

Björk was well on her way with her debut LP (second if you count her 1977 album). For her, it was no hobby music, but the real thing. The album, 'Debut', was scheduled for release in July of 1993 on One Little Indian. The most optimistic people at the label thought it might shift 20,000 copies. ♪

Photos:

1. Happy Happy Joy Joy – The Sugarcubes in 1989.
2. The Sugarcubes' three studio albums, 'Life's Too Good', 'Here Today Tomorrow Next Week' and 'Stick Around For Joy'.

Dark Music Days

Reykjavík's Dark Music Days Festival (*Myrkir Músikdagur*) is a bit like *Iceland Airwaves*, if *Airwaves* catered mostly to hip classical musicians, threw in a ton of contrabass instruments, and was operated entirely by about four people. This year, the usual multi-week festival was squashed into three-and-a-half days, exhausting my ears in the same way as *Airwaves* did, only this time with more sixteenth notes and fewer earplugs.

THURSDAY

The festival kicked off with a grand concert by the Iceland National Symphony. Daniel Bjarnason's conducting of György Ligeti's 'Atmospheres' squeezed out of the double bass section a low sustained note more fantastically vulgar than I've ever heard in orchestral music. Steingrímur Rohloff's 'Clarinet Concerto' could have just given me the parts of the piece featuring growling, didgeridoo-like squeals for the bass clarinet, and I would have been perfectly content. The composition, and Rúnar Óskarsson's performance as soloist, particularly showcased the bass clarinet as well-balanced against the forces of the full orchestra.

Daniel conducted his own 'Birting', the crowning achievement of the evening. Daniel's work was full of primordial shifts of light and darkness, mysterious and unexpected sounds at just the right moments. I went home comforted.

FRIDAY

The onslaught of events began on Friday at lunchtime, with one-hour events placed at roughly three-hour intervals until late in the night. At Kristín Jónína's lecture, Þorkell Sigurbjörnsson mentioned that for years he had to have an unlisted phone number after receiving threatening calls—apparently nothing made Icelanders angrier than his hosting an avant-garde music programme on the radio during rush hour.

Sigurður Sævarsson's 'Missa Pacis' was hauntingly beautiful, performed in the darkly lit *Neskirka*. The restraint of the vocal writing made the work's deliciously full moments shine even more. It is soon to be a *Hljómeyki* Choir hit when it's released on CD.

The electro-acoustic performances at *Hugmyndahúsið* in the late evening included several works featuring altered found sounds. Ríkhartur Friðriksson stood on stage for his piece, writing out computer code that propelled the work in real-time. Strangely enthralling.

SATURDAY

The highlight from *Hnúkapeyr Wind Octet* was 'Andar' by Anna Þorvaldsdóttir, containing ideas 'under the influence of breathing and tidal waves'. It was also a perfect nod to the sounds of pounding waves of rain on *Kjarvalsstaðir's* roof. Dark Music Days this year was sponsored by Iceland's worst winter weather: wind, rain, slush, and snow coming at you from all directions.

Kira Kira's late-night concert at *Norðurljósin* was...eclectic. I bet that she could leave out the heavy reverb and echo effects and still have interesting pieces left over. For most of the evening I thought to myself, if I would feature all these low-sounding instruments: double basses, cornet, contrabass clarinet—I'd definitely have a tuba as well.

SUNDAY

Pulling myself together after a long night (it was the weekend, after all), I took a bus to *CAPUT's* performance of Atli Heimir Sveinsson's '5-hjóladrif' at *Norðurljósin*. The two dancers on stage sadly only performed during a fifth of the work, but Atli Heimir's multi-genre, vigorous and virtuosic (read: 'crazy') writing held my interest.

The final concert of the festival was held at the National Gallery (*Listasafn Íslands*), an acoustically dull but obviously artful venue for the Reykjavík Chamber Orchestra. Hlynur Vilmarsson's 'Héxié' for piano, strings, and low-frequency pulsing electronics conveyed a stillness that resonated the best through the museum's space. Arnold Schoenberg's 'Verklärte Nacht' was the final work on the programme, with intense anguish that melted into sighs of romance, and finally into an uplifting spiritual breath. It was also the bookend to the symphony concert a few nights before; it tied together many of the works over the weekend that seemed to explore inhalation and exhalation, the passions of simply being alive.

These kinds of festivals are a rare opportunity to hear so much contemporary music for such a reasonable price. Much like I experienced at *Airwaves*, I found it best to just be a 'sponge', soaking up all of the highs and lows of new classical music in Iceland today, and taking them home to ponder.

✉ NATHAN HALL



Ask The Slave

The Order Of Things

asktheslave

Fuck the haters

This is the type of music that experts and self-appointed authorities on what's cool make fun of or are intimidated by. 'The Order Of Things' is equal part a display of: the joyousness of playing with individuals that gel together, yeswecanism (evident in how they rejoice in riffs, vocals and song structures most avoid) and an unashamed homage to their influences (*Theater Of The Absurd*, *Mr. Bungle*, *Fantomas* and metal). Going in, I had my reservations. Coming out, I was happy as a donkey in an '80s arcade. At first the herky-jerky nature of the whole thing annoyed me but quickly it made all the sense in the world. It flows and these guys have a panache rarely found in Icelandic bands that don't fit particular trends.

If you couldn't stomach proggy music that's also abrasive and scatterbrained, you will not like this. But if you want to try, it's the best place to start. 'The Order Of Things' is energetic, twisted, eventful, oddly catchy and fun as hell. It'll give you plenty to chew on.

✉ BIRKIR FJALAR VÍÐARSSON



Prins Póló

Jukk

www.prinspolo.com

If a winning formula ain't broke, don't try to fix it.

With 'Átján og hundrað', Prins Póló created one of Iceland's more hideously catchy songs of 2009. Fast forward a year and Svavar Pétur Eysteinnsson's (of *Skakkamanage*) one-man project (now called Prins Póló) again enchants with the same lo-fi acoustic pop, this time with the debut album 'Jukk'.

However on this occasion there's a more expansive, psychedelic bent to the music, as if Svavar has just discovered the Beta Band's '3 EPs' for the first time. The songs sound loose and free, usually starting with a simple continuous acoustic riff that's allowed to roam the hills before the other instruments realise it's missing and decide to wander off to find it. Despite the greater ambition, it's still as ramshackle as ever (the tambourine bashing on 'Njóttum afans' sound so out of time it's practically in time). Many albums often try to do the whole 'happy loose pop' shtick, but Jukk not only pulls it off, it make it look easy as well.

✉ BOB CLUNESS

Music | End Of Days



You Don't Know What You've Got 'Til It's Temporarily Closed For Relocation After Having To Make Way For A Hotel Lobby'

-Havarí interviewed, for posterity's sake

By the time this goes to print, Havarí will be shut. Temporarily closed while they seek a new locale, the independent record store/bookstore/small venue/art gallery/recording studio/coffee shop has been forced to make way for a new downtown hotel after seventeen months of centrally located awesomeness.

Initially opened as an outlet store for local record labels Kimi and Borgin, Havarí gradually became all the above-mentioned things as time progressed, with the collective of artists/musicians who ran it, keeping an open mind as to the nature of the place. Word spread and people rather started taking them for granted, but their last month in business saw a flurry of press attention as everyone suddenly realised what was being lost here. The Grapevine, spineless conformists that we are, jumped on the bandwagon and hastily discussed some sad facts with proprietors Svavar Pétur Eysteinnsson and Kristján Freyr Halldórsson.

THE COSIEST WAREHOUSE IN TOWN

The general attitude now is that the record store is a dying thing. Was Havarí your way of trying to save the record store?

Svavar: I have no particular aspirations on behalf of The Album, in the physical sense of the word. I don't want to rescue it; it'll just go its own way. Maybe this is a natural result of the fact that the record store is dying, it has to adapt and evolve into something else, something culturally and musically active. We've used this space for various different things, we've recorded albums in the basement. And then, of course, Kimi Records came and

turned my studio into their warehouse. But it's a very cosy warehouse. The cosiest warehouse in town. I want it to be like a downtown creative workspace.

So you do definitely think there is a place for a creative workspace like Havarí in Reykjavík?

Svavar: Yes, especially if you do it carelessly enough... don't take it too seriously, then people will like it more. We were always ready to give it all up tomorrow. We took things day-by-day, week-by-week. If we don't feel like doing this tomorrow, we'll just close. We never made any kind of commitment... but we love running this place, and we will keep doing it.

PROSTITUTION AND DRUGS

Kristján: I personally think it's a crying shame what's happening, what with the hotel and all. You would've thought that with the Best Party in City Hall, this kind of thing would change, but nothing has happened. The only real progress being made, has been exactly this kind of activity, the kind Svavar and his ilk have been involved in the downtown area, [vintage clothing store] Gyllti Kötturinn and these design spaces, young people trying to establish themselves. The fact of the matter is, however, that places like that [Kristján points across the street to a vacant storefront that once housed a Subway], the rent there costs 1.000.000 ISK a month. If you can't sell teenagers oblong pieces of bread, then what can you do? Are we going to have to resort to prostitution and drugs? I don't want to get political, but we need to think about what kind of downtown Reykjavík we want to have. Do we want hotels and puffin shops [derogatory term for tourist shops]...

Svavar:... that are designed according to some imaginary concept of what tourists need. You can't imagine that all tourists want to do is hang out in hotels and collect puffin dolls.

SHITTING ONE'S COLLECTIVE PANTS (OR FAILURE TO DO SO)

Kristján: It's a degrading portrait of tourists; I don't think tourists are idiots. Cultural tourism has grown a lot, and Havarí is a direct response to that. Tourists come here and piss themselves out of happiness... they aren't buying some puffin... I mean, some of them do, but not everybody who comes to Iceland buys a puffin keychain and a picture of Geysir. It is a fact that most tourists who come to Iceland come for the culture: music and other art. It's sad that there is no presentation of these things in downtown Reykjavík. The only people who so far haven't shit their collective pants in Iceland are the artists.

Svavar: When Iceland is advertised, or attempts are made to improve our image abroad, it's the artists who get the call. They're asked to do pro bono work to present Iceland as having a flourishing culture, but the people in charge do nothing to support these artists or give them creative space. Sure, there is some funding, but...

Kristján:...but in the end, city officials have yet to formulate a policy regarding these matters. It's Reykjavík's existential crisis: what kind of downtown do we want. ♪

SINDRI ELDON
HÖRÐUR SVEINSSON

Music | CD Reviews

— Klassart's blues-y country (or is that country-style blues? Who can tell?), seems to have mistaken mellowness and intimacy for boredom and a complete and total lack of dynamism. Tiresome, plodding blues guitar lines, with country melodies that have shrivelled up from being out in the sun for too long. Oh dear.
♪ - BOB CLUNESS

<< **Klassart**
Bréf frá París

fridaklassart

The sound of slow death

Lifun >>

Fögur fyrirheit

lifungerirutfrakeflavik

Acoustic pop as mains hum ...

+ The beginning of Lifun's debut album seems designed to bring out feelings of despondency with trite pop pap that's as disposable as last week's newspapers. Improvements occur, but while they can play and sing nice melodies you get the feeling that this group of musicians really isn't stretching itself that much.
♪ - BOB CLUNESS

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Art | As means of philosophising about stuff

WHERE TO, FOLKS?

Words

Markús Þór Andrésson

Illustration

Porgersður Ólafsdóttir, *You've Got a Face With a View*, 2011



Our desire to travel and the nature of our relationship with the places that we go to see is the topic of an international art exhibition, conference and publication entitled 'Without Destination' at Reykjavík Art Museum's Hafnarhús. The project proposes an insight into man's need to position himself within the world, into how he relates to his environment and how this relationship has developed towards what we today know as tourism.

Coming from an art background as curator, I collaborate with the geographer, Gunnþóra Ólafsdóttir, on the project as a whole. Having both worked as tour guides in Iceland, we find it interesting to observe the local changes in the field of tourism over the last fifteen years. I had not been on the road for a while so I decided last summer to do a ten day tour with a group of people from all parts of the world, partly as preparation for the project 'Without Destination'.

MOUNTAIN HIGH, VALLEY LOW

Talking to travellers about their expectations and experience is very interesting, reflecting the extent to which people attempt to match a certain image that they have in their minds with what they encounter. It is very different how much room people leave beyond the preconceived idea when taking in the environment. It also matters a great deal how people are introduced to the places they go to, what sort of history and infrastructure you find between a traveller and a place.

A walk in Stóruð in the East Fjords, where we stopped the coach in a mountain pass and followed a trail to a valley of extraordinary beauty, left everyone with a different personal experience. However, a walk through the valley of Dimmuborgir near Lake Mývatn, which offers no less a magnificent landscape, seemed to make no special impression

"In Iceland today a tour guide can still take groups to both kinds of sites, where on the one hand people will leave with a personal impression of a place in their mind, and where on the other hand they will take with them an identical image of a destination on their cameras. The change I notice in the last fifteen years within the field of local tourism is that it is increasingly leaning towards the latter notion.

on people.

The fact that in Stóruð we met only one other group, whereas in Dimmuborgir there were around thirty, might have had something to do with it. Or was it the fact that someone recently decided that Dimmuborgir should be the home of "The Icelandic Yule Lads"? Now, you can follow the trail down in the valley guided by signs displaying the rascals goofing around. A shop selling Yule Lad kitsch has risen on top of a cliff overlooking the valley, making sure that it does not escape your sight wherever you may find yourself in this magical landscape.

In Iceland today a tour guide can still take groups to both kinds of sites, where on the one hand people will leave with a personal impression of a place in their mind, and where on the other hand they will take with them an identical image of a destination on their cameras. The change I have noticed in the last fifteen years within the field of local tourism is that it is increasingly leaning towards the latter notion.

ANOTHER TIME, ANOTHER PLACE

The elements at stake in a personal engagement with the environment are subject to many contemporary artists and the aim with the exhibition is to bring together works that elaborate on this engagement. In many different case studies offered by artists they refer to our capability to find ourselves in two places at the same time—one physically in the here and now, while in our minds we can be in another place and another time entirely. Some projects aim at uniting both senses in the same moment within the museum experience, while others play with this double feature relating to a faraway place in the present work.

Another repeated element in the works is the notion of the creative relationship of an individual with his or her surroundings within a constant state

of flux. The interplay of identity, place and time are made to provide unlimited possibilities for unique experiences where- and whenever. As the ventriloquist Willie Tyler was quoted saying: "The reason lightning doesn't strike twice in the same place is that the same place isn't there the second time."

This is how Fiete Stolte, a young German artist, displays a series of Polaroid photographs taken from the same lighthouse tower in the West Fjords. Eight similar sequences show the same surroundings depending on time of day and weather conditions. The same place, yet always different.

Húbert Nói Jóhannesson creates paintings that refer both to specific places within the museum—literally one-to-one paintings of architectural details of the building—and also to faraway places, specified with accurate GPS markers.

The origin of tourism as we know it today is the topic of the Swedish artist Johan Furåker and local artist Unnar Örn who both study historical archives in their work. When the European middle class started having leisure time and could save some money, travelling soon became an important factor of its identity. Certain places became landmarks through which a person could establish their status in society.

This trend also came to Iceland, if somewhat later than it began in Europe, and people would create their own leisure destinations on the island. The notion of travel and the relationship people have with places remains quite similar today as it did in the heyday of tourism over a century and a half ago. These similarities are underlined in works that bring the viewer back and forth in the history of wanderlust.

THE JOURNEY, NOT THE DESTINATION

'Without Destination' is a project that raises questions about where Iceland



is heading today as a tourist destination. With the steady increase of local and international travellers wanting to visit the island, some places are already facing overexposure and reaching their limits of sustainability. Still, it becomes more and more apparent that tourism is not as much defined by the number of tourists as it is by the mindfulness of the toured. How is Iceland living up to the challenge of being a popular destination?

While the element of individual enterprise may be charming it is another thing when a nature reserve of rare beauty like Dimmuborgir becomes someone's playground for the marketing of the Icelandic Yule Lads. In an era of expanding experience economy it seems somewhat anachronistic to steer tourism down the road of product-centred economy. The valley, in this case, has changed from being a place of limitless experience, to which visitors may relate on their own terms and turned into a fixed destination ready for consumption.

It is in the hope that such development does not happen by mere oversight, that the project 'Without Destination' is introduced. In her book 'On the Beaten Track', American writer

and curator Lucy R. Lippard debates whether the term sustainable tourism may be an oxymoron, given the inevitable change the industry brings about wherever it is introduced. Here in Iceland we still have the chance to at least try and rope the two notions together.

WHERE TO, FOLKS?

The exhibition 'Without Destination' at Hafnarhús is divided into four parts: 'Wanderlust' focuses on tourists and travel while 'Place' examines the relationship between the traveller and the environment. Both themes are represented through new and recent international works on display in the galleries.

'Travelogue' presents diverse individual experiences in narrative form with a programme of film, video and sound art running all day long in a specially designed black box. The schedule is presented online.

Finally, 'Trail' guides the viewer from place to place within the museum through a poster exhibition created by the Institut für Raumexperimente [The Institute for Spatial Experiment], which is an educational research facility at the Berlin University of the Arts, directed by artist Ólafur Elíasson. ☘



Ideas | Damn good ones

Here Today Gone Tomorrow Or Next Week

The rise and fall of Reykjavík's House of Ideas

In early 2009, a new institution washed ashore in the Reykjavík harbour, a little lifeboat providing some refuge from Iceland's economic shipwreck. It's called Hugmyndahúsið ('The House of Ideas'), and was established to give rise to 50 companies that would in turn create 500 new jobs over a period of two years. It's an idea that grew out of an unlikely alliance between two universities in Reykjavík; the fine arts oriented Iceland Academy of Arts and business-minded Reykjavík University.

Hugmyndahúsið is ostensibly open to everyone—including foreigners—and getting involved is practically free. Too good to be true? The Grapevine recently toured the somewhat hidden House of Ideas with project manager, Daniél Björnsson, who helped shed some light on its foundations.

FROM BUZZWORDS TO BASICS

According to Daniél, another way of describing Hugmyndahúsið is an "open innovation centre." I ask him to describe the ideological objectives of such a centre and he says: "to connect people." Yet, Daniél shies away from the term networking and underlines the spontaneous rather than calculated possibilities that such an open space provides. "This environment works better with creative people," he says, "like creative industries—another buzz word—but it's true, when you have this kind of rough space, creative people seem to be drawn to it because you can create your own space out of it." Although it is safe to say that Hugmyndahúsið was conceived in the wake of the 2008 economic crash in order to create jobs and boost morale, Daniél hesitates to call the institution a force for social change, "It's more of a result of social change. We haven't been pushing anything in any particular direction."

In material terms, Hugmyndahúsið oversees two large warehouse-type spaces on Grandagarður. In addition to the cubicle room that houses a rotating set of about a dozen various upstart companies and projects, the main building houses a café and several pockets of seemingly empty space. "We provide chairs, a fridge and internet, but basically what you see is what you get." The key is providing space: "You have the opportunity because you have the space to work your ideas out."

FROM KNITTING PARTIES TO POLITICS

When Hugmyndahúsið first got started, booking space in the cubicle room was free, but a small fee was eventually in-



roduced (6.000 ISK per month) because "people were booking space and not showing up." Each group can use their allotted space for up to nine months, whereupon the group "graduates." So far 56 companies have graduated, the most successful being Clara, an IT start-up now operating independently. Along with IT people, architects form another group that seems to gravitate towards Hugmyndahúsið, and a tour of the room revealed all sorts: accountants, knitting aficionados, board game creators, product designers, art festival organisers, Icelandic cinema promoters, software developers and more. And as Daniél stresses, they don't have to be companies or "have something to do with money." They can be projects, such as Betri Stofan's brightly painted public benches and garbage bins, which suddenly appeared on Laugavegur this past summer.

Nor does one have to rent a square to make use of the facilities. Adjoining the cubicle room, an exhibition hall regularly hosts visual arts exhibitions, architecture conferences, and political meetings. For example, the newly formed association for democracy and sustainability, ALDA, "has been using the hall for its meetings almost everyday," Daniél tells me. He points to one corner of the building where boxes of stuff line the walls: "This is SARE's content provider. It is filled with recycled material that companies were going to throw away, but was brought here instead and now pre-schools in Reykjavík have access to it." Next to this arts and

crafts storehouse, is a recording studio. "CCP has a lot of equipment but no space, so a group of young filmmakers help out CCP in exchange for use of their equipment."

THE HOUSE OF IDEAS GOES FISHING

Last June, the Associated Icelandic Ports in Faxaflói harbour gave Hugmyndahúsið free lease on an old fishing net warehouse on Grandagarður 16. The warehouse, known as Útgerðin ("The Fishery"), amounts to 2500 square meters of raw, loft space and Hugmyndahúsið has been allocating units of space to individuals and groups practically for free: "You pay 2.000 ISK for the key, and then you get a thousand back if you return it in the end." Despite the worn down appearance of the space, it has attracted all sorts of people from visual artists (especially recent graduates of Iceland Academy of Arts), architects (Borgarmynd) and designers (PopUp Markaðurinn) to hackers (Hakkavélin), alternative media initiatives (Kritík) and theatre groups (Áhugaleikhús atvinnumanna). Indeed the space is large enough to accommodate live theatre rehearsals and performances.

This past fall, Útgerðin hosted Hugmyndasmiðjan, a start-up seminar that involved some 200 individuals and 40 business ideas. At the end of the six-week long seminar, six ideas were chosen as the best and rewarded 450.000 ISK from various sponsors in order to continue developing their projects.

CAPITALISM AND THE ARTS

I ask Daniél whether enlisting corporations such as Íslandsbanki, N1 and Össur to provide prize money for Hugmyndasmiðjan risks compromising both the artistic freedom of individual participants and the academic integrity of the two universities behind Hugmyndahúsið, but he does not believe this is an issue. He underlines the fact that Hugmyndahúsið remains a non-profit organisation that receives no private funding: "the universities are its sole benefactors." And although he likens the alliance between Iceland Academy of Arts and Reykjavík University to "two separate species talking to each other," he maintains that the results have been largely positive.

Incidentally, Daniél was also involved in the Klink and Bank project, which saw Landsbankinn give Klink and Bang gallery free lease on a 5.000 square metre building in downtown Reykjavík between 2004-2005. Klink and Bank was then offered as a free studio and exhibition space to hundreds of artists. Still, Daniél asserts, "the artists working in Klink and Bank were not compromised by what Landsbankinn was doing. Maybe we were just naive, but there was very little cultural awareness about the implications of branding." And the sponsor, Daniél adds, did not prevent grassroots organisations such as Saving Iceland (which gathered opposition against the Kárahnjúkar dam) and Nýhil (which publishes the politically leftist book series Afbækur) to make use of the space. Moreover, he says, "at one point, courses in civil disobedience were being



held in Klink and Bank, basically on offer through Landsbankinn, which at least goes to show that the bank was also naive in their understanding of what was going on there."

CLOSING TIME

It has not been easy to keep Hugmyndahúsið and its subsidiary Útgerðin running, for as Daniél remarks about the latter, "it may look like a squat, but it's not. We need to meet the minimum health and safety codes as well as pay for heating and electricity, and this has been tricky." Moreover, the free lease runs out this February, so the people currently using the space will soon have to pack up their projects and leave. Hugmyndahúsið itself is currently facing the probability of shutting down, as the universities will stop funding the project this month. Although Hugmyndahúsið has applied for state funding, the prospect of receiving it does not look promising.

And yet, Daniél remains resignedly optimistic. "These grassroots things come and go...all Hugmyndahúsið does is provide the housing. And a house is merely a house, people are the main thing." It seems if people really want to keep Hugmyndahúsið going, they will have to take it upon themselves to find another space. ☺

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Water, Water, Everywhere

Foggy hiking on Sólheimajökull

Words

Steve Ganey

Photography

Hvalreki

“Maybe it was the experience of being in a land seemingly lost to time and space, or maybe it was the humorous absurdity of standing soaking wet on a field of ice, but never did the group seem upset

We all dream of the perfect vacation, filled with unforgettable moments and taking brochure-worthy photos to make our Facebook buddies super jealous. But let's face it: Sometimes the weather just doesn't cooperate. Rain may dampen your socks, but it doesn't have to dampen your spirit. What you get out of any vacation is entirely up to you.

As I waited outside for my bus in the early morning, I put up my hood to shelter from the rain. It was chilly and windy, and the rain showed no sign of letting up: Not the ideal conditions for hiking on a glacier. C'est la vie. I wasn't about to let a little water keep me from having a fun day. I've always tried to find the bright side in any situation, and today would be an occasion for such "silver-lining" thought.

The hike was on Sólheimajökull, a "crawling tongue of the main glacier, Mýrdalsjökull," as our bus driver, Ævar called it. On the way back we would stop at two waterfalls, Seljalandsfoss and Skógafoss. The drive from Reykjavík to Sólheimajökull took a little more than two hours. Along the way, Ævar pointed out numerous landmarks that could be seen from the bus... on a sunny day, that is. Today, few of those sights weren't hidden by the rain and fog.



COME HELL OR HIGH WATER

Nevertheless, our hosts, Icelandic Mountain Guides, made the very best of what they were dealt. They provided everything we needed for glacier-hiking: crampons, rain gear, boots, and even ice axes, which turned out to be more of a photo prop than a necessary survival tool, but fun for taking a few whacks in the ice. Our glacier guide, Maxim, was cheerful and informative. Meanwhile, the rain came down. It rained when we started; it rained during the hike; and it rained when we left. Despite this, our tour group of nine faced the conditions with a remarkable optimism and sense of adventure.

We stepped off the bus and crossed a soggy field of volcanic ash left by Mýrdalsjökull's cranky neighbour Eyjafjallajökull, with Sólheimajökull looming ahead. Maxim was quick to point out that only twenty years ago, the glacier covered this field. With my crampons on, and my rain gear only slightly delaying the rain as it made its way through my layers of clothing, we stepped onto the ice.

A COLD SHOWER

Not long into the hike, the wind picked up. The

thick fog closed in around our group, and in no time we found ourselves engulfed in a world of the elements. There was nothing ahead or behind but fog, and nothing at hand but wind and rain and ice. This was not the most scenic of hikes, as was evident in many of Maxim's sentences starting with, "On a clear day, from here you can see..." but I found myself strangely pleased.

Maybe it was the experience of being in a land seemingly lost to time and space, or maybe it was the humorous absurdity of standing soaking wet on a field of ice, but never did the group seem upset. In fact, looking around all I could see were smiling faces. We laughed as we took photos of ourselves drenched from head to toe. It's a great way to look at it: You're going to be wet no matter what, so why not laugh about it?

WHAT RAIN?

The hike lasted about two hours, perhaps cut a bit short by the fact that very few of the tour's sights were visible, and could be described as a casual stroll rather than a hike. It wasn't especially strenuous, although the increasing weight of my coat as it absorbed more and more water did feel great to shrug off once back on the bus. Back in

our seats, we met another tour group who had visited some museums, comfortable and dry. They must've thought we had gone mad as we arrived laughing and drenched to the core.

On the way back, the bus stopped at two of Iceland's scenic waterfalls, Seljalandsfoss and Skógafoss, for both tour groups to get out and take pictures. Already soaked, my glacier companions and I were the first off to get some great shots, heedless of the rain and spray from the falls. One of my fellow ice-hikers, Clint Wilson of New York, whose spirit was a ray of sunshine on an otherwise dreary day, summed up the day perfectly. "Remember when you were a kid, and it was no big deal to get wet? I'm actually having fun!" Clearly, Clint has the right attitude to take on vacations. So when the weather laughs at you, just laugh with it. ☺



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Oddsskarð: *The Park At The End Of The World*

Words

Bogi Bjarnason

Photography

Alisa Kalyanova

“Definitely a top-notch option for your Easter break, unless you enjoy the endless lift lines at Hlíðarfjall and the accommodation in Akureyri that books solid weeks in advance

Momentum singer Hörður Ólafsson is gently chanting at me through my super-sized Sennheisers. His message is something regarding “holding back”, but the virgin powder unfolding endlessly in front of me in a mad mountainous panorama begs for deflowering and on such a bluebird day, there is nothing on God’s green earth that can hold a man from letting loose.

But allow me to backtrack to.....right... about.....here! Saturday 10:30 AM at Egilsstaðir Airport. We venture into town, and after a brief stop at the local Krónan we hightail it in our shiny ride for Eskifjörður and its ski area at Oddsskarð. We do make a quick pit stop at Guesthouse Mjóeyri to suit up, where the friendly innkeeper Sævar welcomes us.

Daffi, head of operations at Oddsskarð, seems none too pleased to see us, however. Perhaps because his ambitious snow park project, featuring big jumps with up to 36-metre clearance, has all but disappeared under fresh snow, taking the plot point of this entire article with it.

Still, a powder drenched area with no lift queues and myriad backcountry possibilities—with minimal hiking involved—seems worthy enough a subject for yours truly. Definitely a top-notch option for your Easter break, unless you enjoy the endless lift lines at Hlíðarfjall and the accommodation in Akureyri that books solid weeks in advance. Given, there are only a short lift serviced children’s run and two main tows, the latter of which (the one that takes you up to the top) seems to be on permanent hiatus.

Fog, that old party crasher, makes repeated appearances throughout the day, ultimately causing an early retreat for us boarders.

Back at Mjóeyri, a quaint, charming retreat at

the edge of town, owner-operator Sævar hatches a game plan for Sunday. Off-piste activities are the order of the day he feels and we are all too happy to agree.

Eskifjörður itself is a village of limited possibilities as far as recreation goes. So, after winding down at the local swimming pool hot tubs, we head on over to Reyðarfjörður. It is a virtual metropolis in comparison, where one can enjoy the best pizza pie east of Reykjavík at the local pizzeria Tærgesen. You can also venture next door to Kaffi Kósý, where we—along with a host of locals—break lose in boundless fits of revelry over Iceland handing Hungary their asses on the handball field. However, you shouldn’t take your business to Grillskálinn, where a sour, middle-aged clerk will ignore you or give you an evil eye.

Sunday morning is always a bastard. Well usually anyway. A mild hangover and a deep-seated disgust with getting out of bed slowly yield to the promises of a blue sky evident through the bedroom window.

The day is perfection wrapped in joyful rapture served on a gilded platter of contentment. There are still patches of unmolested cherry powder alongside the groomed runs, and a crew of local teenage huckster all garbed out in DC attire have fashioned a kicker just out of bound. All giddy like schoolgirls, we slay the powder and bomb the kicker until the moment of truth arrives—the descent of Fagradalur.

We now find ourselves back to the opening stanza of this saga. Momentum are again underscoring the majesty of the awe-inspiring scenery assaulting us from all directions. I turn their epic dirge down as Sævar, our gracious host, has instructions and warnings of waterfalls to relay. As

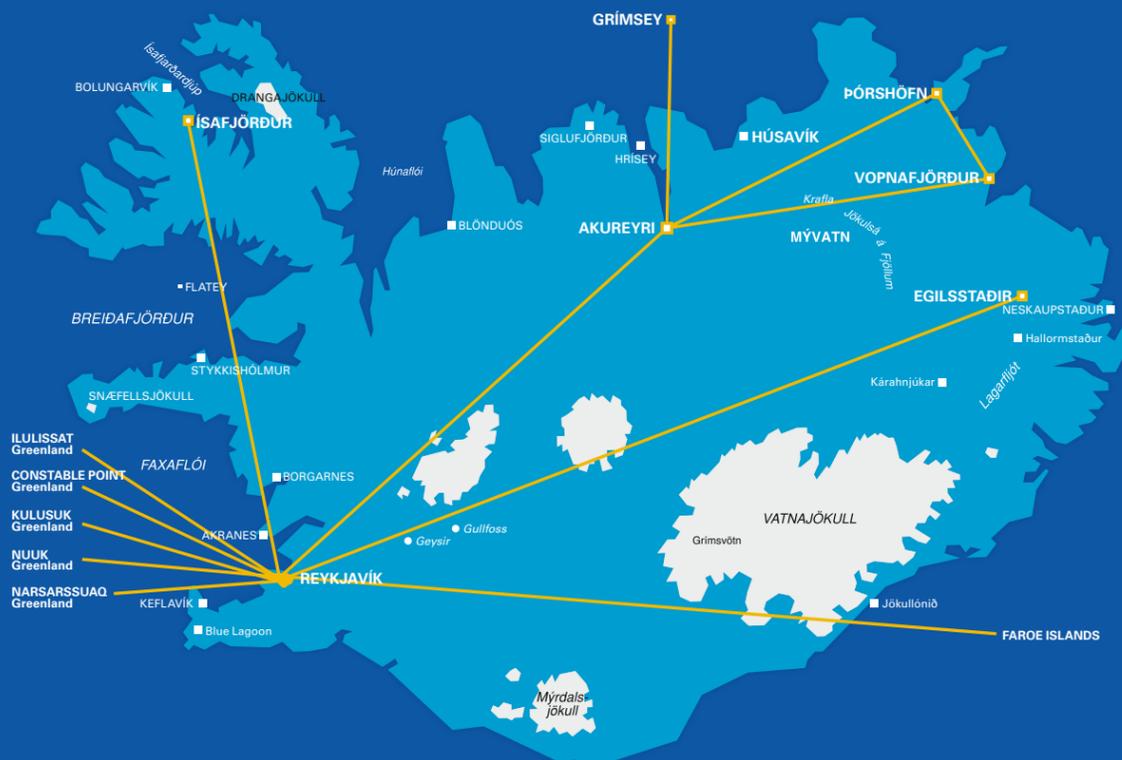
we follow in the tracks of his Telemark skis, the 900 metre vertical descent hits us with barrels of fun and moments of danger.

We are subjected to flocks of ptarmigans, and the tracks of reindeer and foxes. The sketchiest feature is a narrow chute between cliffs that brings us down the side of the smaller waterfall and is unquestionably the scariest piece of snowboarding both Brian and I have attempted. The run ends at an abandoned farmhouse whose slanted roof I scale so that I might drop down it on my snowboard. Once topside I almost chicken out. But with Sævar and Brian—video cameras aloft—egging me on towards glory, I dot the i of this trip by launching into it feet first. ☺



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Another Year Has Passed: Where Are We Now?



In October 2008, on the eve of the economic crash, then Prime Minister Geir Haarde appeared on television and

gave a speech to the nation, closing with the words: "God bless Iceland!" The phrase stuck. The nation collectively thought: what terrible mess have we gotten ourselves into? This year, Haarde will appear before a special court, never before convened in the history of the Iceland, to answer for charges of gross negligence.

Two years later, the crisis ("kreppa" in Icelandic) is bottoming out. Unemployment is at a record high, production is considerably down, and there is great discontentment within society; politicians and institutions are not trusted at all. One of the greatest worries is emigration—the next-door neighbour to Iceland is Norway, and there is a steady stream of doctors, technicians, nurses and workers moving across the North Atlantic.

CONFISCATED PRIVATE JETS

This is very different from the boom years when the Icelandic currency was totally overvalued, foreign money flowed into the economy through the banks, and financiers bought up shopping chains and airlines abroad, flaunting their wealth in private jets and yachts. The jets do not fly into Reykjavík airport any more. They have all been sold or confiscated.

These financiers, often referred to as modern day Vikings, have been ostracized. Most of them now live abroad, and in any event they are thoroughly despised and would not be welcome in a group of their countrymen. Many are under investigation by a Special Prosecutor who is investigating the crash—it is likely that some of them will end up in prison. Among those who have been interrogated are bank directors such as Sigurður Einarsson and Hreiðar Már Sigurðsson of Kaupthing and tycoon Jón Ásgeir Jóhannesson of now-bankrupt retail empire Baugur.

FROM HOLY JOHANNA TO LADY GAGA

There are some peculiarities in the way Iceland is handling its crisis. One reason might be pure luck. At the time of the crash, the government employed emergency legislation to disentangle itself from the collapsing banks' foreign commitments. Well, Iceland could never have repaid this kind of money—which maybe adds up to ten times the nation's GDP—and admittedly, Geir Haarde's government tried desperately to secure funding from abroad in the months leading up to the crash in order to prop up the banks. But nobody wanted to lend to Iceland, which was already considered a basketcase. This turn of events now sees Iceland in a different position to Ireland, where the government assumed responsibility for the banks' debts. The Icelandic government's failure to secure funds and prop up the banks, and its refusal to honour their commitments, might wind up securing the nation a speedier recovery.

However, the economy is still in dire straits. Iceland is now working within the framework of an agreement with the IMF. The debt situation is crippling for the government, for private enterprise and for many households. There are strict currency restrictions, and even though the present left-wing

Words

Egill Helgason

Illustration

Lóa Hjálmtýsdóttir

"Therefore nationalism has become rampant, and the person at its forefront is Iceland's president, Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson."

government refers to itself as 'a government of Nordic welfare policies', it has been forced to considerably cut budgets for healthcare, social affairs and education.

In a political climate like this, no government can expect to be popular. Unexpectedly, political veteran and social democrat Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir became Prime Minister in 2009, mainly due to her reputation for being incorruptible and for being a friend of the needy and poor. Her nickname at the time was 'Holy Johanna', but now things have changed and in the current vicious atmosphere she is often referred to as 'Lady Gaga', due to her head of white hair. The main source of discontent is the household debt, which shot through the roof when the króna collapsed along with the banks.

THE SECOND FIDDLE STANDS TRIAL

In March of 2009, French/Norwegian prosecutor Eva Joly stepped into this atmosphere of mistrust. She was in Iceland to do a television interview on how to deal with financial crime. A few days later, due to public pressure, she was appointed advisor to the office of the Special Prosecutor. Almost overnight, Joly, with her knowledge and gravitas, became a national hero—her moral authority was unequalled. It is mostly due to her efforts that the Special Prosecutor now has a staff of ninety people investigating the banks' financial misdoings—but Joly has left and stands to run for president of France in 2012.

A Special Investigative Committee appointed by Alþingi published a 2.600 page report on the collapse early last year. The report describes fraudulent practices by the banks, and a failure of politics and governance. It is on the basis of this report that former PM Geir Haarde will stand trial. But while Alþingi condemned the political practices that led to the crash, it also descended into party bickering that resulted in a group of ex-ministers escaping prosecution at the last moment. Geir will thus have to face charges alone.

Some might consider this unfair, as Haarde always played second fiddle to his predecessor Davíð Oddsson, Iceland's Prime Minister from 1991–2004. Indeed, it was Davíð who created the system that failed, a system he kept on managing as a director of Iceland's



Central Bank, where he was positioned after pushing through his agenda of privatisation and deregulation as PM.

Geir Haarde is a modest man who seems to have lost his nerve in office whereas Davíð is ruthless, intelligent and unrepentant. Geir has mostly disappeared from view, while Davíð refuses to leave the stage—after he was fired from the Central Bank he assumed position as chief editor of daily newspaper Morgunblaðið, where he scorns his opponents on a daily basis.

A NATIONALISTIC FOLK HERO?

Another issue that complicates matters is Iceland's application to join the EU. The motion to apply was narrowly passed by Alþingi, and the whole process is very tentative, with polls showing a sizable majority against joining. Many Icelanders feel betrayed by their neighbouring countries—especially Britain, whose government used terrorist legislation to freeze the assets of Icelandic banks—and by Iceland's traditional allies in Scandinavia, who have been pressuring Icelanders to pay a huge debt incurred through Landsbankinn's Icesave accounts.

Therefore nationalism has become rampant, and the person at its forefront is Iceland's president, Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson. Traditionally, the role of the president has been a symbolic one, but Ólafur Ragnar has changed that, vetoing bills passed by parliament and travelling around the world embarrassing the government with his utterances.

Ólafur Ragnar is a consummate political acrobat. He started out as a socialist, during the time of the boom he

was perceived as a shameless cheerleader for the business Vikings, but now, through his stance on national debt, he has managed to restore his reputation and is even considered a folk hero by some.

HIGH HOPES—TANGIBLE ANGER

There has been a radicalization of politics, starting with the so-called 'Pots and pans revolution' of January 2009. Passionate mass meetings were staged in the aftermath and the blogs teemed with ideas about the new and improved Iceland that might be built on the ruins. That atmosphere begat November's elections for representatives in a Constitutional Assembly, which was scheduled to convene this February. The elections were sadly declared null and void recently by the High Court, a bastion of conformism, solely due to technicalities.

Demonstrations returned with a second wave last October. It was an altogether different affair: the mood was much gloomier, there was little optimism and more tangible anger. The big grievance regarded spiralling household debts, and the feeling that in the end business and finance will prevail while the general public will be trapped for years to come. The political atmosphere has turned nasty. Old elites and interest groups that were subdued after the collapse have found their voices again. Parties are back at their old bickering. The blogs are ill tempered.

AN AMBITIOUS AGENDA

Nobody has very high hopes for the government of Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir.

It still has to be admitted that its agenda is an ambitious one. They are not only struggling to restore the nation's economy and financial systems, but also negotiating with the EU, rewriting the constitution, restructuring the civil service, all the while pushing for the redistribution of fishing quotas from the extremely powerful group of vessel owners—a huge issue in Iceland.

But the coalition government of the Social Democrats and the Left-Greens constantly has to deal with revolt within its own parties. One of the reasons it has not yet fallen is that the opposition doesn't really wish to take over. Within the political class there is also fear that we might be in for a repeat performance from the Reykjavík municipal elections, where a party of comedians gained 40% of the vote and took over city council.

The strong man of the government is Finance Minister Steingrímur J. Sigfússon, who was never invited to govern during the boom years. He and his party, the Left Greens, were always on the sidelines, criticizing the excesses of the prevailing free market ideology. Now Steingrímur is finally in government. He has to try to clean up the mess. But then he is adhering to the IMF's program, so many people in his party feel that he has betrayed their cause. Working to resurrect capitalism is probably not what this socialist son of a farmer envisaged himself doing during his long years in opposition, when few heeded his warnings that Iceland had lost its way. ☹



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Friendship In The 21st Century



One of the things visitors to Iceland, especially those venturing from southern climates, often comment upon is that Icelanders seem very hard to approach. That is, until the clock strikes twelve at midnight on a Friday or Saturday and everyone starts speaking very loudly and largely incoherently at the same time, as if everything that has been kept in during the week must be let out at once. Surely, this is due to the climate (well, it's actually not that bad these days), the darkness and so on. This may be true, but history probably has something to do with it as well.

Many social historians in larger countries suggest that 'friendship' as we know it only came about in the 18th century, with the emergence of a middle class and city culture. Before then, people had little need for friendship in the modern sense. This is largely corroborated by the Sagas. Family is here of the utmost importance. People make friends, but then they are incorporated into the family structure. The most obvious example is the institution of Fóstbræður ("Foster-brothers"), one of the strongest bonds that can exist between two men. To initiate such a thing, men must first mix their bodily fluids. This is done by digging a hole in the ground, opening up yours and your partner's veins, spilling the results into said hole, and then mixing it all together. This gives both parties all the rights of family towards one another and has, sadly, been discontinued.

FRIENDSHIP AND SOBRIETY

In a rural farming society such as existed in Iceland up until the 20th century, one had little need for paying social calls on the neighbours, there usually being no neighbourhood to speak of. Instead, Icelanders held occasional feasts which went on for days, the guests then being sent away bearing precious gifts from the host. Your social standing depended on the opulence of your feasts (or, failing this, on where you sat at a feast), and an invitation came with responsibility. If you accepted, got your food

and drink and your going away present, you owed a favour in return to your host.

Since city culture here is relatively new, one might surmise that the idea of casual friendship might be too. Icelanders tend to enter into strong friendships, loyal to the point of stupidity at times, and bonds to friends and family usually trump any connection people might feel to society at large. This has its benefits, obviously, but it can also lead to the sort of crony corruption evidenced during the recent economic boom. It can also explain why people don't really feel comfortable in the company of strangers, at least not while sober.

THE FACEBOOK ERA

If casual friendships among men are comparatively rare, they are even rarer among men and women. Largely, you see them sitting in groups according to gender, until that all-important hour of midnight strikes and they start to mix, usually with an obvious purpose in mind.

These things only change over generations, but technology has come to our aid. Mark Pincus, founder of Zynga games (the ones you see on Facebook), says that with the advent of the telephone, the number of people you frequently interacted with rose to 125. Whether this applies to Iceland or not, Icelanders certainly have kept up with new phone technologies and embraced the mobile phone with its text feature almost as fervently as the formerly silent Finns did. In the Facebook era, says Pincus, we now have regular contact with around 500 people apiece. Small wonder then that the Icelandic nation has more or less logged on in its entirety. It's a way to keep in touch without having to be drunk all the time... ☺

Branding | Eiríkur Kristjánsson

Gapping And Ellipsis



In January there was a discussion in Iceland about whether H&M would set up shop in Reykjavík or not. Here are some thoughts.

Let's start with an excerpt from a recent Financial Times column:

"Last week, for the first time ever, the mob on Twitter and Facebook forced the management of a big company into defeat. This victory of democracy over autocracy was scored over something people feel strongly about: whether three letters belong inside or outside a box.

For the past 20 years, the letters G-A-P have resided in a dark blue square, but two weeks ago the management of the clothing company announced that the letters had escaped and that a smaller blue square would henceforth sit above the P. All hell then broke loose. Thousands of people protested online and, a week later, Gap backed down. The big box was going to stay."

(Listening To Customers Can Be Bad Business' - Lucy Kellaway)

Note that the opposing sides are "the management" vs. "the mob" (GAP is an "autocracy" where the workers are irrelevant).

GAP is not the only company doing this: Starbucks is deleting the words "Starbucks" and "coffee" from its logo. When the going gets tough, the tough change their name to "going".

In a similar vein, an infamous debt collecting firm in Iceland, Intrum, has changed its name to "Motus". According to a spokesperson, this is done (my paraphrase) "to ensure the company's independence and efficiency going forward to be able to meet the needs of the market at each time." Whatever that means, it cannot be done with the same old name (though Motus will supposedly do its best to associate itself with the old name, let's see how that goes).

Alex Carey ("Taking the Risk out of Democracy", 1995), citing a study, lists some "Business Strategies" to be used if a company is doing poorly:

"1. Do not change performance, but change public perception of business per-



formance through education and information.

2. If changes in public perception are not possible, change the symbols used to describe business performance, thereby making it congruent with public perception. Note that no change in actual performance is called for.

3. In case both (1) and (2) are ineffective, bring about changes in business performance, thereby closely matching it with society's expectations."

Sidenote: Kellaway thinks that "when a company panics and surrenders", as in GAP's case, it is "not progress". "It is feeble." One is reminded of Chomsky comparing governments to corporations (which he often calls totalitarian institutions): "The government has a defect: it's potentially democratic. Corporations have no defect. They are pure tyrannies." One person's tyranny is another's autocracy.

In January, it was also announced that a

Chinese company, Blue Star, had acquired a Norwegian company, Orkla, that runs a factory at Grundartangi. It is reported that Orkla's owners will be paid handsomely for the company. Not too long ago, people were wondering whether they wanted the Chinese investing in Iceland. Well, this announcement renders any such discussion irrelevant (I suppose one can be for the Chinese or against Grundartangi, if we keep to the common standard of discussion in this country).

Who knows. Maybe we'll get our precious H&M. If they are "feeble" enough, we might have a say in how they use symbols "to describe business performance". Then the Chinese might acquire H&M and get a bit of smelting going downtown. By then, I will hopefully have moved to Mallorca, where (if Halldór Laxness has his facts straight) they're not at all stingy with their rum. ☺

Poetry | Eiríkur Örn Norðdahl

The Art Of Any Impact



The most important thing to keep in mind during a fistfight (or while writing a poem) isn't what to do with your arms and knuckles, but where to place your feet. If you keep them too close together, you're liable to fall over—and if you keep them too far apart you leave your genitalia vulnerable (you don't want to do that, not even if you're a girl). If you have one foot directly in front of the other, you might keel on your side, whereas if you keep them side by side, you risk falling on your ass—or alternately, your face. So while your fists may be doing most of the bodily harm, your punching is pointless if you don't mind your footwork.

The same goes for writing. Or, for that matter, living. (I have now assumed the position of life-changing prolonged metaphor—do not stop reading!)

Writing does of course not cause much bodily harm. In fact writing entails only a bare minimum of bodily harm and it's mostly harmful for the person doing it (long bouts of writing have been linked to bad blood flow, back aches, haemorrhoids, alcoholism, sleeplessness, severe angst and frequent panic attacks), while the person reading need not worry. At least not much.

But just like when you punch someone in the face (which I'm supposing is a reality most Grapevine readers are

intimately familiar with) to perform any good (nevermind great) writing you need to find a comfortable base-stance from whence you throw your jabs, strophes, plots and uppercut in-rhymes.

And yet. And yet. And yet.

And yet most poets, most writers—and indeed perhaps most people (not excluding me, a lot of the time)—tend to put a great deal of effort into perfecting their punches (the most obvious aspects of their technique) while failing to seek good grounding. Now what I'm trying (and failing, obviously) to aggrandizingly metaphorize towards (besides changing your life), is that (sometimes) I get the distinct sense that most writers, poets,

painters, musicians and performance artists seldom stop to think about why they do what they do, what it is they seek to accomplish. That is to say: where they want to place their right foot, and where they want to place their left foot. Rather, they seem to have perfected their quick-jabs and knockouts—their paintstrokes, metaphors, plots, frills and moaning, without seemingly having the slightest idea why they are doing so. And so the world slowly but surely gets filled—not with revelatory art curious about life, its bits and pieces, but hollow posing.

Now, lest I be misunderstood (oh! the horror of possibly being misunderstood!): I'm not saying everyone should now go

fill their poetry with social consciousness or political messages. I'm not saying art can't (or shouldn't) be made for the sake of art. I'm saying art shouldn't be made for the sake of nothing-better-to-do or being-an-artist-seems-fun (or, at the very least, if so, then be it decisively so).

What I'm saying (with any and every ounce of whatever authority I may have, and a lot of assumed authority I have never had) is that the fundamentals of what you do are more important and deserve more of your attention than your technical prowess. When you know what you want to do, you may accidentally stumble upon a great way to do it. But if you don't, you most definitely won't. ☺



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PAGE 6

What we tend to end up doing most often is in effect to stretch our budget by providing duty-free alcohol for receptions at exhibit openings and art festivals. Because alcohol is highly taxed in Iceland, our gifts of wine for receptions strike Icelanders as far more generous than they actually are.

The US Embassy in Reykjavík explains how to win friends and influence people in Iceland.

PAGE 8

A life without skyr is a life half lived.

Well, thank whoever's your god for Siggis. If you're in the US, anyway.

PAGE 8

Far from depicting a careful anarchist conspiracy to attack Alþingi, what transpired was a classic picture of the kind of bumbling, unnecessarily brutal overreaction and incompetence that characterises the way governments react when the public seeks to exercise its constitutional right to protest.

The husband of an accused Rvk9-er on the internationally infamous trial

PAGE 10

The economic benefits to being the safe-haven for free speech are very well known because the last country that did it is still the dominant empire on the planet.

So says Smári McCarthy, co-founder of the Icelandic Digital Freedom Society, ex-WikiLeaks volunteer, and one of the authors of the IMMI proposal

PAGE 22

At Kristín Jónína's lecture, Þorkell Sigurbjörnsson mentioned that for years he had to have an unlisted phone number after receiving threatening calls—apparently nothing made Icelanders angrier than his hosting an avant-garde music programme on the radio during rush hour.

This shouldn't come as a surprise to anyone who remembers said programme

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The background is a dark blue gradient with a grid of light blue lines. It is decorated with various snowflakes in white, light blue, yellow, and pink, and several bright white stars with a soft glow.

Reykjavík Winter Lights Festival

11. - 13. February 2011

Programme of events

- Museum Night
- International Children's Day
- The Love Walk



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REYKJAVÍK
MUSEUM NIGHT

Friday 11. February

Opening Ceremony, Friday February 11th at 19:00

The dark winter days have accompanied Icelanders since ancient times but rays of light have always managed to sift through. Art group Norðanbál will kick off the Winter Lights Festival in an event where the story of a nation will be told through a light bulb. Soundscape created by renowned musician and former drummer of the Sugarcubes; Sigtryggur Baldursson.



The Settlement Exhibition Reykjavík ± 871

21:00 - 21:30

Pots and pearls

Artifacts belonging to women from the Settlement Time (at 17:00, 22:00 and 23:00).

Adalstræti 16, 101, Reykjavík

Alliance Française

19:00 - 23:00

French cinema in Reykjavík for 100 years.

Join us on our trip to the past through posters and programs.

Tryggvagötu 8, 101, Reykjavík

Reykjavík City Museum - Árbæjarsafn

21:00 - 00:00

The Secrets of the Darkness

Guided twilight tour around Árbæjarsafn Museum at 21:00, 22:00 and 23:00.

Kistuhyl 4, 110, Reykjavík

Garðabær Library

20:30 - 21:00

Vífilsstaðir - tuberculosis sanatorium

Journalist and author Steinar J. Lúdvíksson gives a short recital.

21:30 - 22:00

Music - Sigríður Thorlacius singer

Singer Sigríður Thorlacius (from the Icelandic group, Hjaltalín) sings. She is accompanied by Guðmundur Óskar Guðmundsson on guitar.

Again at 22:45.

Garðatorgi 7, 210, Garðabær

Hafnarfjörður Library

19:00 - 00:00

Photography Exhibition - Lárus Karl Ingason

An exhibition of the works of photographer Lárus Karl Ingason. Books containing some of his photos will be on display. Also on Sat 11am-3pm.

11:00 - 15:00

Fun fun fun in the Children's Library

How about playing cards? No problem! There are plenty of playing cards available and ready to use.

19:00 - 00:00

Quality Saga Time

The Sagas played from CDs in the music department.

19:00 - 00:00

An Exhibition of Hand-Painted Porcelain

Katrín Bjarnadóttir exhibits the crème de la crème from her China collection, all of which are hand-painted and processed by her.

19:00 - 00:00

Art Exhibition

12 year old students from Hraunvallaskóli elementary school exhibit their drawings in which they demonstrate what they consider to be the "typical Icelander."

19:30 - 20:00

Dance dance dance

Young dancers from Listdansskóli Hafnarfjarðar demonstrate how to dance properly.

19:30 - 20:30

Movie Night with Goethe Institute

The film Sommer vorm Balkon (Summer in Berlin) will be screened.

Language: German. Subtitles: English.

20:00 - 20:30

No, I'm from Skagafjörður!

Ethnologist Símon Jón Jóhannsson gives a lecture on Icelanders and how they see themselves.

21:00 - 21:30

Robert The Roommate - A Folk Quartet

The Folk Quartet Robert The Roommate, plays 60's and 70's classics in their own way.

21:30 - 00:00

Movie Night - Goethe Institute

The film Solino. Languages: German and Italian. Subtitles: English

Strandgata 1, 221, Hafnarfjörður

Kópavogur Library

19:00 - 19:30

The Icelandic poets society Íðunn

Performs in the Hot pot.

19:30 - 00:00

Hands On

Opening of the art show, "Hands On" by Viktoría Guðnadóttir in Djúpið.

20:00 - 20:30

Blikandi stjórnur

The singing group Blikandi stjórnur will sing a few songs. The conductor of the group is Ingvaldur Ýr.

20:30 - 21:00

Paedopriest

The garage band Paedopriest will keep up the fun.

21:00 - 21:30

Russian music

Viktoria Tsarevskaja and Ivetta Lishe play the cello and piano with Liudmila Tsarevskaja singing Russian music.

23:00 - 00:00

Hókus Pókus

The band, Hókus Pókus plays until midnight.

Hamraborg 6a, 200, Kópavogur

Seltjarnarnes Library

20:30 - 21:00

FÍH Old boys' Bigband

Some of the most experienced brass players in town play together in a band.

19:00 - 00:00

Museum in a Museum

Exhibits from the Seltjarnarnes Natural Museum shown in the Library.

Eiðistorg, 170, Seltjarnarnes

Reykjavík City Library

19:00 - 20:00

Ghost Stories

A story hour with Icelandic ghost stories in the children's department at the Reykjavík City Library. All children and their guardians welcome!

20:30 - 22:00

Poetry Slam

Young people compete in performing their original poetry at Reykjavík City Library's annual Poetry Slam. The theme this year is Independence.

Tryggvagötu 15, 101, Reykjavík

Kópavogur Art Museum - Gerðarsafn

20:00 - 22:00

Visage of the Land: Water, Earth, Sea and Sky

Artists: Daði Guðbjörnsson, Gunnlaugur Scheving, Jóhannes Kjarval, Rúrí, Vilhjálmur Þorberg Bergsson
Curator: Guðbergur Bergsson.
Guided tour at 20:00 and 21:00.
Hamraborg 4, 200, Kópavogur



Laxness Museum - Gljúfrasteinn

19:00 - 00:00

Laxness Museum - Gljúfrasteinn

Gljúfrasteinn was the home and workplace of Halldór Laxness (winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1955) and his family for more than half a century.

Audio tours of the house are available in Icelandic, English, German, Swedish and Danish.

21:00 - 22:00

Concert - Svavar Knútur

Svavar Knútur in concert at Gljúfrasteinn - Laxness Museum.

Mosfellsdalur, 270, Mosfellsbær

Hafnarborg - The Hafnarfjörður Centre of Culture and Fine Art

19:00 - 19:15

Lunch Time Concert in the Afternoon

Short concert with Gréta Hergils Valdimarsdóttir, soprano, and Antonía Hevesi, pianist and artistic director for the lunch time concert series at Hafnarborg.

19:00 - 21:00

Copy Cat - Like Him/Her!

Workshop for children where you can construct your own variation of Stefán Jónsson's sculptures, Kjarvalar. A variety of material is available and there are guided family tours of the exhibition at 19:00 and 20:00.

20:30 - 21:00

Behind the Scenes

An opportunity to look behind the scenes and see the collection of Hafnarborg in the museum's storerooms accompanied by the staff of Hafnarborg. Maximum 10 guests at a time.

21:00 - 22:00

Artist's Talk - Kjarvalar

The artist Stefán Jónsson will lead an informal discussion about his work in his exhibition, Kjarvalar.

21:30 - 22:00

Behind the Scenes

An opportunity to look behind the scenes and see the collection of Hafnarborg in the museum's storerooms accompanied by the staff of Hafnarborg. Maximum 10 guests at a time.

22:00 - 00:00

The Guitar Islancio trio

Jazz concert at the café, Maður Lifandi, with Guitar Islancio. The trio have released five albums, four of them containing jazzed-up Icelandic folk songs.

Strandgata 34, 220, Hafnarfjörður

Museum of Design and Applied Art

20:00 - 00:00

Opening. Exhibition on Gunnar Magnusson furniture designer

Gunnar Magnusson (b.1933) is one of

the most productive and originative furniture designers in Iceland. He has left his mark on the visual perception and daily life of many Icelanders.

22:30 - 23:00

Guided tour: Furniture by Gunnar Magnusson

Asdis Olafsdóttir, curator of the exhibition, will walk with guests around the exhibition.

Garðatorg 1, 210, Garðabær

ASÍ Art Museum

19:00 - 00:00

Opening: A present for you, your majesty.

Gunnhildur Hauksdóttir and Kristín Ómarsdóttir. A stage that can take on different shapes is a set for a number of video works. The public is invited to perform monologues and plays during the exhibition.

19:00 - 00:00

Opening: The Family Quintet

Curver Thoroddsen exhibits a video-installation called The Family Quintet II. The artist and his family improvise jazz with instruments they do not know how to play on. By taking the family out of its natural circumstances and putting them in exotic roles, their characters and the pattern of human relations within the family are made visible.

19:00 - 00:00

Opening: We made our own games.

Páll Haukur Björnsson opens an exhibition in Gryfjan with a video installation called, "We made our own games."

Freyjugata 41, 101, Reykjavík

The Einar Jónsson Museum

21:00 - 22:00

Classical Concert in the Einar Jónsson Museum

Anna Jónsdóttir, soprano and Sophie Schoonjans, harp.

Eiríksgrata, 101, Reykjavík

National Gallery of Iceland

19:00 - 20:00

Landscape Through the Eyes of Children

Guided tour of art works created by children and a workshop in the Education Center.

20:00 - 21:00

Vastness

Students from The Dance Academy of Reykjavík capture the energy in the galleries. Choreography: River Camalt.

21:00 - 21:30

Dialogue with Art - Guided Tour

Visitors select their favorite work of art and write about it. Texts will be collected.

22:00 - 23:00

Icelandic Artists at the Tree of Life

Artist Snorri Ásmundsson gives a lecture on Icelandic Art.

23:00 - 00:00

Open Window

Gallery talk led by museum director Halldór B. Runólfsson.

Friðkirkjuvegur 7, 101, Reykjavík

Reykjavík Art Museum - Ásmundarsafn

19:00 - 00:00

Thoughts in forms

In the pyramid, Ásmundur's studio has been recreated, to give an idea of his working environment in Sigtún. Also on Sat & Sun.

19:00 - 00:00

"I choose blossoming women ..." - Woman as Symbol in the Art of Ásmundur Sveinsson

Many of Ásmundur Sveinsson's works of art depict women - from loving mothers to domestic labourers, from sensitive

souls to wild ogresses. The works span the entire career of the sculptor. Also on Sat & Sun.

19:00 - 00:00

Sleep Light - Ráðhildur Ingadóttir

The installation, Sleep Light, by Ráðhildur Ingadóttir comprises the dome of the Ásmundarsafn art museum, the sound of the space, a computer, a hand mirror, a light projection and a shadow. Also on Sat & Sun.

20:00 - 20:30

Guided tour for the family: Ásmundur Sveinsson

Guðmundur Steinn Gunnarsson, core member of S.L.Á.T.U.R., will perform a sound piece for live audiences in the darkness of the dome. Max. 10 people at once.

21:00 - 22:30

S.L.Á.T.U.R in Sleep Light

Guðmundur Steinn Gunnarsson, core member of S.L.Á.T.U.R., will perform a sound piece for live audiences in the darkness of the dome. Max. 10 people at once.

21:30 - 22:15

Architecture - Guided tour

Guja Dögg Hauksdóttir, head of architecture dep. at the Reykjavík Art Museum leads a tour of the house.

22:30 - 23:00

Guided Tour - Ásmundur Sveinsson

Guided tour through the exhibitions, "I choose blossoming women..." Woman as Symbol in the Art of Ásmundur Sveinsson and Thoughts in Forms (in Icelandic).

Sigtúni, 105, Reykjavík

Reykjavík Art Museum - Hafnarhús

19:00 - 00:00

Without destination

The inspiration for the project, "Without Destination," is the ever-increasing flow of domestic and international tourists through Iceland. Numerous contemporary artists and scholars have studied the complex relationship between humans and the environment in this context. Also on Sat & Sun.

19:00 - 00:00

Erró - Collage and Assemblage

The exhibition, Erró - Collage, offers, for the first time, an opportunity to discover a holistic selection of Erró's collages from Reykjavík Art Museum's Erró collection. Also on Sat & Sun.

19:00 - 00:00

D19 - Hulda Rós Guðnadóttir

The D19 project, Hops Hopsi, is a 10-channel video installation by Hulda Rós Guðnadóttir created in 2010. Also on Sat & Sun.

19:00 - 00:00

Message of Mothman

Artists Hannes Lárusson and Ásmundur Ásmundsson join forces for this event and create a mixed media interactive installation. The installation requires participation from both children and adults. A drawing competition will be held in conjunction with the event. A committee of internationally renowned artists will choose the best picture and an award will be given to a talented child. Also on Sat & Sun.

19:00 - 00:00

Film, Video and Sound Art / Without Destination

Multi-purpose room / Hafnarhus
19:00 - Skipholt, John Bock, 2005 (55 min.)
20:00 Hringurinn / Ring road, Friðrik Þór Friðriksson, 1985 (80 min.)
Gallery B / Hafnarhús:
19:00 - From Hetty to Nancy, Deborah Stratman, 1997 (44 min.)
20:00 Das Echo ist der Zwerge Sprache, Teil I: Island - Land ohne Eisenbahn, Wolfgang Müller, 1999 (22 min.)
20:30 - Skagafjörður, Peter Hutton, 2003 (35 min.)
21:15 - Hekla, Haraldur Jónsson, 2001 (10 min.)
21:30 - Searching for Hjetna, Rory

Middleton, 2010 (45 min.)
22:30 - Counter Clockwise, Ragnheiður Gestsdóttir, 2011 (20 min.)
In between films:
Aero, 2008, Ghostigital/Finnbogi Pétursson/Skúli Sverrisson
19:30 - 20:15

Gallery talk and orienteering game for the family

Gallery talk and orienteering game built around the exhibition Without Destination.

21:00 - 21:30

Gallery Talk: Erró Collage & Assemblage

Gallery Talk through the exhibitions Erró Collage & Assemblage. The exhibition, Erró - Collage, offers, for the first time, an opportunity to discover a holistic selection of Erró's collages from Reykjavik Art Museum's Erró collection.

22:00 - 22:45

Gallery Talk: Without Destination

Gallery talk through the exhibition, Without destination, a project made in collaboration between curator Markús Þór Andrússon and geographer Dr. Gunnþóra Ólafsdóttir.

22:30 - 22:50

Live event by Rafmagnssveitin

Rafmagnssveitin includes artists Sigurður Guðjónsson, Magnús Árnason, and writer Ófeigur Sigurðson.

Tryggvagata 17, 101, Reykjavík

Reykjavík Art Museum - Kjarvalsstaðir

19:00 - 00:00

50 Years of Icelandic Art at the Venice Biennale

As groundwork for the exhibition is newly published research on Iceland's participation in the Venice Biennale in Italy, which is the first of its kind ever to be made on the subject. Icelandic artists have had a representative at this major international contemporary art exhibition for fifty years but their regular participation did not start until the year 1984. Also on Sat & Sun.

19:00 - 00:00

Kjarval - Key Works

The Reykjavik Art Museum draws on its extensive collection of works by Jóhannes S. Kjarval for ongoing exhibitions at Kjarvalsstaðir. The exhibition in Kjarvalsstaðir's east gallery features key works from the museum's collection. Also on Sat & Sun

19:00 - 00:00

Italian Cafe at Kjarvalsstaðir

The cafe at Kjarvalsstaðir will take up an Italian theme in relation to Kjarvalsstaðir's exhibition: "50 Years of Icelandic Art at the Venice Biennale."

19:00 - 19:30

Gallery talk for the family - 50 Years of Icelandic Art at the Venice Biennale

Gallery talk designed for the whole family in relation to the exhibition, "50 Years of Icelandic Art at the Venice Biennale."

19:30 - 20:15

Architecture - Guided Tour through Kjarvalsstaðir

Guja Dögg Hauksdóttir, head of architecture department at Reykjavik Art Museum leads a tour of the house.

20:00 - 22:00

Guided tour: Reykjavik Art Museums storages

Guided tour through the Reykjavik Art Museum storages for its art collection. A tour is held every half hour starting at 20:00. Max 10 people for each tour. 20:00, 20:30, 21:00 and 21:30.

20:30 - 21:00

Gallery Talk: 50 Years of Icelandic Art at the Venice Biennale

Guided tour through the exhibition, "50 Years of Icelandic Art at the Venice Biennale,"

Flókagata 5, 105, Reykjavík

The Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum

19:00 - 00:00

Sigurjón Ólafsson's Pillars

One of sculptor Sigurjón Ólafsson's main themes is columns and pillars, and his most well known of such sculptures are probably the Emblem of Iceland at Hagatorg and the Throne Pillars at Höfði House, both in Reykjavík. This exhibition

displays a selection of pillars and columns, carved in wood, which are a variation of former mentioned sculptures and are intended to reveal the creativity of the sculptor.

Laugarnestanga 70, 105, Reykjavík

The Pharmacy Museum

19:00 - 21:30

Pharmacy Museum

Pharmacists will guide guests around the exhibition and a 60 minute DVD will be shown about how the manufacturing of drugs has been through the years.

Neströð, 170, Seltjarnarnes

Molinn Cultural Centre

20:00 - 00:00

Giving cute things sharp teeth

Welcome to Júlíus Valdimarsson's first art exhibition. The exhibition consists of bizarre creatures in a variety of colors. Live music, pancakes and coffee.

Hábraut 2, 200, Kópavogur

National History Museum of Kópavogur

19:00 - 00:00

"Indigenous Icelanders"

"Indigenous Icelanders" are subterranean, freshwater amphipods (Crustaceans), one of the few endemic species in Iceland.

Nordic House

19:00 - 00:00

I Vesterveg

"Vesterveg" in Viking times and early Middle Ages meant to travel to countries west of the North Sea. This touring exhibition is the culmination of a collaborative project involving 7 artists from Shetland, Iceland and Norway. Also on Sat & Sun.

19:00 - 00:00

Landscape

The Danish artist Jens Damkjær Nielsen's exhibition is in the foyer of the Nordic House. It includes major black and white linoleum prints, which bear the common title, Landscape. Also on Sat & Sun.

Sturlugata 5, 101, Reykjavík

The Music History Museum of Iceland

19:00 - 00:00

The National Anthem - composer Sveinbjörn Sveinbjörnsson

The Music History Museum of Iceland now prepares an exhibition on Sveinbjörn Sveinbjörnsson, composer of the Icelandic National Anthem, and the first Icelander to study musical composition. Guests will be able to see the exhibition take shape; the curator and the director of the museum will share insights. At 21:30, the Ugly Choir will perform Icelandic songs, accompanied by "unusual" instruments. Also open on Sat.

Hábraut 2, 200, Kópavogur

Nesstofa

19:00 - 23:00

Stars and meteors in Nes

Stjörnmuskoðunarfélag Seltjarnarnes (Amateur Astronomical Society) bring telescopes and meteors to Nes.

19:15 - 19:45

Nesstofa - Guided tour for children

Walk around Nesstofa.

20:00 - 20:30

Chorus - Selkórinn in Nesstofa

Selkórinn will sing few songs in Nesstofa.

21:00 - 21:45

Bjarni Pálsson in late 18th century

Guided tour around Nesstofa with Óttar Guðmundsson.

22:15 - 23:00

Architecture - Nesstofa

In Nesstofa, built in 1761-1767, Danish and Icelandic architectural traditions are brought together. Guided tour.

Nes við Seltjörn, 170, Seltjarnarnes

Víkin - Reykjavík Maritime Museum

19:00 - 00:00

The Icelander and the sea

Exhibition of 32 painters. Also on Sat & Sun.

19:30 - 21:30

Coast Guard Vessel Ódinn

Guided tour by former crew members.

20:00 - 20:30

Puppet Theatre

One of the most beloved of the Sagas, Laxdeala, comes alive at the Maritime museum.

20:30 - 21:00

Concert - Male Choir

The Kjalarnes Male Choir sings aboard Coast Guard Vessel, Odinn.

21:00 - 21:30

Puppet Theatre

One of the most beloved of the Sagas, Laxdeala, comes alive at the Maritime museum.

21:30 - 22:00

Concert

Kjalarnes Male Choir sings at the Bryggjan café.

22:30 - 23:00

Singing on the pier

Members of the Kjalarnes Men's Choir sing with museum guests in the Pier Hall of the Museum.

Grandagarður 8, 101, Reykjavík

The Culture House



19:00 - 00:00

Child of Hope - Children's Hopes

Inside the exhibition, Child of Hope, about national hero Jón Sigurðsson, children are invited to suggest ways to better today's society in the spirit of Jón Sigurðsson's campaign for independence and human rights. The children write their wishes on a piece of paper, fold the paper and seal it with sealing wax. The Culture House's guide will assist and talk with guests.

19:00 - 00:00

ICELAND::FILM rolling

The exhibition gives an overview of Icelandic filmmaking from its beginning to the present. Selected clips screened continuously and movies in full length. Over 100 titles.

19:00 - 00:00

Nation and nature

A nature film by filmmaker Páll Steingrímsson will be screened continuously. Steingrímsson captures the contact between man and nature in a sensitive way where respect for the subject matter comes first. A film the entire family can enjoy together.

19:30 - 21:30

See My Black Ass

The authors of the folk tale children's book, See My Black Ass, read from their book inside an exhibition with pictures from the book and odds and ends from Icelandic folk heritage. Brynhildur Heiðar and Ómarsdóttir selected and retold the folk tales and Þórey Mjallhvít Heiðar and Ómarsdóttir painted the pictures.

19:30 - 00:00

The Scriptorium in the Medieval Manuscripts exhibition is open

Try your hand at writing with a quill on vellum using ink boiled from Icelandic herbs. The Árni Magnússon Institution's educator will assist and explain this ancient art to guests.

22:00 - 00:00

Fimm í tangó (Five in tango) throw a Tango Ball

The quintet Fimm í tangó (Five in tango) throws a tango ball in the Library Room. Fimm í tangó are: Ágúst Ólafsson, vocals, Ástríður A. Sigurðard, piano, Íris Dögg Gísladóttir, violin, Kristín Lárusdóttir, cello, and Vadim Fedorov, accordion.

21:00 - 21:30

Jón Sigurðsson reflects on his namesake

Jón Sigurðsson, former governor of the Central Bank of Iceland, minister and chairman of the Progressive Party, talks about Jón Sigurðsson, leader of the campaign for independence in the 19th century.

Hverfisgötu 15, 101, Reykjavík

National Museum of Iceland

19:00 - 00:00

Make Do and Mend

A new exhibition at the National Museum of Iceland where various mended objects from the past can be viewed. Also on Sat & Sun.

19:00 - 00:00

Chests and Caskets

A new exhibition at the National Museum where guests can view various old Icelandic chests and caskets from the museum collection. Also on Sat & Sun.

19:00 - 00:00

Be ye Welcome, my Good Friends!

Carving is an age-old tradition in Iceland and the carvings have strong identifying features. A special craft and tradition developed in Iceland in carving cattle horns. The exhibition comprises a selection of the National Museum's collection as well as horns on loan from the National Museum of Denmark. Also on Sat & Sun.

19:00 - 00:00

Photographs from the Lake Mývatn area

Photographs from the Lake Mývatn area by the photographer Bárður Sigurðsson (1872-1937). The photographs represent the every day life of Icelanders in the beginning of the 20th Century. Also on Sat & Sun.

19:00 - 19:30

Children's film-Ráðagóða stelpan

An Icelandic childrens film, Ráðagóða stelpan. The film is about a very resourceful girl who gets into many adventures. No subtitles.

20:00 - 20:30

A Lecture on Nationalism

A lecture on nationalism by Guðmundur Hálfánarson, historian.

21:00 - 21:30

Live music

Live music event at the National Museum of Iceland

22:00 - 23:00

Who was Jonas?

A film about Jonas Hallgrímsson, a 19th century Icelandic poet. The film is in Icelandic. No subtitles.

Suðurgötu 41, 101, Reykjavík

The National Archives

19:00 - 21:30

An introduction to genealogical research

Find your ancestors in church records.

19:00 - 23:00

Private archives

Do you have interesting records that you would like to submit to the National Archives? Consult the specialists at the National Archives.

19:00 - 00:00

Old Handwriting

Try to read old handwriting. Try to imitate old handwriting. Prize quiz.

19:00 - 21:00

Preservation of old records

Specialists of the National Archives of Iceland clean old documents.



22:30 - 23:00

Musician Svavar Knútur performs

Musician Svavar Knútur performs.

Laugavegur 162, 105, Reykjavík

The Icelandic Printmaking Association

19:00 - 00:00

Artist Of The Year

The artist of the year at the friends of the IPA 2011 is Ríkharður Valtingoer. During Museum Night, Ríkharður presents his artwork at the Printmakers Associations Gallery. Works by previous artists will also be on display.

Tryggvagata 17, 101, Reykjavík

Note that this is not a complete list of events. It may be subject to change. For further information see www.vetrarhatid.is. All events in Icelandic unless otherwise stated. All events on Museum Night (11 February) are free of charge.

Reykjavík Museum of Photography

19:00 - 00:00

Karl R. Lilliendahl - The Light of the Righteous Shines ...

Photos taken of the protest in November where the photographer adds sentences from the testament of Solomon in the Bible.

19:00 - 00:00

Do you recognise this person?

A chance to look at photos from the archives of the Museum and identify the people or the places on them.

19:00 - 00:00

Orri - Interiors

For over a decade, photographer Orri has been taking photographs of deserted farmsteads in Iceland, and in Interiors he shows a selection of the photographs taken 1999-2010. Orri seeks to capture the colourful spirits and aura of the deserted that lives in the interior of the houses.

20:00 - 21:00

Leifur Þorsteinsson - Guided Tour

On the 30th anniversary of Reykjavik Museum of Photography, Leifur Þorsteinsson will exhibit his first part of five in the series 2011. At 8pm Leifur will discuss his exhibition and the technique behind the photographs.

Tryggvagata 15, 101, Reykjavík

Reykjavík Municipal Archives

19:00 - 21:00

Children Games

In the children's corner there will be a number of toys, such as legs and shells, to remind us of the games children played in the old days in Iceland. Children will also be able to draw and color.

19:30 - 00:00

Crazy Youth

Majority of Icelandic youth attended Tónabær, centre for young people, and observed and participated in shaping the Icelandic culture of young people each time. Exhibition of documents from Tónabær about bands, concerts, and behaviour of the young people.

19:00 - 20:00

Remember Tónabær?

DJ Þráinn Óskarsson will play music from the good old vinyl records which were most popular at the youth centre Tónabær in the 70's and 80's. Ideal to show younger generations what turntable, vinyl records and real music is like! Again at 21:00.

19:30 - 20:30

In the shelter of the glaciers

Film about vanished life and work of people in Skaftafell in Southern Iceland, made in the years 1952-1958. Good documentary about life in the countryside in older times. Again at 21:30.

20:00 - 20:30

Sharp

Show from the Ballet Academy of Hafnarfjörður. Four to six dancers show two dances, one sharp and colorful and the other lyrical and technical.

Tryggvagata 15, 101, Reykjavík

SÍM (Association of Icelandic Visual Artists)

19:00 - 00:00

Spessi - Artist of the Month

Spessi is one of our prestigious photographers and his work has been exhibited in museums and galleries worldwide.

Hafnarstræti 16, 101, Reykjavík

Saga Museum

19:00 - 00:00

The old Sagas brought to life

The Saga Museum transports you to the Viking Age and brings back to life renowned figures and major events in Icelandic history.

Perlan, Óskjuhlíð, 105 Reykjavík



HAFNARFJÖRÐUR



The Museum Bus - Free of Charge

A special free museum bus will be operated on Museum Night to take visitors between the museums. A timetable for the Museum Bus will be on display at each museum and on www.vetrarhatid.is

Reykjavík

Saturday 12. February and Sunday 13. February

Winter Lights Festival

Reykjavík Art Museum - Hafnarhús**10:00 - 17:00 Saturday and Sunday
Film, Video and Sound Art /
Without destination**

Film, Video and Sound Art Program:

10:00 Ring Road, Friðrik Þór Friðriksson, 1985 (80 min.)

11:30 Hekla, Haraldur Jónsson, 2001 (10 min.)

12:00 Skipholt, John Bock, 2005 (55 min.)

13:00 From Hetty to Nancy, Deborah Stratman, 1997 (44 min.)

14:00 Das Echo ist der Zwerge Sprache, Teil I: Island - Land ohne Eisenbahn, Wolfgang Müller, 1999 (22 min.)

14:30 Counterclockwise, Ragnheiður Gestsdóttir, 2011 (12 min.)

15:00 Skagafjörður, Peter Hutton, 2003 (35 min.)

16:00 Searching for Hjetna, Rory Middleton, 2010 (45 min.)

Tryggvagata 17, 101, Reykjavík

Garðabær Library**11:30 - 14:00 Saturday
Play reading for children**

Anna Brynja Baldursdóttir reads for children. Suitable for children age 5-8 years, all children and adults are welcome.

Again at 12.30 and 13.30

Garðatorgi 7, 210, Garðabær

The Icelandic Printmaking Association**14:000 - 18:00 Saturday
Friends of the IPA**

Printmakers will be working at the workshop. Programme for children from 14pm-4pm, in which graphic artists print with children. Museum also open Sun.

Tryggvagata 17, 101, Reykjavík

Grófarhús**14:00 - 16:00 Saturday
Shadow Theatre**

A workshop for children and grown-ups. Make your own puppets and use them in the shadow theatre on site. Hosted by Reykjavík City Library, Reykjavík Museum of Photography and Reykjavík City Archives.

Tryggvagata 15, 101, Reykjavík

**Hafnarborg - The
Hafnarfjordur Centre of
Culture and Fine Art****15:00 - 16:00 Saturday
Artist's Talk: Libia Castro and
Ólafur Ólafsson**

The artists Libia Castro and Ólafur Ólafsson, will lead an informal discussion about their work, The Constitution of the Republic of Iceland.

12:00 - 17:00 Saturday**The Constitution of the Republic
of Iceland - Libia Castro and
Ólafur Ólafsson**

The Spanish-Icelandic artist duo Libia Castro & Ólafur Ólafsson will open their exhibition, The Constitution of the Republic of Iceland. The work is a collaboration with the composer Karólína Eiríksdóttir. They commissioned Karólína to write a music piece where all the 81 articles of the constitution would be sung.

Strandgata 34, 220, Hafnarfjörður

The Farmhouse Krókur**13:00 - 16:00 Saturday
The farmhouse Krókur at
Garðaholt - open house**

The small farmhouse, Krókur að Garðaholt, is a small gabled farmhouse clad with corrugated iron, built in 1923 on the foundations of an earlier turf building. Krókur is a good example of houses in which ordinary working people lived in this part of the country in the first half of the twentieth century.

Garðavegur, 210 Garðabær

**The Sigurjón Ólafsson
Museum****15:00 - 16:00 Saturday and Sunday
Sigurjón Ólafsson's Pillars -
Guided tour**

One of sculptor Sigurjón Ólafsson's main themes is columns and pillars. A guided tour through the exhibition which displays a selection of pillars and columns, carved in wood.

Laugamestanga 70, 105, Reykjavík

**National Museum of
Iceland****11:00 - 12:00 Saturday
Guided tour in English**

A guided tour through the main exhibition of the National Museum of Iceland, Making of a Nation.

Suðurgötu 41, 101, Reykjavík

ASÍ Art Museum**15:00 - 16:00 Sunday
Artist talk: The Family Quintet**

The Family Quintet talks. The artist Curver Thoroddsen and his family will be present to talk about the exhibition and answer questions.

Freyjugata 41, 101, Reykjavík

**Reykjavík Art Museum -
Kjarvalsstaðir****15:00 -16:00 Sunday****Artist's talk: Ragnar Kjartansson**

Artist's talk with Ragnar Kjartansson, Iceland's representative at Venice Biennale in 2008 in relation to the exhibition, "50 Years of Icelandic Art at the Venice Biennale." Icelandic artists have had a representative at this major international contemporary art exhibition for fifty years but their regular participation did not start until the year 1984.

Flókagata 5, 105, Reykjavík

Reykjavík
Winter Lights Festival

Saturday, 12 February 13:00 - 17:00

International Children's Day

Gerðuberg Culture Center and Miðberg Leisure Center

Free entrance



International Children's Day

Protective charms - Would you like to make your own protective charm? Runes were an ancient alphabet, used mainly for cutting into stone or wood. Come and put your rune on a piece of wood that you can wear round your neck.

Instructor: Þórdís Halla Sigmarsdóttir

Óðinn's ravens - Come and make your own news-gathering raven! Huginn and Muninn were the pet ravens of Óðinn, the highest of the Norse gods. By day they flew far and wide, watching and listening to everything on their way; in the evening they came back, perched on Óðinn's shoulders and croaked the day's news into his ears.

Instructor: Guðmunda Óskarsdóttir

No ordinary animals, these! - Come and make Óðinn's eight-legged horse Sleipnir, the two cats that drew the chariot of Freyja, goddess of Love, or the boar Sæhrímnir, which was cooked for dinner every night in Valhöll, the great hall of warriors in the afterlife. All these can be made out of ordinary paper plates, which you will learn to transform as if by magic into the animals of Norse mythology.

Instructor: Rosalie Alegre

When the Dwarves Rolled up their**Sleeves** - The Black Elves of Norse mythology were skilled craftsmen who could make wonderful things with magic powers. For example, they made the charmed cord that bound the monster Fenrisúlfr (Fenrir's Wolf) in Gerðuberg. Come and make your own dwarf and give him a real dwarf's name.

Instructor: Kristín Ragna Gunnarsdóttir

Freyja's pikelets and the Valkyries' mead - Freyja's pikelets are irresistible, especially with the golden dressing made from the tears of the Goddess of Love. The Valkyries drank a special charmed mead before they set off to the battlefield to select the bravest heroes and bring them back to live forever in Valhöll. Come and enjoy these refreshments, prepared out of doors over an open fire.

Instructors: Nichole Leigh Mosty and Anita Krasniqi

Make a Roman musical instrument! - A variety of musical instruments were used by the ancient Romans in the worship of their gods. Come and make your own Pan pipes, drums, rattles and wind instruments. At the outdoor gathering at the end of the day

there will be a chance to join in the singing and let rip with your own instrumental accompaniment.

Instructors: Pamela De Sensi, Hjörtur Hjartarson, Heiðrún Fivelstad and Hugrún Helgadóttir.

Dance workshop: Southern and Swaying - A dance workshop where you will learn some important steps to the accompaniment of the subtle and hypnotic music of South America and Cuba. At the closing festival gathering on the square outside there will be an opportunity to dance to the accompaniment of drums and other instruments.

Instructor: Edna Mastache

Making the Festival Dragon - Dragons feature in myths from many parts of the world. Origami is the ancient Japanese art of folding paper to make figures and ornaments. Come and take part in making a big oriental dragon and then go with it out to the festival gathering on the square outside at the end of the day.

Instructor: Björn Finnsson

Chinese dragons - Come and make a little dragon you can take home with you. Chinese dragons are colourful and can twist and coil and turn just like real ones! The blue one is the Weather Dragon, and the Manchu Dragon can change itself into other things. What sort of dragon is yours?

Instructor: Katarsyna Wo newska

Making puppets from A to Z - It's fun to make simple puppets out of paper. Greek mythology is full of all sorts of intriguing figures: Athena, goddess of Skill and Wisdom; Aphrodite, Goddess of Love and Beauty; Zeus, King of the Gods ... Learn to make your own puppet of a Greek god or goddess.

Instructor: Hugrún Ýr Magnúsdóttir

Dracula - Would you like to play at being Dracula? The tale about Count Dracula in his gloomy castle in Transylvania is based on ancient history and also folklore about vampires. The Count is terribly pale, with blood-red lips and red eyes, and his white fangs stick out from under his lip. - Dracula is horrrrrrrible!

Instructor: Kristín Þóra Guðbjartsdóttir

Merlin's Magic Workshop

The mythical figure Merlin was an ancient British magician who appears in the stories of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. The magician Jón Víðis will take on the role of Merlin and teach us some clever magic tricks.

Instructor: The magician Jón Víðis Jakobsson

Festival of Fire - with a Dragon!

World Children's Day will end with all participants going out onto the square between Miðberg and Gerðuberg at 4 p.m. There, artists from the Circus School will perform, including Wally the Clown and a real fire-eater! Those who have made Roman instruments will play them, and to the accompaniment of drums, the great Dragon will be brought out and the singing and dancing will begin.

Gerðuberg 3-5, 111, Reykjavík

Don't miss World Children's Day in Gerðuberg!

Sunday, 13 February 17:30.

Love Walk in ReykjavíkT

The Love Walk festival will be held at the heart of Reykjavík on Sunday 13th February. The event starts at sunset, 17:30 and lasts for about an hour. In this festival we all focus on what unites us; love. People gather at Austurvöllur where we are welcomed by a brass band playing. Several noted individuals present beautiful thoughts on love and what connects us. The love walk goes around the lake while skilled musicians

play known love songs. Several Reykjavík choirs unite by the lake and sing a few songs for us. Actress and author Bergljót Arnalds is the organiser of the festival, with the help of several parties such as AUS, the Red Cross and others. Everyone is encouraged to wear red for the occasion.

Austurvöllur, 101, Reykjavík