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Issue 16 – **October 9 – November 5** – 2009

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In the midst of a harsh economic recession, Icelanders have started selling off their valuable energy resources to international corporations at KREPPA-rates. Grapevine's Catharine Fulton investigates the sale of HS Orka to Canada's Magma Energy, how the deal went down and if it is an indication of what's to come. **PG. 12.**

Haukur’s 16th Editorial
Just Haukur rambling, really

I’m back. I wrestled the reigns away from Davíð Oddsson. Even though I was excited about some of his new editorial policy (expanding the poetry section, more original fiction), it still came down to the fact that I kind of like this job.

Also, employment in the field of publishing is hard to come by these days, especially jobs that don’t entail your owner spying on you and reading your e-mail and stuff. So I took it back. Yay, me.

Anyway, all of the amazing Grapevine staff has been hard at work for the past couple of weeks, preparing this packed issue of packed-ness. It has it all. Interviews, opinions, music reviews, comix. Oh and a whole extra paper inside, The Grapevine Airwaves Mini, where you can read up on your Iceland Airwaves bands and get some good advice on how to conduct your festival in an optimal manner. It’s loaded with stuff. (Sidenote: I am in awe of the folks that contribute to making Grapevine. From our proof-reader Jim, to our SUPER TEAM of interns, to every single writer, photographer and illustrator to grace our pages, and our

designer extraordinaire, Jói – these people all continually break their backs (or allow me to break them) and bust their asses just so you can gain some enjoyment from this paper. I hope you’re happy. At least I am. And proud to get to work with all these fine people).

Now. Here are two points:

1) Read Catharine Fulton’s eye-opening feature on the privatization and subsequent sale of HS Orka. To me, this is some scary, eyebrow-raising stuff. Even if every party involved in the transaction has the best of intentions (which is unlikely, if THE COLLAPSE taught us anything about common businessfolks’ ethics, and if we look at how such deals have gone down in the past), this is still a matter of grave importance that should be discussed and debated heavily before any course of action is taken.

We just effectively sold off exclusive rights to all of Reykjanes’ harnessable energy for the next 130 years. And if what we’re hearing is right, this might just be the beginning. Selling off a nation’s resources at bargain rates, while that nation is battling severe economic problems and in great

need of an instant cash injection – that just doesn’t sound like a very smart idea. Like a downtrodden crack-addict pawning his TV.

Anyway, no matter what your opinion on these issues will be, I dare you to have one. That is important, as this is an extremely important matter. Possibly one of the most important we as a nation will be confronted with in the next decades. We cannot afford to be lazy here. We just can’t.

2) If you’re going Airwaves next week, make sure to catch as many of the local acts as you can. And dare to be surprised – there are a lot of great things happening in the Icelandic music scene these days and you won’t have heard about all of them. Go out early, stay out late, don’t get too drunk and respect your elders.

I ALSO HAPPEN TO BE A MEMBER OF A BAND THAT’S PLAYING AT AIRWAVES AND YOU SHOULD DEFINITELY CHECK US OUT AS WE ARE REALLY GREAT AND LIFE ALTERING AND STUFF! WE’RE CALLED REYKJAVÍK! Phew.



Cover Photo:
Hörður Sveinsson
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Printed by Landsprent ehf. in 25,000 copies.

THE REYKJAVÍK GRAPEVINE
Hafnarstræti 15, 101 Reykjavík
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Published by Fröken ehf.
Member of the Icelandic Travel Industry Association - www.saf.is

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The Reykjavík Grapevine is published 18 times a year by Fröken Ltd. Monthly from November through April, and fortnightly from May til October. Nothing in this magazine may be reproduced in whole or in part without the written permission of the publishers. The Reykjavík Grapevine is distributed around Reykjavík, Akureyri, Egilsstaðir, Selfoss, Keflavík, Ísafjörður and at key locations along road #1, and all major tourist attractions and tourist information centres in the country.

You may not like it, but at least it’s not sponsored. (No articles in the Reykjavík Grapevine are pay-for articles. The opinions expressed are the writers’ own, not the advertisers’).

Comic | Lóa Hjálmtýsdóttir



This Issue’s Free-Track COMPILATION!

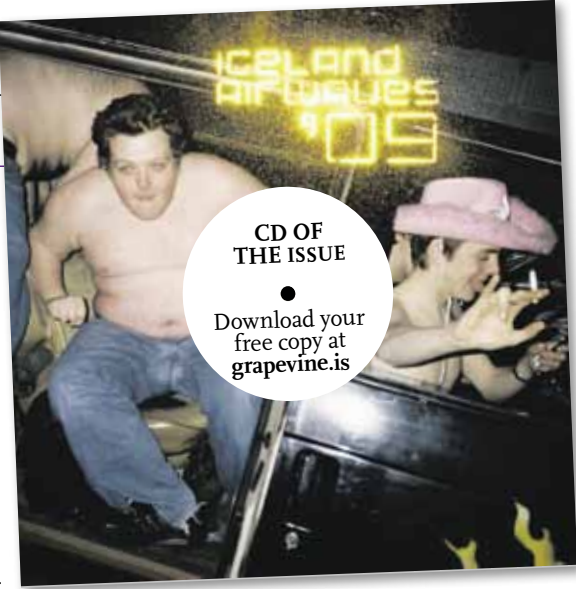
Grapevine Airwaves 2009 Compilation

Download the free Compilation CD at www.grapevine.is

It’s Airwaves time again. Damn, that’s exciting. All that music, all those shows. It’ll be a blast for sure. The thought of all this impending fun makes us feel all festive and warm inside. And you know us, we like to spread the joy around and so we done went and made up this cool Iceland Airwaves compilation for y’all to download and blast in anticipation of the great fest.

It features select contributions from some of our favourite local artists that are playing Airwaves 2009 (not all of them, but some of them) for all your CD burning pleasures. It also has a full tracklist and a sweet cover designed and shot by our very own Jói Kjartans. Here’s what’s on it:

Ben Frost – The Carpathians // Berndsen – Dark Times // Dynamo Fog – Rock ‘n’ Rock // Egill S – Stay Unhooked /// FM Belfast – Frequency // Foreign Monkeys – Los // Hjaltalín – Stay By You // Kimono – Black // Lára – Love // Mammút – Rauðilækur // Me, the Slumbering Napoleon – She’s a Maniac// Morðingjarnir – Manvísa // Retro Stefson – Montana // Retrön – Iron Goblet // Reykjavík! – THE BLOOD // Sudden Weather Change – She was a Cheerleader // Svavar Knútur (of Hraun) – Yfir hóla og hæðir // Sykur – New Horizon





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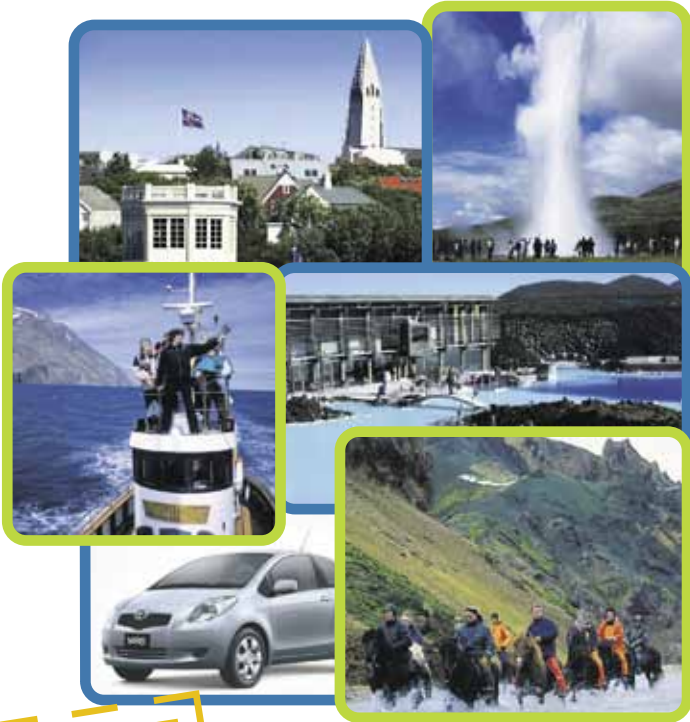
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Sour grapes and stuff

Say your piece, voice your opinion, send your letters to letters@grapevine.is

4 Letters

THE WORLD HAS IGNORED THE TRUE GOD.THEY HAVE IGNORED JESUS CHRIST.THEY HAVE CONTINUED DOING EVIL IN THE SIGHT OF THEIR GOD. GOD HAS NOW STIRRED HIMSELF TO START A SYSTEMATIC AND UNPARALLELED DESTRUCTION OF THE INHABITANTS OF THE WORLD.FROM NOW ON THE WORLD WILL BE DESTROYED BY:-

1.EARTHQUAKES. 2.FLOODS
3.GIGANTIC HAIL STORMS. 4.WARS
5.WILD ANIMALS. 6.OLD AND NEW SICKNESSES. 7.FAMINE. 8.DROUGHT
9.POISONED AND/OR BLOODIED WATER. 10.STRANGE CREATURES FROM THE CORE OF THE EARTH. 11.FIRES. 12.STORMS. 13.FALLING STARS. 14.TORTURE. 15.MURDERS AND OTHER FORMS OF CRIME. 16.BLOOD. 17.E.T.C.

18.AFTER PHYSICAL DESTRUCTION, THEY WILL BE CAST INTO HELL AND/OR LAKE OF FIRE AND BRIMSTONE WHERE THEY WILL BE BURNING FOR EVER AND EVER

GOD IS THE CREATOR OF ALL.HIS CREATION HAS REJECTED HIM.THEY WILL NOW SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES

CHARLES MWANGI GACHICHIO & RAHAB WANJIKU MWANGI
(THE 2 END-TIME PROPHETS,THE 2 WITNESSES OF REVELATION 11:3)

Dear Charles and Rahab,

thank you for your warning. It really sucks that it has come to this, but we must admit: we are sorta curious to see these 'STRANGE CREATURES FROM THE CORE OF THE EARTH' type things. Are they Morlocks? Or in any way Morlock-like? That would be so cool. HG Wells is truly your brother in prophethood.

In any case, thanks for letting us know about all this. It means we can prepare properly for damnation. I have already started making a cool APOCALYPSE playlist. It has Nas on it. And some Lemonheads.

Dear Grapevine

I am a proud westfjordan, currently living in the capital of Iceland.

I, like normal people, like music, food, and all that normal people stuff. Specially food, in fact I like food so much I'd die for a home-made hamburger. But that's not my point!

Let's not talk about me, but more about my problem. I, along 5 friends went to Indian Mango last month, a little restaurant downtown. One of them was celebrating her 22 birthday. And therefore we decided to go to this restaurant. We came there just around 8 pm, got our menus and just around 8:20 we ordered, nothing heavy that would make the chef sweat!

And then we waited... and a bit more...

And then a couple came in, ordered, they waited for a few minutes and voilá! their food came, they eat, payed and left. as we waited... and just around 9:40 ish the food finally came

The birthday-girl had seen a great part of her birthday go down the drain waiting for food, well, if that's not fun, I don't know what!

And the only thing that the restaurant

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MOST AWESOME LETTER:

Dear Ms.Joly

I am writing to you as i am very worried about Christmas this year. my mom and dad do not work and have to pay a lot of bills. All the stuff we buy at the shops costs a lot more and we never buy fresh fruit any more for school.

My school has cancelled the trip we take every year as they do not have any money to do it.

My mom says a lot of bad people took all our money on holiday and that its not coming back. I still have my savings, but my grandma and grandpa lost everything they saved up for.

Everyone is very sad and seems to have lost all hope and are not smiling so much anymore now. Maybe you could tell me and my family that you will fix everything for us before it gets too cold. If i ask anyone if things will get better they can never give me an answer. Thank you.

Dear nameless fictional melodramatic kid,
we appreciate your letter, as it brings attention to the plight of fictional melodramatic children all over Iceland. Possibly some real ones, too, although we do hope that's not the case. Things are grim and all, but "fix everything for us before it gets too cold?" Sheesh. That's pretty over the top. Are you eating coal for breakfast yet?
Anyway, here's to you, kid, your drama and your 'kid scrawl font' letter. You can have that case of beer. It will keep you warm until Ms. Joly fixes everything. Beer always helps.

And if things ever get so bad that we start seeing real versions of this letter, we will do our best to bring beer to all the cold children in Iceland. That's a promise.

PS – If you're reading this, Joly, we really wouldn't mind you fixing everything, fake kid or not. You can have the fake kid's beer if you do.

did to say: "we're sorry, sorry for ruining your birthday" was 10% discount(not of drinks, like beers and redwine to celebrate birthdays) and free coffee.

Well, I can say for sure that neither I, or my friends are ever going there again, I could understand this if there was crowdy in there, but no. The truth is that there were us, and two other tabels.

And I hope that you will publish this, but if not...atleast it's off my chest!
EVJ

Dear Evj,

jeez. You went to a restaurant and had to wait for an hour for your food. Did you read that imaginary kid letter? That kid is COLD. Compared to him, your plight really doesn't sound that bad.

Also, you guys must be some seriously boring people, since sitting together at a ta-

ble for an hour and twenty minutes – WITH ALCOHOL – was so goddamn awful.

But yeah, we feel your pain. Things often don't go as one would wish them to. But you should cut the restaurant a little slack. Sometimes things just go wrong. I agree that a better discount would have been in order, since you clearly asked for it, but not everyone is a diplomat. Oh I don't know. I hope you find a group of more exciting friends, if nothing else.

(by the way, Evj doesn't sound like a particularly 'Westfjordan' name. At least in my neck of the fjords we've not heard of any Evjs. Are you sure you're from there?)

Hressingarskálinn

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

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Steering Revolution

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Late-night Laugavegur revellers may be forgiven for walking in ignorance past the two green parking spots located near the intersection of Ingólfsstræti. Designated as an electric car refilling station, the set-up is, for the most part, symbolic—on a recent visit, neither of the cars parked in the spots were hybrids (much less electric) and the charging post had been peppered with graffiti. But for energy professionals, this little corner on the drunkest street in Reykjavík is the tip of the iceberg: the first sign of a nationwide reform.

As politicians, environmental organisations and private investors are keen to share, and there's a long list of reasons why Iceland is one of the best suited locations for the first national alternative-energy transportation network. That's fine and dandy, but the pressing questions of when, what, and how a transportation revolution will take place are still itching to be addressed.

YOUR MERCEDES WILL BE POWERED BY MY GAS

The 3rd Annual Driving Sustainability Conference, which wrapped up a few weeks ago in Reykjavík, attempts to address the subject both in Iceland and abroad. Roughly 200 delegates, 20 nations and dozens of organisations including representatives of environmental organisations, engineering firms, ministries of industry and heads of state gathered to discuss the topic.

One of the primary conclusions of this and the last two conferences is

that the future will be a multi-energy society, conference co-founder Teitur Þorkelsson told me over coffee.

"All different sources of energy and fuels will be used, depending on where you are," Þorkelsson said. "I'm not a believer in monotheism."

For Iceland in particular, Þorkelsson is a believer in biogas as an inexpensive and immediate option. The island already produces a considerable amount of biogas from waste material—enough to power 2,500 to 3,000 cars, he estimates. It's a surprising figure when you consider there are only about 120 biogas equipped vehicles in Iceland today. The unused majority of biogas is wastefully burned up in flares.

The situation is different in Sweden for example, where biogas is harnessed from sewage, sludge, landfills, and industrial refuse, Þorkelsson says: "You solve two problems at once: you get rid of waste in an environmentally sound manner, and you make domestically produced fuel."

"There's been a growing hype about electric cars too," Þorkelsson adds with some hesitation. The problem is that for the next five to seven years, electric cars will continue to be expensive, Þorkelsson estimates. Secondly, the Icelandic government, which has generally supported the transformation, has lagged behind on providing the sort of incentives necessary to create a viable business platform. Unlike biogas vehicles, electric cars in Iceland are still susceptible to the VAT, or the Value

Added Tax. Short-term tax breaks, which the Icelandic government approves yearly, don't foster a business environment that attracts long term investment.

Furthermore, Iceland hasn't offered the consumer perks other Nordic countries have in order to get drivers out of their gas-guzzlers. For instance, Norway lifted the VAT and offers electric car owners free use of bus lanes and electricity. This spring the Norwegian Socialist Left Party even floated the idea of a ban on fossil-fuel vehicles as soon as 2015. That kind of proactive approach has put 3,000 electric cars on Norwegian roads.

Whether biogas or electric, any kind of transportation revolution is still at least a few years away Þorkelsson argues:

"The standard number for exchanging the fleet takes about ten years. So from 2022 to 2030 at least half, and by 2030 possibly a majority, of our cars will be running on electric or biogas....Realistically, we will not see any significant electric car purchases in Iceland for the next two years."

I'M NOT AFRAID OF THE BUSES

That just won't do for Gísli Gíslason of Northern Lights Energy (NLE), an investment company built around the goal of transforming Iceland into an electric, and electric only, transportation network in a matter of years, not decades. With charging stations slated for instalment as early as next year, NLE hopes to have 50,000 electric cars on Icelandic roads by

2012—though they admit they'd be satisfied with 20,000.

To reach Gíslason's even more modest estimate, Iceland would need to buy 19,989 electric cars in the next three years, since today there are only 11—with the 11th being Gíslason's own. In other words, Gísli Gíslason, who today owns just over 9% of all electric cars in Iceland, only wants to own .005% and he wants Icelanders to help.

Big numbers don't scare Gíslason or the investors he claims to have lined up because, he argues, going electric isn't part of a multi-energy solution for Iceland; it's the only solution.

Iceland has more than the required 50 megawatts of electricity it would take to transform the network. Secondly, NLE believes that the complicated engines found in gasoline and biofuel cars—with over a thousand moving parts—will inevitably be replaced by the simplicity of electric engines (with only four moving parts). Lastly, Gíslason and his managing director, Sturla Sighvatsson, argue that despite the economic collapse, there's never been a better time to revolutionise: there's a surge of talented but unemployed engineers and the drastic drop-off in car sales since 2007 will translate into a fleet that needs renewal by 2011 or 2012.

But even though NLE's goals are national, the company will work independent of the government. "There's been a lack of leadership within the Icelandic government," Sighvatsson said. "We're making a decision for the government."

For example, since Iceland lacks any kind of comprehensive regulations for taxing electricity meant for vehicles, NLE plans to install GPS units and onboard computers in all cars sold. This will enable NLE to track not only what roads the driver takes, but how much and from where the car is being charged. Once the government wakes up to the energy revolution, the argument follows, they'll be free to tap into a pre-established data base for tax purposes.

However lucrative leading the government with a carrot and stick might be, it doesn't always sound very scrupulous: One of NLE's immediate projects is to import 10 city buses for the Reykjavík system even though they've yet to sign a contract with the city itself. I asked Gíslason if he was nervous about the purchase.

"I'm not afraid of the buses" he responded with a smile. "If the city of Reykjavík doesn't want [to buy] the buses, they will never be able to say that they want to go green again."

"It'll be in the papers," the managing director added, grinning my way. ☺

✍ MICHAEL ZELENKO



Why Iceland?

ICELAND IS AN ISLAND, STUPID

Which translates into an isolated transportation system with a quantifiable number of vehicles, somewhere in the 220,000-240,000 range. Unlike in, for example, Luxemburg, where a system overhaul would have to include neighboring communities, Iceland can transform its system independently.

AIN'T NOBODY DOPE AS ME, I'M JUST SO FRESH AND CLEAN

Iceland is already a world leader in green energy production and consumption: 90% of homes are heated by geothermal energy; 80% of the country's energy comes from hydropower stations; and 75% to 80% of the technically and environmentally feasible reserves of hydro- and geothermal energy reserves have yet to be tapped for heavy industry. Yet.

ICELANDERS LIKE TO GET COZY

Consider the fact that as of January 1, 2009, roughly 320,000 people live in Iceland. Nearly 170,000 of them live in the Reykjavík metropolitan area and 120,000 live in the city proper. Seventy-five percent of this population lives within 50 km of two hypothetical alternative energy refueling stations.

ENERGY REVOLUTION? NO THING BUT A CHICKEN WING

Iceland has already undergone one energy revolution and is well-equipped to do so again. In the 1920s and 30s, a majority of Iceland's energy demands were met by imported coal and oil – an unsustainable system that rendered the island dependent. The government-backed energy transformation that successfully weaned the island off imported energy was encouraged, and highlighted, by the oil crisis of the 70s. ☹

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The Surprising Pleasures Of The North Atlantic

Sea swimming in Iceland

Forget hot springs and hot tubs—it's time to highlight a slightly more daunting Icelandic activity. It's time for some sea swimming action. One might wonder why one would want to splash around in the freezing North Atlantic. Because believe me, it's fucking cold. Still the experience somehow manages to be totally awesome.

Dark clouds hovered above on the particular day we chose to try it out; there was an icy breeze in the air. Standing on the shore, my toes in the cold sand, I think to myself why, oh why am I here, when I could easily be in a number of other places. Warm places.

Still. It's 4 degrees Celsius, the water temperature is a nice 7.5. It's a lovely day for a swim in the sea.

Sea swimming has grown more popular in Iceland over the past few years. Most people in the Reykjavík area use the facilities around Nauthólsvík, a.k.a. the artificial beach, mainly because those bring access to showers and a hot tub. So far this year, the number of visitors to Nauthólsvík is five times what it was last year. "A few years ago people thought we were strange. It was almost like we didn't dare speak aloud of the fact that we sea swam. But this has changed now," says experienced sea swimmer Heimir Örn Sveinsson. "It's been a long process but after some positive media coverage, more people became curious and tried it out."

JUST DO IT

Heimir Örn Sveinsson and Benedikt Hjartarson have both been active sea swimmers for years—they go several times a week, all year round, regardless of the weather. Neither ice nor snow will stop them. They have promised to give me some pointers during my first dip in

the North Atlantic. "The first minutes it's really important to breathe, otherwise there is risk that you start panicking and hyperventilating. So just think actively about the breathing," explains Heimir.

While entering the water I do try to remember the breathing part, only to realise that I'm both panicking and hyperventilating in-between gruesome teeth chattering. I remember Benni's words of wisdom: "If you decide to go in—just do it. Just go. Don't hesitate. Keep going until you find that peace and balance in your body when you get used to the water."

There is some risk involving sea swimming in the cold waters of the Northern hemisphere. According to Þórarinn Sveinsson, senior physiology lecturer at the University of Iceland, hyperventilating causes a decrease in swimming ability. And when the temperature in your arm muscles is low, they get tired which means you have difficulty swimming. That really just means that you're at a higher risk of drowning while swimming in cold North Atlantic waters.

Heimir and Benni assure me that sea swimming is, in fact, safe as long as you're careful and up on your common sense. Tips include: don't swim alone, stay close to shore and listen to your body.

SURPRISINGLY PLEASURABLE

The only thing my body told me whilst submerging into the iciness is that it's going really numb. The word COLD repeats itself in my mind in big bold letters, but I push myself further until I find myself swimming. Not only that, I'm enjoying it. "Sea swimming is extremely good for your body and mind. And by taking the challenge you obtain

self confidence to overcome obstacles in your life," says Heimir. Apparently it's a very healthy way of exercising, at least according to my sea swimming buddies.

I must admit that after a while in the water, it does start to get nice. Real nice. Although not necessarily physically, but definitely mentally. It remains unknown whether this emotion will help me overcome great obstacles in the long run, but here and now it brings a wonderful feeling of accomplishment.

Fifty or so metres and approximately 4.5 minutes later, I've had enough and head back to the shore. You would think that entering the hot tub nearby would be heavenly after freezing your ass off in the sea. Wrong. At first you're shivering in the hot water and you can't feel whether it's hot or cold. However, after a few minutes of adjusting it's utter bliss.

My main conclusion after trying out sea swimming á la Iceland: the whole sea versus hot tub thing does not exist. In the end, both have lots of merit, and the combo is the height of awesomeness. 🍷

✍ LOUISE PETERSSON
📷 JULIA STAPLES

One Nation, One Party, One Bank Account?

 A year after the economic collapse and one can't help notice that nothing has really changed. The oligarchs, though officially bankrupt, still control Iceland's industries. Of the two daily papers, one is run by the main architect of the collapse, former PM and Central Bank Manager Davíð Oddsson, and the other is still owned by Jón Ásgeir Jóhannesson, one of the most indebted men in Iceland's history.

Free speech has been all but suspended, while no one has assumed responsibility for any of the decisions made here in the past twenty years. Even the Icesave issue remains unresolved. Which brings us to the question, are Iceland's politicians merely incompetent, or could it be that they don't actually want the current problems solved? It seems the latter might actually be the case.

In a recent issue of Time Magazine, columnist Joe Klein calls the US debate about Health Care a national embarrassment. Icelanders are no strangers to national embarrassment, but let's let Klein finish. He writes "Obama should be heartened by the fact that most of his Republican adversaries oppose the bill for crass political rather than ideological reasons."

He then goes on to explain this, saying that the Republicans are terrified that the healthcare bill will pass, not because they are afraid that the results will be a failure, but because they are afraid that it will be a success. If Obama manages to reform health care, end America's hopeless wars and rescue the economy, in other words, pull the US out of the quagmire the Republicans have mired it in, the Democrats will be in an unassailable position for the foreseeable future. Therefore, the Republicans seem to have decided to put their own party's political interests ahead of the good of the nation.

They would rather do harm to their adversaries than take part in doing good for their people. No wonder bipartisanship has proven impossible on this or any other major issue.

THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE ICESAVE

Which brings us to Iceland. A year after the October collapse, the Independence Party has proven to be as irresponsible in opposition as it was in government. They spent all of summer squabbling about Icesave while the nation's households sank deeper into debt. Even after they had

made their amendments, they still refused to support the bill, instead electing to remain idle as the bill was passed.

No doubt they hope to accrue political advantage from this. If the bill proves a relative success, they will claim credit for their amendments. If it proves a failure, they will claim to never have supported it to begin with. This argument, of course, can easily be stood on its head. There are no good solutions to Icesave, only various degrees of bad. If worst comes to worst, it will be because the Independence Party left the country in a hopeless position. If the problem can be solved, it only proves that the current government is that much better than the last.

PARTY OR PEOPLE?

The Progressive Party is little better, if slightly less obvious. On the same day that the current government made their first real proposals, a lowering of the debt of Icelandic families by up to 40%, it was the Progressive Party that captured the headlines by announcing an imaginary loan from Norway.

The Icesave fiasco is something that was created by the previous government. Not wanting to see the country's problems solved, problems that were created by itself, is therefore a case of the Independence Party offending the people twice. But they don't stop there. The party still controls the city of Reykjavík, and from there are busy continuing their futile policies, currently by selling off the energy supplies and trying to tear down old houses in the city centre.

From a party-political perspective, this makes sense. Eighteen years of the Independence Party rule led to national bankruptcy. If the Red-Green Alliance manages to solve the major problems, it will be the end of the Independence Party's dominance in Icelandic politics. It is therefore understandable that it chooses to put its own interests ahead of those of its country. It is also very unfortunate. 🍷

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Is Icelandic Media Being Held Hostage By Its Owners?

The Grapevine got permission from its owners to investigate



Everyone knows it. The smallness of Iceland leads to almost everything being contaminated by personal connections and considerations. Of course, the same goes for the nation's media—it's affected. Now, is the Icelandic media being held hostage by its owners and their interests, whatever those may be? Are there effective attempts to control and shape the local discourse?

Since last year's TOTAL ECONOMIC COLLAPSE, a lot of people have pointed their fingers squarely at the local media. Critics say that there was very little critical analysis being done in the build up to the fall, and that local journalists neglected to review and investigate what was going on due to political affiliations and/or owner interests. A recent survey by the local Market and Media Researching Agency shows that Icelanders' faith in their media averages at 18.9 percent. In comparison, 35.8 percent of the nation express no faith in their media.

This can't be normal, can it? At least we didn't think so. So we consulted with a scholar, Sociology Professor Þorbjörn Broddason, who teaches media and journalism at the University of Iceland.

How does the Icelandic media work?

Icelandic mass media in many ways resembles every other media system. You've got all the ingredients. In the printed press, we presently have newspapers Morgunblaðið and Fréttablaðið, tabloid DV and the business centred Viðskiptablaðið. The interesting thing is that all these papers wound up in the hands of entrepreneurs who had very strong interests to protect the Icelandic financial system. The media used to be hand in glove with the political system, what with party press and all, then they became hand in glove with the financial system.

The owners of the printed press are simply different families of entrepreneurs; it's all in the hands of people who have invested in what is written. That doesn't mean that all journalists are bent or corrupt, we simply have to realise that they are all employed

by people who like to see the news presented in a certain fashion. The only thing that should be totally independent is the state run TV and radio, which is supposedly owned by the people. So this is the scene.

Some argue that even though there are reputedly no more party papers, the current media is still dependant on and a part of large power structures and actively takes sides...

Absolutely. I think so. It's in a subtle manner, but they do take sides. There is no denying that there are strong ties between the Independence Party and Morgunblaðið. It's been the organ of the party since its inception. Fréttablaðið is constantly being accused of being in service of the Social Democrats, or perhaps it's the Social Democrats that are in the power of the owners of Fréttablaðið. The media is simply an integral part of the ongoing power struggles.

As someone who's studied the Icelandic media environment for years, do you feel ownership is an important factor?

Ownership is extremely important and always has been, simply because it interferes with freedom of expression. People are always looking over their shoulder—even if they don't admit it, even if they don't admit it to themselves. They are held hostage by the owner; it is the owner who hires them. The mass media may not be lying to you, but they may be giving you a certain version of reality.

For example, we were lead to believe that banking was the only thing that mattered in the country. There was a lack of critical analysis about this. More strongly put, there was complete absence of critical analysis. And when there were any doubts raised, someone would jump up and complain, even make threats. Either by advertising boycotts or threatening phone calls.

The local media is often accused being subjective. Why is that?

Is it accused, or is it true? Morgunblaðið

is obviously always read with its party allegiance in mind, and Fréttablaðið has in recent years been accused of being in the service of their previous owners, the Baugur family. And why is that? Because there appears to be an affinity between these parties. Assume they do have these ties; then they should admit and come clean that even in the news there can be bias. In every Icelandic news story, there will be this bias.

But you have to realise that no media can achieve total objectivity. Honesty, and the search of objectivity is what you can demand of every journalist.

Davíð Oddsson (former Central Bank chairman and PM of Iceland for the Independence Party) has been appointed editor of Morgunblaðið. People were not happy. Why?

He is totally enmeshed in practically every major problem that the Icelandic nation has encountered during the last twenty years. You simply cannot accept him as an editor; it's no use saying that he is not going to interfere in this and that. To me, it's a tragic blow to Icelandic mass communication that this was allowed to happen.

He was hired because the owners admire his undisputed qualities. They agree with his opinions and they know he is a strong advocate of their interests. They do it at the cost of the credibility of the paper, and a paper that has lost credibility is not of very much use.

Why choose such a polarizing figure?

It's incomprehensible. Except that they seem to be focused on their particular interests and they do not have any inkling about journalism, they do not care about journalism and they simply do not know what journalism is. It's very sad. Morgunblaðið and the people would have been much better off had he not been hired.

Finally: Is Icelandic media corrupt?

No, the media is not corrupt, in the true sense of the word. It is very far from perfection, but not corrupt. Icelandic journalists are decent people doing their best.

I don't think Icelandic media is in any sense less professional than other countries' media. Our problem is the smallness of the market and the proximity of our relations. How would you think, as a journalist, when every mass medium in this small country is laying off people? Would you rock the boat, would you print nasty things about the owners? No, you would think twice. You've got a mortgage and kids in kindergarten. This has simply always made life difficult for Icelandic journalists. 🍷

 LOUISE PETERSSON
 JULIA STAPLES

Catastrophology



Q: Will they ever stop speaking about billions?

A: Blablabla ... billions ... blablabla-blabla ... billions and billions and blabions, blablabions and blablablabions. Blablabions? Blablablabions. This was a random sample from Icelandic public debate in 2007. Here comes a random sample anno 2009: BLABLABLA! BILLIONS! BLABLABLA-BLABLA-BILLIONS AND BILLIONS, BLABIONS AND BABLIONS, BABLION YOU! YOU BABLIONIC LITTLE BABLIONE!

Ontology is the field within philosophy where it is debated what exists, and what it means for it to exist. Ontological debate is not needed for those who follow the news at all: what exists is money. Even non-existent money, which is the most discussed sort, exists in its own special, but all too real way.

There used to be an escape route. For the better half of the 20th century, there were countries where people spoke of something besides money. According to historians, well, according to the pundits of neo-liberalism anyway, people in these places did not have much else to speak about, no coffee-table items of curiosity, and the little they had they dared not mention out of fear that a secret agent might overhear, and wrong words uttered in their presence might get you a one way ticket to Siberia. A cold and dreary place where people just worked, worked and worked until they died, in the gloomy silence of a Kiesloski film. Well, at least they did not have to suffer this endless, no but absolutely endless, delusional talk of imagined things. Imagined, made-up, gone with the wind, and still as absolutely real as God used to be, as made clear with every second word uttered in this mad little place.

Now, since there is no place to visit East of the Wall anymore, for those wanting a brief pause from these absurd non-items of fascination, what is there to do?

Perhaps you've thought of staying somewhere alone for a while. That may help—you can rent a cottage, or even borrow a place somewhere on the countryside, there's enough room available in the small towns that used to be fishing villages. Whether here or there, though, can you be trusted to think of anything else, even if you lock yourself up without radio and internet, bring food, bring some books of poetry and give no one the address, thoroughly hermitize for a few days?

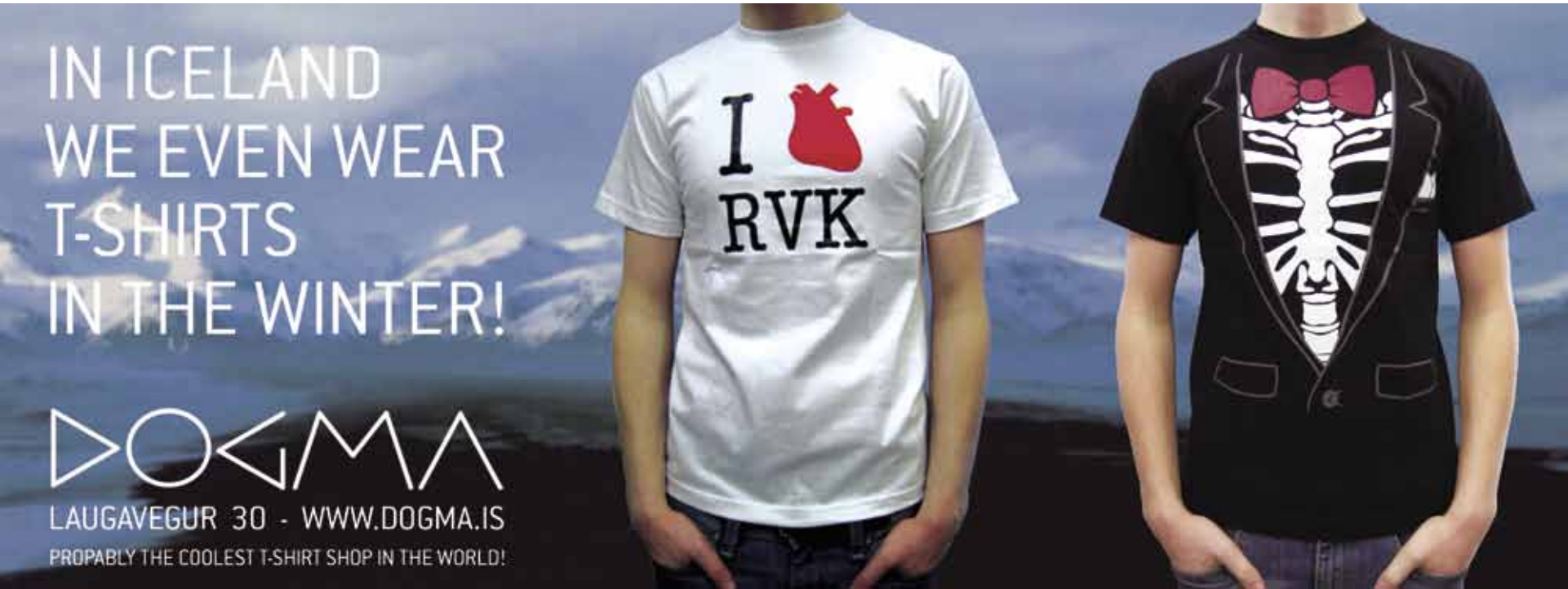
Furthermore: Can you afford it? Tourists pay billions every year to

escape talk of billions in a safari or by hiking through the silent eventless wilderness of glaciers. There will be a bill. Try travelling in an area where you don't speak the language, you will still hear billions mentioned on the radio, in the café, in your sleep—billions sound the same everywhere. And yes, they also speak of money in the third world, especially when you're around. They may not mention billions right away; you'd get a break from that, if you travel in Burma, for example. But they'll be after your dollars, explicitly, on every street corner. You, who hardly have any. You'll likely have to pay for food and lodging anyway and one day anguish awaits you as your minor fractions of a billion have dispersed like ... mercenaries. Those opportunistic fractions.

The same goes for other ideas: pursuing your studies, given that your field is neither business nor economics, it won't get you far away from the world of billions anyhow. Study literature and you will find that since the lost generation, writers have tended to stay in any country with an undervalued currency, fleeing all booms like a herd. Paris became popular when the Franc was low. Study anything and you'll spend the rest of your life applying for sponsorships and stipendia.

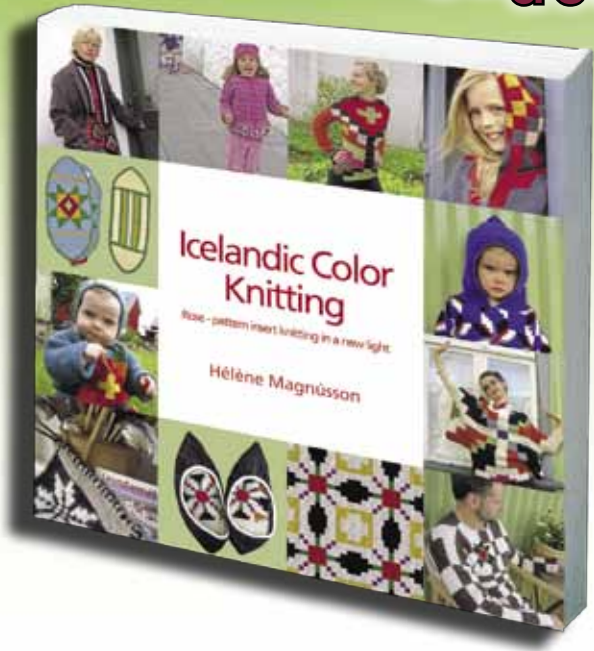
Activism sounds wholesome and neat, but perhaps you just don't see yourself as an anarchist—perhaps you endorse hierarchies, you may not be anti-power as such, just anti-wrong-powers. Anti-other-people's-power. You may not like the dress code, their noises, you may not like all the fun they seem to be having and you're not sure you'd get laid as an anarchist or that the anarchists would like to lay you. The police seem to get all worked up about them—and besides, they seem to be following the news too, getting all worked up over other people's money. And you, you just want some peace.

It is not there. Our languages used to be warzones, but they were conquered by billions. And then looted. There will be ceaseless talk of billions everywhere until judgement falls. Lucky for you, even if the 2008 economic crisis fell short of being the end of the world, a rumour is spreading in London that 2011 might just be it. And if not, there is the looming ecological catastrophe. Just hang in there. 🍷





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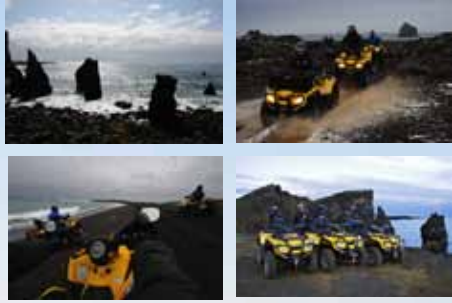
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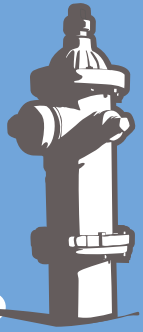
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Blame Canada?

Geothermal energy, Swedish shelf companies and the privatisation of Iceland

One by one men in suits of varying shades of grey approached the podium in the pit of the Reykjavík City Hall. One by one they pleaded their cases while Reykjavík's esteemed mayor—the fourth in two years—Ms. Hanna Birna Kristjánsdóttir looked on appearing disinterested in what appeared to be solely a formality. As the council members continued selling the idea of selling Iceland's resources, a crowd of 100-strong grew more agitated and increasingly vocal from their perch in the viewing gallery of the hall, separated from having a say in their own natural resources by an aesthetically pleasing glass barrier.

"People were screaming, saying that the politicians were traitors," explained Jón Bjarki Magnússon, a student who arrived at City Hall just in time for the vote. "It was a weird feeling to see it happen, to see these people down on the floor raise their hands and the decision is made and to see all these angry people above them not able to do anything."

The September 15th city council meeting stretched on for over three hours, during which time onlookers shouted and boo-ed as city council progressed toward approving the 32.32% sale of Iceland's HS Orka to the Canadian-cum-Swedish firm Magma Energy Corp.

Reykjavík Energy had agreed to purchase shares in HS Orka from Hafnarfjörður but the Competition Authority prohibits the energy firm from owning shares in competitors, explained the Progressive Party's Óskar Bergsson. "It is my opinion that the sale was necessary to comply with the law, solve a dispute with a neighbouring municipality and strengthen the financial status of [Reykjavík Energy]."

They had no choice, they said. It was a done deal, they said. It is a wise move for the Icelandic economy, they said. And so the sale was approved; three protestors, including Jón Bjarki, were arrested; and the mayor, along with her councilmen and women celebrated the sale with a champagne toast behind closed doors.

A BRIEF BUT COMPLICATED HISTORY OF HITAVEITA SUÐURNESJA

"Before this all started, in 2007, the state owned 50.9% of [Hitaveita Suðurnesja], the municipalities owned the rest," recounts Júlíus Jónsson, CEO of HS Orka. "Then the state [run by the Independence Party] decided to sell their shares to Geysir Green Energy [owned by the FL Group, an Independence Party supporter]."

By July 2007, Geysir and Independence Party stronghold Reykjanesbær each owned roughly a third of the company, Reykjavík Energy and Hafnarfjörður each claimed a sixth and four other municipalities owned just over 1% between them.

In June 2008, Alþingi passed new energy laws that mandated the separation of private energy production from competitive operations thus Hitaveita Suðurnesja was divided into HS Veitur, managing distribution of electricity, water and heat, and HS Orka, taking care of energy productions and sales.

Júlíus continued: "Then in July, 2009 Reykjanesbær sold all their shares in HS Orka to Geysir Green Energy and bought all Geysir Green Energy's shares in HS Veitur. At that time Geysir Green Energy sold 10.78% to Magma Energy."

According to press releases heralding this initial transaction between Magma and Geysir, throughout the sale "Magma was advised by Glacier Partners... and its affiliate Capacent Glacier... and Mannvit Engineering provided a third-party evaluation of HS Orka's operations." Interestingly, Geysir's Director of Business Development, Davíð Stefánsson, is also a Partner at Capacent Consulting, focusing on corporate strategy in the energy sector, and Mannvit Engineering is a shareholder in Geysir Green Energy. It's curious, therefore, how Capacent and Mannvit were deemed suitably objective to advise Magma Energy through their purchase of shares from Geysir Green Energy.

"Then Reykjavík Energy made their contract

with Magma and, along with Hafnarfjörður, sold them 32.32%," Júlíus further explained. So today Geysir Green Energy and Magma are proud owners of 55.2% and 43%, respectively, and four municipalities hold on to just under 2% of HS Orka.

WAS IT INEVITABLE?

This sale to Magma Energy has been in the works for sometime it would seem, with the wheels set in motion with the Independence Party selling the state's share in Hitaveita Suðurnesja to their cronies—infamous banksters Hannes Smárason, Bjarni Ármannsson and Jón Ásgeir Jóhannesson—at Geysir Green Energy to ensure transfer of what is now HS Orka to private hands.

"In the beginning of 2007, the government of the Progressive and Independence parties decided to put the state's share in Hitaveita Suðurnesja up for sale and barred public entities from bidding," said Þorleifur Gunnlaugsson, a Left-Green city councilman and Reykjavík Energy board member. "Representatives of those same parties have now sealed the deal in the municipal government."

While it's true that Reykjavík Energy's partial ownership of HS Orka contradicted Icelandic competition laws, critics have been questioning the speed at which the deal was passed, the lack of options presented to keep HS Orka in the hands of the public and the overall timing of the deal. Municipalities are, indeed, strapped for cash in these trying economic times, but the value of green energy is such that it would seem to be most sensible to hold on to it for dear life. Or at least to consider doing so.

The guaranteed revenue of owning a stake in a geothermal plant could very well have proved to be a life vest for drowning municipalities—times when the nation is in such a weakened financial state are also those in which interested parties are going to suss out the most lucrative deal for themselves, possibly paying far less than the resources are worth.

Júlíus noted that there were, at one time, as many as thirteen parties interested in purchasing the shares in HS Orka, but only two offers were made and there was allegedly no comparison. No information on the second bidder in this case has been made public, but their offer must have been laughable if not strong enough to rival the appallingly low deal wrangled by Magma, explained below.

Dagur B. Eggertsson, former Mayor of Reykjavík and Vice Chair of the Social Democrats, asserts that "now is probably the worst time in history to sell shares," and criticizes the majority in the municipal government for failing to investigate alternate solutions.

"It was not inevitable," Dagur insisted. "During this period we have seen examples of big energy-related deals that have been turned over by the city government but the thing is that the two political parties in power in city hall now are the same parties that gave away Icelandic banks to their friends, so they have a reckless record with privatisation. Not all privatisation is bad but you can privatise in such a manner that everybody is losing, and that is the sad case of a lot of privatisation in Iceland."

WHO IS MAGMA ENERGY?

According to their website, Canadian Magma Energy Corp. is a "geothermal pure play focused on becoming THE pre-eminent geothermal energy company in the world." With its hands in geothermal operations along the west coast of the United States, throughout South America and, most recently, in Iceland since its inception in early 2008, it would appear that Magma is indeed dedicated to achieving their lofty corporate goal of industry domination.

"I'm an entrepreneur so I've started many, many companies, that's what I do. This time around I wanted to build something green, so I looked at geothermal and it was just perfect, it just fit," explained Ross Beaty, CEO of Magma Energy, of his foray into green energy following more than thirty years heading up precious metal mining companies.

"I went to Iceland earlier this year and looked at opportunities and it seemed that HS Orka could benefit from capital infusion, reorganisation of its shareholding to stronger positions and it looked like there was an opportunity to do something that would help us and help HS Orka and, in the big picture, help the country of Iceland."

STRIKE WHILE THE NATION IS POOR

However, since Magma's appearance on Iceland's radar, their intentions have come under fire, with the general public seeming to doubt the Canadian firm's interest in helping Iceland, rather than simply helping itself at Iceland's expense. Earlier this year John Perkins, author of Confessions of an Economic Hit Man, paid a visit to Iceland expressly to warn the nation of what was to come. "You may be the first developed country to really be hit by the hit men," he said. "Like the people in Latin America [Iceland has] incredible resources, the old fish industry and cheap energy. Energy and water are scarce resources on the planet today. Iceland must protect its resources."

When confronted with claims that Magma Energy is an economic opportunist, praying on a country that is already on its knees following the economic collapse, Mr. Beaty responded "that is ignorance and complete nonsense. It's just because Icelanders don't know what we're all about and they don't understand the world that we live in. We're in Iceland because it has opportunities for the long-term benefit where we can deploy capital and we can improve the condition of an Icelandic company for the long term."

"We're here because Iceland is a core geothermal country that has great resources, many of them untapped, and it's simply a core business for us to get involved with countries like that, be it Iceland, Indonesia, the Philippines or, for that matter, North America," said Mr. Beaty. "I particularly enjoy the hypocrisy of some people who don't want foreign companies to be in Iceland but have no problem with Icelandic companies going to other parts of the world to do geothermal development, but that's a whole different subject. There's a lot of hypocrisy and a lot of finger pointing in situations like this, but that's the way of the world I suppose."

OUT WITH THE OLD AND... BACK IN WITH THE OLD

The general concern that seems to be brewing around Magma Energy's involvement in Iceland is not unfounded, however, as the deal struck with Reykjavík Energy reeks of the economic wheelings and dealings that led to the collapse precisely one year ago.

The Share Sale and Purchase Agreement entered into by Reykjavík Energy and Magma Energy Sweden AB reads: "Payment of the Purchase Price shall be by: (i) wire transfer of ISK 3,616,988,813... and (ii) delivery to Arctica... of a bond issued by the Buyer in favour of the Seller... evidencing an aggregate indebtedness of an amount in USD equivalent to ISK 8,439,640,562

The REYKJAVÍK GRAPEVINE iNFO



Music, Art, Films and Events Listings + Eating, Drinking and Shopping + Map

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Issue 16 2009

www.grapevine.is

SEQUENCES Real-time Art Festival



SEQUENCES 2009 IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER, SO PREPARE YOURSELF FOR AWESOME CUTTING-EDGE VISUAL ART ALL OVER REYKJAVÍK. THIS ANNUAL INDEPENDENT ART FESTIVAL FOCUSES ON TIME-BASED ARTS IN PUBLIC SPACES WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON PERFORMANCES, SONIC WORKS AND VIDEO ART TO CREATE A CROSS-PLATFORM FOR THESE ART FORMS. SEQUENCES TAKES PLACE IN VARIOUS VENUES IN TOWN AND IT INVOLVES BOTH ICELANDIC AND INTERNATIONAL ARTISTS. SO GET OUT THERE, CELEBRATE AND CHECK OUT THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN THE FIELD OF CONTEMPORARY VISUAL ART. **LP**

FRIDAY 30TH OCTOBER

18.00: Opening of (made up and let down) at Lost Horse Gallery by artists Anita Wernstrom (SE), Line Ellegaard (DK), Malin Stahl (SE), Pernille Leggat Ramfelt (NO) & Sofia Dahlgren (SE).
18.00- 18.45: Imagined Death. Performance by Anita Wernstrom (SE)
At dusk: 'day for night', Pernille Leggat Ramfelt (NO).
20.00: SEQUENCES 2009 - opening reception at Reykjavik Art Museum Hafnarhus.
20.30: Performance by SEQUENCES 2009 honorary artist Magnús Pálsson (IS) at Reykjavik Art Museum Hafnarhus.
21.30: Performance by Sigurður Gudjónsson (IS) at House of Ideas.
22.00- 00.00: Performance party at House of Ideas: American Meat LLC (US), This dumb region of the heart by Páll Haukur Björnsson (IS) and performance by Spartacus Chetwynd (UK) and Maurice Blok (FI).

SATURDAY 31ST OCTOBER

14.00: Performance piece Air by Prinz Gholam (DE) at Reykjavik Maritime Museum.
15.00: Performance by Spartacus Chetwynd (UK) at House of Ideas.
16.00: Video Screening Event at Regnboginn Cinema. Includes work by the Icelandic Love Corporation (IS), Curver (IS) and An Exquisite Corpse in Nikisialka by 16 Icelandic & Polish artists.
17.00: Opening Office, Parfyme (DK) at Hverfisgata 37.
18.00: PPPTPC – Center for Publicity by Berglind Jóna (IS) & Etienne de France (FR) at Lækjargata – Mæðragarður.
At dusk: 'day for night', Pernille Leggat Ramfelt (NO) at Lost Horse Gallery.
19.00- 19.30: S C O U R G E . Performance by Melkorka Huldudóttir at Dwarf Gallery.
20.00: Opening of næstum því ekki neitt and performance by Halldór Úlfarsson at Íslensk Grafík Gallery.
21.00: Video projection by Andrew Burgess at Concert & Conference Centre.

22.00: Room 408, an interactive live performance by Room 408- Hrafnhildur Hagalín & Steinunn Knútsdóttir (IS) at House of Ideas.

SUNDAY 1ST NOVEMBER

14.00: 'I-Projector'. Performance by Line Ellegaard (DK) at Lost Horse Gallery.
14.30: American Meat LLC (US) at Reykjavik Harbour, Miðbakkí.
15.00: Artist talk with Egill Sæbjörnsson (IS) at Reykjavik Art Museum Hafnarhus.
16.30: Performance by Sequences 2009 honorary artist Magnús Pálsson (IS) at Reykjavik Art Museum Hafnarhus.
At dusk: 'day for night', Pernille Leggat Ramfelt (NO) at Lost Horse Gallery.
19.00- 19.30: S C O U R G E . Performance by Melkorka Huldudóttir at Dwarf Gallery.
20.00: Entertainment Island II, Oblivia (FI) at lðnó Theatre.
21.00: Ingibjörg Magnadóttir (IS) at lðnó Theatre.

MONDAY 2ND NOVEMBER

Sequences 2009- Lecture Series at the Nordic House. See: www.sequences.is
18.00: Low by Björk Viggósdóttir (IS) in collaboration with Sigríður Soffía Nielsdóttir (IS) at National Gallery of Iceland.
20.00- 22.00: Evening programme at Lost Horse Gallery.
At dusk: 'day for night', Pernille Leggat Ramfelt (NO).
20.00: 'I-Projector'. Performance by Line Ellegaard (DK).
21.00: Imagined Death. Performance by Anita Wernstrom (SE).

TUESDAY 3RD NOVEMBER

Sequences 2009- Lecture Series at the Nordic House. See: www.sequences.is

WEDNESDAY 4TH NOVEMBER

Sequences 2009- Lecture Series @ the Nordic House. See: www.sequences.is
At dusk: 'day for night', Pernille Leggat Ramfelt (NO) at Lost Horse Gallery.
18.00-22.00: Open studios at SIM Seljavegur. This dumb region of the heart by Páll Haukur Björnsson (IS).
20.00: Performance by Maurice Blok (FI).

THURSDAY 5TH NOVEMBER

15.00: Imagined Death. Performance by Anita Wernstrom (SE) at Lost Horse Gallery.
17.00: Video Screening Event at Regnboginn Cinema. Includes work by the Icelandic Love Corporation (IS), Curver (IS) and An Exquisite Corpse in Nikisialka by 16 Icelandic & Polish artists.
At dusk: 'day for night', Pernille Leggat Ramfelt (NO) at Lost Horse Gallery.
20.00: The Mind, Performance by Egill Sæbjörnsson (IS) in collaboration with Marcia Moraes at Reykjavik Art Museum Hafnarhus.

FRIDAY 6TH NOVEMBER

16.00: For Hairdressing Night by Rita Canarezza & Pier Paolo Coro (IT/RSM). A meeting with Svanbjörg Hróbjartsdóttir, home/hairdresser, Laugarnesvegur 96, 101 Reykjavik.
17.00: Entertainment Island II by Oblivia

(FI) at lðnó Theatre.
18.00: Ingibjörg Magnadóttir (IS) at lðnó Theatre.
20.00-23.00: Evening programme at Lost Horse Gallery.
At dusk: 'day for night', Pernille Leggat Ramfelt (NO).
Comodin Silverhammar Curates, performances with students from the Iceland Academy of the Arts.
21.00 - 23.00: Hairdressing Night by Rita Canarezza & Pier Paolo Coro (IT/RSM) at various venues.

SATURDAY 7TH NOVEMBER

15.00: PPPTPC – Center for Publicity by Berglind Jóna (IS) & Etienne de France (FR) at Lækjargata – Mæðragarður.
American Meat LLC (US).
16.00 - 18.00: Open Masterclass with Ásmundur Ásmundsson (IS) and Snorri Ásmundsson (IS) at MR – Lækjargata.
17.00: THE ONE LETTER DELIVERY SHOW, Parfyme (DK) at Hverfisgata 37.
At dusk: 'day for night', Pernille Leggat Ramfelt (NO) at Lost Horse Gallery.
20.00: Closing Party @ the Nordic House This dumb region of the heart by Páll Haukur Björnsson (IS)
20.30: performance by Maurice Blok (FI).
21.00: performance by Spartacus Chetwynd (UK)
21.30: Portrait painting by Dough Warrior, Soren Dahlgaard (DK)

ONGOING PROJECTS:

Icelandic Love Corporation, Black Swans at Kling & Bang gallery
(17. Oct. - 15. Nov. 2009). Open: Thursday-Sunday 14.00-18.00.

Egill Sæbjörnsson, Spirit of Place and Narrative at Reykjavik Art Museum – Hafnarhus (29 Oct. 2009 – 3. Jan 2010). Open: every day from 10.00 – 17.00, Thursday 10.00 – 22.00.

Halldór Úlfarsson at Íslensk Grafík Gallery (31. Oct – 7. Nov 2009).

(made up and let down) at Lost Horse Gallery (30. Oct – 7. Nov 2009).

Parfyme, THE ONE LETTER DELIVERY SHOW, at Hverfisgata 37 (31. Oct – 7. Nov 2009).

Páll Haukur Björnsson, This dumb region of the heart. Pick up at House of Ideas Friday 30th October 22.00; at SIM Seljavegur Wednesday 4th November 18.00; at the Nordic House Saturday 7th November 20.00.

Ásmundur Ásmundsson and Snorri Ásmundsson, Masterclass, at MR (30. Oct – 7. Nov 2009). Open: Saturday 7th Nov. 16.00.

PPPTPC – Center for Publicity by Berglind Jóna (IS) & Etienne de France (FR) at Lækjargata – Mæðragarður. Open from 14- 18 and online at: <http://pptpc.blogspot.com/>

Soren Dahlgaard will have an performance at the Sequences Festival on Saturday 7th November, 21.30 in the Nordic House

16 FRI

Bakkus
22:00 DJ Kári.

B5
22:00 DJ Jay Oh!

Bar 11
22:00 Airwaves Off Venue: **Green Lights, Cosmic Call** and **Weapons**.

Batteriíð
20:00 Iceland Airwaves Festival. See icelandairwaves.com for full schedule.

Café Rósenberg
22:00 **Hvanndalsbraður**.

Café Rót
20:00 **Young Catz**.

Celtic Cross
01:00 Live Music.

Cultura
22:00 House DJs.

Dubliner
22:30 Live Music.

English Pub
22:00 Live music.

Frikirkjan
22:00 Iceland Airwaves.

Grand Rokk
19:30 Iceland Airwaves.

Hemmi & Valdi
22:00 Airwaves Off Venue: Live Music.

Hressó
19:00 Iceland Airwaves.

Iðnó
20:00 Iceland Airwaves.

Jacobsen
21:00 Iceland Airwaves.

Kaffibarinn
16:00-19:00 Bedroom Community Day Program: **Borgar Magnason & Kippi Kaninus (IS)**, **Valgeir Sigurðsson (IS)**. 00:00-05:00 **Jack Schidt & Kasper Björke**.

Kaffi Zimsen
22:00 DJs **Nino** and **Dramatík**.

NASA
20:00 Iceland Airwaves.

Prikið
10:00 Rock'n'Bacon with **XXX Rottweiler**. **Danni Deluxxx & ATG Crew** spin at night.

Reykjavík Art Museum
20:00 Iceland Airwaves.

Sódóma
20:00 Iceland Airwaves.

Thorvaldsen
22:00 Live DJs.

17 SAT

Bakkus
22:00 DJ **Arni Sveins**.

B5
22:00 Dj **Einar**.

Bar 11
22:00 Airwaves Off Venue: **Swive, Pontiak Pilatus** and **Vicky**.

Batteriíð
20:00 Iceland Airwaves Festival. See icelandairwaves.com for full schedule.

Café Rósenberg
22:00 **Hvanndalsbraður**.

Celtic Cross
01:00 Live Music.

Cultura
22:00 House DJs.

Dubliner
22:30 Live Music.

English Pub
22:00 Live Music.

Grand Rokk
19:30 Iceland Airwaves.

Hemmi & Valdi
20:00 Airways Off Venue + One Night Only: **Blues Willis & Alli** and **Útlagarnir**.

Hresso
19:30 Iceland Airwaves.

Iðnó
19:30 Iceland Airwaves.

Jacobsen
23:00 Iceland Airwaves.

Kaffibarinn
16:00-19:00 Bedroom Community Day Program: **Daníel Bjarnason (IS)**, **Olivia Petrolí (CH)**, **Helgi Hrafn Jonsson (IS)**. 00:00-05:00 **Hunk of Man**.

Kaffi Zimsen
22:00 DJs **Nino** and **Dramatík**.

NASA
20:00 Iceland Airwaves.

Prikið
22:00 **Addi Intro** and **Hundarnir**.

Reykjavík Art Museum
20:00 Iceland Airwaves.

Sódóma
20:00 Iceland Airwaves.

Thorvaldsen
22:00 Live DJs.

18 SUN

Café Rósenberg
22:00 **Hafðís Huld** Album release show.

Café Rót
17:00 Live Music.

Dubliner
22:30 Live Music.

Hressó
19:00 Live Music.

Kaffibarinn
21:00 Calm Down Party.

Kaffi Zimsen
22:00 Movie night.

NASA
20:00 Iceland Airwaves Festival. See icelandairwaves.com for full schedule.

Prikið
23:00 Hangover Cinema screening **Wild At Heart**. Free popcorn.

Sódóma
20:50 Iceland Airwaves.

19 MON

Café Rót
21:00 Rootmovies screening **Phantom** by **F.M.Murnau**.

Café Rósenberg
22:00 **Krístjana Stefáns Blues Band**.

Dubliner
22:30 Live Music.

Kaffi Zimsen
21:00 Best Friends Day. 2 for 1 beer.



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20 TUE

Café Rósenberg
22:00 **Fabúla**.

Oliver
22:00 Live Karaoke with **Trúbador Raggi**.

21 WED

Bakkus
22:00 Rafskinna Film Night.

Café Rósenberg
22:00 **Soffía Karlsdóttir**.

Café Rót
20:00 Salsa Night.

Dubliner
22:30 Live Music.

Hemmi & Valdi
22:00 Live Music.

Kaffibarinn
22:00 **DJ Benson** is fantastic.

Prikið
22:00 DNA Night.

22 THU

B5
21:00 Live Music.

Bakkus
22:00 DJ **Geiri**.

Bar 11
22:00 Kreppa Nights with live music. Beer and shots for 400ISK.

Café Rósenberg
22:00 **Mogadon**.

Café Rót
20:00 Open Mic Night.

Cultura
22:00 House DJs.

Dubliner
22:30 Live Music.

English Pub
22:00 Live Music.

Hitt Húsið
20:00 **The Sleeping Prophets**.

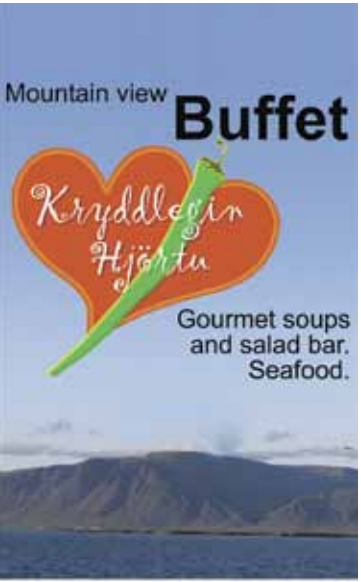
Hresso
22:00 **Böddi & Davið** and **Dalton**.

Jacobsen
22:00 YoungCatz Night with **Captain Fafanu, Sykur** and **Jungle Fiction**.

Kaffi Zimsen
22:00 Ólafsvaka night. Beer for 490 ISK.

Oliver
22:00 Beer for 500 ISK.

Prikið
22:00 **Kokteílbandið**.



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– continued –

23 FRI

24 SAT

25 SUN

26 MON

27 TUE

28 WED

29 THU

30 FRI

31 SAT

1 SUN

2 MON

3 TUE

4 WED

5 THU

18
Okt.

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**Klink
Dillon**

Back at the arse end of the 20th century, before even malignant rumours of the band's creation started to slither out from the rancid bowels of hell, Icelandic mothers would set their offspring afright with tales presaged by the oracle of how, with each chord struck by the almighty Klink, an angel would lose its wings.

Upon erupting from those blazing bowels Klink immediately set fire to every obstacle and all doubts in their way as they ripped stages apart only half as fast as they would.

Klink, who in previous incarnations have scored both killer reviews from Kerrang and a European tour with legendary Floridian death metal stalwarts Deicide, will resurface at Dillon from their second, and hopefully last, hiatus on Sat. Oct. 10. at 10:30.

Their era of dominance will be ushered in by the mighty RETRÖN and Celestine!, who by doing so will pledge their allegiance to these legends of Icelandic fuck-core in their own distorted way. Be there, but be sure to pack an umbrella to ward off the angelic downpour from above. **BB**



**Grand Rokkin' in the
Grapevine!**

**Grand Rökk
1000ISK**

Oh, how we do love to throw a party! And we do, every fucking chance we get - although that isn't actually so much because we are usually here busting our asses at the paper FOR YOU. But I digress. We always have time for our regular Grand Rökk party with an always exciting line-up of artists to kick start a damn fun Friday night. This go around we have Feldberg, punkers Mörðingjarnir, rocksters Jeff Who? and special international guest from the UK, Mr. Fogg. Beer will be served and fun will be had, so don't be a stranger and come on down! **RL**



She's Cold as Ice...

Kaffi Zimsen ☺ 21:00

The Queen of Halloween puts it bluntly: Where else in Iceland can you rock out with your cock out to the likes of Rob Zombie on all Hallows' eve? The answer is nowhere, except for Kaffi Zimsen with the royal goth herself.

Halloween Iceland has been coming into its own in the last 11 years. What started out as an intimate party has ballooned into a full-fledged ruckus. Wait, did we mention Rob Zombie? Her majesty is DJing this year's party herself. "We used to have DJs, but they get too shit-faced." We think this is a good sign.

Don't bother showing up without a costume—Halloween Iceland doesn't party with posers. **MZ**



See the Sea Change

Hafnarhúsið, October 11 – 18:00,

October 12, 13 – 15:00

Suggested donation 500 ISK

Icelanders are intimate with water: the sea brought them here, fed them and has kept them safe. But these days those very same waters are in, forgive us, 'deep' trouble, and it's time to repay the debt.

The Lost Horse Gallery's recently unveiled initiative, ASEA, aims to organize a collection of artist who work for, on, in, with, around, about, and on top of the environment. Set to debut during Copenhagen's Klima Forum this December, ASEA is busy establishing its reputation and raising some dough.

To that effect, ASEA is screening A Sea Change, the first documentary to address ocean acidification. Award-winning director Barbara Ettinger's beautifully shot feature-length film follows a Norwegian-American family whose life is intertwined with the sea, asking viewers to imagine a word without fish. We tried. Then we tried harder. Then we started crying. A day without harðfiskur is a day we don't get out of bed. **MZ**



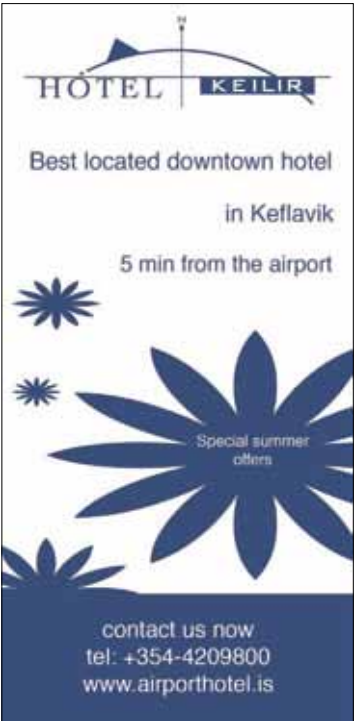
**Guð blessi Ísland //
God Bless Iceland –
Documentary**

Háskólabíó

See midi.is for showtimes

Guð blessi Ísland, or 'God Bless Iceland' is a documentary by director Helgi Felixson. The documentary is the first (of hopefully many) forthcoming docs that cover the Icelandic economic collapse last fall and its aftermath. The film, features excellent footage of the protests leading up the the resignation of Geir H. Haarde's government last February, and follows around a few of the protestors; truck driver Sturla, and his family, local witch (yeah, witch) Eva Hauksdóttir, and on the other side police officer Þórir Rúnar Geirsson.

The movie also features controversial interviews with former bank owners and business tycoons Jón Ásgeir Jóhannesson and Björgólfur Thor, along with former head of Glitnir bank, Bjarni Ármannsson. Part of the interview footage was shot without the knowledge of the interviewees, causing the abovementioned controversy. The film mostly focuses on the human factor of the collapse, and although somewhat limited in it's effort to do so, is a must see. **JTS**



**André Kertész
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MAP

Places We Like

1 Á Næstu Grösum

Laugavegi 20b

Á Næstu Grösum is an all vegetarian restaurant right in the city centre that features a friendly atmosphere and fair prices. There is always at least one vegan soup on offer and the daily special portions are big and always satisfying. There is even some organic wine on offer.

2 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

3 Habibi

Hafnarstræti 18

This small restaurant offers up a concise menu of delicious Arabic cuisine, from shawarma to kebabs and falafels. The staff is really friendly and accommodating of requests to kick up the spiciness or tone it down if the customer so desires. Habibi seriously hits the spot after hours of partying (or any other time of day) so it's convenient that the place is open until 6 a.m. Friday and Saturday. CF

4 Krua Thai

Tryggvagötu 14

This is the best affordable Thai food on offer in Reykjavík. Rice is always fluffy, the spicy kick is just right and the spring rolls are always crispy cylinders of deliciousness. The servings are hearty too, so you're bound to leave satisfied. CF

5 Kaffitár

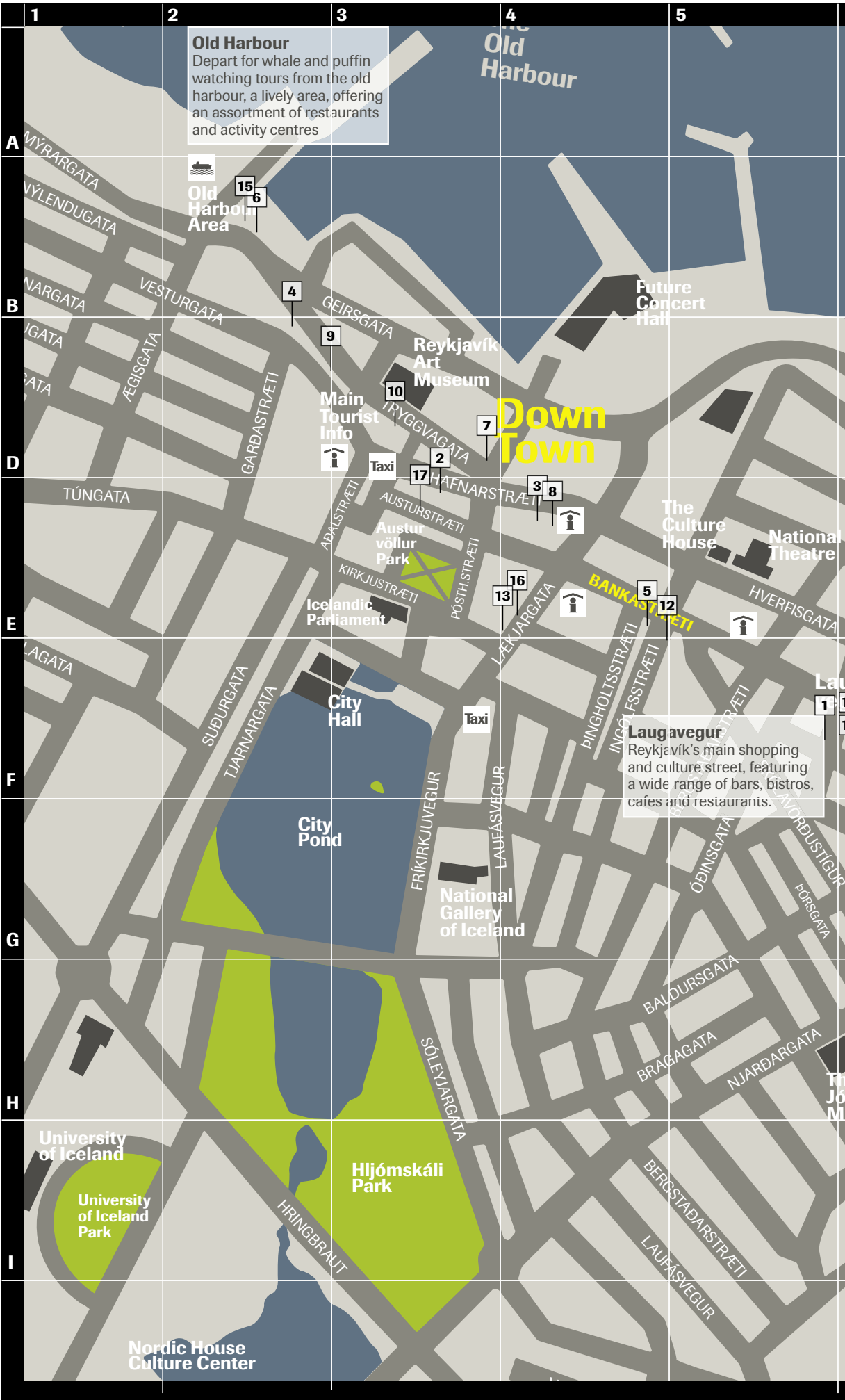
Bankastræti 8

Kaffitár on Bankastræti is a comfortable little café with a great selection of coffee, tea and baked goods on offer. Since Kaffitár is also a big-name Icelandic roasterie the caffeinated beverages on the menu are quality. The wi-fi makes this a nice place to sit and chill with your laptop as well. CF

6 Sægreifinn

Verbúð 8, Geirsgata

Down by the Reykjavík harbour, Sægreifinn fish shop and restaurant is truly a unique establishment. The menu features various fish dishes (including most of the “crazy Icelandic food” you'll want to tell your friends you had) and a rich portion of the best lobster soup we've ever tasted. Good food and welcoming service make this place a must-try.



7 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

8 Pizza King

Hafnarstræti 18

To be honest, this isn't the best pizza up for grabs, but it's cheap, not pre-heated (like at various other pizza places downtown), and the guys are rather cool. Their pizzas are always bulletproof, and they offer various great offers on top of it, which you should definitely check out. SKK

9 Café Haiti

Tryggvagötu 16

The first time I entered this exotic little joint, meaning to buy myself a take-away espresso, I ended up with two kilos of fresh and 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



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Airwaves Survival Guide

Making it through the madness intact

Cheap Eats!

Pylsur

Fast, unhealthy and delicious, Iceland's standard off-the-paw snack is a hot dog in a league of its own. The sausages are steamed, but not soggy, and the bun is warm and soft with a satisfying crunch. Topping options include raw onions, fried onions (cronions! funions!), ketch-up (a thinner and sweeter variety), remolaði (a funny local relish), and savoury brown mustard—we recommend one with everything. Available all over the city in various stands and corner stores, usually for 260 ISK a pop.

Bónus

Waste not want not. You might be inclined to hit the grocery store and pick up a few items to stash in your pockets while running from show to show. Look for the big, crazy pig logo and pop in for the cheapest prices on food in town. In the produce section, look for the certified Icelandic label, as those are grown locally and cheaper.

We also recommend picking up some skyr, a yogurt-like milk curd product with awesome fruit flavours and super low in fat.

Grocery shoppers would do well to avoid any store that has the numbers 10, 11 or 24 (or any combination of those numbers) in their name, as those are notoriously expensive.

Ali Baba

Wonder how Lebanese food holds up with Icelandic ingredients? Damn well, is how! Perfectly located between two of the prime venues of the festival, on Ingólfstorg, Ali Baba provides huge, healthy Middle-East-meets-North-Atlantic wraps and meals at nice prices. Their massive falafel sandwich, with a curious blend of corn, cabbage, garlic and spicy sauce, is a challenge to finish for only 800 ISK. Full shish taouk plates with all the classic fixings are not too much more. Best of all, they are open way past your bedtime.

Cheap Drinks!

Vínbúð

Pre-drinking is key in this city that starts late and now charges four toes for a beer. Make sure to locate the nearest liquor store (Austurstræti 10a in downtown Reykjavík), go there during the awkwardly short opening hours (Monday to Saturday, 11am–6pm) and supply yourself with some hooch to grease the wheels before going out. Hard liquor is especially expensive in bars, so you might want to stock up on that.

Kaffi Zimsen

This cool and cosy bar down by the harbour is the Mecca of boozing students and broke foreigners alike, with pretty good beer deals and house-party playlists. Mondays boast the only 2-for-1 beer

It's been a long journey, but here you are! You got through the treacherous Leif Eiríksson Air Terminal and braved the FlyBus into Reykjavík and made it in one piece. Congratulations! Now what? Oh, it's your first time in the country and you're freaking the fuck out? Relax. This list should get you started on a good time over the next few days. Now, good luck!

special in town, cutting pints down to a scant 350ISK each. On Thursdays, a large beer goes for 490 ISK. So remember that.

Bar 11

Cashing in on the credit crash, this wicked dive on the corner of Laugavegur & Smiðustígur came up with Kreppa nights, a Thursday rager where folks can forget their financial woes! The bar serves up beers and shots for 400 ISK apiece in their rock'n'roll den of iniquity. Drinks are pretty cheap there at other times, too.

Sexy Times!

Places to hook up

Here's what our panel of experts said in our very own 'BEST OF REYKJAVÍK' issue this summer (for more BEST OF REYKJAVÍK, you should log on to

Grapevine.is, where we've got the whole collection of Rvk's best for your reading pleasures):

“OK, this is kind of a sketchy category, but our panellists did discuss the subject at length, so we thought we'd include the results for fun and/or pleasure. Note that our panel featured both men and women of varied ages, and that the findings are meant to work regardless of gender.

Vegamót (6-10)

As one of our people remarked, Vegamót is “the place where conventionally attractive people that put a lot of effort into their appearance go to hook up. They're ready for action, but you have to look the part, too.

Hressó (solid 5)

For your average hooker-upper, Hressó was generally considered the best place

to find love. “At night, Hressó has a good, honest, often surprisingly attractive clientele, and most of them are looking for some good, honest hook-ups.”

Dubliners (0-4)

If you're really determined to get some action, why not try Dubliners. “The late-night patrons of Dubliners usually don't have a lot of standards, which will pay off if you don't either.”

BYO Condoms

This is a key rule that applies to everyone, everywhere, at all times, but it is particularly important when getting down with Icelanders. Many of them don't think twice about the possibility of procreation—or contamination. Stock up on rubbers at the pharmacy (Lyfja, Laugavegur & Vegamótastígur) or a 10-11 (various locations) before you go in for the kill. They are really expensive here, but it's better (and cheaper) than the potential alternatives.

Hangover Killers!

Treo

These little fizzy tablets look and taste just like old school Alka-Seltzer, but they are made up of aspirin, caffeine and magic. They come in a handy plastic cylindrical tube, protecting them from getting crushed in your bag. It's also useful to bonk someone over the head with if they pass out. Just drop one of these babies into the beverage of your choice (two if you're still drunk), and drink your hangover away.

Vesturbæjarlaug

Of all the pools in the central Reykjavík area, the one located in Vesturbær, just off of Hofsvallagata, is probably the cutest and most relaxing. Removed from the bustling downtown brouhaha, it has four wonderful hot tubs to sit in and soak up vitamin D rich rays (mostly absent in October. Go figure). Go sit in the mystical, glass-walled steam room or one of the rare saunas in the city. Easily accessible by foot or bus line 15. Entry is 360 ISK per adult.

More Booze

When in doubt, follow the hair of the dog rule. Icelanders swear by it and many of us foreigners have come around to it as well. If you were drinking steadily for hours on end the night before, and all else fails, the only way to power through is to start hammering back beer ASAFP. Actually, fuck that. Drink water. The cold tap water is better than anywhere else in the world! - Rebecca Louder



Your Complete Réttir Reviews!

We feel awful about not doing the Grapevine Airwaves dailies this year. It sucks. What we'll miss most are the reviews of every show, every band from last night. Although we will be covering the shows to some extent at our website, it doesn't replace the dailies. Lucky for us, the Réttir music festival concert series took place a couple of weeks ago, and they had pretty much every local Airwaves band playing. So we just reviewed that entire festival instead. So you can feast your eyes on the following reviews to get a clue on who to see during Airwaves. Their performances last month can't be that different from what they'll do now. Enjoy.

Wednesday 23.09.09

Batterið

One thing never changes: concerts in Iceland ALWAYS start late. This was pretty convenient for the first artist, AMFJ, since there were about 10 people present when he took the stage. **AMFJ** is a one-man band of a genre I know nothing about, if it even exists. His act involves a lot of screaming. Eerie and gloomy screaming, very un-human, technically manipulated screaming, bringing to mind Bob from Twin Peaks. This all, over a pretty hip, danceable playback. I have a feeling that he's actually reciting some kind of apocalyptic poem, but as technology/art will have it, there is no way for me to tell. Definitely interesting music that is probably better suited in to a smaller, more crowded space.

DLX ATX take the stage, and the place fills up pretty quickly. This is one act that I'm excited to witness, a previous sighting leaving me hungry for more. It soon becomes apparent that DLX ATX is a pretty cool band, very happening and 2009. You can also hear some flirting with old school rawk. This seems strange for an act comprising only of a drummer and a bassist (along with some techy effects), but somehow the seventies keep coming to mind, flare trousers and all. The singing compliments this image nicely, and gives the band a very unique sound. Groovy. DLX ATX are very groovy. A real pleasure for both ears and eyes.

The young, suburban **Kid Twist** are next up. Their music reeks of psychedelic stoner fury; it's simple and to-the-point. Finding the right words to do their excellent music justice is hard; a single car driving through a quiet desert might be the best mental image. All out through their set there is a tone, a sense of eerie melancholy. In a way, it's pretty dreamy.

Feldberg. Now, this is bewildering to me. I don't really know what's going on here. What I do know, though, is that this band is really fucking pro. They play very loud which, again, is puzzling, because they are very... cute. This REALLY doesn't add up in my books. Their singer is excellent, professional, no fuss. The whole band is, very tight, very casual, like this is all they do, ever. Again, this is baffling since they announced at the start of their set that this was their first show. They are obviously up to something else in their separate musical corners. They have a lot of equipment, a whole lot. Yet their sound is very natural, clean and pure. Again, this is puzzling. The music is not very impressive, it has a summer-pop feel to it and will most likely be well received, and receive good ratings. They failed to keep my attention, though, and about 3 songs into their set I was quite lost.

Bloodgroup were supposed to go on next, but they failed to show up. On the upside, a guy with the head of a hippo made a surprising entrance. This partially made up for the lack of Bloodgroup.

Last band on is **Jungle Fiction**. I get the feeling this is some high school arty-farty half-joke, half-serious act. Seconds into their set, my suspicions are confirmed. I feel like someone turned on their time machine and I have suddenly arrived in the eighties. Now THIS is mind-boggling. What is this? What is going on here? They have a huge stack of equipment, building a fort between the three obviously happening young fellows and the crowd, growing drunker by the second, shake off their last bit of shyness.

I do not think this is cool. But I have a feeling that this actually might be cool, and I'm just not in the know. There was some dancing, so some folks liked it. Jungle Fiction certainly seemed to enjoy their show, sadly the feeling wasn't mutual.

- Friða Brá Pálsdóttir

Wednesday 23.09.09

Grand Rokk

The crowd is sparse as **Carpet Show** take the stage. There's something intensely intimate about their performance and maybe they're better off performing to smaller groups. The vocals plead over a basic musical landscape while the sax adds a touch of the bizarre.

As soon as Carpet Show descends, **Blóð** stomp on. Mumbling, screaming and swearing, it's obvious they're angry about something, but little of the audience shares their sentiment. One gets the uncomfortable notion that maybe that's what made Blóð so angry in the first place.

Létt á Bárunni pick up Blóð's punk influences but take a more heartfelt, soulful approach and the audience is swooning. Throwing his oddy-shaped hair this way and that, there's something playful about the lead singer's approach and the smiling drummer in the back makes us want to give her a hug. Old friends and soon-to-be friends gravitate toward the stage.

As Létt á Bárunni wrap up, a whole troupe of artists climb on stage. They're getting ready for something big, but instead, something small comes on stage: the petite lead singer of **Skelkur í bringu**. The crowd presses in tighter and they're well rewarded: Skelkur i bringu brings a completely off the wall show, with the lead singer swinging from croons to screams to whelps, the band doing its best to catch up.

Riding high on Skelkur i bringu's wave of energy, **<3 Svanhvít!**'s collection of well cut clean boys elevate the night into full fledged dance party. Everyone's hopping about, singing along, clapping their hands. Members of the band take off their shirts and photographers swarm—what started out as a tender underground show is now a bumping dance club.

Suddenly, an uneasy lull hits Grand Rokk as an unassuming, middle-aged man wearing a baby blue sweater with the German Democratic Republic coat of arms and sporting a matching bowling ball bag climbs on stage. Patrons look on with curiosity as he sets up his electronic equipment, raises his right arm, and starts rocking it back in forth in rhythm with the electronic jams. Otherwise, **DJ Musician** is motionless, staring at the audience with two beady eyes.

The effect is surreal. With the exception of one young woman, who rocked the dance floor from the drop of DJ Musician's first beat, the crowd hesitates for the better part of 20 minutes, not quite sure what to make of the situation. Finally, everyone gives in and pulls out their best moves on the middle of the dance floor while. One patron looked on in sheer awe, mumbling, “this man is a genius.”

Fifteen minutes later, a group of 30 hardcore fans are still going strong as **Me, the Slumbering Napoleon** take the stage around 1:00 AM. It's easy to tell the crowd is full of friends—everyone's smiling, crowding in and cutting loose. A driving bass and devilish screams—I couldn't think of a better way to end the night. - Michael Zelenko

Iceland Airwaves 2009 Venues

Batterið

Hafnarstræti 1-3



Even during the day it can be dark inside Batteríð, but this can be a good thing because the space looks larger than it actually is. The bar itself is short, which sometime leads to annoying waiting times, but around 600 ISK a pop, you can afford at least a few beers. The stage is centrally located, which means there are plenty of vantage points from which to catch the act. **MZ**

Fríkirkjan

Fríkirkjuvegur 5



What's not great about experiencing music in the midst of majestic arches, mighty gold crosses, candelabras and paintings of Jesus with arms outstretched and whatnot? Concerts in Fríkirkjan can be heavenly; the acoustics are truly amazing as is the beauty of the church. Just be prepared for some low key, laid back action. Beware of the narrow benches on the balcony, even though this happens to be the best location for viewing. **LP**

Grand Rokk

Smiðjustígur 6



Something about Grand Rokk elicits the traditional feel of a haphazard neighborhood pub. Upstairs is a nice contrast to the homeliness of below—there's a solid stage and enough room to fit a crowd of nearly a hundred. As for the bathrooms—quantity beats quality but that's good enough for us. **MZ**

Hressó

Austurstræti 20



This daytime diner turns into a nighttime hotspot for unplugged acts. The long bar and show-space at the back of the room make it okay to get a beer, but kind of hard to get to the bathroom. Beer is reasonably priced, but not particularly cheap. Get there early if you have any desire for seating. **RL**



gerðu tónlist á  makkann þinn

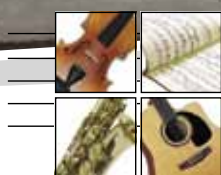


duet

by APOGEE

Í Tónastöðinni
finnur þú einstakt
úrval tækja til hljóðupptöku
frá mörgum af þekktustu
framleiðendum heims.

Hjá okkur færðu faglega þjónustu,
byggða á þekkingu
og áratuga reynslu.



TÓNASTÖÐIN

Allt fyrir tónlistarmanninn

Contest | VIP Shit

Win A Date With Frímánn Frímannsson!

+ lots of festival goodies!

Y'all know him, y'all love him. Here's your chance to win a four-day date Reykjavík's premier scenester, the hipster y'all love to love, the one, the only, the incomparable FRÍMÁNN FRÍMÁNSSON!

Not only will you get a chance to party down with a local, you'll get to do it in such a grand fashion that you can pretty much guarantee that your friends will hate you for years to come. But that doesn't matter. You'll have Frímánn. And the memories. Think of the memories.

"What are those luxuries you speak of?" you ask? Well. How's this for starters: You'll get VIP access passes to Iceland Airwaves. This means that you will never, ever have to wait in line for anything for the duration of the festival. Ever. Want to hop in to NASA for a quick drink, past that 50 strong queue? Go right ahead, sir or madam.

"That sounds mighty good, Grapevine, but isn't there more?" you ask? Hell yeah, there's more. Try this on for size: Every night of Airwaves, you can step in to the very awesome Bakkus for free shots of whatever you desire – and they'll give you a mighty fine beer discount for the duration of the night. This is of course perfect for all your aftershow drinking needs.

Want more? You got it. When you wake up each day, you can skip along to Kaffibarinn for a free dose of their time tested, alcoholic-tried, 100% guaranteed hangover killer combos.

You will also get a Reykjavík City Pass, courtesy of the City of Reykjavík. This allows free admittance to all the city's fine pools, free bus rides, free museum admittance and discounts at select stores and ven-

ues. Hell yeah.

Not only that, but you will have the infamous partymonster Frímánn Frímannsson to guide you through the wastelands of 101 nightlife and partying. For the whole weekend, Frímánn will be at your service, ready to escort you around to the hottest gigs, parties and debauched after hour hot-tubbing sessions around. And that guy knows how to party.

Who's Frímánn Frímannsson? Well, Frímánn Frímannsson has without any doubt whatsoever been 101 Reykjavík's kingpin of hard-partyin', designer-gear wearin', part-time modellin' neo-hipsters throughout 2009. Also, he's just plain nice, that guy, so following him around should greatly enhance your weekend.

Oh, and you get to bring a friend, too. This prize is good for two. So you'll have one friend that won't abandon you out of resentful envy. Which is comforting.

So here's how you win this grand prize to end all grand prizes (oh yes, the runner up will win an exclusive Kimi Records goodie bag!): you must send us a paragraph detailing your most awesome experience, ever (only a paragraph. Anything over 100 words will go directly to the trashbin).

You must send it via e-mail, with the subject: "I <3 Frímánn Frímannsson."

The address is: editor@grapevine.is

You must include your name, age and a telephone number where you can be reached.

Lastly, this competition is only open to Airwaves wristband holders that do not permanently reside in Iceland. That is – if you



live in Iceland, or if you haven't bought an Airwaves-ticket, we cannot help you. This competition's not for you. Sorry. Stop looking. But good luck.

The contest is open until Thursday, October 15 at 14:00. We will contact the winner that same day, at 16:00, and give him all those cool goodies. If you won, but cannot be reached – we reserve the right to select another winner.

Winners will be expected to document their festival weekend via a digital camera, phone camera or other such nifty device. Winners agree to being interviewed by a representative of the Reykjavík Grapevine on Airwaves Sunday.

This excellent contest is brought to you by The Reykjavík Grapevine, in cooperation with the following, awesome parties:

- Mr. Destiny
- The Iceland Airwaves Festival
- Kaffibarinn
- Bakkus
- The City of Reykjavík
- Kimi Records

All your submissions are belong to us. And PepsiCo International. Although neither entity will want to use them for anything, probably. By submitting to this contest, you forfeit all your intellectual rights. Period.

Réttir Music Reviews

Wednesday 23.09.09 Jacobsen

Upstairs, **Tonik** started the night off to an unfortunately small and laid back crowd. The duo composed of one programmer and one bassist still gave it their all, delivering trippy, hypnotic drum'n'bass with tinges of early 90s electro. The pair bobbed and shimmied the whole time, so at least they were having fun, even if the crowd was too timid.

Yaglia then hit the decks next with dark, spacey weird-tech that seriously called for a big vial of ketamine. A few bodies started gravitating to the dancefloor but overall, the soft, psychedelic tracks were still a bit too low key for a second-billed DJ. At this point, someone really had to bring it. Luckily, **Oculus** showed up in his fancy trademark Sgt. Pepper jacket and cranked shit up to 11. Suddenly the dancefloor was packed with flailing arms and gyrating hips. The man is reliable for delivering super deep, twisted, sexy grooves to make everyone move. Shouting, hand claps, snaps and clicks and general weirdness, it was pretty hard to stand still.

Meanwhile, down in the basement, **Futuregrapher** started the night off at a steady pace with trancey, chillout beats. A few people standing against the wall suddenly moved onto the floor and the tracks started getting harder and trippier, with borderline 8-bit overtones. The man behind the music was clapping and shouting and the eight of us dancing went nuts.

Suddenly **Ruxpin** took over in a fairly smooth transition, but quickly brought down the pace and energy that Futuregrapher had established. With the music rapidly losing cadence, people started sitting down and going upstairs to smoke, missing out on his funky, booty-bass with seriously messed up time signatures.

The real bummer was for **Biogen**, who got slotted at the same time as Oculus. This was no easy task and he sort of got the shaft by the crowd. Only a few people hung around downstairs, mostly sitting or just standing around, while he played swervy, pulsating, dream-tech. Tough crowd!

- Rebecca Louder

Wednesday 23.09.09 NASA

I arrive just as **For A Minor Reflection** are getting ready to start. There is a guy with a big white canvas at the end of the stage who apparently is there to "capture the sounds and portray them as colours and form on the canvas." I seeeeee. Starting their set with their headline song, Kastljós, they plough a well furrowed line in melodic post-rock. Indeed, I wouldn't be shocked if I found out the band had been cloned from a skin scraping from Explosions in the Sky. But it's pleasant enough, if rather meandering. At the end of their set, I can see the painter has made a composition heavy in red and black. Personally, I would have used light blue and corn yellow.

Ólafur Arnalds is a sick, sick man. No seriously, he doesn't look that good when he takes the stage. Apparently suffering from a fever, he looks like he may vomit onto his keyboard at any moment. But the man is nothing if not a trooper and he and his string quartet bring the mood and pace right down with his sparse, melodic compositions. But my enjoyment was slightly marred by the fact that, despite asking to the audience be a little quieter, the quieter moments in the set was rather spoilt by constant yakking at the back of the venue. Bloody proles!

Now I've come to the conclusion that there are two **Hjaltalín**s out there. The first one, which features on record, is full of twee, irrelevant nonsense that annoys the fuck out of me. And then there is the second Hjaltalín, the live one. It's amazing what happens when you beef up the rhythm section, as it lends Hjaltalín a more muscular sound. Indeed, their opening tracks Suitcase Man and Goodbye July – Margt að ugga are suffused with an immediacy that I certainly wouldn't expect from them. The crowd certainly seemed to be enjoying it almost as much as singer Högni, who sported a massive shit eating grin during the entire set.

By the time **Fallegir menn** bounce on stage, the crowd seems to have thinned by a third (hmm... must be a lot of early lectures at the university tomorrow). They are certainly a sight to behold. Their live rap act strives for the Beastie Boys, but their look (the keyboard player from Granddaddy, the guitarist from Roxy Music, a rapper looking like he wandered off from Boys in a Band) owes a lot more to Goldie Lookin' Chain. But it sounds tight and funky thanks to the keyboardist and rhythm section. And as for the rapping? Well there was loads of Tiger-like energy, but to be honest they could have been rapping about Icelandic Monetary Policy or the price of milk in Bónus and I would have been none the wiser.

Overall it was a pleasant, if not spellbinding night. Here is some advice to concert promoters: you should start these midweek concerts at least an hour earlier. That way, I won't be so fucking knackered when I start work at 7 AM the next morning. - Bob Clunness

Wednesday 23.09.09 Rósenberg

Trúbatríx night at Rósenberg is meant to be one of those low key, laidback evenings. Candles light the room, people are finishing up their dinner, there are more red wine glasses around than beer. That kind of thing isn't necessarily a bad thing; it's actually kind of... nice. The Trúbatríx collective aims to round up Iceland's foremost female talents, so my expectations for the evening are high.

20:00: Headcount: 9. The obligatory "nice seeing so many

people here tonight," results in a somewhat awkward spread of laughter as **Mysterious Marta** takes the stage with her calm, yet strong presence. Marta is one of those girls with a unique, childlike voice that gives you goose bumps when she sings about moons and mountains and stars and skirts and dresses while plucking her acoustic guitar. Both music and appearance is bubbly, sparkly and sweet. She is cuteness personified—in the best possible sense.

20:40: Headcount: around twenty-ish. We move from doll face Marta to polar opposite tomboy **Elin Ey**. Rolling up her sleeves, curly hair covering her eyes she plays somewhat depressing, slow country tunes. That little something that makes an artist stand out seems missing, and it might as well be background music rather than a live act. It's never a good sign when conversations louden and people start going out for smokes during a set.

21:04: Headcount: slowly but surely improving. **Sigga Eyþórs** is sort of a continuation of Elin. Sigga does bring a tad bit more presence, but her acoustic folk songs aren't all that impressive to myself and my fellow concertgoer, who starts flipping through a magazine. To be fair, the rest of the audience seem to be of a totally different opinion.

21:25: The worst imaginable scenario takes place—or so I think... Elin Ey joins Sigga on stage, and they start playing a bluegrass number together. I soon realise I was very mistaken, and find myself quite liking it. Do two wrongs really make a right?

21:30: Headcount: Every seat in the house is taken. The audience consists of an extremely high percentage of women. Like, freakishly many ladies. It's refreshing in a way, and it adds to the sisterhood feel of the event. The increasing amount of people certainly contributes to the atmosphere, but the main reason the evening progresses is because the best acts are saved for last.

21:38: Next up: **Songbird**. A sweetheart in braces, singing happy, cheerful, shoe-tapping tunes. Her xylophone adds to the niceness of it all. Makes you feel all bubbly inside.

22:15: The absolute highlight of the evening. **Lára Rúnars** stands out like no other with her personality, charisma and contagious, silly songs. She simply shines and is of a whole other calibre than the earlier artists. Lára plays songs that give you the urge for some crazy table dancing, rather than sitting nicely by a candlelit table. She's just kinda amazing at what she does.

23:00: Headcount: crowded and elbow shoving. Time for Norwegian **Hanne Hukkelberg**. Her tender, marvellous voice goes straight to your heart but the performance itself lacks personality. Although obviously a fantastic talent, I imagine her being better on CD than in a live setting. All in all, the Trúbatríx evening is a pleasant one with highlights that make it, at times, magic. - Louise Petersson

Wednesday 23.09.09 Sódóma

First on stage are **Ten Steps Away**, a rock 'n' roll four piece from Hafnarfjörður. Playing generic alternative rock that wouldn't seem out of place on American rock radio stations, their high-energy performance in an attempt to connect with the crowd is to their honour. Still, tonight was not their night.

Nögl are faced with a similar situation. Just back from a successful tour of Florida, they use their experience and get a more responsive crowd. Continuing where Ten Steps Away left off, Nögl play their version of alternative rock with songs off their debut album, I Proudly Present. Having enjoyed modest radio success with My World and the song Don't Leave, currently on rotation at X-10, they do get some crowd interest when they're played. Unfortunately for the band, the crowd is still too thin for them to have any impact.

With their debut album finally seeing the light of day this October, the crowd had high expectations from **OurLives'** performance. The venue has filled up considerably by now, and the crowd apparently expects something special. Unfortunately for OurLives, the venue sound for their set is awful, and in those conditions most of their atmospheric pop rock songs sound like a bad covers outfit. Although their radio hits do see a crowd-reaction, most present seem disinterested, with the anticipation for Dikta growing.

It is in the live environment that **Dikta** really come into to their comfort zone. Right from the first song off new single Let Go, Dikta spell out what is to be expected from tonight's show, and the crowd show their approval. By the time they play oldie Someone Somewhere midway through their set, the band really hit their stride, inciting crowd singalongs and whatnot. Growing in confidence they reel off numerous new songs from their long awaited newie, and it seems they are on to a winner. Sticking with the formula that saw their last album do so well, the crowd don't seem disappointed by the new songs

Lights on the Highway, fresh from the release of a new LP, take to the stage and unleash their take on psychedelic alterna-rock. As one would expect from these vets, their sound is spot on. When they band play recent single A Little Bit Of Everything it gives the crowd exactly what they want, but unfortunately the band fail to pick up on the momentum. They seem oddly lacking in the live arena, which is a shame. To their credit, Lights on the Highway still keep the crowd on their side throughout their performance. As the concert goes on I just feel there is something missing from their performance. I expect more from a band of this calibre.

- Adam Wood

Iceland Airwaves 2009 Venues

Iðnó

Vonarstræti 3



Built in 1897, the historical theatre by the pond is a small and charming show-room with an above average capacity. It's like NASA's baby sister. Its 19th Century chic décor is well reflected in the price of drinks. Bathrooms can be a bit of a wait. The place can be wonderful to experience live music in, provided the place isn't too crowded and the soundperson doesn't suck. **RL**

Jacobsen

Austurstræti 9



The self-described "only club in town" is an out of control dancerrama. Drinks are fairly average price for the city, but they frequently have specials on mixes. The women's washroom is like a makeup bomb went off in there and the men's room is often a breeding ground for cock-measuring quarrels. There is still no better place to hear electronic music. **RL**

Listasafn Reykjavíkur

Tryggvagata 17



Once a year, The Reykjavík Art Gallery is transformed into Airwaves' largest venue, hosting some of the bigger acts Airwaves has to offer. Drinks are fairly expensive, but hey, it's a classy gallery and you're partying among masterpieces so what the heck. Expect some of the wildest dancing in town and general insanity, with a taste of posh. **LP**

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Interview | by Ólafur Halldór Ólafsson

Endless Summers – Now In Iceland! The Drums

Friday 20:50

Reykjavík Art Museum

One of the most interesting international acts to play Airwaves this year is without a doubt New York [via Florida] transplants The Drums. The band was founded earlier this year (!) by long-time friends Jonathan Pierce (vocals) and Jacob Graham (guitar)—the two seem to have a certain knack, as they’ve already received heaps of oozing praise. They released their first EP this summer, and called it… Summertime. It’s a pretty brilliant EP, full of straightforward, summery pop tunes that bring to mind 1950s surf music and the Factory Records music of the eighties. We called up Jonathan at his Brooklyn apartment. “We are very excited to play the Iceland Airwaves festival,” Jonathan tells me. “I have known about the festival for a few years, and I’ve always wanted to come to Iceland—you could say it’s a dream come true. We will stay in Reykjavík for three days and will try to hang out and see as much as we can.”

How long have you been playing together?

We have played as a four-piece since this May. Me and my best friend Jacob started the band as a studio project. I moved to Florida from New York to live with him, so we could make music together. We called it The Drums and posted a few things online—people started to take notice, so we decided to move to New York and make it a four-piece band to play live shows. We found



our drummer Connor through a friend, and it worked out really well. Adam [guitar] we had known for a long time, he used to be in a band with me few years ago called Elkland, kind of a synth pop band. We put out one album on Columbia records and then we split.”

The Drums seems like kind of a strange a band name...

The name of the band kinda came to us. Last couple of years, Jacob and I have had this blog that we only share between the two of us. We made up this imaginary band on the blog, found picture for all the imaginary band members, named everyone and gave them all their own lives. And then we decided to call the band The Drums. When we decided to form a real band, we just copied this imaginary band.

You’ve been known to play surf music. Is that something you set out to do from the beginning?

We never made any decision to play surf music, it just happened. I moved from New York in the middle of a winter and being in Florida during that time feels like being on an endless vacation. It never snows like in New York, and I got inspired from being on vacation. We wrote handful of song that were very summery and decided to put them all out in as an EP and call it Summertime! Our other songs are not as surfy and summery.

How is the Florida music scene?

We don’t really know, because we did not go out at all in Florida. We kept to ourselves, we didn’t have cars and we weren’t living in the middle of town—we lived near the beach. We both had these stupid jobs, and when we came home we just made music ‘til we passed out. Then we woke up and did the same thing again, day after day. In about six months, we wrote around twenty songs. It seemed to me that the scene is a bit lacking.

Really all you had where we lived was Disneyworld, and everything there was really sort of Nazi-ish, in the way that anything creative gets stomped out immediately, because they want a city like Disney world—kind of a perfect world with nothing interesting going on.

I don’t know if I would ever want to go back there, not even to play a show. There is something really dark about Disney. Jacob used to work there and he told me a lot of crazy stories about it. If someone dies at the park, they don’t pronounce him dead ‘til they get him out of there, so they can say that no one has ever died at Disney World.

The Young Composer’s Guide To Reykjavík Dining

-by Nico Muhly



Reykjavík is a funny town for food: the cheap places aren’t always fabulous and the fabulous places aren’t ever cheap. However, there are a few ways to construct a soothing itinerary. There is one that I usually do alone, and another is better in pairs.

Alone, there is only one way to construct an afternoon. At three o’clock, it’s about a perfect, iconic lobster soup, whale kebab, and light beer at Sægrefinn. Walk across the street to Café du Haïti and order a poisonously strong delicious double espresso, in your best Island French. Then, you have an hour to kill, so walk around the harbour. Return, ruddy and refreshed to Hotel 101. Breeze into the dining room, and order the foal sandwich with a side of mustard to dip the fries in. If you

wait to order the mustard, you’ll have to watch them put the order in, and haul a tiny little ramekin of Dijon up through the dumbwaiter; it’s a little depressing. The foal sandwich, however, is a high-water mark for western civilization.

The second itinerary is more expensive, and best done with people to laugh about it with you. Book yourself a table at Sjárvakallarin (don’t even try to walk in and wait at the bar. It’s no seats at the bar, and they will give you a very in-

tense stare if you try to order a drink). Just perform the tasting menu with her attendant wines: it’s a procession of the delicious (langoustine, truffle, and sriracha bell jar), the absurd-in-any-economy (zebra carpaccio), and the linguistically extreme (hubba-bubba sorbet).

Afterwards, go get a hot dog. There is nothing more exhausting than eating fusion food, no matter how wonderful. You’ll have earned it.

Iceland Airwaves 2009 Venues

NASA

Austurvöllur



This music venue/nightclub is a steady Airwaves favourite. There’s a bunch of sane madness going on with just the right amount of rowdiness. On the downside, it’s not the best place to get wasted for cheap, as drinks are on expensive side. The ladies room offers a fair amount of elbow shoving and catfights, which isn’t necessarily a bad thing if you’re up for some drama. **LP**

Sóðóma

Tryggvagata 22



Sóðóma translates to Sodom, but don’t be misled; there’s no more – or less – sodomy here than in most other bars in town. Climb the dark stairwell and enter a fairly large floor bordered by a few tables. Beers are moderately priced, and if you can shove your way outside there’s a covered balcony where the nicotine-minded can get their fix. The piece de resistance has to be the men’s bathroom, where patrons are invited to piss on the portraits of the banksters. **MZ**

Réttir Music Reviews

Thursday 24.09.09

Batterið

In a live setting, many electronica artists have problems connecting with the crowd.

7oi does not have that problem. Throughout his set, he shows great variety with songs drifting between tender sweet lullabies into heavier drum loops with plenty of reverb and delay. The added element of vocals and some guitar strumming provides a much-needed human angle, which is often lacking in electronica acts. As is often the case with the first billed outfits, 7oi’s enjoyable experimental set is unfortunately experienced by too few.

Magnoose (now: **Quadropolis**) is another electronica artist. Reminiscent of Warp Records artist Clark, Magnoose produces dark ambient sound textures with pounding bass beats. The music he creates seems like it could be a soundtrack to a Fritz Lang movie, so it seems appropriate he has a film showing in the background. Unfortunately, the music doesn’t seem to relate to the film, making it a missed opportunity. Maybe Magnoose is trying to draw attention away from him fiddling with knobs, giving his performance a more visual element, which in any case is very interesting musically.

Having made a name for themselves in their home country, Danish band **The State, The Market and The DJ** have come to Iceland to give their take on alternative music. It’s a pretty atmospheric and intense affair, often bringing to mind The Devics, but with a male vocalist. The songs have plenty of space in them, and they seem like they would make the perfect soundtrack for driving across America. However enjoyable, like that cross country drive, tonight’s set goes on a little too long for comfort.

That night, the Reykjavík International Film Festival world-premiered **Jesse Hartman**’s new flick, House Of Satisfaction. Thus, Hartman had booked an appearance at Batterið to play some songs from his movie. New Yorker Hartman has played in many bands, starting when he a teenager and toured Japan with Richard Hell, remaining active in the NY scene ever since. His first song, a quintessential Hartman track, gave the crowd a perfect introduction to his music, but unfortunately his one-man rock show with its good story telling lyrics was lost on the crowd. He hits back by dedicating 1999 single I’m So Happy You Failed to all the talkers in the crowd, but soldiers on through an enjoyable set.

Unlike Hartman, local songstress **Ólöf Arnalds** has little trouble with tonight’s crowd. With her intimacy and charm she has them in the palm of her hand. She gets them singing along to the la la chorus of Englar og Dárar. During new song Crazy Car, she hums the piano line and forgets the final verse. After repeating a guitar line and a blaa blaa, she’s off again, much to our enjoyment. Instead of getting annoying, these antics add to her charm. After a new glass of wine and what seems like an eternity tuning her unusual armadillo instrument the charango, she plays Klara, before reverting back to her guitar for two covers: Hank Williams’ Please Don’t Let Me Love You and Caetano Veloso’s Maria Bethania. On request, she then plays album favourite Við og við. Not expecting to play that song tonight, she struggled with the lyrics throughout the song, but it is of little worry to the crowd who joyfully sing along to chorus. It brings this intimate and wonderful gig to a fitting and perfect end. - **Adam Wood**

Thursday 24.09.09

Grand Rokk

The nice people in charge of this festival are already in my good book, if only because—unlike another festival that’s coming up soon—they did not forget the metalheads. It’s about time people realise that there is more to the Icelandic music scene than wailing little fairies and good natured gnomes. The Dark Side has its representatives as well. On that stormy Thursday night we were graced with the presence of some of the bands that are going to play at the Eistnaflug Rock Festival next year. It is the only festival in Iceland that focuses solely on metal, punk and other undesirables.

The first band that took to the stage was **Atrum**, and I had to stifle a laugh. The band had obviously decided to wear the international war paint of Black Metal, the infamous Corpse-paint. But they had failed to bring enough paint, and only managed to paint around their eyes. They looked more like cartoon bandits than any Black Metal outfit. The laugh froze on my lips, though, when they started playing. It was a powerhouse performance. Great songs with great guitar riffs and the vocals came straight from the bowels of the Earth...or lower. Think Emperor, think Keep of Kalessin. I cannot wait to see them again, but I hope they’ll think carefully about putting on that stupid make-up.

Next was a band that has gained cult status among local hard rockers. **XIII** seemed aware of their own importance, and they tried too hard to maintain their legend image. It fizzled. People that had flocked to the stage when Atrum were playing, now returned quietly to their seats. Their music is old school metal, reminiscent of the 80s and 90s: little bit of Ratt, a little bit of Alice in Chains. With the exception of frontman Hallur, the other members of the band looked more like session musicians than rockers. It wasn’t until they played 13, a cool song from their first album, that you could witness nostalgic eruptions among the crowd.

Gone Postal were next and wasted no time in assaulting our eardrums with their powerful, old-school deathmetal. I couldn’t help but wonder if the 4 screaming children on stage were old enough to be here—the singer looks like a satanic version of Pocahontas. Young they may be, but it was obvious they had done their homework. This was Death Metal 101. Great band! The only criticism I can come up with is this: guys, please lower your guitars to at least hip level. You don’t wanna look like fucking Mezzoforte, do you?

I was anxious to hear new **Morðingjarnir** songs. Their latest album, Áfram Ísland, is arguably one of the best punk albums ever to come out of Iceland. Sadly, however, the band members looked tired and there were sound problems, so the performance was not as good as expected. Better luck next time.

In **Memoriam** were the closing act and did their job in a professional manner. Sporting a singer that has ASS (Arena Stage Syndrome), they kept the crowd happy with their trashy metal and even got so bold as to cover Slayer—and get away with it, too!

Again, thanks to the promoters of Réttir and Eistnaflug for a great evening at Grand Rokk! - **Flosi Þorgeirsson**

Thursday 24.9.09

Jacobsen

It’s platinum blond club time, Reykjavík-style, at Jacobsen on Thursday night, with razor thin high-heeled bombshells, flat brims and over-sized hoodies as far as the eye can see.

Young **MC Gauti**, sporting a flat-brimmed cap with the words “New Money” splashed across the front, delivers club-friendly hits, climbing the speakers and showering the audience with sing-along choruses and breaking down for at least one pseudo-R&B track.

As soon as MC Gauti descends, the much-praised **Forgotten Lores** climb up—as if by magic, the dance floor is completely packed. There’s something almost boy band-ish about how each member boasts a particular ‘style’. Even the ‘Posh Spice’ member had the crowd flipping their lid.

From dust we come and to dust we return—the club descends into the DJ stylings of some ambiguous DJs...

- **Michael Zelenko**

Thursday 24.09.09

Nasa

At Nasa, the night began with a sparsely scattered crowd, entertained by the musical styling of **Dr. Gunn** who rather admirably enticed some enthusiastic head nodding and knee

bobbing from the audience. No mean feat when performing to a mostly sober crowd in the early stages of a festival, especially in Iceland—where alcohol is an almost mandatory lubricant and all flailing of limbs is kept to a minimum until an appropriate level of drunkenness is achieved. Needless to say, the music was good. No messing around with this band. Chunky, rocky and genuine, the audience reaction was not undeserved. They played a solid set, without theatrics or pretension, and their kinda tough sound was offset well with the delicate backing vocals of Hellvar’s Heiða. Jolly good.

The growing crowd was suitably warmed up for the appearance of Icelandic music legend **Megas**, accompanied by backing band **Senubjóðarnir**, who attracted a wide variety of folks. The crowd thickened and the wide age range of the audience is a testament to his talent and appeal, though those unfamiliar with Icelandic music history, tourists, might be perplexed by the sight of so many young people rocking out to the slightly obscure musician. Megas’ on-stage demeanour could be compared to a more cooperative Bob Dylan, with his clever lyrics and unique style of singing definitely bringing Dylan to mind, while his clear enjoyment of being on stage putting him a different league entirely.

The set ended with cries for ‘meira’ and paved the way for **Hjálmar**, fresh from the release of their latest album, IV. The jostling motion now successfully pulled itself together into a bit of all out dancing, spurred on by Hjálmar’s Icelandic reggae. They performed an awesome set—bright and vibrant—leading the audience in a beautiful rendition of ‘Leidin okkar allra’, where any sense of war, strife and kreppa in the world left the building for the moment, and there was unity. Good times. By the end the crowd had begun to thin out, so the gig was perhaps a little on the long side. Either way the atmosphere was nice and relaxed throughout the gig.

- **Bergún Anna Hallsteinsdóttir**

Thursday 24.09.09

Sóðóma

The room is almost empty when **Me, the Slumbering Napoleon** start, but what do you expect at 8:30 in Reykjavík? Their slow start makes their unfortunately chosen band name seem rather appropriate. It’s a bit of a snooze, but suddenly a fog machine kicks in and a dude starts shouting and it gets better. The second half of their set is loud, grungy and kind of math-rock, but still fails to get a crowd reaction.

Okay, maybe it’s not the band, because the crowd also stands immobile for **Sudden Weather Change**’s highly energetic and air-tight set. The three guitarists and bassist stand in a row, flailing their instruments about in a kind of sludge rock synchronized dance. They are so young and so don’t give a shit. One of them loses his shirt. Awesome!

Finally the room is packing up, and I am drunk. **Morðingjarnir** are chugging away some real fun old school punk. DC meets RVKI Still, no one is moving. What the hell? It’s raw and fast and catchy and everyone around me is in serious need of some alcohol, but it’s too packed to get to the bar.

It’s too packed because **Mugison** is climbing onstage and everyone is going mental. It’s been far too long since this guy has graced a Reykjavík stage with his pornographic blues punk, and it’s truly a sin. There are so many people in the room that it is impossible to move, but everyone is joining the sing-alongs and having a blast.

Mugison doesn’t wanna get of stage, so he kicks off an impromptu jam session with **Reykjavik** as they gear up and plays with them on the first song. Fuck yeah! They immediately start tearing shit up, their singer jumping into the crowd and nearly strangulating audience members with his microphone cord. The editor of this paper is a guitar maniac, FYI. Finally people are headbanging.

Reitrón get up to wrap up the night and they are dressed pretty funny. There’s a lot of metallic spandex over neon spandex and it’s kind of amazing. The remaining audience are fully into the game-console power metal. Seriously, I saw a Guitar Hero guitar up there. And a keytar! Yes! The band unleash an epic finale of making heart-hands synchronized with their playing. It’s hard to describe, but it was absolutely hilarious. - **Rebecca Louder**

Friday 25.09.09

Batterið

Calf Method took to the stage late, immediately hollering for everybody in Batteri to come up and show them some love on the dance floor. Luckily, of the ten people in the bar, nine were members of their entourage, so their demands were 90% met. The three piece laughed their way through their white-boy gangsta rap, two shouting out “I wanna get low with you bitches” while the third wailed on his tenor sax so smoothly he belonged in another band.

As if hordes of people were waiting in the wings for Calf Method to wrap it up, Batteri was comfortably full by the time **Johnny Stronghands** graced the stage, sitting meekly in a chair, guitar on his lap, smiling shyly when the anticipatory crowd shouted out support for the young troubadour. As loud as the bellowing “strong hands!” and “show ‘em what you got, buddy!” was the crowd was eerily silent so as not to miss one note of Johnny’s haunting and bluesy voice that’s somewhat akin to Nick Drake in its complexity. Contributing to the truly impressive vocals was some astounding guitar playing that had the young man employing the length of his instruments neck with speed and accuracy. It was both a treat to hear and witness such musical talent. Seriously goosebump-inducing music.

Let me entertain you

After the complete silence of the crowd during Johnny Stronghands’ set the chatter was almost distracting as **Svavar Knútur** strummed through his first song with a ukulele and a massive child-like smile. I suppose that’s the difference between a musician and an entertainer. Svavar Knútur is undeniably talented with his voice some times resonating a Damien Rice quality and his animated persona on the stage leads one of my companions to liken him to Jack Black, but the crowd in Batteri paid him as much attention as generic bar entertainment, not a well-known performer on a festival line-up. Once his backing band got in on the action and they broke into an anecdotal ditty that had the jovial front man reciting the works of the Prodigy and Bon Jovi, with some Eye of the Tiger tossed in for balance, things picked up and the smiling crowd paid the act the attention it deserved.

Hinting a neutral note

Svavar Knútur ended his set on a high-note with his cover-laden finale, leaving quite the void for **Snorri Helgason** to fill, especially now that Batteri was rather full and people wanted to be entertained. Unfortunately Snorri’s set, while technically solid and ripe with entertaining tambourine performances from former Grapeviners, left much to be desired. This guy has talent, as the former lead singer and songwriter for the über upbeat Sprengjuhöllin, and his band was exceptionally good at what they were doing. It was just... unremarkable. Neutral. Love and hate are both passionate emotions and, while being loved is preferable to being hated, I would take hate over neutrality any day.

And then the waiting began

As if the night wasn’t far enough behind schedule already, the downtime between Snorri Helgason and the electronic dance ensemble **Sometime** dragged on for eons. But once this aesthetically pleasing fivesome got their shit together and began their set the dance floor was packed with writhing bodies totally digging the 80s inspired synths, and rapid ultra-feminine crooning. Sometime’s high-energy set, accented by Christmas lights, feathered head accoutrements and electric eye make-up, was high voltage and beaucoup de fun.

Let’s keep this electro-energy pumping! Oh. **Bodebrizen** didn’t bother to wire any of their twelve electronic devices beforehand? I see. It’s a real shame that this Danish act didn’t prep their equipment at all before their set, maybe more of the dancers so keen on Sometime would have continued the party stage-front for them. This upbeat group played some catchy synth-heavy tunes and they looked kinda cute in their

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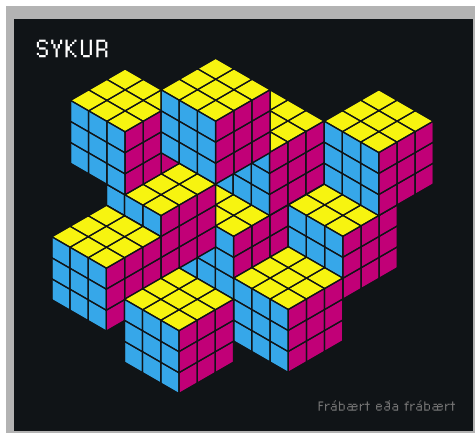
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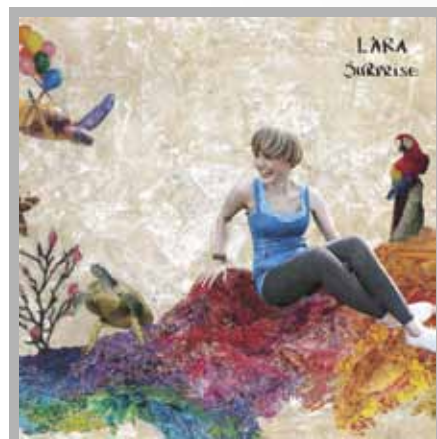
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Sykur



Lára

Live music all weekend at Skífan Laugavegur 26

Thursday

15.00 22
16.00 Culture Reject
17.00 Eliza
18.00 Moto Boy

Friday

16.00 Hafdís Huld
17.00 Sigríður Thorlacius
18.00 Brasstronaut
19.00 Úlpa

Saturday

13.00 Dynamo Fog
14.00 Sykur
15.00 Bloodgroup
16.00 Lára Rúnars
17.00 Mammút
18.00 Mecaphonic Thrift

Sunday - Trubatrix in Skífan

13.00 María
14.00 Halla Norðfjörð
15.00 Björt Sigfinnsdóttir
16.00 Uni
17.00 Mysterious Marta

Icelandic movies



Interview | By Rebecca Louder



Since playing the Iceland Airwaves festival in 2005, Joseph Mount and his outfit Metronomy has gone from being a solo project to a full-blown electro-pop band. Since the release of their album *Nights Out* last fall, the group has built up a steady blog buzz and toured all over the UK and North America, wearing out dancing shoes wherever they've gone. They now have the honour of being the only non-Faroese, non-Bedroom Community affiliated international act to play Airwaves for a second time. I recently spoke to Mr. Mount about where the band is at right now.

It was a long break between your first and second albums. Will we have to wait another three years before you drop a new album or do you have plans to hit the studio again soon?

Sadly, it is seen as a long break, but in actual fact it felt like a very short time. In the three years we were trying to get out of a record deal and touring pretty hard. Fact is the next record will take much less than three years to make. The last one only really took about nine months.

What is your song writing process? Where do you do your best composing? The process is very confused, but it is efficient. I compose best in a dark room after a few drinks...or an argument.

How do you know you've made a song you are happy with? What's the feeling you get?

It takes a long time. You need to like it yourself, first of all. Then you need to feel like it was worthwhile by others enjoying it also. As a rule of thumb, I do not release music that I do not like.

You guys remixed U2's *City of Blind Lights*, but it wasn't allowed to be released. What's up with that?

That was a marketing decision I think. Fuck knows why they didn't like it. They had a chance to back a young aspiring artist, but decided against it. It's not unusual.

Your music videos are pretty clever. How much hand do you have in those? Do you owe it to the directors you've worked with?

It is a bit of both. In most cases I have come up with the ideas and given them to a director. Luckily we work with good video makers who understand our humour. They then take the idea and run with it. It'd good to let someone else have fun.

You have been touring fairly extensively since the release of *Nights Out*. How do you avoid hitting the wall of exhaustion?

Well, the new line up has postponed exhaustion to some extent. It's very exciting and new for us all. Otherwise, we don't. We get ill on the road and do our best to keep up. Of course we have the best job in the whole universe, but it is not without its minor problems.

Got A Thing For Them

Metronomy enthuse about their upcoming Airwaves gig

Friday 23:50

Reykjavik Art Museum

Are you looking forward to playing at Airwaves for the second time? What makes you excited?

The first time I played at Airwaves was the first time I ever played abroad. I remember being so afraid and excited, it was a massive thing for me to do. No one else in the band has ever travelled to Iceland, and I keep telling them how beautiful the air is. The first time I played there had a huge impact on me.

And do you realise you are pretty much the only international act that has been invited to play Airwaves twice? How does that make you feel?

It is an honour. It's maybe a mistake that I am able to come back, but of all the people in the world that could be invited I am probably the most grateful.

Any particular remembrances from your last Airwaves stint? What stuck out if anything? Also, a lot of first time Airwavesgoers will be reading this, so in that spirit: Do you have any advice for them? What not to miss, and what to dis?

I remember three things...

1. Being very nervous
 2. How incredible the air was
 3. How very English the people are
- Beyond that, I would say that Iceland is a very unique place. I can't dis anything. Really, nothing bad happened to me there last time.

What can the Airwaves audience expect from your live show?

A very excited bunch of English people who want nothing more than to put on a good show. I really can't stress how excited we are, you probably get this a lot, but this is the highlight of our year.

Iceland Airwaves 2009 CD Review



Metronomy

Pip Payne (Pay The £5000 You Owe) & Nights Out

Inventive to the point of annoyance Who'd have thought that being in debt would make you famous these days?

For the sake of five grand owed to a car scrappers' yard, Pip has been forever immortalised in bleeps, beeps, turning-trick melodies, Aphex Twin scary skewiff twisted-face sound manipulation and electro-bounciness. Random, somewhat rusty, but classy. Seems the debut album has taken its spirit from that cheeky fucker, and in the case of something like Bearcan it actually sounds like Metronomy mainman Joseph Mount has sneaked into the same car yard to record the percussion on discarded Ladas. Fiddle around under the bonnet enough and you'll find the pop sump full of... ok enough with the cars.

Nights Out, last year's follow-up offering, is slightly more user-friendly, and nearly a concept album in Metronomy's own hall of mirrors manner, right from the moment the Chinese traditional sounds of the intro-title track bank round a sky of manipulated mariachi horns and military drums. The remarkable thing about this second album is that it does, at times, sound exactly like a night out running through bars, or at least the fractured following-morning memories. The End Of You Too lurches between indie discos playing Take Me Out by Franz Ferdinand, reggae cafes and 80s discos before finally leaving its mark with a half-heard bassline as if through the walls of a club. Throughout there are nods to Devo, Talking Heads, rave culture, kiddy toys and anyone whose hearts are blessed and bloody with the frolics and frustrations of trying to break out of a small town—or, more accurately, getting out of their own strange, poppy, amazing, annoyingly talented heads. Pip would understand.

- Joe Shooman

Réttir Music Reviews

matching nautical outfits but all their songs sounded the same and it all got very dull very fast. Even the crowd seemed eager to get the Danes off the stage halfway into the set, coincidentally around the time either Bode or Brixen shouted "thank you Greenland!" Sorry buddy, wrong colony.

Maybe gauging the temperature of the crowd or maybe just smart, [Berndsen](#) set up his stage quickly and playfully left the eager crowd chanting his name while he sauntered over to the bar for a pre-gig bevy, kissing some adoring fans along the way. With the runaway popularity of his Supertime video, everybody in Batteri turned to their neighbour and whispered "oh my god, it's Berndsen!" as he passed by in the pink and yellow jacket and headband from his *Lover in the Dark* video. Once behind the mic Berndsen's set left something to be desired. Perhaps it was nerves or perhaps it was that he was bouncing around too much, causing his voice to sound choppy, but something was off about the performance. The electronic instruments of *The Young Boys* were jumpy and fun and kept the Berndsen fanatics busting their moves, but the night was losing momentum fast until he closed his set with Supertime.

Berndsen is so goddamn adorable that I forgive him for the lags in his stage time. Once the masses get a better taste of what he's all about—other than Supertime—this boy is going places. - Catharine Fulton

Friday 25.09.09

Cultura

What do you get when you put together an amateur, a shitload of ladadada-lyrics and a terrible singer? I'll tell you what you get: a rather shitty evening.

It's Melodica Acoustic Festival night, and four acoustic acts are to take the carpet covered stage in the dark basement of Kaffi Kúltúra. A handful of people have turned up and it is quite apparent that the audience mainly consists of friends of the performers. This could have been one of those cosy, intimate concerts. It was not.

[Myrra Rós](#) is first up. The performance is basically the same slow depressing type of song over and over again. She does a lot of talking to her friends in the audience, as well as some mid-song giggling. This night, this venue, Myrra Rós just isn't very convincing as a musician. Everything is very amateur-like, and there is no presence what so ever. Myrra Rós can at least sing, but her voice is not particularly memorable.

Suddenly, while people are running up and down the stairs for beer, a loud noise flows from the speakers. It is the next act, [Sebastian Storgaard](#), singing. His mediocre voice starts pounding these terrible lyrics into my head via the way too loud mic and I just begin to wonder if this dude shouldn't find another hobby. One not involving music. There is an overload of ladadada-ing, then someone in the audience tips Sebastian on tuning his guitar, I've had too much.

I am only going to mention briefly what happens next, because my mother once told me that if you don't have anything nice to say, you shouldn't say anything. [Tryggvi Gunnarsson](#) takes the stage. The whole experience is just kind of embarrassing.

The evening's long-awaited highpoint comes as the presenter announces that the last act is a no-show. I let out a silent sigh of relief and thank my stars. - Louise Petersson

Friday 25.09.09

Grand Rokk

My ears still ringing after the Eistnaflug concert the night before, I was happy to enter Grand Rokk again for some good and heavy music. Grand Rokk is an ideal venue for tonight. It's dark and gloomy, but it has an eerily soothing atmosphere. Just like the previous night the place was packed, and [Plastic Gods](#) got a warm welcome from an expectant crowd. Defining their music is hard. There was definitely a lot of heavy, smoky and delicious sludge. Yet, there is also great intensity and aggression. PG are definitely one of Iceland's most exciting acts nowadays.

While I was still reeling from the psychedelic aftermath of Plastic Gods, Logn hit the stage. The little metalheads in front of me began their head-banging, so [Logn](#) were probably doing something right.

For some reason, they failed to impress. Yes, it was very fast, and the guitars had apparently been tuned beforehand by the Dark Lord's own roadie, but therein lies the problem. I may sound like an old fart here, but I couldn't hear any riffs or power chords. It was just noise. Mainstream noise. The good thing is that these young guys were really hammering their guitars with full force. They may turn into something really nasty one day, I hope.

Next on stage was [Myra](#) whose members have been active in the metal/punk/hardcore scene for a long time. Again, it is difficult to define their music but the word that comes to mind is heavy. Myra are heavy as shit, and I could feel my lower jaw begin to protrude while my mouth made unintelligible growling noises. That's metal-fever, right there. The bass and drums got an evil groove going on, while the guitars smear total lunacy on top. The singer's voice isn't so powerful, but he makes up for that with wild stage antics and his howling sent shivers down my spine. Myra have been absent from the scene for a while, but I sincerely hope they will stay for now, because they are simply awesome.

It is always difficult to take to stage while the audience is still screaming for the last band, but [Muck](#) showed no sign of retreating. Muck have some pretty powerful things up their sleeve. I was especially impressed with the guitar players. The music is some kind of post hardcore. Fast, with cool and slow intervals. I got pretty annoyed with the singer through the set. He sang in exactly the same pitch the whole time, and it was always this tiresome hardcore screaming. Trying a different

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The Kolaportið flea market (open Saturdays and Sundays) is the host to a few regular vinyl booths. Usually there is quite a big selection, and although it's heavy on old Eagles and Rush albums, you can find some gems there if you rummage around. The biggest booth there is run by a Mr. Lucky, who just happened to open a specialty shop at Hverfisgata 82, with over 20.000 vinyl LPs on offer, as well as CDs and DVDs.

At Vitastígur, a friendly fellow named Valdi runs a small shop with a good selection, especially in the metal genre. There you can also find a sizeable used CD selection. If you want brand new plastic, then the shops at Skífan and 12 Tónar on Laugavegur have new releases, and the few Icelandic albums that are available on vinyl. - Páll Hilmarsson

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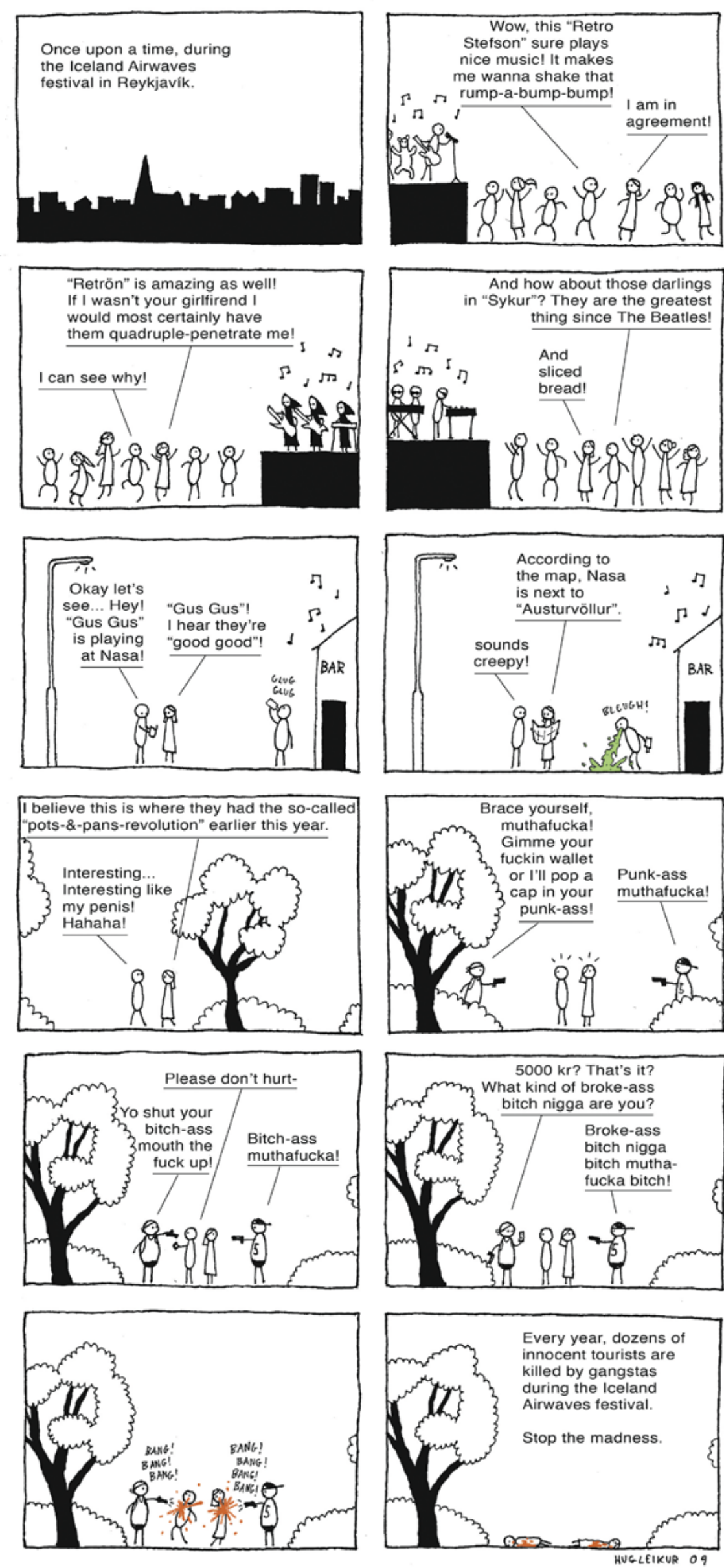
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Iceland Airwaves 2009 CD Review



Casiokids
Singles (Moshi Moshi)

Oh yes! Dubby, poppy, swinkly basslines, Mr Oizo-esque bubbly farty electro-kazoo noises! Jaunty drums! Yes, jaunty! Sweet pop melodies! Harmonies! One Two Three Four heartbeat wowness! Synths not synthetics! Infiltration of happiness! This couldn't get any better! Test me! Try and listen to these songs without smiling, groovin, grinnin and vowing to order more sugary cocktails: that's right, bucko, you can't! Casiokids have made you happy! Tough shit if

that's not what you wanted! You suck! The names of the songs go like this: Verdens Største Land (demo) / Fot I Hose Grønt Lys I Alle Ledd / Togens Hule / Gomur Mamma (Unreleased)! You don't care! You're eating Pez direct from the dispenser and have a sudden urge to play with Rubiks Cubes! Play this to the bankers and the arschloch cunthurdling thieves will explode, showering the world in semi-digested hedge funds and blobs of gold! Probably. - Joe Shooman

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approach every once in a while would not hurt. I remember seeing [Momentum](#) play a few years back. It was fast, heavy and brutal. I do not know what has happened since then, but they're certainly neither fast nor brutal these days. It seems Momentum, like Sólstafir, have discovered the road to indieville. It is admirable when bands try out new things, and Momentum are clearly on the right track. The music is ominous and dreamy, a delightful mix of metal and indie-rock. It lacked a certain punch however. Maybe it was the sound, but a little more power would've helped. - [Flosi Þorgeirsson](#)

THE OUTER REACHES:
GRAND ROKK late night
on the 25th of SEPTEMBER



There are times I am relatively proud to be from Iceland. The scene at a quarter past midnight at Grand Rokk on the third night of Reykjavik Round-Up may have been one of those times. It was like a dockside bar in a Kaurismäki film, with the final dregs of the festival, audience- and music-wise coming together at this fairly wayward venue to indulge in their preferred vices... sort of.

The drinks were a little too far on the expensive side to fully set the scene, and of course, not every drunk in town had bought tickets to Reykjavik Round-Up, nor were they willing to sacrifice 1000 ISK of unemployment benefits otherwise spent on 22 oz of beer for a one-night entry pass. In fact, I'm a little surprised anyone would, and I don't mean that as any kind of insult to the bands playing that night.

No, I'm just surprised that a city, a town of 200,000 people can not only have differing cultures and genres of music, but also subcultures and subgenres. It's astounding, really, when you think about the numbers. It would be impossible to deny the existence of a multitude of musical niches that exist in Iceland, all of them diligently filled by someone or other who never makes any money doing it.

Not that the night's acts seemed overly concerned with fitting into any niches... or making any money. [Peter & Wolf](#) were two bearded men who offered continuous and deeply satisfying drones and beats playing for a half-empty room of what looked mostly like drunk intellectuals and other music critics, most of whom were probably pretty drunk as well. I found it particularly amusing that along one of the walls was a row of spare tables, upon which there sat an upturned second row along with their corresponding chairs. The place was so empty that the staff didn't even need to lay all the tables down.

Peter & Wolf's sci-fi strategy PC game soundtrack was eventually replaced by the slightly more energetic keyboard stylings of [Orustubjarki](#). His tightly controlled, very German-sounding techno was invigorating, and drew more enthusiasm from the "crowd." It was a curious scene, made all the more fascinating by its loudness, closeness and privacy.

I have up to this point omitted two particular adjectives which, although offering a very concise description of the first two acts I saw, just seem irrelevant and inadequate for their own respective reasons. The first is hypnotic, but that was, seemingly, the whole point of the music, and their likability hinged on being able to bring this hypnotism across live. At that, they succeeded brilliantly. The second word is trippy, and I just haven't used it up to this point because it's a loathsome word used only by dim-witted cretins.

Orrustubjarki managed to give his electronics a sort of confident lo-fi charm, a subtle onslaught of pop that at first seemed sublime and ingenious, blessed with the kind of consistent persistence that gets you into a girl's pants, but it all kind of dissolved in the end. It became shallow in a distinctly unwelcome way, and I remember feeling like an accessory to the murder of a Swiss DJ for even liking it.

[Skorpulífur](#) were another matter entirely. Well-intentioned, both as musicians and as a freak show, they fell prey to two errors made far too often by small bands in small scenes. First off, the sound was awful. Grand Rokk almost always has bad sound, but Skorpulífur, being a playback-based duo, were particularly susceptible to this, as the vocals were considerably louder than the playback, so the otherwise decisive force of their beats was rendered inconsequential.

Second, they played too long, and I want to call people's—and by people I mean musicians—attention to this. I'll print it in bold and uppercase and hope to Moses that the Grapevine's excellent layout people won't fuck me over: **IF YOUR BAND HAS NOT HAD AT LEAST ONE GOLD ALBUM, DO NOT BOTHER PLAYING FOR LONGER THAN 25 MINUTES. NOBODY GIVES A SHIT, AND YOU'RE BETTER OFF LEAVING PEOPLE WANTING MORE. TRUST ME.**

So what started out as an exuberant all-out performance from two slightly overweight drunk guys, one wearing sequined two-piece pyjamas and the other in Speedos and a swim cap (Why is it that all Icelandic men interested in exposing themselves in public are in terrible shape, whereas the fit, slim ones always stay completely clothed?), eventually petered out to an obnoxiously repetitive display of attention-whoring that, towards the end, failed to elicit even mild guffaws of entertainment. Oh sure, there was applause, but when isn't there? I mean, they could have told jokes about Patrick Swayze and Michael Jackson being lovers and dying of AIDS, and somebody would have applauded. Applause does not equal satisfaction. It has become an utterly meaningless form of social communication, like a toast or a handjob.

That said, they were still pretty decent. They just made two very common mistakes, one of which wasn't entirely theirs, and their music is pretty interesting. If those men did not get laid that night, I'd be very surprised. - [Sindri Eldon](#)

Friday 25.09.09
Jacobsen

Sin Fang Bous and Seabear main man Sindri DJs before and in-between acts tonight. He starts the evening by playing a nice selection of minimal electronica, almost as if he'd raided Thomas Morr's collection. It works perfectly in warm up Jacobsen, the crazy weather beating down outside.

Starting off the evening are [Pascal Pinon](#), whose looks precede them. The ubiquitous "krútt" generation style is certainly on display at tonight's show, but it would be harsh to judge the four 15-year-old girls who make up the band based on their look and write them off as just another krútt band. Pascal Pinon's music deserves more than that, as it really shines and more than exceeds any label one could slap on it. Their simple lo-fi indie pop brings melodies you can't help but get stuck in your head. Attracting a large crowd and well received by all present, they most definitely have a promising future.

Next act, [DJ Flugvél & Geimskip](#), is neither a duo nor a DJ. One girl armed with an array of old keyboards and a computer, DF&G plays a sort of naïve punk lo-fi videogame electronica, similar in style akin to 12 Tónar legend Sigríður Nielsdóttir. Unfortunately for DJ Flugvél & Geimskip, she doesn't possess the charm and subtleties that makes Sigríður Nielsdóttir so likeable and that sound just seems old fashioned by now.

Svavar Pétur Eysteinnsson of Skakkamanage fame turns up next to play as his musical alterego, [Prins Pólo](#). We are treated to a short sharp set of his solo acoustic music. As a big fan of Skakkamanage, I'm excited to witness Prins Pólo play, but that is probably the problem. While obviously a great songwriter, without the aid of his comrades Svavar's solo songs often sound like Skakkamanage demos—missing a lot of the charisma that makes Skakkamanage so enjoyable. This doesn't seem to bother tonight's crowd, though, and his set's highlight is during final song Átján og hundrað from his debut EP, where Svavar even gets a deserved sing along.

[Sudden Weather Change](#) have seen a lot of hype over the last year, which is worrying. Surely they can't live up to all that. How wrong could I be, though. Sudden Weather Change certainly wear their influences on their sleeves. Sounding like the bastard child of Sonic Youth and Pavement, they have big shoes to fill and they certainly do, with a youthful energy and excitement on their side. From jangly quiet guitar buildups, to walls of distortion and loud throbbing bass lines, they show little regard for their equipment or personal safety, as one guitarist ends up on the speaker boxes and the Jacobsen mirror balls look in real danger.

Jacobsen has never seen a rock show like this and probably never will again. Finishing with a wall of feedback, while members sing Nothing Compares To You, Total Eclipse Of The Heart and Stereo Rock 'n Roll, theirs is a hype you could well buy into.

Downstairs, [HumanWoman](#), consisting of DJ Magic and Sexy Lazer, show why they are some of the best house/ techno/dub DJs in town. Playing a mixture of minimal techno and house, we are even lucky enough to get the first preview of songs off their forthcoming album. With both of them adding live vocals over the top of a dub house beat, it points to exciting things to come for this pair. The future of dance music is in safe hands it would seem. - [Adam Wood](#)

Friday 25.09.09
NASA

Friday got off to a pretty chilled out start with [Nóra](#) opening things up for an evening of relaxed revelry. The five-piece band entertained a scattering of people with an interesting mash up of instruments, creating music that was bit left of centre and pretty cool. They didn't exactly start the night with a bang but they played a nice set and got things going well enough, even if the audience at this point consisted mostly of photographers.

By the time [Sing for me Sandra](#) rolled up, the audience had grown to include a big bunch of teenagers, who appraised other audience members disdainfully and generally didn't seem to be particularly enthused by anything. The guys in the band are a talented bunch, but still have a slightly young sound (the Blink 182 influences are firmly on their sleeves) that will probably only improve with time. They used their voices well, creating cool triple harmonies, and their music, despite its adolescent sound, brought some intangible element of difference. However, it was hard to get past the feeling of being at a high school dance, and the atmosphere was heavy with the feeling of youthful indifference.

Then along came [The Samúel Jón Samúelsson Big Band](#) who packed the place out with a loyal audience, inciting dancing and action. In fact, it was difficult not to get caught up in the funk and lose it a little bit on the dance floor. The band is huge (18 members in total) and brought the right attitude, not taking themselves too seriously, and sporting a variety of fun costumes. They effortlessly set up a fun atmosphere for the evening, and their music paved the way well for [Retro Stefson](#), who drew a huge crowd and did not disappoint with their awesome blend of world and pop music, rocking the crowd impressively with favourites such as Medallion and Papa Paulo III. As usual, they played a tight set. The band works really well in a large venue, and their onstage presence belies their youth (to be fair, they have been playing the Reykjavik scene for a good few years).

The crowd in the right frame of mind to have their now rather drunk and disorderly socks rocked off by [FM Belfast](#), who firmly delivered. There was confetti. There was frenzied dancing. Their audience lapped it up. The band played a solid set of old and new material, appearing to let themselves go in the moment as much as the drunken and excitable crowd. They were naturally called back for more at the end of their set, and delivered a wicked encore that ended their set on a high note. Most of the audience left at that point, leaving an enthusiastic core stomping around to the fresh beats laid down by [Pedro Pilatus and Bear Hug](#). Comprising of Retro Stefson bassist Logi Pedro and his friend Hugi Peyr, the duo played a sweet electro/hip hop set, interspersed with ODB samples and some nice female vocals. - [Bergrún Anna Hallsteinsdóttir](#)

Friday 25.09.09
Sódóma

Keflavík's [Hellvar](#) start the night and they have gotten the right idea by bringing some friends along to dance and shout and incite the rest of the audience to approach the stage. Their brand of electro-metal is fairly catchy and infectious, but their drum machine is so loud, it's borderline obnoxious. The lead singer is pretty hard when she loses her guitar and starts doing the soccer-mom shuffle. She should probably just hang onto her instrument.

The boys in [Jan Mayen](#) don't need to use their instruments as crutches, luckily, because they are far too busy making adorable, retro, garage-pop on them. It's fun and easy to clap along to, very enjoyable in the moment. The musicians deliver their songs with ample energy and commitment, but something tells me they have yet to write the hit that will cement them as a solid band. Keep on truckin', kids.

I would have taken an extra thirty minutes of Jan Mayen over the snooze fest that was [Miri](#). I was intrigued by the bombastic montage of classical music that the band entered the stage with, but was promptly bummed out within 20 seconds of hearing the band's lacklustre preppy rock. The crowd gets really riled up, but their dramatic stage demeanour is complete overkill for their severely boring music. Every song seems to build up, then stop short and go nowhere. Yawn.

[Skakkamanage](#) are a welcome relief from the previous act for the first few songs of their set, but once they take it down a few notches, their standard indie rock stylings simply become background music and I can tell they will be



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Interviews | By Haukur S Magnússon



Casiokids

Friday 21:50
Reykjavík Art Museum

Casiokids! Give us a short introduction of yourself! Why should the uninitiated check out your show?

You sound excited. I will suggest you start more cautiously by first checking out our music and videos on Spotify or Myspace. Then, if you're still positive and thrilled, come to our show and we will try our best.

Next week, you will board a flight to RVK. We assume you'll be making an iPod playlist. Give us ten tracks you would put on it (and if you want to include a sentence on why for each one, then by all means do).

I must say first that I am very much looking forward to coming! My first time in Reykjavik and Iceland and I am very excited. Sorry that this playlist turned out so melancholy and sad, I promise to put my dancing shoes on in the evenings during the Airwaves festival.

Burt Bacharach – Ill never fall in love again
Jens Lekman – I Don't Know if She's worth 900 kr
Bob Hund – Den Ensamme
Sjömannens Födelsedag
Jonathan Johansson – En hand i Himlen
Cat Stevens – Don't be shy
Wetete Mare – Muluqen Mellesse
Lloyd Chambers & The Soul Stirrers – Come See About Me
Teeny Grownups – I Was a Teacher
Bjørn Torske – Møljekalas
Familjen – Kom Säger dom

Do you plan on catching any shows at Airwaves? Who are you interested in seeing and why?

I want to see Micachu & The Shapes. I have some of their tracks in my collection, like my favourites, Turn Me Well and Guts, so I'm curious to catch them live. I've had so many chances to see them this summer on various festivals in the UK, but I'm always eating or getting there too late or perhaps even play-

ing myself when they are on. This time I believe we even play the same stage on the same evening, so I promise to finally go see them, I'll even bring my food to the concert if I have to.

What was the idea with the kindergarten gigs? Were the kids into it?

We did a gig at Gyldenpris Kindergarten in Bergen for our Norwegian release of the album "Fück MIDI!" in 2006 and did not know what to expect, and we were relieved and happy to see the kids so excited. Playing for kids, and especially in kindergartens when their parents are not around and they are just around their friends, is as crazy as any chaotic, teenage home alone party.

They let themselves go completely, not caring what anyone thinks, and just roam around us in excitement, climbing us and joining in on percussion and instruments we lay around the room. We respect them as much as any other audience, and since Casiokids started in 2004 we've done shows from everyone from 0 – 90. We don't have a target audience, and I think that no music has got that.

Does the band have any sort of MO and if so, what is it?

Our overall mission, even from the early years when we made edits of our favourite tracks of New Kids on the Block, Queen and Beck to bring to our friend's parties, is to have a good time.

How should Airwaves guests prepare for your show?

We would prefer if everyone came in animal costumes. We like to believe we connect well with animals, and this summer we did a show in a farm outside of Oslo where we played an acoustic show for a sow, a goat and a handful of cows (a gang of chickens were also nearby, though I suspect they were not paying attention judging by their loud clucking). (Answers by Ketil)



Kasper Björke

Saturday 03:30
NASA

Kasper Björke! Give us a short introduction of yourself! Why should the uninitiated check out your show?

I've been DJ-ing and making music for the past ten years – Icelanders might know me from one of my numerous DJ sets in Reykjavik for the past five years, or my collaboration with FM Belfast, Back & Spine, on my last album.

Its really important to come to my DJ sets this year, 'cause there'll be a fire-show and a juggler, and a snow-mountain builder! A sort of Balearic meets the North Pole kinda vibe. Fire and ice... No, but do come on down to Kaffibarinn Friday night or Nasa on Saturday for a heavy dose of techno and disco. No stunts, just great parties.

Next week, you will board a flight from CPH to RVK. We assume you'll be making an iPod playlist. Give us ten tracks you would put on it and why.

The Drums - I Wanna Go Surfin' - For my last album in 2007, I was in NYC working on tracks, and I actually tried to get Jonathan Pierce (the singer from The Drums) in the studio to record on a song, but it never happened.
Mathew Jonson - When Love Feels Like Crying (Kasper Björke edit) – Yeah, I made my own edit with a 4/4 beat, to play in my sets.
The XX – Shelter – One of many amazing songs from an amazing album.
Kasper Björke - Young Again – The new single from my next album, feat. Jacob Bellens from I Got You On Tape on vocals. Album's out in February 2010.
Wareika - Burnin - Wareika is great and Burnin is an ANTHEM from their forthcoming album on the Danish Tartelet label.
Jarvis Cocker - Discosong (Pilooski edit) – Pilooski makes super edits!
The Antlers – Kettering - So depressing, so good!
Bibio - Abrasion – Another great addition to the Warp catalogue.
Matthew Dear & Seth Troxler - Hurt –

Brilliant song from Ghostly International.

Do you plan on catching any shows at Airwaves? Who are you interested in seeing and why?

The Drums – I gotta check out their show. The hype is so big around this band, and I've heard so much good stuff about their live show!
Oh Land – My good Danish friend, who I actually discovered back in the day on MySpace, then signed her to Fake Diamond Records (where I do A&R) and since then I've been trying to get Airwaves to book her! So now finally she is here and her live performance is stunning! Her next album will be HUGE!
FM Belfast - Always a great experience to catch my Icelandic friends live, and the only chance to see one of my own songs performed live (Back & Spine), where they sing and which they usually include in their sets. Margeir at the Blue Lagoon; usually I'm too hung-over to go, but THIS YEAR I'm going to!
And, oh, **GusGus** on Sunday evening!

You've been to Airwaves a bunch of times. Any favourite memories you wish to share?

Playing Kaffibarinn and stage diving from the bar with Sexy Lazer (Jón Atli, the Hairdoctor), Prinzhorn Dance School's live performance, being drunk in the outdoor hot tubs at one of the local swimming pools, following Margeir around on his marathon through Reykjavik, playing between 20 and 75 DJ sets in four days... and a lot of other memories that are x rated, muah!

Your track with FM Belfast was pretty great. Any plans on further collaboration?

Who knows... maybe for a future single or remix? We are all busy people, but it could be fun! I'm just finishing a remix for múm these days, actually... and recently did one for GusGus, but The President never got back to me on that one!

Réttir Music Reviews

forgettable. They still manage to set a decent pace with their song list, starting fast then toning it down and bringing things back up at the end. They've fared well with the crowd.

The room has filled and people are getting steadily liquored up as **Kimono** hit the stage and the lights go low. Things get off to an exciting start with one suspenseful, dark chord washing over rolling toms and suddenly kicks into hypnotic, dark, grunge punk. Their lyrics are weird and their time signatures give a nice big fuck-you to 4/4. The Canadian singer incites sheep impersonations from the crowd in honour of the event's name. By the end, everyone in the front row has their eyes shut and are gently head banging. Beautiful.

People begin chanting the next act's name before they've even hit the stage and the smokers start crowding back into the room. When **Ensími** finally stops teasing the crowd and starts to play, everyone loses their shit. This is the second part of a long awaited reunion it seems. These guys were huge around 1996 I am told, and from the sounds of it, I can see why. It's powerful stadium Brit-come-Iceland rock. The entire audience is in a nostalgic frenzy. Hands are in the air, people are making out and a full-on mosh pit forms. The band is in their element, playing their hearts out effortlessly. Definitely makes me miss my first summer rock festivals.

The room fucking clears out right afterwards, leaving a scant handful of people to enjoy **Swords of Chaos'** absolutely nutso set. They are left with only thirty minutes to tear shit up, so they waste no time screaming, thrashing and diving into the small but insane crowd. An attempt at removing the stage-grates to allow for stage diving is promptly stopped by furious security, but the pack of drunk, shirtless, long-haired men seem perfectly content just flailing about the room to the super hardcore closers. Too bad it ended so soon. - **Rebecca Louder**

Saturday 26.09.09

Batterið

The night began well, if a little quietly, easing festivalgoers into the spirit. **Bórður Hermannsson** enhanced the mellow atmosphere with his own brand of experimental folk, a very chilled and easy way to start the night. The small audience just relaxed in the friendly atmosphere and took it all in over a few quiet beers.

Adda continued the laid-back trend, keeping things on the quiet side with an original acoustic set, entertaining with her witty lyrics and delicate voice, while the crowd stayed pretty pacified, but appreciative nonetheless. She accompanied the cosy, candle-lit mood exceptionally.

If anything **Lydia Grétars** cranked things up a notch, although it would be an exaggeration to say that her music was energetic. It did pick up the pace, though, and kept things from coming to a complete standstill. Using a keyboard, a laptop and a pretty sweet singing voice, she accompanied her original lyrics with some experimental sampling and simple melodic piano.

This curiously paved the way for the next act, reggae/dub group **Ojba Rasta** who, despite a big difference in sound, didn't stand out performing right after the acoustic trio. They picked up the pace somewhat, playing a set of good old-fashioned reggae and filling the dance floor almost instantly. Ojba Rasta are a new-ish band to the Reykjavik scene, which is rather uncrowded in terms of reggae and dub bands, but they stand themselves well, both as musicians in general and as a live act, giving a strong performance of easily danceable reggae.

Króna changed the tone suitably, with their own take on pure Icelandic rock. They kept the dance floor occupied and the crowd entertained, although many chose to enjoy themselves from a seated position. There was still a good bit of headnodding and seat dancing going on to their good, honest rock. Their performance was solid although there was something a little bit standardised about the sound of Króna. The music will probably enjoy a lot of radio play but on stage it lacks the personality of a band such as the previous Ojba Rasta. They did play their unpretentious rock music well and tight, though, and were enjoyable to watch.

The crowd suitably warmed up for the ever-popular **Agent Fresco** who, in their short lifespan, have made a deep mark and garnered a loyal following in the Reykjavik music scene. Their popularity is well deserved and this show proved them entertaining as usual, building in intensity, with the crowd quickly graduating from enthusiastic head nodding to enthusiastic jumping and heaving in response to the explosive live performance. No one walked away disappointed, and the band ended with the always-popular Eyes of a Cloud Catcher, leaving the stage to the sound of cries for more.

After a fairly long pause, **Kleerup** provided a change in atmosphere with some very danceable disco/house, packing the dance floor and keeping it that way for the whole duration of his one and half hour set. His bright music stood in stark contrast to the artful, heavy sound of Agent Fresco, but was certainly not a step back in terms of quality. Good times all round. He wasn't there to entertain and was fairly focused on his music, not bothering with any onstage theatrics while playing. This gave it more the feeling of a DJ set than a live show. The music stood for itself, though, and any antics would have just been an addition to a strong live show.

The night ended with **Sykur** who kept the beats flowing with a solid set of their own electro-pop. Sykur were joined onstage by various collaborators, including Arnór from Agent Fresco. They took the evening out in good style and submitted to demands for an encore, the presence of which was testament to their good live performance. - **Bergrún Anna Hallsteinsdóttir**

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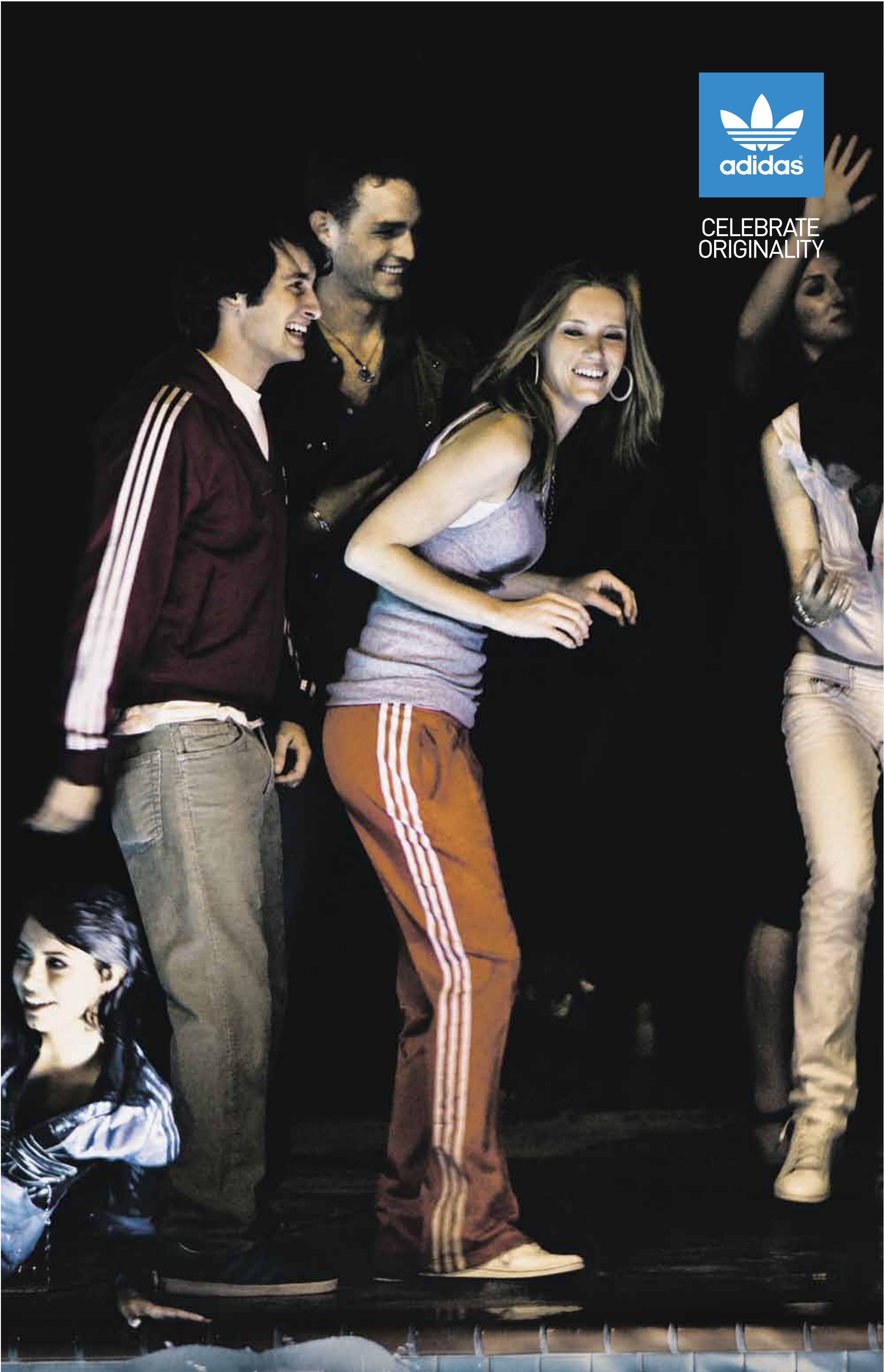
17. OCTOBER at Skífan record store, Laugavegur 26 - Time: 1pm - 6pm

1pm: Dynamo Fog
2pm: Sykur
3pm: Bloodgroup

4pm: Lára
5pm: Mammút
6pm: Megaphonic Thrift



CELEBRATE
ORIGINALITY



Interview | By Ben Frost

Squeegee enthusiast Tim Hecker

Friday 22:20
lðnó

I bought Tim Hecker's LP Harmony in Ultraviolet off the shelf at NYC's Other Music in 2006. Frankly, I nearly pissed myself when the album opener, Blood Rainbow, tore through my speakers for the first time. It was like a Kandinsky painting had exploded across my living room in sonic imagery perched at the intersection of noise, dissonance, and melody.

The critically acclaimed Canadian's work has been described as "structured ambient" and "cathedral electronic music"—the latter phrase was what actually made me pick it up, because it has a certain Shakespearean oxymoronic imagery I appreciate, and I don't know who said it, but they were spot-fucking-on. As a very special guest of the Bedroom Community label, Airwaves 2009 will mark Hecker's debut in Iceland.

Ben Frost: "I find it easier to talk about music in visual terms than in aural ones; and with that in mind, to me your music is very much a painted image—oil paints on a brush. Would you agree with that? Your records also imply grand design, demonstrated if anything by the way in which everything is



carefully stitched together, and by your use of refrains and codas—compositional devices rooted in classical music. Thoughts?"

Tim Hecker: Yes, I think that's quite fair and spot on. Although I often see the music more in terms of squeegee-based oil painting than maybe brush-based. During the recording one of my last records, Harmony in Ultraviolet, I was reading a collection of Gerhard Richter's early writings and found that text a million times more inspirational than anything directly musical. His flickering large abstract paintings from the 80s and 90s have immense depth, and it was fun to think of how something like that would transfer into the sonic palette. Having said all that, however, there is a limit to the music-as-visual-art metaphor.

I also agree with all the attempts to obfuscate, transform, mangle and vaporize instruments or structures, I'd say it still fails in that it falls back on sometimes very traditional notions of musical form. Maybe that's good though, in that there needs to be some sort of anchor or things have the tendency to float away

in a bland maudlin sonic fog—or if not, then too difficult to render any sort of pleasure or sliver of transcendence to the listener.

BF: What other people hear in your work is one thing, and lining your work up next to Christian Fennesz, William Basinski, or myself even (ha!) I suspect is tolerable, but probably a far cry from what you hear in it. You have influences I'm sure, but I'm interested in the ones your listeners wouldn't see—the ones you've abstracted far beyond the point of recognition, and beyond music. I imagine literature, ice hockey and beer have as much input...

TH: You could say that the ice hockey game I played last night has as much or probably more influence than abstract electronic composers, but who knows for sure. I love all the musicians you mention, but those direct links are only part of the package. I think the space of arrangement makes a huge impact. Music composed in dark, dank, windowless rooms often seems more pressure-infused than the work done alongside light-strewn windows or even outdoors. Time of day, again, is something else.

I also find it interesting how much music relates to what I've been doing that I've never even heard—you know, sort of diffused through other artists—through second-order relationships, maybe hearing pieces in passing. I'm listening to some new age music, probably from the early eighties right now, as I write this, and could have been released last year on certain 'contemporary' respected labels from England or Germany (who would touch 'new age' music though!?!).

The web of interrelationships is wide beyond imagination. I could say, 'I'm interested in making music at levels of

immensity never heard before, and realise that both that thought is not novel, nor has it not been attempted before. I'm writing right now about certain monster pipe organs built at the turn of the century that would kill anything I could make with a computer and PA system. And the heavy metal band that tried to outplay the organ in Atlantic City in the 1970s also failed to beat it.

BF: Like paintings by Leonardo or Michelangelo, your compositions, to me, often reveal structure only from a certain distance, but up close they are infinitely human and flawed, even. Your new record, An Imaginary Country, is like a chapel fresco painting with noise—which is perhaps most interesting considering that you started as a techno producer, a musical discipline which, if anything, visually conjures a pragmatic, architectural approach. Are you working from gridlines and blueprints or from light and shadows?

TH: Part of why I sidestepped from techno music was because of the need to have predictable time signatures and things like that. My way of developing music is very messy and unstructured. This is partly the fault (or blessing) of the software I use. But it's also a decision to keep things off a linear, organised path. I know techno producers who are far more disorganised than I am, so it's probably not that. I guess I was just more interested in music unhinged from the direct referent of the metronome. Or as you say, drawn to the 'light and shadows' instead of the right-angles of edifice.

Tim Hecker performs as a special guest of the Bedroom Community Label Night @ lðnó on Friday October 16 at 22:20.

Interview | By Tim Hecker

One With The Wolves Ben Frost

Friday 00:20
lðnó

I first came across Ben's music right around when Theory of Machines was released. Like most genres, electronic/experimental music can be very dull at times. On the cover of his record I found the musician suspended from what appeared to be a meat hook in a butcher shop; I later realised it was a medicalesque mise-en-scène. The music contained on the disc has even more personality. Not dull music at all—tranquil, brusque, ethereal, even violent at times. A charming addition to the robust world of Icelandic music indeed.

Tim Hecker: I'm listening to your new record quite a bit (which is coming out soon!) so let's talk about that. It's lush and heavy, but also whispers at times. Your music is great on a bunch of levels, but there's a looming threat to this record that makes it special to me. Maybe you could talk about intention and mood, because it seems like there's a coherent chromatic hue to this music and I'm curious how much of that was design, or whether things took on a life of their own in the studio.

Ben Frost: I felt a definite pull back to more acoustic, classical elements with this record, specifically the thick dark wooden sounds that you find in old German made pianos, hammered string instruments like the harpsichord, and of course the double bass—performed by Borgar Magnason—which was very much at the heart of it and very consciously decided. I cannot say why, but



I think perhaps that came partly as a reaction to the period surrounding Theory of Machines.

It was also a return to music that was less calculated and more instinctual and more rooted in chance and performance. Leo Needs A New Pair Of Shoes, for example, is more or less a live recording and contains all of the core elements of this record at their most reduced and bare form. Most of the material was initially extrapolated from the simple cyclical tonal patterns that wound up in Leo.

This record is like a Rothko painting to me: it's huge, warm clouds of colour—big, dark blood reds, blacks and golds. If it were a light source, it would be the glow of a burning church more than the cold light of a hospital, as in Theory.

All of those visually oriented, aesthetic ideas about this record are very much by design, and totally present from the start: again, utterly calculated. But when I started experimenting to get to those colours, the elements—such as the animal recordings and the breathing transformative qualities of the instruments—came into play. Utilising a wolf recording or an orca recording here or there seemed isolated and kind of a twee gesture that ultimately commanded a more thorough investigation—I am not interested in making 'sample' music.

Tim Hecker: Since you work in a studio quite a lot, and this record being what I think is the product of the pos-

sibilities of the studio as a compositional tool, talk about how you come to finish pieces like this. I was mentioning how fairly disorganised my work process is to come to a result which seems somewhat structured. Do you come at a piece with a clear vision of structure, or is it a messy, esoteric thing?

Ben Frost: To an extent, I think maybe that's where you and I part company, because generally my process is more like a game of Jenga. I mostly build a simple, predetermined structure from the ground up, until it's a solid towering object, and then I start poking holes in it until it collapses. My work is organised in the sense that I have an end in sight, right from the beginning.

That is not to say, however, that the end object is static, but rather it is something that is constantly being reshaped and contorted until all the redundant material is removed. The structural beginning at that root level of most of this material often ties me to the grid, as you mentioned, which interestingly is probably something that draws me to your work—a kind of-grass is greener-attraction perhaps?

Tim Hecker: Another thing I love about this record is the undeniable quality of breath as a transformative instrument. Whispers turn to gasps turn to distorted bass resonances turn to dog growls. The thing is that the nature of those sounds are never obvious, they always sort of drift under the surface. Tell me how you feel about leaving sounds like this lingering just at the threshold of audibility....

Ben Frost: Wasn't it Hitchcock that described how the abstract threats in films like The Birds and Psycho are ultimately more thrilling than the explicit ones? There is an element of that mentality for me in this record: creating a sort of lingering unease which I find intoxicating. I am not concerned with didacticism in music though, but instead I am more interested in duality and the intersection of juxtaposing elements. By placing a growling wolf in the left channel and a double bass in the right

where they utter the same transients and phrasing, I can create a space which is drawing simultaneously on naturalism and surrealism. Those two opposing elements are at the extreme edges of my work here and between them they define an internal space where a whole other level of drama can play out and that is my concern.

I am saying explore this string instrument as an animal, and this animal as an instrument and then accept this reality as a three dimensional space, a hyper-acoustic space and then focus on it because that is where my music will occur.

Iceland Airwaves 2009 CD Review



Moto Boy

Moto Boy

Moizzer—were you in Sverige 20-odd years ago? We think you were... If Morrissey was a little less of a miserable, arguably racist posing old foppish shit-haired wannabe light entertainment Tony Blackburn-show type buffoon, and if he spent less time waving flowers about and a bit more time getting out and twatting around smiling with his mates, he'd write music like this. There's such an optimism about the output of Swede Oskar Humlebo, aka Moto Boy, that it's nearly-impossible to resist. Young Love opens matters on such a promising, positive, excited note that sets the tone for the rest of an album that draws heavily on the Smiths/Cure blueprint—Ride My Wild Heart is brilliant pastiche. It's jangly, wistful, summery, very Eighties, and will have girls and boys alike twirling their hair in their fingers and cleaning imaginary birdshit off their kaftan sleeves whilst shuffling about shyly, staring at the floor in the corner of a particularly shy party.

- Joe Shooman

Réttir Music Reviews

Saturday 26.09.09 Cultura

As I enter the basement of Kaffi Cultura for the Melodica showcase, troubadour **Svavar Knútur** is playing his version of Clementine on a ukulele. Introducing himself while still playing his ukulele, he even gets a la la sing along at the end of tonight's first track. His stage presence and interaction with the crowd are just perfect, and his troubadour take on Nick Drake means we are all in for a special evening. A few hardened fans in the crowd put in requests and are kept happy as most are played. There are more anecdotes, a ukulele solo and a tale of getting accosted on a Hamburg subway by drunk Germans that somehow turns into ukulele covers of Eye Of The Tiger, Living On A Prayer, Rock Me Amadeus and Firestarter—"cause in the German's words, "he is the party man with the ukulele." You look round the crowd and everyone is smiling from the pleasurable gig. Svavar may not be the party man the Germans wanted, but he is perfect for tonight's mood.

By the time next artist **Daníel Jónsson** finally turns up, you can see he is visibly flustered by his late arrival. As soon as he picks up the guitar and begins picking his way through his first song, he starts feeling at home. Soft and gentle lyrics combine well in this candle lit cellar, and its rhymes perfectly with the raging storm outside.

Best known as bassist for Miri and Króna, **Hjalti Jón Sverrisson** is here tonight to play a collection of his own songs. Not as captivating as Svavar or Daniel, he still shows his strong song-writing abilities, at times resembling an acoustic version of Radiohead. Unfortunately, his voice doesn't seem to fit. Comparing anyone's voice to Thom Yorke's is probably unfair, however.

Mysterious Marta brings immediate appeal. Her finger picked guitar and beautiful voice bringing Regina Spektor to mind. She soon has the crowd under her spell and shows she has a promising future in her field. She keeps the momentum going as Svavar joins her on piano for a track, and it is just perfect. Again Svavar joins her for the final two songs of the set, finishing with a completely acoustic version of Heartless Heart and the quiet crowd show their appreciation for a magical performance.

As an added bonus tonight we get **Halla Norðfjörð**. Although lacking the crowd interaction of the other performers, her voice along with a strummer guitar provide a softness that is the perfect end to the evening. Think of a stripped down Beth Orton and you're somewhere close. She dedicates her angry song to Davíð Oddsson, but it's not really angry. In fact, you can't really imagine this songstress ever getting angry. It's a fitting end to a beautiful evening in some perfect surroundings. - **Adam Wood**

Saturday 26.09.09 Grand Rokk

Entering Grand Rokk, I was not in the best of moods. Due to an optician's mistake, I had been prescribed a wrong set of glasses, which resulted in serious headaches and nausea. Still, the show must go on and after gulping down a nearly lethal dose of pain-killers I set out to hear what Okidoki would bring us.

Sadly, I was too late to catch **Helgi Valur**'s show. This young man with the angelic face and generally likeable attitude has recently released an album titled The Black Man is God, the White Man is the Devil. The less said about that choice for a title the better, but I couldn't help wondering what Malcolm X would think of this?

Still, I'm told this dude is good live. I will check that out as soon as possible. Feel like I owe the guy for showing up too late, migraine or not.

I did arrive in time to see a young Brit hop around the stage fiddling with some effects and staring intently at his lap-top. This was **Matthew Collings**, and he had a guitar strapped to his scrawny and lanky frame. Why, I don't know and it looked like he didn't either. The music was some sort of ambient drone only broken up occasionally when Mr. Collings realised he was playing for an audience of 13 and began pounding his guitar in frustration until he returned to his lap-top staring contest. This did nothing to quell my migraine, quite the opposite.

At this time the pain in my head had gone from a dull throbbing to a searing hell. But I had heard too many interesting things about **Rökkuró**, so I persevered. This is a band comprised of five young people, two girls and three boys who had a nice quiet demeanour, play instruments like the accordion and cello and I could have sworn I saw a few fairies jumping around...yes, this had KRÚTT written all over it! Rökkuró is not a bad band. The music is serene, moody and it felt like every song was some kind of a lullaby. Sadly, some of the guests had apparently forgotten they were at a concert and began chatting and laughing loudly. By then the Optician's Curse hit me full time, and after having graced the lovely toilets of Grand Rokk with some colourful vomit, I headed home.

That means I missed the performance of **Ljósvaki, Útíður, Caterpillar men, Bárújárn** and **Dynamo Fog**. I am sorry about that and will definitely try to be around next time those artists will perform. I will just have to put my glasses on first. - **Flosti Þorgeirsson**

Saturday 26.09.09 Jacobsen

The final night at Jacobsen was put on by the Breakbeat.is gang and it started off upstairs with some nice, glitchy, weird-ass tech courtesy of **DJ Hero's Trial**. He defies convention by spending half the time sitting down, meanwhile pumping out super FX'ed sci-fi house, full of clicks, beeps and quivering white noise. It's like the soundtrack to an epic video game or a Ridley Scott movie, and even the early bird crowd dances.

The room has steadily packed in for the next act, and left and right I am getting strong opposing opinions. Everyone seems to have a nostalgic memory attached to **XXX Rotweiler**, but they are extremely polarized. Not being able to understand their apparently shocking lyrics, I am still impressed by their cadence and group dynamic. Even more impressive is the crowd reaction and the overall energy of their live show. I think I fall on the love side.

Everyone is in need of a serious breather before the night's main course comes on, and **Kalli & Evok** providing the perfect relief. They smooth things out with a set of shimmering 80s electro, offbeat old-school hip-hop grooves full of shakes and heavy bass. Their use of pitch-shift is ample and clever, blending old and new styles of drum'n'bass the whole time.

Down in the basement, **NintenDJ** has kicked off a set of standard, classic d'n'b. The deep beats trip over each other nicely, as they should, and people are happily skipping about. It's all very fine and dandy, but ultimately my mind isn't blown. Dude still has a fucking great artist name, though.

Back upstairs, **Hudson Mohawke** is climbing up to the decks and I have managed to secure myself a comfy spot sitting on a speaker at the front. The crowd around me is out of control, screaming and bumping bodies to the funky, Commodore 64 trip-tech. It's no wonder why this UK boy-wonder has been so heavily anticipated. Jumping back and forth in time between the late 70s and early 90s, his songs are full of elastic bass lines and lush, twinkling keyboards creating absolutely gorgeous and infectious hits. Pretty soon, I am dancing on that speaker.

Once Hudson finishes up, nearly everyone heads downstairs to hear **Muted** finish up the night with more classic drum'n'bass tracks. He throws in a bunch of old school jungle for good measure. It's a nice way to come down from the previous act and regain some composure, but it's also steady and hard to stop dancing. Unfortunately, the cops showed up before 6am and that was how it all rounded up. Good times! - **Rebecca Louder**

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SKÓLAVÖRÐUSTÍGUR



Shopping | By Haukur S Magnússon

The Jet Korine Guide To Buying Fashion During Airwaves

Jet Korine is a Reykjavík based fashion designer, stylist and costume designer. She hails from the Netherlands, although she has been in Iceland long enough for folks to call her an Icelander. She is without doubt one of Reykjavík's smartest dressers, and she does a lot of dressing other folks for a living, too. She knows all about clothes.

So we thought we'd ask her to help us compile a sorta guide to fashion shopping at Airwaves. All she asked in return is that we mention that JET KORINE, the brand, will be available on-line this winter, and its cool blanket coats can already be spotted on Reykjavík streets, as worn by rare fashionistas. So there you have it.

The Jet Korine guide to Airwaves fashion shopping is divided into xx levels, according to how much they'll cost you. We start with some cheapo second-hand shopping, move up to pre-selected second hand shopping, finally ending at some first hand shopping and design-stuff.

Second-hand // Selected second-hand

Cool vintage pieces are an absolute main fashion item that has always been really strong in Iceland. They help you personalise your outfits, because you won't find them on other people. They are easy to combine with design pieces, and a lot of design pieces need that, to not be too sterile and clean.

Hjálpræðisherinn //

The Red Cross Stores // Kolaportið

This is the rawest version of second hand clothing. You get everything from fleece sweaters to ugly tacky jeans; you can never count on good items. But those who are up for it, and are armed with some good taste or the funkiness to bear those kinds of items can get excellent bargains at the Red Cross stores on Laugavegur and Hlemmur, Hjálpræðisherinn on Ránargata and the Kolaportið flea market on weekends.

To successfully shop at those stores, the individual must have a clear view on how to combine his or her clothes, although they could be the place to get inspiration to buy something unusual. Always leave the fleece behind.

Spúútník // Rokk & Rósir // Nostalgía

These stores cherry pick the best items from second-hand markets, so you wind up paying a bit more, but finding a special piece is a lot easier. I recommend getting some Dr. Martens at these stores; they're an absolute must. Preferably green, red or black.



Spúútník is the rawest version of the select vintage stores. They have everything available for girls and boys, in good amounts. For select female pieces, Nostalgía and Rokk & Rósir are the place to go – they have a bit more narrowed down version.

Select second-hand // New items

Herrafataverzlun Kormáks & Skjaldar Kormákur & Skjöldur have both second hand and new items, and they have the finest collection within their specialised corner. The store is a nice little niche outfit where boys can go and, to put it into fashion terms, buy themselves a style, with a little ambiance from the old days. They also sell Farmer's Market sweaters and they do have an incredible amount of suits that will fit anyone of any size, with any taste.

Aftur

Aftur give second hand items a new life, which is definitely a dominant downtown look. They rework second hand items into new garments, in a very particular and recognizable way that a lot of people have tried to copy, but just can't. Their items feature a fantastic use of patchwork and collage, and a fine-tuned sense of colour that others don't seem to be able to repeat.

New items // Design from around the world

Here's where we leave second hand and look at stores that host Icelandic and foreign design brands that are a little pricier.

Belleville

Belleville is cool and slick, and they have a new shipment of Bernhard Willhelm in store. They also sell Raf Simon and Cosmic Wonder – all very nice brands.

KronKron

KronKron is a design store where you'll get pricey, but extremely beautiful, design items. They have a couple of Icelandic brands, a lot of Scandinavian stuff like Henrik Vibskov as well as lots of international designers. It's really the only store in Reykjavík that sums up Scandinavian streetwear on a design level.

Elsewhere| By Birkir Fjalar Viðarsson

There's Also Icelandic Metal! Check it out!



The Airwaves festival is a good thing. Bunch of bands, amalgam of styles and genres. Couple of great bands, bunch of good ones, healthy dose of meh-bands and then there are the selected annoying, pretentious and pathetic bands. And I wouldn't want it any other way, really. Strength through diversity, eh? This year's line-up has less heavy, raging and extreme bands than before, so why not take a look at some bands not included in the fest, but are still worthy of your attention, seeing as you are snooping around the Icelandic grassroots anyway.

At Dodge City, are a busy bunch. Playing shows frequently and all over the place. Not a million miles away from later-day Poison The Well and Every Time I Die at their most calmed down and hook-minded. Featuring confident and dynamic vocals as well as pretty rough sounding bass.

www.myspace.com/atdodgecity

Atrum rule, OK? These guys play cold, heathen, blackened death metal with the right amount of thrashy rawness to keep them in safe distance from the polished and lame sound of many of today's larger metal acts. But that's not enough to impress me. The kicker here is some bloody good song writing that doesn't rely on low-tunings or studio trickery. Great dual vocals in just the right places, topped with lead vocals that bring to mind Celtic Frost and Bathory from time to time. Boner inducing.

www.myspace.com/atrumiceland

Which brings me to Beneath, who also have an air of maturity around them, due to the fact that two of the members are, erm, old. In Icelandic metal terms, at least. But fear not, their brand of modern death metal is plenty modern and dense with layers upon layers of intricate guitar work, melodies and crushing mid-tempo parts. Each song has so much going on that it could confuse you at first listen but stick with it and it will prove more musical than you'd anticipated.

www.myspace.com/beneathdeathmetal

Bastard never really pull it off live and in the beginning there were too many awkward elements going on in their music, but luckily for them their progression is a positive one and they are going into the right direction with their dynamic blackened death.

www.myspace.com/heavymetalbastard

Iceland's heaviest Celestine deliver a sonic combination that ends with a

devastating knock out, each and every time they step into the ring. This band keeps pushing their sound at an even pace, with pretty much new songs to add to their much loved set-lists every three months or something. Such is the prolific work ethic of these young lads.

www.myspace.com/celestinemusic

What happens when a black metal band has a nu-metal-sounding name? Nothing. That's what happens. Chao play furious black metal that is true to the alienating, raw, monotonous and simple elements that made the genre so notorious. But this is not some throwback, retro stuff. The song structures, dynamic drumming, evil yet catchy guitar picking as well as the surprising stop and go's make Chao a breath of fresh and Christ killing air in the Icelandic metal scene. So good.

www.myspace.com/chaobm

Momentum is one of the most talked about bands today, which is pretty impressive as they rarely play. The band keeps evolving, playing with people's expectations. Having long since forsaken their black metalish beginnings, we now find them in some psychedelic proggy metal sphere. Makes them all the more curious.

www.myspace.com/momentumtheband

Not nearly as spaced out but indefinitely more baked are seekers of the riff, Plastic Gods. Iceland's only band that is proper in their doom, sludge and heavy stoner dabbings. Boris, Sunn o))) and Grief come to mind. Rad.

www.myspace.com/plasticgods

Ever so catholic, Severed Crotch remain the scene's most beloved band. Liked by metalheads of varying degrees, they somehow manage to marry a raging party time with their technical ultra brutal death metal. Set firmly in the modern genre, these days we see them flirt a little with the old school as well. And it works charms.

www.myspace.com/severedcrotch

Svartidaudi is probably the most true and uncompromising in their take on no-bullshit, misanthropic, pro-degradation black metal. Naturally they are kvlt-as fuck and actually deserve the hype, because their BM will hurt you, and your friends will hate it. Wonderful.

www.myspace.com/svartidaudi

Réttir Music Reviews

Saturday 26.09.09

NASA

T'was an evening that went from chill to cool to fantastic to kick ass to fucking outrageous. The evening's NASA line-up hinted that this would be a night to remember.

Chill: The two adolescent boys who make up Nolo kick-started the evening with some laidback electro. Although they hit some sour notes, these guys charmed the hell out of the few who dared venture out in the Reykjavík nightlife at such an early hour. Their performance was wobbly at first, but Nolo got their act together and brought about a great deal of headnodding and shoe tapping.

Cool: They came, they played, and they left. Don't get me wrong. Leaves did a damn good job and they excel at doing their thing (their thing being mainstream rock radio hit fare). It just failed to impress. Maybe Leaves are to fault, or this really annoying dude in the audience that sported sunglasses. In any case, this reviewer could not seem to concentrate on anything other than figuring out something offensive to say to him.

Fantastic: Danish outfit The State, The Market & The DJ had me at the very first notes. The real slow sweet beauty made you want lie in the middle of a frosty meadow under a starry sky, rather than standing in a dim concert venue amidst audience members who can't shut the hell up. My only objection is that they left the stage way too soon.

Kick ass: What the hell is going on? Suddenly NASA is packed to such an extent that there is no chance of moving an inch. Or breathing correctly, for that matter. Apparat Organ Quartet is finally reunited to many people's delight, and the concert is totally worth the wait. It's out of this world, utterly brilliant and totally awesome.

Fucking outrageous: Gas mask plus pink glitter spandex plus yellow rubber gloves plus playful rock. Dr. Spock take the stage. Totally twisted, totally outrageous, totally awesome. They put on quite the impressive show whether or not you're into their music, and you gotta love them for that.

- Louise Petersson

Saturday 26.09.09

Sódóma

I arrive at Sódóma armed with vodka as Lockerbie start their set. Winning the prize for dodgiest band name this weekend (well dodgy if they were British), their post-rock sound is laden with a poppy tinge. Unlike fellow post-rockers For A Minor Reflection, they mercifully keep the songs down to a mere 4 minutes. But they have a bloody string section and a trumpet! Whatever happened to the power trio?

I unload my fifth vodka as Monotown take to the stage. However, their boring dud rock positively violates the core of my being and so I leave Sódóma to go to Dillon to say happy birthday to a friend.

When I return, Weapons have already started playing. Compared to the previous band, they're a breath of fresh air. They do a natty line in powerful guitar pop which, while not groundbreaking, is simple and direct. Which is what I crave. Also, the bass player throws some good poses with his low slung bass.

I should be enjoying Mammút, but for some reason they leave me flat. Perhaps it was having their last album on repeat loop for 10 hours on a driving trip that means their songs don't seem to have the same immediacy they used to. Having said that, Svefnýkt is always a treat to hear and jump to. More vodka barman!

By now my notes seem to have taken on a weird hieroglyphic nature as the alcohol digs its cold, bitch mistress claws into my brain. Bodebriken start their set and they freak me out. They all seem to be wearing the same striped shirts, giving them the look of an indie Brady bunch or some crazed sect. And they smile waaay too much. But their music is OK for jaunty pop, not brilliant, just OK.

Bróðir Svartúlfs start playing and my attention seriously starts to wander. I find their loose rap rock a little undercooked and uninspiring, so I spend most of time making drunken texts and being a pain in the arse.

Thank Christ for Bloodgroup. Their electroclash stomp shakes me from my cynical torpor from the first song and keeps me there all the way through. Along with the low farting bass synths and serious grooves, frontwoman Lilja struts the stage like some demented Valkyrie on a serious mission to destroy us all. I'm even more surprised to find myself dancing like a bear high on dodgy honey.

I decide to call it a night and go home. Unfortunately my taxi money has gone on vodka so I'm forced to trek the 10km back to Breiðholt. In the rain. Oh yeah a consummate professional. - Bob Cluness





Interviews | by Haukur S Magnússon

YOU WANT ANSWERS? WE'VE GOT YOUR ANSWERS

A bunch of local Airwaves bands answer a bunch of our questions

There are literally millions of local bands playing Iceland Airwaves this year. You visitors will need to check them out. Of course we will be checking them out too, but then, we check them out all the time, as we live here and they are always playing (this is why many of them are so good, too, playing a lot).

We thought you Airwaves newcomers might benefit from getting to know some of them, and getting their advice, so we e-mailed a bunch of them the following questions.

1) Who are you? What can we expect from your Airwaves appearance, and what can we expect of you in general?

2) What are some of the acts you'll want to see at this festival, and why?

3) This year sees fewer 'large' international acts on the schedule. Do you believe this changes anything for the festival in general, and its spirit?

4) Looking back, do you have a favourite edition of Iceland Airwaves? And if so, why?

5) A lot of our readers are first time Airwaves-visitors. Do you have any tips for them? What to see, what to do, what to avoid, etc.? Where to buy records? Or a good place to grab a bite or get away from it all for a while?

6) Given that most Airwaves visitors won't have a lot of time in their schedule to see the Icelandic countryside, are there any nature-havens close by that you'd recommend?

7) Has a lot changed in the Icelandic music scene since Airwaves 2008? How about Airwaves 2004?

A lot of them answered. Well, 11 of them answered. And they're all such wordy folks that we couldn't really fit their answers in the paper. So here's what we'll do: we're publishing selected answers from each outfit (usually the best ones) and you can log on to www.grapevine.is/airwaves to read their full interviews. We will also have other stuff there: goodies, blogs, interviews + up to date Airwaves news. Anyway, here are some answers:



DYNAMO FOG

Wednesday 22:30 Sódóma

"The only really remarkable thing about us is that we've all been in more popular bands than this at one stage or another, and we use an electronic drum kit."

7) That's kind of a loaded question, so I'm going to give the short version: every year, the scene grows more self-conscious, more arrogant, more post, more retro, more arty, more ironic and more new-wave.



KIMONO

Wednesday 23:30 NASA

"At Airwaves we will focus on new material off EM4DP and people can expect to be blown to smithereens. That is all."

4) I think it was at Airwaves 3 years ago, when we had bands like Brazilian Girls over. There was something in the air, some type of uncertain lunacy... Dragging the bassist from Brazilian Girls out of a dumpster behind Bæjarins Bestu in the middle of the day, and later that night seeing him perform at NASA, buck-naked... Priceless.



BÁRUJÁRN

Friday 20:00 Sódóma

"In general, you can expect flag burnings, haddock fucking and hopefully a record soon from us."

5) Go and watch the masses skin bankers and politicians alive every Saturday at Austurvöllur, three o' clock.

If there's a huge line at the big venues and you are planning on staying there for an hour or two, at least try to carry as much alcohol on you as possible. Then you won't have to buy beer from the venues at ridiculous prices. Instead, use your money to buy records directly from the local bands. Better yet, not going in if there's a long line, instead exploring smaller venues and experience smaller

local bands.

Then if you're hungry, go late with a group of people and fill the super robbery-market 10-11. Try to steal as much as you can, and don't feel sorry.



DIKTA

Friday 22:30 Sódóma

"People can expect a powerful and lively performance from us at Airwaves, as usual."

5) As all the concerts at Airwaves are held in small-to-medium sized venues, they can sometimes get packed. Sometimes queues build up. It's a good rule of thumb to show up early if there's something you really want to see, and not leave the venue until that act is over. Another good one is to wear warm clothes that can be easily removed and stuffed in a bag once inside. It can sometimes be extremely chilly in October in Iceland, but the venues are, understandably, often quite hot.

I recommend Sushibarinn, next to Kofi Tómasar Frænda on Laugavegur. It's a tiny place, but they make good sushi, and you can have it brought over to Uncle Tom's Cabin and dine there. Very cosy.



EBERG

Thursday 22:30 Batterið

"In general, you can expect a soft, tipsy guy who barks occasionally."

3) Iceland Airwaves has always been about the grassroots in my eyes. I'm not there to see massive international bands. I'm there to see some local bands, and a few interesting international ones.



FM BELFAST

Saturday 01:10 Nasa

"General nonsense, civil disobedience and dancing friends with blinking lights

and loud music in 4/4."

2) Retro Stefson, since they are awesome, Micachu and the Shapes, because I hope they are awesome, and Reykjavík! since they make awesome an understatement.

5) Plan to see bands you don't know, that is the best way to experience this festival. Try to see some off venue gigs. Overplanning is forbidden: leave room for the unexpected. Go to Havarí to buy Icelandic Records and Kolaportið for all your vinyl dreams (if you're lucky).

6) Gróttá is nice and Rauðhólar are close by.



AGENT FRESCO

Thursday 23:20 Grand Rokk and Saturday 23:20 Sódóma

"We promise you the most energetic and musically tight concert at this Airwaves."

3) I of course try not to think that way, focusing on what's missing that is. We could go on and on about artists we all wanted to see, but that's just being silly and won't get you anywhere. I'm first and foremost grateful for being a part of this festival. I think we're playing about five times during the festivities, so I know that it's going to be an impulsive, hectic dance, trying to get to listen to as many acts as possible.

5) Just walk down Laugavegur and scout continuously down to where the venues are. It's Reykjavík, it's not that big, and it's intensified with good unique stuff and decent record stores.



GHOSTIGITAL

Saturday 21:40 Batterið

"Fit and really working again. Out of breath! A bit harder, wiser and out of pocket! Dirty dancing."

2) Micachu and the Shapes – There is hope

Jungle Fiction – Young dudes
Captain Fufanu – The future absolutely and eh, Ghostigital – Unavoidable.

4) There is no looking back, but every festival has had its flavour!

5) Basically step out, turn left, if you don't find anything, go back and take the right. You will always find something.

6) Take the Krýsuvík circle via Grindavík. That will make your day.



ÓLAFUR ARNALDS

Saturday 22:00 Iðnó

"You can expect a lot of new material, as I am just finishing recording my next full length album."

3) I think Airwaves has always been about discovering new exciting acts rather than seeing bands that are already on the top. At least for me, the most fun is to go see bands I haven't heard much about before. The Iceland Airwaves crew has always had a good eye for bands that will make it big just in the year after Airwaves.

5) Don't forget about the off-venue shows! Try to find out who is playing where and go see them. Some of these shows are much more intimate and fun than the bands' main shows.



WEAPONS

Saturday 20:20 Grand Rokk

"What you can expect from our appearance is that we will give it our best. And I will give it my best in general."

4) The 2004 festival was amazing! With two of my favourite bands The Shins and the Stills playing back to back.

5) Go to Devitos Pizza at Hlemmur. It's the best pizza place in the city.



MIRI

"Most of the time when you go to concerts your mind starts to wander off somewhere else midway through the first song. This will not happen at our show."

5) Don't get to drunk too early! It might seem like a good idea at the moment but we have missed a lot of good shows or can't remember them because of that! Dress properly, the nights are gonna be cold! Don't think you can run between shows every five minutes! There are always gonna be some lines. Walk around town during the days and drop into random off-venue concerts.

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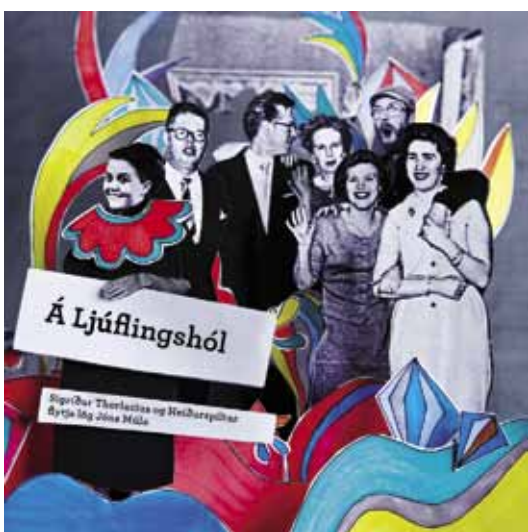


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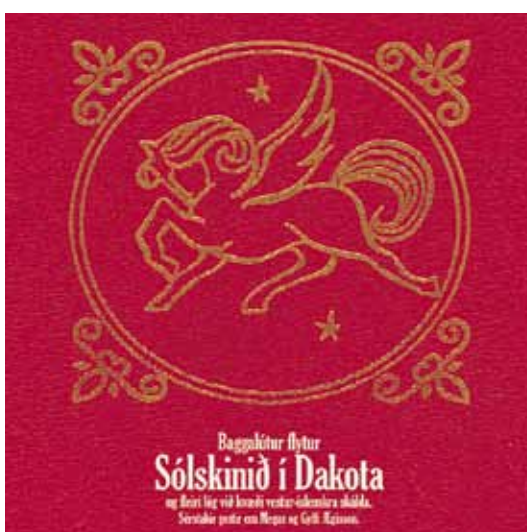
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NIKITA DENIM



10 Bakkus

Tryggvagötu 22 – Naustarmegin

A new and welcome addition to Reykjavík's bar scene, 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

11 Santa Maria

Laugavegur 22

On Laugavegur, Santa Maria offers a fairly extensive menu of Mexican dishes and drinks at a really reasonable price – possibly some of the best in the city. The décor is colourful and welcoming, the portions are generous and the service is fast and friendly. Recommended. CF

12 Prikið

Bankastræti 12

Prikið is one of those places that shape-shifts. It's a warm café with photographs of their senior frequenters on weekday mornings, a hung-over hangout on weekend afternoons, and during nights it's filled to the brim with what remains of Iceland's hip hop scene. Go there in daytime for the cheap burgers; enter at night for some OTT hip-hop debauchery, old skool and the latest bangers alike. SKK

13 Korníð

Lækjargötu 4

How about filling your face with cakes at the delightful Korníð. They taste so good, you would gladly push your own mother over for even the slightest of sniffs. Not a sweet tooth? Well, try their delectable sandwiches then, I recommend the egg and bacon ciabatta! At only 590ISK plus all the Pítu Sósa you could dream of, what more could you ask for on your lunch break? JB

14 Barbara

Laugavegur 22

At Laugavegur 22, above Karamba, Barbara serves up a lively atmosphere for Reykjavík's gay community and anybody else who just wants to dance and have a good time. The first level is made for dancing and is often packed with sweaty bodies, while the second level of the bar offers a place to sit, drink and chat and another in which to smoke. CF

15 Sushismiðjan

Geirsgötu 3

This is a seriously great place to grab a quick and quality sushi lunch. Pre-prepared boxes of maki and nigiri are reasonable priced and really well made, amply filled with deliciously fresh ingredients. The indoor seating area is limited to some stools and outward-facing wall-mounted tabletops but there are a couple of tables and chairs set up outside the front door for those wanting to watch the ships and tourists in the harbour while they eat. CF

16 Pizzuverksmiðjan

Lækjargata 8

Best. Pizza. Ever. Seriously, this pizza is ridiculously delicious, and the chilli and garlic oils that accompany it are to die for. Added bonuses of this joint are the super-friendly owner, Óli, and the cool and casual atmosphere in which to stuff your mouth with slice after slice of cheesy, crusty goodness. CF

17 Austur

Austurstræti 7

Sleek and shiny, this new restaurant and bar is a straight-up boutique hot spot for stylish kids and trendy professionals alike. Appropriate for formal business meetings but casual enough for the roll-out-bed-at-5pm crowd, they serve up ample, satisfying, modern dishes at reasonable prices. This is also one of the rare places to get a full breakfast all day long! It's really fucking good too. RL

18 Karamba

Laugavegur 22

Hotspot in town Karamba is a colourful and eclectic bar on Laugavegur with a comfortable atmosphere, typically great music and a chill crowd. This is a good place to relax or to do some serious drinking. Plus, their decors are done strictly by Grapevine-friendly artists, such as Lóa (who does our comics), Hugleikur Dagsson (who illustrates the monster column) and Bobby Breiðholt (who's done a lot of nice illustrations for us); they are truly a sight to behold. CF



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

OPENING

OCTOBER

9 ⌚ 6pm
Lost Horse Gallery
No Man's Land
Photography and video installations by Julia Staples and Lana Vogestad. Join the artists for an evening of art, ice cream and beer on opening night.

10 ⌚ 5pm
Gallerí Tukt
I'm Collecting Monsters In Your Bed
Exhibit featuring the works of Berlin-based illustrator Carmen Maria Traud, aka Frau Grau. Ongoing until October 24.

10 ⌚ 2pm
Gallerí Havari
Nine of the most progressive artists in Iceland exhibit their works.

10 11 12 ⌚ 6pm and 3pm
Reykjavík Art Museum
Hafnarhús
See The Sea Change
Project ASE screens Barbara Ettinger's documentary A Sea Change on October 10 at 6pm and on October 11 and 12 at 3pm.

17 ⌚ 1pm
Gerðuberg Culture Centre
Where pleasure lives
Exhibition on Halla Einarsdóttir's life and poetry. Ongoing until January 3.

17 ⌚ 2pm
Kling & Bang Gallery
Black Swans
Exhibit by Icelandic Love Corporation. Ongoing until November 5.

24 ⌚ 1pm
ASÍ Art Museum
Gunnfríður Jónsdóttir
An exhibition of the works of sculptor Gunnfríður Jónsdóttir. Ongoing until November 15.

ONGOING

ASÍ Art Museum
September 26 - October 18
Roles
Guðjón Ketilsson exhibits new sculptures and drawings in the Ásmundarsalur.
Lothar Pöpperl
Lothar Pöpperl exhibits paintings, photographs and three dimensional works in Gryfjan and Arinstofa.

Ásmundur Sveinsson Sculpture Museum
Permanent Exhibition:
The Shape of Line.
A new retrospective of works by Ásmundur Sveinsson. The exhibition focuses on abstract works from 1945 onwards.
May 01- April 30 2010
RHYTHM- Ásmundur and Our Age
This exhibition showcases contemporary artists that tackle similar issues as Ásmundur did in his time, but in a context of a new age.

The Culture House
Permanent Exhibition:
Medieval Manuscripts
March 28- January 10 2010
ICELAND::FILM
This exhibition traces for the first time the development of Icelandic filmmaking from its origins around 1904 to the year 2008.
September 16 - December 1
Postal History and Transport
September 25 - November 25
Goðar Íslands and Múmíumúsín
Sigurður Gunnarsson and Kristín Elva Rögnvaldsdóttir exhibit their works.

The Library Room
Current exhibitions:
August 12 - ongoing
National Archives of Iceland - 90 years in the museum building.
Commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Culture House.
Sheepskin, Saffian and Shirting
Exhibiting the tools and equipment used in book binding.
Exhibition Series:
Paintings by Hulda Viljálmsdóttir.

The Einar Jónsson Museum
Permanent exhibition: **The ork of sculptor Einar Jónsson..**

Art | Venue finder

<p>101 Gallery Hverfisgata 18A F6 Thu-Sat 14-17 and by appointment www.101hotel.is/101hotel/101gallery/</p> <p>Artótek Tryggvagata 15 D5 Mon 10-21, Tue-Thu 10-19, Fri 11-19, Sat and Sun 13-17 www.sim.is/Index/Islenska/Artotek</p> <p>ASÍ Art Museum Freyugata 41 G10 Tue-Sun 13-17</p> <p>Árbæjarsafn Kistuhylur 4</p> <p>The Culture House Hverfisgata 15 F6 Open daily 11-17 www.thjodmenning.is</p> <p>Dwarf Gallery Grundarstígur 21 H8 Opening Hours: Fri and Sat 18-20 www.this.is/birta</p> <p>The Einar Jónsson Museum Eiríksgata G9 Tue-Sun 14-17 www.skulptur.is</p> <p>Fótógrafi Skólavörðustígur 4a F7 www.fotografi.is</p> <p>Gallery 100° Bæjarháls 1 www.or.is/Forsida/Gallery100/ Open weekdays from 08:30-16:00</p> <p>Gallery Auga fyrir Auga Hverfisgata 35 G7</p> <p>Gallery StartArt Laugavegur 12B G7 Tue-Sat 1-17 www.startart.is</p>	<p>Gallery Ágúst Baldursgata 12 F9 Wed-Sat 12-17 www.galleriagust.is</p> <p>Gallery Fold Rauðarástígur 14-16 J9 Mon-Fri 10-18 / Sat 11-16 / Sun 14-16 www.myndlist.is</p> <p>Gallery Kling & Bang Hverfisgata 42 G7 Thurs-Sun from 14-18 this.is/klingogbang/</p> <p>Gallery Turpentine Ingólfstræti 5 F7 Tue-Fri 12-18 / Sat 11-16 www.turpentine.is</p> <p>Gerðuberg Cultural Centre Gerðuberg 3-5 Mon-Thu 11-17 / Wed 11-21 / Thu-Fri 11-17 / Sat-Sun 13-16 www.gerduberg.is</p> <p>Hitt Húsið - Gallery Tukt Pósthússtræti 3-5 E6 www.hitthusid.is</p> <p>i8 Gallery Klapparástígur 33 G7 Tue-Fri 11-17 / Sat 13-17 and by appointment. www.i8.is</p> <p>Living Art Museum Vatnsstígur 3 - G7 Wed, Fri-Sun 13-17 / Thu 13-22. www.nylo.is</p> <p>Lost Horse Gallery Skólástræti 1 F6 Weekends from 13-19 and by appointment on weekdays.</p> <p>Hafnarborg Strandgötu 34, Hafnarfjörður</p> <p>The National Gallery of Iceland Frikirkjuvegur 7 E8</p>	<p>Tue-Sun 11-17 www listasafn.is The National Museum Suðurgata 41 C9 Open daily 10-17 natmus.is/</p> <p>The Nordic House Sturlugata 5 C11 Tue-Sun 12-17 www.nordice.is/</p> <p>The Numismatic Museum Einholt 4 K9 Open Mon-Fri 13:30-15:30.</p> <p>Reykjavík 871+/-2 Aðalstræti 17 D6 Open daily 10-17</p> <p>Reykjavík Art Gallery Skúlagata 28 H6 Tuesday through Sunday 14-18</p> <p>Reykjavík Art Museum Open daily 10-16 www listasafnreykjavikur.is Ásmundur Sveinsson Sculpture Museum Sigtún Hafnarhús Tryggvagata 17 E5 Kjarvalsstaðir Flókagata K11</p> <p>Reykjavík City Theatre Listabraut 3</p> <p>Reykjavík Maritime Museum Grandagarður 8 C3</p> <p>Reykjavík Museum of Photography Tryggvagata 16 D5 Weekdays 12-19 / Sat-Sun 13-17 www.ljosmyndasafnreykjavikur.is</p> <p>Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum Laugarnestangi 70</p>
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Gerðuberg Cultural Centre
August 12 - October 17
Cartoon courses for teenagers
Halldór Baldursson's course will cover the basics of political cartooning: symbolism, exaggeration, sarcasm and analysis, with a look at the history of cartoons and their role in the present age. The event runs every Saturday and costs 5500ISK.
August 20 - October 18
Headlines...
Caricatures by Halldór Baldursson 2007-2009.

Gerðuberg Cultural Centre Boginn Gallery
August 19 - November 8
Rising From the Summer Sea
Steinunn Einarsdóttir exhibits oil, watercolour and acrylic paintings

Gljúfrasteinn Laxness Museum
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. It has now been opened to the public as a museum, unchanged from when Laxness lived there.

Living Art Museum
The museum is closed for restoration and will open on a new location in January 2010.

Mokka
October 2 - October 22
Hörður Lárusson
Hörður Lárusson exhibits his photographs.

National Gallery of Iceland
Ongoing through October 18

Hidden Treasure: Treasures In Public Possession?
Works from the three Icelandic state-owned banks' collections, along with some works from the National Gallery.

The National Museum
Permanent exhibition:
The Making of a Nation
Heritage and History in Iceland is intended to provide insight into the history of the Icelandic nation from the Settlement to the present day.
January 31 - November 30.
Encounters.
Archaeological excavations at many locations around Iceland have been funded by Kristnihátíðarsjóður (the Millennium Fund). Finds from some of these excavations are on display in an exhibition suitable for the whole family.

The Numismatic Museum
Permanent exhibition:
The Central Bank of Iceland and the National Museum of Iceland jointly operate a numismatic collection consisting of Icelandic notes and coins.

Ráðhús Reykjavíkur
Dulín Himintungl
Kim Linnet exhibits her 360° panorama photos of Iceland.

Reykjavík 871 +/- 2
Permanent exhibition:
The Settlement Exhibition

Reykjavík Art Museum Hafnarhús
September 3 - October 18
Children of Nature vs. Antichrists.
Consisting of twelve large paintings of selected frames from films by Lars

Outside Reykjavik | Venue finder

Keflavík Suðsuðvestur www.sudsudvestur.is Hafnargata 22 230 Reykjanesbær 421-2225	Stykkishólmur Vatnasafnið / Library of Water	Egilsstaðir Sláturhúsið
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Schedule starts at 20:00

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Frank Murder
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Tonik
Yagya



Thursday 15/10

Breakbeat.is
Schedule starts at 21:00

Kalli & Ewok (DJ Set)
Muled
RayChem
Hypno
Subliminal
Panoramix

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Klose One/Illa Man
Elvee
Rack N Ruin

Friday 16/10

PARTY ZONE
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Rabbi Bananas
Quadruplus
Beatmakin' Troopa
DJ BenSol
DJ Casanova/ DJ Frimann

BUGGED OUT

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Captain Fufanu
Pedro Pilatus & Bear Hug
Jungle Fiction
Firas (Filthy Few)
JoJo De Freq

Saturday 17/10

REYKVEEK

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Firas (Filthy Few)
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ART GALLERIES

– continued –

von Trier and Friðrik Thor Friðriksson, and a multi-media installation by Ari Alexander Ergis Magnússon.
September 3 - October 18
D 13 Ingibjörg Birgisdóttir
The D project is a series of exhibitions at Hafnarhus, drawing its name from one of the museum’s galleries. For the ongoing series, the Reykjavik Art Museum commissions new work by promising artists who have not had prior private exhibitions in Iceland’s major museums.
September 17 - January 3 2010
The Crated Rooms in Iceland
A new installation by world-renowned artist Yoshitomo Nara in collaboration with Hideki Toyoshima. The room-sized installation, which consists of shipping crates and billboards, places Nara’s iconic images in a new and unexpected context.

Reykjavik Art Museum Kjarvalsstaðir
September 12 - November 8
Blink
The exhibition explores the role of visual illusion in Icelandic art from the middle of the 1960s until today. Included are paintings and sculptures by the artists Eybor Guðmundsdóttir, Hreinn Friðfinnsson, Ólafur Eliasson, JBK Ransu and others. The way artists use colors, lights and shapes in a variety of media to create a feeling of disorientation is examined. Curated by Helgi Már Kristinsson
September 12 - November 8
Blinkworks
Blinkworks is an educational, family-oriented workshop in the North Gallery in conjunction with the exhibition Blink. Guests are invited to try their hand at enjoyable projects related to op-art, optical illusion, and science.

Reykjavik Maritime Museum
Current Exhibitions:
Living Museum by the Sea; Arterial for Country and City; From Poverty to Abundance; The Shark – Light and Life Energy; Hidden Craftsman.
The Reykjavík Museum of Photography

haha
varí

Arty Havarí Party

Ausurstræti 6

Saturday, October 10th, 2pm

As if this new record shop and local indie music co-op project wasn’t badass enough, they’ve gone ahead and added a gallery to the fold! Gallery Havarí features the work of a buttload of the city’s multi-talented creative types, such as Sindri Már Sigfússon of Sin Fang Bous and Seabear, Ísak Óli Sævarsson, Davíð Örn Halldórsson, Bjargey Ólafsdóttir and our very own funny folks, Lóa and Huggleikur. **RL**

Food & Drink | Venue finder

3 Frakkar Baldursgata 14 F9	D6/E6 Bæjarins Beztu Tryggvagata E6
Aktu Taktu Skúlgata 15 K8	Brons Pósthússtræti 9 E6
Alibaba Veltusund 3b E3	Café Cultura Hverfisgata 18 G6
American Style Tryggvagata 26 E5	Café Loki Lokastígur 28 G9
Argentina Steak-house Barónstígur I8	Café Paris Austurstræti 14 E6
Austurlanda-hraðlestin Hverfisgata 64A H7	Café Roma Rauðarárstrígur 8 J9
Á Næstu Grösom Laugavegur 20B G7	Domo Þinghóltsstræti 5 F7
B5 Bankastræti 5 F6	Einar Ben Veltusundi E6
Bakkus Tryggvagata 22 D3	Eldsmíðjan Bragagata 38A G9
Basil & Lime Klapparstíg 38 G7	Fiskmarkaðurinn Aðalstræti 12 D6
Babalú Skólavörðustígur 22A G8	Geysir Bar/Bistro Aðalstræti 2 D6
Balthazar Hafnarstræti 1-3	Garðurinn Klappastígur 37 G7
	Glætan book café Laugavegur 19 F5

August 28 - October 20
Polar Extremes
Lisa Blatt lived in Antarctica for two months and camped for more than one month. Polar Extremes, a result of this journey, portrays the fragility, beauty, and criticality of Antarctica.
September 26 - January 17 2010
André Kertész - Ma France
Exhibit of André Kertész’s photographs of France. Ongoing until January 17 2010.
Skuld Bookstore Verðandi Gallery
September 18 - October 26
Pórir SF 77
Brynja Dögg Friðriksdóttir exhibits her photography.



I'm Collecting Monsters In Your Bed

Gallerí Tukt

October 10-24

Berlin-based artist Frau Grau is coming to Iceland. Carmen Maria Traud will hold her first solo show at Gallerí Tukt and she’s here to show off her childlike yet intelligent illustrations. Her drawings can be described as microcosmic studies of an ambivalent world which spread a whole lot of happiness. Although simple, they have a tendency to captivate even the toughest of critics. Find some hidden treasures that will seize your heart and pet your soul. **LP**



No Man’s Land

Lost Horse Gallery

October 9-25

No Man’s Land is a term for land that is not occupied often due to fear or uncertainty. It is land that is being disputed by two countries. During war it is a term used for the area of land between two enemy trenches that neither side wishes to openly move on or take control of due to fear of being attacked by the enemy in the process. The theme of both artists’ work addresses a place of unfamiliarity and transition using installation to create spaces which impose these feelings. The artworks conjure up an emotional sense of No Man’s Land, drawing on



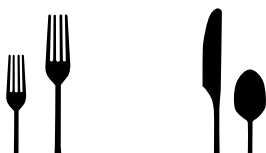
Free trips for all to Viðey Island!

Sundahöfn Harbour

October 9-11, 8pm

It’s time to spread the message of make love not war! The Imagine Peace Tower is a memorial to John Lennon from his widow, Yoko Ono, and the time has come to light the thing. On a clear night, this beacon of light can reach an altitude of 4.000 metres, and it’s located on Viðey island near Reykjavík.
Iceland was selected for the project because of its geo-thermal energy grid, which powers the light. Now check this out: Yoko Ono is offering trips to Viðey during the first weekend of the lighting, free for all! Just take the ferry at 8pm from Skarfabakki pier at Sundahöfn harbour from October 9-11 and embark on a guided tour of Viðey, where history, nature and art are combined. The Peace Tower itself is lit every night from October 9, Lennon’s birthday, through December 8, his dying date.**LP**

feelings of loss and change.
Grapevine’s own Julia Staples shows a photography installation of abandoned buildings while Lana Vogestad’s video installation addresses impermanence, a transitory point where there is no beginning or end, and unfamiliarity. Come to the opening of the exhibition on October 9th at 6pm for art, beer and ice cream provided by Ísbúð Vesturbæjar – or check out their Grapevine sponsored Airwaves off-venue, featuring more Vesturbær ice cream and sweet musical performances. **RL**



Kitchen Sessions

The Bedroom Community takes over your kitchen

Established by Valgeir Sigurðsson in 2006, with luminaries Ben Frost and Nico Muhly, the Bedroom Community record label is currently busy preparing its cross Europe 'Whale Watching Tour.' In addition to the usual packing, practicing and organising, the ladies and gentlemen of the Bedroom Community are also cooking up a storm—and writing a book about it.

"We do recording at the Greenhouse studio. It is a bit out there, there are no restaurants close by, and we all enjoy cooking, sitting around and having dinner," Valgeir explains. "The kitchen sometimes becomes the creative centre. Everyone throws in ideas; everyone has sometimes made a contribution to what is for dinner."

The idea to record and collect these culinary jams in a tome is one the artists have played with for a while. "Maybe this is a start of our recipe collection, you know how each kitchen has the handwritten notebook with grandmother's waffles with a secret ingredient that makes them special," Valgeir tells me.

Almost ready to print, the book includes recipes by the record label artists, engineers and musicians as well as guest collaborators from over the years. Accompanied by comic illustrations by artist Sam Amidon, the label-mates also offer recommendations of their favourite places to eat, drink and hang out all over the world.

"Some of the recipes have an Icelandic theme to them, like the lamb, the whale and the puffin, but the book covers the whole spectrum of eating good food," Valgeir says. "It has a bunch of influences, probably in a way that is like the music," he says, "there's a common ground there somewhere but no specific style, no one way of

thinking".

And who is the master of the kitchen in the Bedroom Community? "That is a constant battle," Valgeir smiles.

The Whale Watching Tour 24.10-2.11; The Bedroom Community Cook Book available on tour and in concert, as sold by the members.

SAMPLE RECIPE

Una Sveinbjarnardóttir
Fennel Gratin from Cologne

Germans sure know how to use the veggies in their repertoire. This dish is a great example. I got it at a friend of a friend's place in Cologne, during an Ensemble Modern session in the city, playing the music of Luigi Nono.

4 Fennel bulbs
2 Carrots
Spinach (if so desired, no neccessity)
Balsamic vinegar
Parmigiano
Salt and pepper
Extra virgin olive oil

The veggies are steamed for ca. 10 minutes, then cut in thick slices and put in an olive-oily roasting pan. Pour over the balsamic vinegar, don't use too much, 2 ½ tbsp is a good ausgangspunkt. Grated cheese goes on top, my friend Valerij likes to add mozzarella to the parmigiano, that would be the pianist's variation – it is quite good actually. Salt and pepper to your taste, and place for 15 minutes in the oven.

This is a great starter with ultra dry white wine or prosecco, it goes well with an Italian Gavi or a dry Riesling. The Fennel Gratin is also good as a side dish to a juicy steak or fatty fish. 🍷 - SARI PELTONEN

BEDROOM COMMUNITY COOKBOOK - RECOMMENDATIONS :

1 UNA SVEINBJARNARDÓTTIR

Tjörúhúsið, Ísafjörður

The best fish restaurant I know, catch of the day is to be recommended. With Icelandic butter and other weapons, it is worth many many trips to the Westfjords, where they have the best fish and seafood in the world.

2 BEN FROST

There is nothing to be recommended here because the man in the kitchen, Maggi, who incidentally is the father of Haukur of the band Reykjavík! (confused yet?...welcome to Iceland) is the best chef in Iceland. If he has made it, and it's in front of you, you will eat it. And you will cry a little.

Tjörúhúsið, Ísafjörður

3 STURLA MIO ÞÓRISSESSON

There is this Belgian girl in the kitchen; she makes the most delicious food - holy mouthwatering crumbs! Fresh stuff in every day and the menu changes all the time. There are the set menu meals, like kjötsúpa & plokkið fiskur but dude/dudette - I had some mussels there the other day... They were soooooo goooooood! I Wish I were still there eating those mussels... Which begs the question: why am I sitting here? In front of a computer screen, telling you about Boston - I should be there having my dinner... Going... Gone... bye.

Hafnarstræti 15

4 VALGEIR SIGURÐSSON

This is a great place to go to if you are dining with a group of people with very different tastes and needs. The price ranges from cheap to medium expensive, nothing extreme, and the quality is consistently great. From juicy sandwiches and burgers, to the freshest fish and tenderest lamb. The service is also friendly, which is sadly not always the case in Iceland. You will however need to ignore the music, which is usually some awful mtzmtzmtz.... But it's never managed to spoil the food or a good time there.

Laugavegur 55

For full restaurant and food listings and venue finder visit www.grapevine.is for detailed information.

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calculated using the mid rate for the USD/ISK exchange rate as posted on the Central Bank of Iceland’s website at 11:00 2 (two) business days prior to the Closing Date.”

To put it in terms that have become alarmingly familiar: Magma Energy will pay ISK 3.6 billion to Reykjavík Energy upfront, with a remaining ISK 8.4 billion provided to Magma as a bullet loan from Reykjavík Energy, with the sole collateral being a bond in HS Orka reissued to Reykjavík Energy by Magma. Also, according to Magma’s financial statements “the bond is repayable in a single instalment in seven years and bears interest at an effective rate of 1.52% per annum.” Magma will repay Reykjavík Energy in US dollars using the Central Bank’s exchange rate according to the strength of the króna at the time of the deal being signed now, in 2009.

Magma’s financial statements further state the “purchase of the Company’s interest in HS Orka will be financed by cash on hand and the credit facility available to it, or from other sources of capital available to the Company” and that, as of June 30, 2009, cash and equivalents totalled \$4.5 million, working capital was \$2.7 million and Magma’s undrawn credit was \$20 million. This would imply that Magma Energy is some \$5 million short of paying even their initial down payment to Reykjavík Energy, contradicting the purchase agreement guaranteeing sufficient liquid assets to complete the transaction and, one would assume, making Magma a poor candidate for a loan for the remaining ISK 8.4 billion.

“I’m very sceptical. It reminds me of what has been going on in Iceland before and to see this happen and stuff like them buying a company with a bullet loan and just using shares in HS Orka as collateral,” worries Jón Bjarki. “How the fuck do they do that? It stinks. The whole thing stinks. I just don’t trust these people anymore. I don’t think anything has changed here. John Perkins came to Iceland and he said that what is going to happen is that we are going to start to sell our natural resources away, you won’t realise what’s happening but that’s what happens after crises like this in Iceland. This may be a small step but it’s a very scary step.”

WAVE THE RED FLAGS

More possible cause for contention, the term of usage rights Magma Energy is purchasing allows for an initial 65 years with the option of renewal for

another 65 years. “This poor deal becomes even clearer when we compare it to other contracts that Magma Energy has made,” explains Social Democratic MP Ólína Þorvarðardóttir, referring to Magma’s 10-year term in Nevada with the possibility of extending for another ten.

From a purely business perspective Mr. Beaty argues that such a long-term is proof positive that Magma is invested in building as strong and successful a company as possible. He says: “If you’re building a house and you want to have a really nice house and you have a leasehold agreement that gives you ownership rights for your house—if you have a short leasehold agreement you’re going to build a really crummy house because you know that, after a while, you’re not going to own anything. If you have a decent term you’re going to build a nice house and it’s going to run well and be nice to live in.”

However some critics of the agreement have their doubts about Magma Energy’s dedication to HS Orka and Iceland. “To my knowledge Magma has plans for maybe five to seven years in Iceland and then they want to exit with good profits,” projected Dagur B. Eggertsson. “So they will probably just sell their 130 year contract for their own profit but not for the profit of the people.”

WHO IS MAGMA ENERGY SWEDEN AB?

Magma Energy Corp. and Magma Energy Sweden AB are, essentially, one and the same. The “Sweden AB” suffix was added when it came to light that Magma Energy Corp. was not permitted to purchase shares in Icelandic natural resources because corporations outside the EEA would not guarantee EEA regulation of resources. Thus a Swedish shelf company was established to skirt Icelandic laws. The listed president of said Gothenburg-based shelf company is Lyle E. Braaten, a long-practicing Vancouver based lawyer and secretary and general counsel of Magma Energy Corp.

Said Mr. Beaty of this: “It’s legal nonsense that comes out of particular Icelandic laws that say the only companies that can be involved in the Icelandic energy business are European community companies. So Canadians, or anywhere else in the world for that matter, can only get involved by incorporating a subsidiary in the EU.”

Due to an agreement between the Canadian and Swedish governments regarding taxation,

Sweden was ideal for Magma’s EU P.O. box for the Canadian firm to avoid double taxation.

As for Magma Energy’s operation in Iceland being regulated in accordance with the EEA and Icelandic law, Mr. Beaty doesn’t “know that it really matters. Magma is going to be following the best practices that I’ve followed all my career. All kinds of things that are demonstrably at world standards. We’re not interested in raping and pillaging, we’re interested in doing long-term sustainable development and if you can do that in any industry you can do it in geothermal.”

This raises concern about the ease with which foreign firms can incorporate themselves within the EEA and the purpose of laws prohibiting non-EEA ownership if they are so easily manoeuvred around.

TRANSPARENCY, PLEASE

Throngs of unanswered questions and intense circulation of rumours surround the Magma Energy deal. Halldór J. Kristjánsson and Finnur Ingólfsson (there’s a name that should ring a bell for those familiar with Icelandic corruption and shady deals) are thought to be involved, and some even suspect Ross Beaty of just being the face of a company being run by Icelandic bankers-cum-green energy enthusiasts, all of which feed the fears of the general public that could be calmed through widespread corporate transparency.

Daði Rafnsson, author of the popular Economic Disaster Area blog, while adamant that transparency is the means by which Iceland can rebuild itself as a nation and avoid suspicion, said, “I think it’s going to be really hard. For business here we’re always going to run into situations of knowing somebody on the other side of the table, but too often the same people are on both sides of the table, that seems to be a reoccurring theme. It’s hard to not be connected in some way but people should know about it. That will go a long way in educating people on who to vote for, who to not vote for, who to trust.”

ICELAND’S PRIVATISED FUTURE

In her frighteningly poignant tome Shock Doctrine, Naomi Klein writes “When communities get hit by great shock large corporations and other power blocks use the opportunity to push a pointed policy where public property is given to private parties on a silver platter, for a disgraceful price.”

Cast of Characters

FL Group, now Stoðir, is an Icelandic investment company, placed under insolvency in September 2008 when its largest investment, Glitnir Bank, was partly nationalised. Other notable investments include the controversial Baugur Group and Geysir Green Energy. FL Group, along with former exec Hannes Smárason, has a complicated history of buying up worthless investments, like Sterling Airlines, and reselling them back and forth among friends to mysteriously turn a profit.

Geysir Green Energy is an investment company in the field of geothermal energy established by Icelandic investment company FL Group and Glitnir Bank. It bought the state’s share in Hitaveita Suðurnesja in 2007 when the Independence party put it up for sale. FL Group, Geysir’s owner, had made a hefty donation to the Independence party a few months earlier. Big names in the failed economy, Bjarni Ármannsson, Jón Ásgeir Jóhannesson and Hannes Smárason, headed up the company at one time, and it is now run by Ásgeir Margeirsson.

Magma Energy is a new Canadian geothermal company with a Swedish shelf company allowing it to operate in Iceland. It owns 43% of Hs Orka hf. Ross Beaty is the CEO of Magma Energy. He has a long history in the mining industry in Canada and abroad and currently serves as Chairman of Pan American Silver Corp., a leading silver producer. He has extensive experience as an entrepreneur, having started more than fifty companies over the course of his career.

Halldór J. Kristjánsson is the former co-CEO of Landsbanki, which was taken over by the state in October 2008 and has left the country to deal with their failed Icesave account. In all the speculation surrounding the Magma Energy deal, it is rumoured that Halldór is somehow secretly involved behind the scenes, as he is known to have moved with his family to Canada for a job with an energy company.

Arctica Finance hf is the financial advisory firm that negotiated the deal with Magma Energy on behalf of Reykjavík Energy. All Arctica staff “have in recent years been successful and proud contributors to many of the largest transactions that have taken place in Iceland”... they are also all former financial gurus of Landsbanki. For example, Stefán Þór Bjarnason, Arctica’s CEO, was Head of Corporate Finance at Landsbanki until October 2008.

The partial sale of HS Orka to Magma Energy is, undoubtedly, a landmark in Iceland’s political economy, but that is not to say that it is destined to be a precedent. For the time being it appears to have opened a floodgate, as a Chinese aluminium company has shown great interest in the possible acquisition of 32% of the Þeistareykir geothermal plant in Húsavík—their representatives have already met with Húsavík officials to discuss the possible deal. The future of Iceland at this pivotal point in its history is largely dependent on ongoing critical thought by policy makers on the long-term well-being of Iceland’s resources.

As Noam Chomsky warns: “Privatisation does not mean you take a public institution and give it to some nice person. It means you take a public institution and give it to an unaccountable tyranny.”

For the time being it is likely best that Iceland stops to evaluate its current situation. Many argued that the Magma Energy deal was passed too swiftly, that not enough time was given to contemplate the possible consequences of the foreign privatisation, that the public didn’t know enough or just didn’t care. But contemplation is imperative, the public needs to know and the public must care. Now is not the time to grow complacent.

“It’s weird to see what they do and to feel like you can’t really do anything,” bemoans Jón Bjarki. “After the protests this winter, people who were there feel like ‘what can we do? Nothing seems to change no matter what.’ For a period of time people were doing stuff, trying to let their voices be heard, but nothing changes and it all seems pointless. The thing is, there are so many reasons to be against all this but people don’t even know it is happening.”

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The History of Icelandic Rock music | Part 12

Stuð in the Seventies



By the mid-seventies, indolent hippies were passé and nobody was really singing about love and peace anymore. Heavy drinking and wild hedonism were the order of the day, and this showed in pop lyrics. The word “stuð”, which means something like ‘fun,’ ‘rush’ and can also mean ‘mood,’ and ‘electric shock’ kept coming up. The nightlife war cry became ‘Eru ekki allir í stuði?’—‘Are you all in the mood to have fun?’ Lyricsists also drew much from the fact that ‘ball’ rhymes with both ‘sk-rall’ (‘ratchet’) and ‘rall’ (‘debauchery’).

The toughest of the stuð-groups was Haukar, ‘The Hawks.’ “If we are having fun, the people will have fun,” was their motto. When the band went on the road in Iceland, one Brennivín-bottle was administered to each member in the tour bus. The origins of the band can be traced back to Húsavík in the early sixties, and around eighty people would play with the band until it fizzled out in the late seventies. By 1970, Haukar had relocated to Reykjavík, where the band got hip playing old rock standards at the clubs. The band stood out as all other bands were growing their hair long and acting all “deep.” Haukar behaved in a saucy manner on stage, saying stuff like: “Now fuck off to your tables and drink your booze.”

“We are saucy to make people free,”

are rough for the people.” Haukar did not put much effort into being good musicians. The best chance to see the band play well was on Mondays according to Helgi, “as we have hangovers then.”

Helgi quit in 1973 and lanky bassplayer Gulli Melsted took over as the Haukar leader. In 1975, their first record came



out, a 7” with Elvis’ Return to Sender amusingly translated (by maestro Þorsteinn Eggertsson) and sung in Icelandic as ‘Three tons of sand.’ The first LP came in 1976 and has one song by Jóhann G. Jóhannsson that has lived on as an Icelandic standard, ‘Fiskinn minn’, with the chorus ‘My Fish, yummy yummy.’ The year after, the second album came out, but by then Haukar had strayed from



said Helgi Steingrímsson in an interview in 1972. “90% of Icelanders are bourgeois and they will not feel comfortable at the dance until they have boozed up. If we can make people forget about themselves for a while by being more rude than themselves, they will feel good. We

the stuð path towards deeper territories. Naturally, the album sold poorly.

Another popular stuð-band was Deildarbungubræður (‘Deildarbunga brothers’), a stuð-band derived from the progressive and serious combo Eik. In the seventies Eik (‘Oak’) made two prog albums, but as Deildarbungubræður the members played cover-songs at dances and did two albums with cover songs and originals. The Icelandicized version of Swedish pop star Harpo’s track ‘Maria’ was the band’s biggest hit.

1. Haukar – Jolly Good!
2. Brimkló looking all swanky – Bo Hall sitting down
3. HLH-flokkurinn – American Graffiti in seventies’ Reykjavík

In the stuð-department, Brimkló (‘Surfclaw’) with singer Björgvin “Bo Hall” Halldórsson in the front made big waves in the mid-seventies. The band had originally been formed in 1972 but lay dormant until Björgvin revived the band in 1976 for its first LP. Originally influenced by country rock acts like Poco, Eagles and The Byrds, Brimkló would lighten-up and play fun pop songs, often sporting amusing lyrics by Þorsteinn Eggertsson. Their first LP, Rock ‘n’ Roll, öll mín bestu ár (‘Rock ‘n’ Roll, all my best years’), was a huge hit, and the band went on the road with comedy half-brothers Halli & Laddi as sidekicks. Brimkló was to make a new LP yearly for the rest of the decade, and each one included a new mega hit for tiny Iceland.

The roadie-profession got popular in the seventies. Some of the roadies, like

Stebbi “The Red” and Albert Icefield, even overshadowed the rock stars with their wild lifestyles and womanizing antics. They reached star status, culminating as Albert got interviewed by Samúel, a seventies men’s magazine. There he told in details which bands used drugs or booze. Brimkló answered with the songs ‘If the Roadies blab’ and ‘I read it in Samúel.’

Björgvin’s was Iceland’s pop king in the late seventies. Along with Brimkló, he did solo albums and sang with Halli & Laddi in a group called HLH flokkurinn (‘The HLH group’). HLH did the early rock routine, dressed accordingly in leather jackets, singing Icelandicized early rock songs along with some originals. Their first LP, Í góðu lagi (‘In cool order’), came out in 1979 and I got it as a confirmation gift. I remember I didn’t like it so much, at least not openly. A new wave was looming—big changes were about to be made in the Icelandic music scene—and I was ready.

Brimkló’s last LP—before later comebacks—came in 1981, when the Icelandic pop landscape had changed considerably with the surface of rock star Bubbi Morthens. One of the first songs he made popular included the infamous line: “I’m a certified invalid, listen to HLH and Brimkló.” **✂ - DR. GUNNI**

By Dr. Gunni, based on his 2000 book Eru ekki allir í stuði? (Rock in Iceland). A revised update of the book is forthcoming in 2010.

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Music | Album Reviews



BC
Sinecure (2009)
bc7000

Mode-ish, then modish
Norwegian electronica

A not-so-wise man once said football was 'a game of two halves'. This album is without a doubt an LP of two halves. Whilst the intro to the first track, Spin Again, could explode either into tech-death metal madness or set off bombs of dark house depth, it wobbles around a little before settling down into several tracks of Depeche Mode-ish neo-gothiness, all low-down and deadpan and oh-so-serious about itself. It's not bad as such but god, guys, go get an ice-cream eh?

Luckily, by the time Martinique Pyknic sidles in, half time has been and gone, and things from here on in are lot more experimental on the arrangement and far more interesting: that track itself actually having a lot of Serge Gainsbourg about it. Cinderbox closes it off with a glitchy, vibey, spacey soundscape and salvages a score draw.

- JOE SHOOMAN



Þóra Björk
I Am a Tree Now (2009)
thorabjorktree

A few too many dú-dú-dú's

I Am a Tree Now, the debut album of singer Þóra Björk, makes a rather valiant attempt to uphold the 'alt' end of the 'alt.pop' niche, but unfortunately falls somewhat short of the mark it is obviously attempting to reach.

This obviousness is part of the problem. It is apparent that musically I Am a Tree Now is trying to be something, while if it had been left to organically take shape, it could have come out much more natural sounding—less put on. The lyrics are basically just going through the motions of the tested love/boys/uncertainty formula, and she relies on a lot of repetition and a whole lot of dúdú-dú-ing to bulk out the songs.

The sound of the music is light and uncomplicated, and although she sings tunefully, she doesn't seem to put her heart and soul into it. This is unfortunate, as a bit of emotion could do to drag the album out of mediocrity.

- BERGRÚN ANNA HALLSTEINSDÓTTIR



María
Not Your Housewife (2009)
mariamagnusdottir

Listen, if you're feeling...smooth.
Don't, if you want to think.

Singer María Magnúsdóttir's début is gutsy. A flowing blend of funk, soul, jazz and pop, the album has a sexy sound to it, a kind of long glances over a candle-lit dinner sort of ambiance, which is easy to listen to. She has a great voice, full of feeling that she uses to good effect throughout the album, frequently busting out dive-like moans that seem to come straight from her heart.

The lyrics are catchy and well-designed for radio play. There are probably a few hits in there, even. Unfortunately, the album is let down somewhat by the pseudo-feminism of the title track, which goes for meaningful social commentary but hits cheesy, out-dated girl power instead. If she wanted to make a feminist statement about the role of women in modern society she missed her mark, rather sounding like Amy Winehouse if she was a Spice Girl.

- BERGRÚN ANNA HALLSTEINSDÓTTIR

"If she wanted to make a feminist statement about the role of women in modern society she missed her mark, rather sounding like Amy Winehouse if she was a Spice Girl."

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Travel | The Golden Circle

Battle of the Golden Circle

Or, ‘How I Tried to Keep Up with Linda, the Most Knowledgeable Guide in Iceland’



One PM and it's a sea of silver heads on the Gullfoss and Geyser Express Tour as international pensioners claim seats. I'm contemplating the mysteries of old people when Linda, our tour guide, comes on the loudspeaker, introduces herself, and sprinkles us with Icelandic trivia: 115,000 people live in Reykjavík, 11% of Iceland is covered in ice...etc. Before long, Linda's on a roll: from trade winds to medieval history, Linda is slowly but surely blowing the bus away with an encyclopaedic knowledge of the island.

I can tell Linda is just getting started. The closer we get our first stop, the more excited she becomes, reciting endless dates, names and locations. I know a challenge when I see one: If Linda thinks she can drown me in facts she has another thing coming.

I vow to record every ounce of info Linda can deliver.

A GREAT DIVIDE

When the bus pulls up to Þingvellir the weather outside is miserable and very Icelandic. Standing on the North American viewing platform, we can't quite see the European side of the valley. "Do you see the dark vertical lines there?" Linda asks, pointing deep into the fog. We don't. A tall, red-nosed

Dane squints over the abyss. "It's fascinating being here at the edge of two continents," he says. He takes one look around and hustles towards the dryness of the tourist centre.

Back on the bus, Linda, that titan of information, is pepper-spraying us with more facts about fauna (mink and reindeer) and flora (poplars and native berries). My hand is sore and I have to switch pens, but I'm keeping up.

A HELL OF A FOSS

Gullfoss is the most remarkable stop of the tour: a mammoth glacial river smashes and tumbles down two cascades and shoots a wall of mist into the sky. Gullfoss also makes a great back drop for your 'I went to Iceland' picture. The sheer number of cameras present quickly leads to a multimedia showdown. It's obviously time to go when I see a boy taking a picture of a woman taking a video of a man. I'm slightly upset—Linda is nowhere in sight and I start going through information withdrawal.

"I'M GETTIN' WET"

Next stop is the Geysir and the weather turns from bad to worse. We beeline towards the largest Geysir, circle it like a pack of wolves, ready our cameras

and wait. It's raining hard and after a few minutes of staring into the lifeless hole everyone feels stupid.

A few more minutes go by and complaints bubble up—a child to my left pulls at his mother's sleeve. There's a puddle in my shoe. A chubby Brit in a red sweater announces, "I'm gettin' wet," but no one pays him any mind. Everybody is getting wet.

With a hiccup the geyser erupts, launching a foul-smelling column of water into the sky. The crowd gasps, scrambles for their cameras and snaps away. Seconds later everyone is running toward the bus, dripping wet.

THE DEATH BLOW

On the ride back to Reykjavík, Linda delivers Icelandic odds and ends she hasn't had time to address: bore-hole drilling, unexpected hot springs, earthquake safety, and the wonders of Icelandic horses—including a detailed résumé of each of their 5 gaits. My eyes settle on the fog outside.

I jerk myself awake: we're downtown and Linda isn't on the microphone anymore. I panic and grab my notebook, flipping to find the pages of facts I've transcribed, to claim success. This is what I find: a mysterious set of percentages; a list of years I can't make sense of; the word 'energy' framed by cartoon steam.

It's an illegible heap of shit. There's even a stray pen mark across the page I must've made as I fell asleep.

I exit the bus a failure. Linda looks me straight in the eye and asks me if I enjoyed the tour, her voice as chipper as ever.

"I did" I mumble.

"Great," she smiles, victory in her eyes. 🍷

✍ MICHAEL ZELENGO
📷 MICHAEL ZELENGO



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Load Up On Guns, Bring Your Friends

Meg and Sruli welcome you to The Armoury

Designer Sruli Recht and writer/illustrator Megan Herbert recently opened a cool new store, Vopnabúrið (‘The Armoury’) down by the Reykjavík harbour. There, they spend their days working on their respective creations amidst selling Sruli’s “arsenal of non-products and the illustrated topo-graphic narratives of Megan Herbert,” as their website states. Which, after paying the Armoury a visit, we discovered amounts to an ambitious line of clothing, shoes, and fashion accessories, as well as hand-printed gift-wrapping paper, artworks and decorative objects.

The store itself is a beautiful, unique affair that highlights the couple’s apparent love for mangling, re-contextualizing and generally transforming story-laden objects to their own, utilitarian end. The effect is that of a sci-fi flick set in a post-apocalyptic future, furnished with materials hoarded from the nuclear rubble. It’s all very cool looking.

“It is semantic play – an armoury is a place wherein one stocks up on supplies. And it’s a reference to the dark subtext that seems to be in the work

offered here,” the couple tells me over coffee and muffins when asked about the store’s name. My eyes keep wandering off to the sides; there is a lot of nifty looking stuff around. I ask them what brought them to Iceland [Sruli is Israel-born and Megan is a native of Australia] and how being here fits into the context of what they want to do.

Says Sruli: “Right now, in terms of business, surprisingly the answer is probably that it makes sense. Despite the current economic situation, this is a relatively central country with a high standard of living. And cultural morality is uniquely polarised – heritage and family values are high on the chain, yet against a contemporary global backdrop, there are some startling examples of flexible morality here, which allow producers to push boundaries.”

Megan was living in London and on the verge of moving back to Australia to resume her career as a television scriptwriter when Sruli invited her to make a life with him in the wild north. “Maybe it’s the risk-taker in me, or the romantic, but I found that the utterly irrational impulse to set up camp in a

place far from all of my comfort zones refused to abate,” she says.

What is it you want to do? And are you interested in fitting into whatever it is that’s going on in Iceland now?

Meg: “I want to use my abilities as a writer and an illustrator to tell people stories. The purpose of my stories, both visual and literary, is to shift perspective, build empathy, and provoke thought. While many of my current projects have an Icelandic audience in mind, I am really trying to reach anyone anywhere with an ability to understand narrative. It is a universal language after all. That said, I do think that post-kreppa Iceland provides the ideal creative conditions for me. Like a hyperactive toddler who’s broken all his expensive toys in a fit of orgiastic play, Iceland is now looking around and working out what can be done with the cardboard box it all came in. Imagination is the new currency here. And that holds a huge appeal for me.

Sruli: “I make things... products. I don’t think you would find a creative who says that what they do is not linked to their environment. In saying that, I don’t make things to conform... or to arouse debate. I make things I need and that other people need. In terms of Iceland, it fits into what is happening here because for the first time the Icelandic consumer is landlocked – too financially restricted to travel casually abroad and unable to afford to buy things once there.

So now the focus is turned inward and the situation for Icelandic business, from design to fresh produce, has improved. The consumer market is only able to shop here now, giving the Icelandic design community, from students through to established producers and designers, a strong sense of optimism.”

So despite the sombre economic landscape and the implied menace of the name, the future at Vopnabúrið looks golden indeed. 🌱

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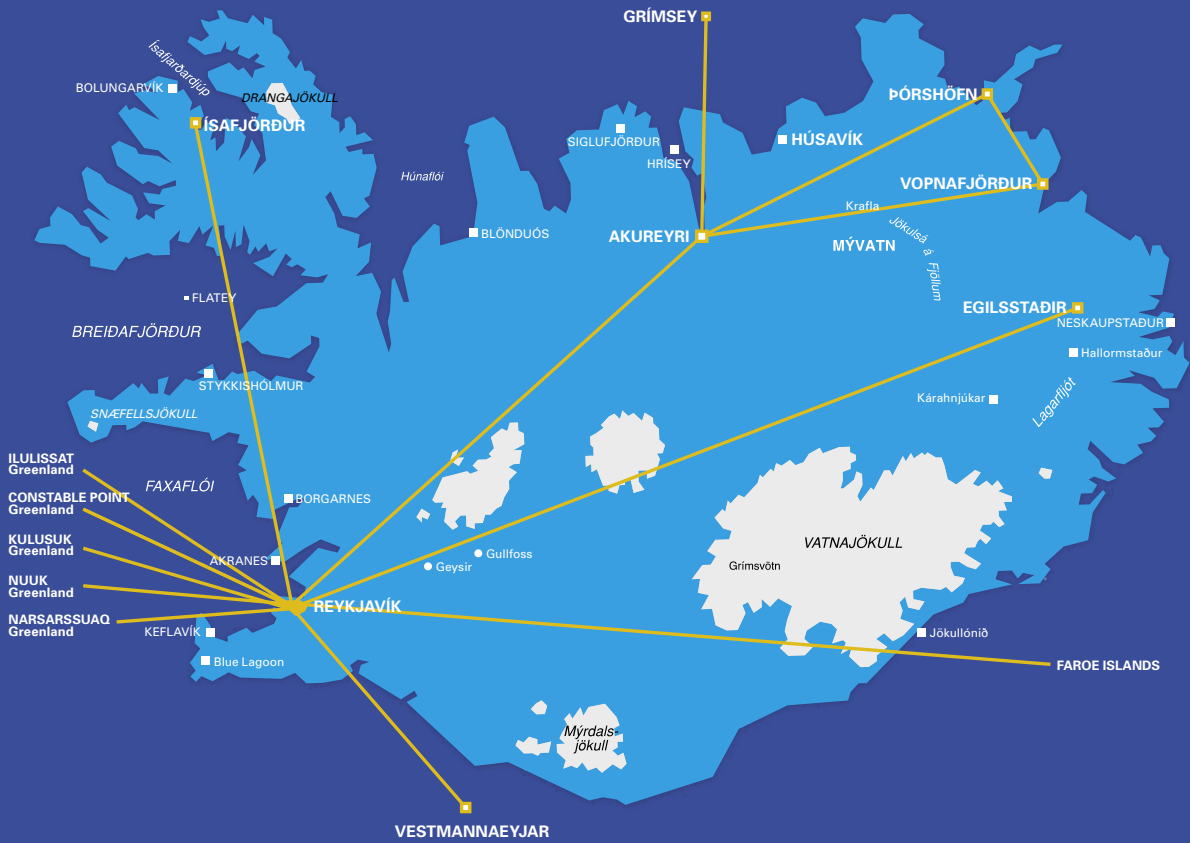
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Article | Souvenirs

Tacky, Awesome Crap

The best and the worst in Icelandic souvenirs

Souvenirs are an essential part of any good (or bad) travelling experience. From the smallest token taken from nature (like that pebble in your pocket—or are you just happy to see me?) to extravagant spontaneous purchases, they seem to be absolutely indispensable to a holiday. At least that's what the merchandisers would have us think.

Iceland definitely doesn't lack for its share of gift shops, with all the usual suspects found within them, but some items offer a bit more punch while others are downright baffling. Here are a few items that will tickle you pink or blow your mind with inanity. You be the judge.



GEYSIR MUG

This delightfully phallic drinking receptacle is perfect for the most gutter-minded traveller or lover of impractical cup handles. I could barely fit three of my little girl fingers through the handle, making it fairly difficult to hold when empty. Just imagine when full. Or with fully-grown hands! For 1.590 ISK though, it might be worth it, just to leave it on your kitchen shelf and disturb your guests.



CAN OF FRESH MOUNTAIN AIR

Oh, a can of air for 990 ISK? Why, of course I need that! That's a great deal on air. Usually the air I breathe costs nothing. Clearly I'm getting ripped off. Wait a minute... Seriously though. This pop-top can claims to contain 240ml of fresh mountain air, so presumably you would peel back the lid and get a nice burst of mountain freshness. Maybe it's a gag and there's actually a fart inside. Actually, that would be worth 990 ISK.



FACEPAINTING KIT

Who doesn't love painting a flag on their face? I could do it every day. With so many countries with red, white and blue as official colours, you can totally switch it up depending on what team is playing. (Unless Russia is playing France. Then you're fucked, sorry.) For 935 ISK, even I couldn't resist purchasing it and Icelandizing my face.



ROCK CUBES

Ice cubes are wonderful in water, but who wants their turpentine cocktail diluted with pesky water? Not me! Lucky for all us chick-drink drunks, there are Rocks On Ice. Nine solid cubes made of pure Icelandic Gabbro rock that chill to the perfect temperature after 2-3 hours in the freezer. They are also an ecological alternative to the water waste that goes into the refilling of an ice tray. For 3,490 ISK, this is a worthwhile investment to anyone with a home bar.



ANGRY LOVE STUFFED TOYS

Goddamn it, I wanna punch these in the face. Look at that fucking seal cub (2.890 ISK). Don't you just want to take it out on



the ice and club the shit out of it? And that wolf (5.980 ISK)! Who does he think he is? What is he gonna do, howl at the moon or something? Fucking unbearably cute, fake animals. Any rage therapist would recommend spending the money to regain control of your life. Don't let the cuteness take control.



BEST T-SHIRT: WHALE OF A TIME IN ICELAND

The person who designed this for children clearly didn't realise they were designing a shirt for Death Cab For Cutie circa 2005 fans. This shirt says two words: Seth Cohen. Also available in blue and yellow, for the ultimate emo nerd. 1.890 ISK.



WORST T-SHIRT: ÉG TALA EKKI ÍSLENSKU

Why would you be so proud of this? If you are just here for a weekend, it's totally unnecessary, and if you're here for a while, you're a jerk for not trying. You might as well just buy a shirt with all the languages you don't speak, or a shirt saying you're mute. 2.800 ISK. ☹

REBECCA LOUDER
REBECCA LOUDER

Comix | Review



Dungeon (The Series)

Created by Lewis Trondheim & Joann Sfar

Art by Kerascoet et al.

French humour has sometimes been described as “not funny” or “weird”. Lewis Trondheim is both French and funny. He's so prolific as a cartoonist that it's tempting to think he runs a sweatshop with tubby little illustrators that are fed with croissants and coffee and can only go to the bathroom twice a day. Instead of doing that, he has ganged up with fine artists and writers such as Joann Sfar and Kerascoet. Together they are like a team of ninjas with pens. Trondheim and friends have even threatened to do at least 300 Dungeon books.

The Dungeon series master the fine art of being dark and silly at the same time. The world of Dungeon is full of dragons and birds, sorcery and weapons. It's a parody of the fantasy worlds similar to Dungeons and Dragons, without being too nerdy or inaccessible to those who are unfamiliar with D&D. The

timeline of the series as a whole is a bit complicated at first. Dungeon is divided into 3 main series: Early Years, Zenith and Twilight and in-between are sub-series and all sorts of nonsense. The series tell the story of the creation, glory days and eventually the demise of the Dungeon world. It seems difficult to sort everything out, but the books are so well written and illustrated that eventually you won't care about timelines—unless you are anal-retentive—which won't be a problem either because information about the timelines is plentiful.

There is nothing less disappointing than Dungeon, except maybe other books by Lewis Trondheim. ☹

HUGLEIKUR DAGSSON



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IN MY OPINION
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Little Bill Hudson jr

OK, Mr. Tarantino did not eat at our place the last time he came to Iceland but we are pretty sure that he will visit us very soon. Join the many very famous people *who* like *Patty Smith* and *John Travolta* and become one of our regular customers. *Where the stars eat you are very safe!*



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Art In Sequence, Real-time!

Controlled chaos, and a sense of focus

The Sequences arts festival has been pretty awesome these past few years. It is a unique offspring of the big happy Icelandic arts family, and it takes place every October. At Sequences, artists from Iceland and all over the world gather to cook up some really incredible stuff. Rumours had that this year's program would differ somewhat from its previous incarnations, so us Grapeviners caught up with festival manager Klara Þórhallsdóttir and art director Kristín Dagmar Jóhannesdóttir to get the word on what to expect.

What's Sequences all about?

Klara: Sequences started in 2006 and was founded by four artist-run galleries: The Living Art Museum, Kling og Bang Gallery, Gallery Dwarf, Gallery Bananananas, as well as the Center for Icelandic Art—CIA. Since then, it has been held annually in Reykjavík. It has evolved to an independent organisation, and is still the only festival in Iceland to focus solely on visual arts. 'Sequences real time art festival,' is the full name, and it focuses on time-based media, such as performances and live art, sonic and video art, as well as creating a cross-platform for these and other art genres.

Each year there have been new organisers for the festival. So each time the festival has been quite different and revolved around specific concepts, though the main emphasis remains the same.

How has the festival developed?

Klara: For the first year, everyone who wanted to was able to participate. It got very popular among young artists to finally have some kind of a platform where they could make an effort and introduce their work and ideas. Since then, it has developed and last year the main board decided to form a curatorial

board that would select the projects or artists that would participate.

Kristín: This we felt was important in order to give Sequences a sense of focus, and to strengthen its identity.

This year you're changing the infrastructure of the festival, basing it exclusively on live shows. What gives? Did you respond to lack of funding by making it more guerilla-ish?

Kristín: Most of the projects this year are run on a low budget, but that didn't really determine our choices. From the visual arts perspective, performance might stand as the obvious choice of real time art and therefore we decided to really focus on the performative nature of art for this year's festival. Next time it might become something totally different. Mainly, our concept has grown from the work of the festival's honorary artist, Magnús Pálsson. Throughout his career, Magnús moved freely between genres in his art practice. He studied theatre design and visual art in the early 1950s and later worked in both fields. We were therefore interested in finding some sort of rendezvous between stage arts and the visual arts.

What are, in your opinion, the most interesting performances we'll be witnessing this year?

Kristín: The whole Sequences week will be full of exciting events and it is hard to pick favourites. The opening night will include Magnús Pálsson's performance and a live event by video artist Sigurður Guðjónsson outside of the House of Ideas (the festival's headquarters), with a performance-party taking place inside later on. Then we are also offering more theatre-based work, such as Oblivia and Ingibjörg Magnadóttir, or dance collaboration such as the work of Björk

Viggósdóttir, Melkorka Huldudóttir or Prinz Gholam. We are also very excited about the work of Spartacus Chetwynd, who has been called the queen of lo-fi art performances, and Soren Dahlgaard, who will close the festival.

It's also interesting that Sequences will offer a series of lectures and artist talks that will run alongside the festival for the first time. Speakers include some of the participating artists and other invited speakers from the fields of visual arts, stage arts and theory.

What does Sequences future look like? How do you see it in five years? Is there something you want to establish in the long run?

Klara: Sequences has been growing every year, and now we have gathered a great deal of experience in how to run such a festival. And it is getting recognised for its cultural value that in the end will hopefully serve our art society. I am very optimistic that in five years this festival will be a fundamental part of the cultural field, and one of the stronger parts of Sequences is how its concept has changed along with the organisers each year. It gives the festival space to tackle issues that come up each time, and to reconsider the diversity in visual art.

Beside all that, it really is priceless how the festival becomes a documentation on art today. It will gain great historical value in later years, as every event that has taken place during the festival has been documented and kept. We hope Sequences will in the long run establish itself as a serious platform for visual arts in an international context.

SIGURÐUR KJARTAN KRISTINSSON
JULIA STAPLES

Sequences Events

We at the Grapevine are no strangers to the dilemmas and panic that surface when you see the packed schedule for such a grand festival as Sequences – both rich and chaotic. Thus we present: a bunch of interesting things we noticed in the programme.

THE DUMB REGION OF THE HEART

A 15-minute video loop will be played on two separate screens in the back seat of a car. Audiences will be picked up, two at a time, and driven around while they watch the videos on the screens and listen to it through headphones. The video is a poetic abundance of sounds, words and images. It's an ambiguous voyage to the ever-equivocal crossroads. It's about going and it's about returning, or not.

WHO Páll Haukur Björnsson: a rising star in the visual arts scene in Iceland. This will be his first performance after returning from the Venice Biennale, where he's modelled for Ragnar Kjartansson for the last six months.

WHEN OCT 30, House of Ideas, 8PM

THE MIND

The Mind is about... well, the mind. The mind doesn't have a shape, and we don't really know if it is inside us or if it is a part of the outer universe. Conscience is also a complicated phenomenon, and we work with that as well. It is not about a relationship between two persons. It is more the relationship of a person with her/himself and with society in general.

WHO Egill Sæbjörnsson is one of Iceland's many multi-talented artists whose work is an unusual fusion of music, sound, video and installations. In addition to this, he often appears in person as part of his exhibition projects.

WHEN NOV 5, Hafnarhús, 8 PM

SPARTACUS CHETWYND

Although we do not know exactly what she is going to dazzle us with at the opening party, we can sure expect it to be spectacular. Spartacus Chetwynd has become known for her baroque and surreal performances, charged with humorous image quotations from art history and melded with pop culture references. So grab a beer and catch some craziness.

WHO Spartacus Chetwynd is a British artist who creates both paintings and large-scale collaborative performances that explore notions of the grotesque, using humour and references to various cultural icons

WHEN OCT 30, House of Ideas, 8 PM

SEMINAR AT THE NORDIC HOUSE PLUS AN AMAZING DINNER PARTY

All through this year's Sequences, The Lost Horse Gallery will host an exhibition, Made up and let down, with Sofia Dahlgren (SWE), Line Ellegaard (DK), Pernille Leggat Ramfelt (NO), Malin Ståhl (SWE) and Anita Weström (SWE). The piece itself is an intervention of Nordic artists habited in London, and is depicted here in Reykjavik, where it might find similar culture gatherings, so it should be interesting.

The artists are throwing a seminar, "Made up and let down: Nordic art in an international context," where they'll aim to analyze the exhibition in a creative way, testing new systems for critical discourse and ways to advance as a critical forum. The best thing is that there is no entry fee AND it includes a celebratory dinner afterwards at the famed DILL restaurant at the Nordic House. Yup, there you have it!

WHEN NOV 3, Nordic House, 12AM



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



MEDIEVAL MANUSCRIPTS – EDDAS AND SAGAS
The Ancient Vellums on Display



A LOOK INTO NATURE
The Story of the Icelandic Museum of Natural History



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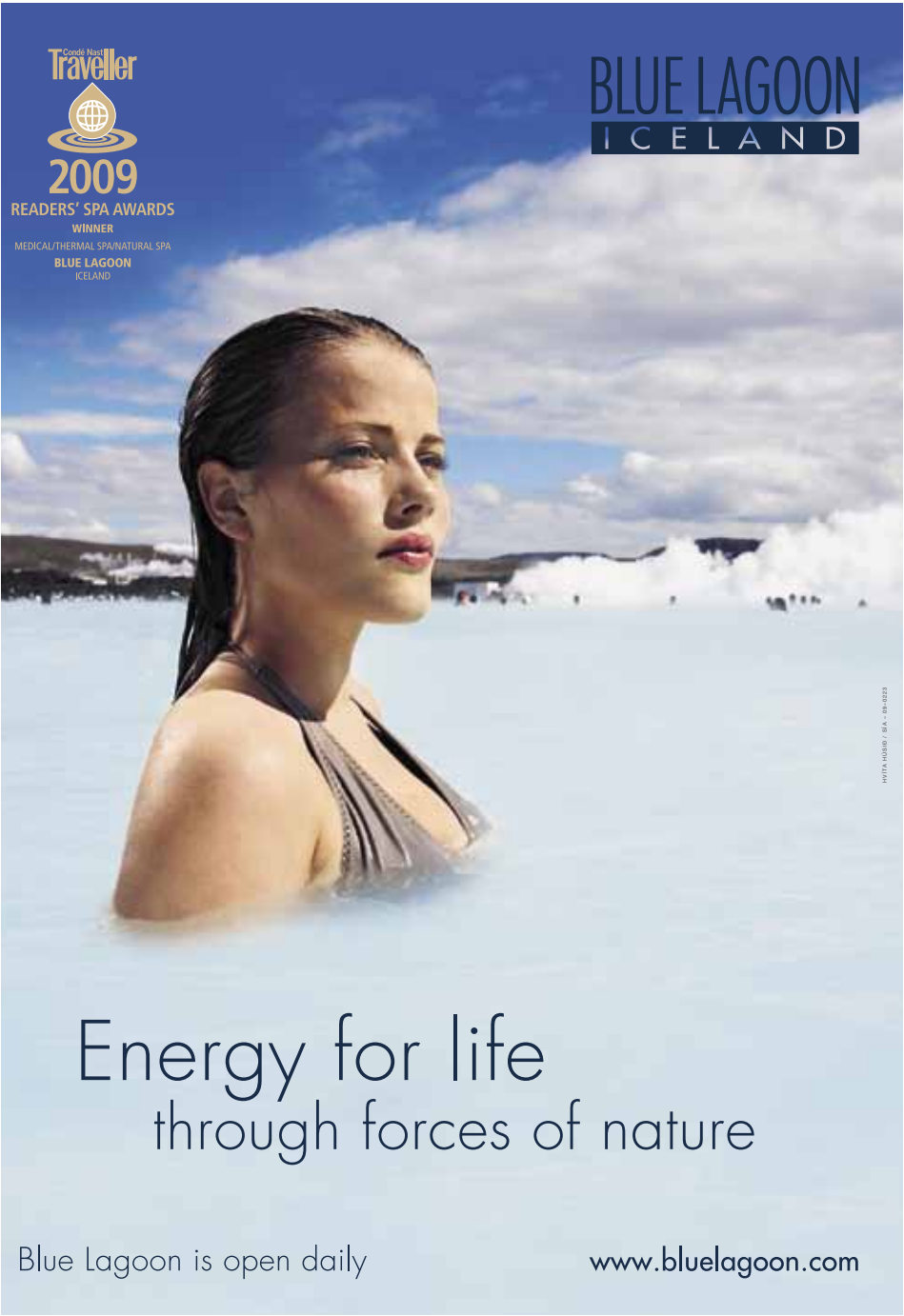
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Next time: We attack downtown Reykjavik on late on a Friday night with all manner of pithy metaphysical questions only a drunk would be dare to answer. You won't be able to miss me. I'll be the guy wearing the neon orange protective clothing, and a badge that reads, "Smile if you believe in elves, huldúfólk or ghosts."

Transcendental Iceland | Part 8: Fallacies, Paradoxes and Butterfly Logic

Radio To The Other Side

In search of the Real McCoy

Words

Marc Vincenz

Illustration

Inga María Brynjarsdóttir



'People fail to notice what they do when awake, just as they forget what they do while asleep.' Heraclitus, Greek Philosopher, 535 – 475 BCE

It was probably somewhere around 500 BCE when the Greek philosopher Heraclitus coined the term Logos: a fundamental concept intimating that there is a source and order to the cosmos; which, in the turn of its own screw, was interpreted to mean that things are pretty much as they appear to be. A hundred years after Heraclitus, Aristotle's analytical logic was born, leading the way for predicate or mathematical logic: the basis for most current scientific reasoning, or so the story goes. Here we are 2,509 years later and we're still pretty much stabbing in the dark.

Scientific reason is, of course, fraught with dichotomies, contradictions and misinterpretations. Often, what we originally believe to be the lay of the land ends up manifesting itself as the most farcical of theories. Some not-so ancient civilisation suggested, using their early principles of logic, that the Earth was flat, and lay like a pounding heart beating at the centre of the Universe. For many hundreds of years, this seemed an entirely plausible hypothesis. Today we see this as one of many fallacies of logical reasoning. But I ask you this: Who knows what other inconsistencies presently manifest themselves right under our very own noses? The Ice Age? Evolution? Relativity? The Big Bang? Skimmed Milk?

Are we all just perched insect-like on a gigantic paradox?

Guðrún Hjörleifsdóttir, visionary, Seer of all things past, present and future, maintains she can look straight through walls. She says, "Life is a dream we are dreaming right now," and, "all matter is just energy vibrating at different wavelengths." Ergo, if you can somehow perceive the wavelength, you can see straight through it. And we all know, you can do virtually anything in dreams; so essentially, no limits barred.

Guðrún says that most people can only see energy when it manifests itself, when it 'materialises.' Doesn't science maintain that matter is not form unless so perceived? Matter is just atoms vibrating anyway, right? Okay, then let's stretch this thought even further, and imagine that that thing you perceive to be in front of you is only matter because you accept that the thing is what it appears to be (as you would without question, within a dream): a butterfly, a door, a house, a mountain.

Is it a butterfly, then? Or is it millions

of swirling atoms that look like a butterfly? Your own mind presents matter to you as form so that you can interact with it—a convenient illusion, a symbol of form, so that, as Guðrún says, "We can manage the puzzle called life."

But then hold on to this thought: Life is but a dream.

According to Guðrún, everything consists of bundles of energy—molecules, atoms—organising, splitting apart, then reorganising into more and more complex patterns, which is the sublime nature of the mind of the Universe which, in turn, is manifested inside your own consciousness.

Guðrún claims she can see through matter into its very primeval essence, and into the past, present and future. As she explains, "Time is also just a condition of the mind [a manner of organising things into neat digestible packets]. Break down the notion of ego, and you will soon see that time and matter only exist to give you hold on your own perceived reality. Past, present and future are essentially one and the same thing."

"Understand that nothing is separate from your own thoughts. Free yourself from the shackles of convention, those self-imposed boundaries, become child-like, more free. Then, master the mind, and you essentially have the potential to control everything in your life."

The concept is, of course, that everything exists only because you think it into existence. In the words of French philosopher René Descartes: "I think, therefore I am."

"A friend of mine, who has passed on," she says, "came to me in my dreams to impart deeper insights, speed up my learning curve, so to speak. I came to understand the significance of my third eye—it's located at the apex of a triangle centred above the other two 'standard' eyes. It connects me to the universal mind, helps me to perceive these things. He also enlightened me on how it is that some of us hear 'voices.' You know, it's just like tuning into the right frequency on the radio."

I could have sworn she was going to say that—the pattern proliferates.

And then, she says, "You know it's

circles within circles: The cycles of life, of mind and dreams, always go back to where they begin. Just look at how things manifest themselves, the geometry of planets, galaxies, celestial motions." It's all built up like a swirling elliptical fractal, whereby, no matter how deep you go into the structure of things, new similar patterns emerge: a fractal of a fractal of a fractal, and so on: mirrors within mirrors.

With no limits, what then of logic? The rational mind?

The philosopher Gottlob Frege, one of the founders of modern logical thought, called logic: "the science of the most general laws of truth." Twelfth-century Muslim scholar Averroes, called it: "the tool for distinguishing between true and false." Only, just on what basis of truth have we been making our rational judgements? Truth, of course, relies on the premise that falsehood also exists; if everything then is a dream, how can there be either? Does this throw logic right out the other side?

Through all of this talk with Guðrún, I believe I may have made the most singular discovery. Among other things, Einstein's great predicate logic proposed that there was nothing that existed that could be faster than the speed of light. Now I know he was wrong. There is something faster: the speed of mind.

And not to disappoint those who tuned in last time to Transcendental Part 7. You will recall that Gústi, the soul-cleanser, was exorcising the spirit who possessed his own living son. Well, as a matter of course, Gústi called on the light-beings who come from the heart of God, and convinced the offending spirit to depart this Earth and take the heavenly light-elevator to the other side. It was a successful exorcism; and yes, a happy ending.

But then, as you know, in dreams anything can happen.

It was the ancient Chinese philosopher, Kung-sun Lung, who lived three hundred years before the birth of Christ, who wrote: "One and one cannot become two, since neither becomes two." Keep that in mind when the going gets tough. 🍷

Poetry | Eiríkur Örn Norðdahl

I'll Have What He's Having



Are you tired of writing your own damn poems? Does it feel like you'd rather plunge through the fiery gates of hell rather than come up with one more metaphor/ simile/ aphorism to explain the human condition? There's so much poetry in the world already! So much language! Why make more?

Now, what if there was a way of making a poem without actually having to resort to our supposedly original ideas? What if we could simply appropriate somebody else's words and call them our own? Text-piracy, of sorts. Plagiarism. Theft. We've gotta fight for our copyright to "party."

A found poem is a piece of language reframed. In some cases the pieces were already poems to begin with, collaged together in a new context, as in Eliot's The Wasteland or Pound's Cantos; but in other cases they are bits of overheard conversation, the text from a commercial or a news story, reframed as poetry. Charles Reznikoff's famous book, Testimony, is just what it says: slightly altered texts from American court transcripts. Kenny Goldsmith's Day is one issue of the New York Times—word for word, retyped. The Norwegian poet Paal Bjelke Andersen is working on a book of sentences found in the New Year speeches of Nordic prime ministers, including the Icelandic ones. Icelandic artist Ragnhildur Jóhannss recently published a limited edition book, Konur 30 og brasilískt (Women 30 and Brazilian), consisting of sentences lifted from an online forum about women over thirty and Brazilian wax treatments. Doesn't that sound fantastic? Delightful? The language around you actually runs amok, constantly, all on its own it seems and needs merely to be picked up and repeated to forthwith metamorphose into wonderful poetry.

Now, finding language in a world so full of it (pun intended) may not seem like a great challenge for the average creative mind. Quite the contrary, most of us wouldn't mind finding somewhere, anywhere, a quiet place devoid of language. Some calm resort, a haven, where we could be free from the incessant chatter, free from screaming billboards, blazing televisions and the latest Top 40 list.

But, as strangely as that may sound, found poems tend to provide a certain relief from their own inanity, stupidity, supposed depth or other imaginable attributes of the given source text. Like a good piece of adusting, a decent-to-brilliant found poem both negates and amplifies the original text creating a flux of meaning and anti-meaning. An eye in the storm, if you will, where one is given the possibility to observe

what actually happens within this given piece of language (or what didn't happen, but, in some parallel universe, might have). Not to mention the irreverent joy that found poems tend to offer, as well as their quirky insight into the discourse and thought of a society.

Found poems document the movements of language, rather than imitating it—found poems leave language exposed, rather than exposing it. But trying to follow the way language moves is an arduous task. Words come and go, become fashionable and fade (particularly when enough people have realised that they indeed have become fashionable). But certain tendencies are obvious.

These days, the language that most Icelanders find themselves submerged in is legal and economic. Suffering a financial blitzkrieg does not only bring with it (rhyme-alert!) oceans of emotion (throes of woes!), but new additions to the everyday vocabulary. Concepts like "debt-equity ratio" are now household terms, as familiar as milk and honey. "Restructuring" is more common than the cold, and "shadow price" is getting so worn as to verge on being unusable.

We've contracted these words from reading the newspapers, blogs and listening to pundits who regurgitate each other's language as if they were ruminating cows. And you'd think, given how much they're thrown about, that we understand them. Yet it seems, according to a survey conducted by the Icelandic Institute for Financial Literacy, that we don't. Only a third of Iceland's inhabitants, 18 years and older, have any understanding of the mere basic economic concepts. And yet we keep on yapping as if everyone understands. Restructuring opportunity costs according to the debt-equity ratio of offshore shadow prices.

And if reproducing language that you don't understand, to people who understand it even less, isn't poetry, then by golly, I don't know what is. 🍷



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Welcome

to events and programmes of the Goethe-Institut in Iceland for October 2009
– culminating in November, when Germany celebrates 20 years after the fall of the wall in Berlin.
Further information: www.goethe.de/island

10. October – 16. November 2009:
Exhibition of German Comics in the Reykjavik City Library.
Further information: www.borgarbokasafn.is

11. October 2009 13:00–16:00:
German Comics in the Reykjavik City Library: Workshop with Line Hoven, comic artist from Hamburg.
Further information: www.borgarbokasafn.is

14.–18. October 2009:
Iceland Airwaves Music Festival Reykjavik. German bands: Wareika and Bodi Bill.
Further information: www.icelandairwaves.com

30. October – 7. November 2009:
Sequences: Real Time Art Festival. German artist: Prinz Gholam.
Further information: www.sequences.is



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*From the Hávamál, 1300 AD

PAGE 12:

“That is ignorance and complete nonsense. It’s just because Icelanders don’t know what we’re all about and they don’t understand the world that we live in.”

Magma Energy’s Ross Beaty has some interesting things to say.

PAGE 18:

This delightfully phallic drinking receptacle is perfect for the most gutter-minded traveller or lover of impractical cup handles. I could barely fit three of my little girl fingers through the handle, making it fairly difficult to hold when empty. Just imagine when full.

Rebecca Louder found y’all some crazy tourist crap!

PAGE 6:

“I’m not afraid of the buses” he responded with a smile. “If the city of Reykjavík doesn’t want [to buy] the buses, they will never be able to say that they want to go green again.”

Gísli Gíslason wants to force Reykjavík to go green.

PAGE 10:

Would you rock the boat, would you print nasty things about the owners? No, you would think twice. You’ve got a mortgage and kids in kindergarten. This has simply always made life difficult for Icelandic journalists.

Professor Þorbjörn Bróddason explains why Icelandic media is the way it is

PAGE 8:

It’s 4 degrees Celsius, the water temperature is a nice 7.5. It’s a lovely day for a swim in the sea.

Louise Petersson went for a cold, cold swim.

PAGE 10:

You may not like the dress code, their noises, you may not like all the fun they seem to be having and you’re not sure you’d get laid as an anarchist or that the anarchists would like to lay you.

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Hlíðarfótur, 101 Reykjavík
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Radisson SAS Hotel Saga
Hagatorg, 107 Reykjavík
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Iðá - Visitor Centre, 2nd floor
Lækjargata 2a, 101 Reykjavík
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