

**GRAPE  
VINE  
AIR  
WAVES  
2005**

GRAPEVINEAIRWAVESDAILY2005 ISSUE 3 of 3



**SUNDAY**



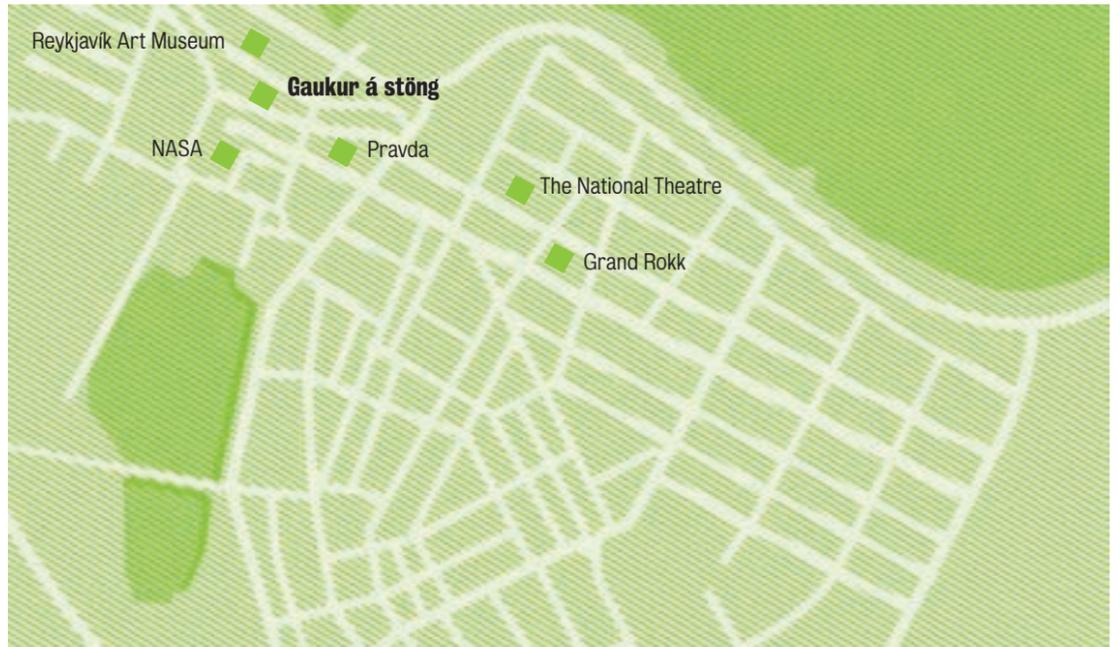
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 (Doors open at 20:00.)



## EDITORIAL

### Why Music Journalists Aren't the Absolute Lowest Form of Life... at Least, Why Our Music Journalists Aren't

BY BART CAMERON

As I write this editorial, I am waiting for Christian Hoard of Rolling Stone to return from his second round of concerts in the evening. He left here smiling ear to ear, putting a cigarette back into his mouth after having just coughed up a sizeable amount of discharge, his eyes blood red from an infection compounded by lack of sleep. On the way out the door, he said "Thanks again for this." And he was serious.

Christian, Bart, Genevieve, and Patricia used vacation from prominent publications to fly thousands of miles and work like dogs for absolutely no pay on two-hour deadlines; this is to say nothing about the ungodly hours that our six other full-time festival journalists, and 35 other employees—most of them temporary—worked to put out a daily magazine for a relatively obscure music festival.

Why did they do it?

Talking with the range of other journalists and industry people at this year's festival, I heard more than once that Iceland is hip and full of beautiful people. The world, New York and London want Iceland, I've been told.

But anybody who would say something like this could never write for The Grapevine. We're not huge fans of vague stereotypes and generalizations, and the idea that a whole country can become hip suggests that countries might become unhip—say with a natural catastrophe or economic depression.

Our writers spent time covering the music here because it is viable art, and because the art humanizes a people that are easily overlooked. Returning to Christian Hoard, who has now strolled into my office screaming about Þórí, I should point out that he came to my attention because of his work on The Mountain Goats, a band from that bleeding edge cultural hotspot Ames, Iowa. Hoard had been able to convey the excitement of listening to John Darnielle's lyrics—breathing in someone else's culture, while connecting at a basic human level. And Hoard and all of our writers have hopefully shared their excitement about making these connections in the last few days working here.

One final note: Good riddance to Mr. Blasengame. Being the second best writer named Bart for my own damned paper was flat out humiliating.

## CONSUMER NOTICE

# Keep your issues

All three issues combine to form one, ultra-powerful Airwaves keepsake. Use the cover to Issue Three, Sunday, as your outer folder. Then place Issue One, Friday, inside, followed by Issue Two, Saturday, and then the bulk of Issue Three, Sunday.

Okay, it ain't simple. But life ain't simple.



## TUNE IN



A helpful sponsored reminder:

**RÁS 2**  
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will offer live concert coverage of this year's Airwaves, just as they have done of every Iceland Airwaves since 1999.

THEY WILL BE COVERING THE FOLLOWING VENUES:

**Wednesday:** Grand Rokk

**Thursday:** Reykjavík Art Museum and Nasa

**Friday:** Reykjavík Art Museum and Gaukur á Stöng

**Saturday:** Reykjavík Art Museum

## MASTHEAD



# GRAPEVINEAIRWAVEDAILY SUNDAY OCTOBER 23 2005

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## featureINTERVIEW



## The Opposition Enters Decade Two

### An Interview with RASS

BY PAUL F. NIKOLOV PHOTO: GÚNDI

>>> This year marks the ten-year anniversary of the creation of punk outfit **Rass** (Ass). After playing about one show a year for many years, their first album, **Andstaða** (Opposition), released earlier this year, has made quite an impact and put the band on stage about two dozen times this year. What accounts for the recent surge of interest? **The Grapevine** spoke to **Rass** to find out. <<<

WHY DID IT TAKE YOU TEN YEARS TO WRITE ONE ALBUM'S WORTH OF SONGS?

**Óttar:** We had been in bands with a very strict structure of writing songs and making albums and so on. So the first idea was to do the opposite of that. We never rehearsed and didn't have a set list. Before going on stage we'd talk about what issue the song was about and maybe in what key, and then we'd go out onstage and do it. But then over a period of ten years we started to remember some songs from our previous concert.

**Björn:** Which was maybe a year before. We played only once a year for a long time. Now when we play these songs, what seems like improvisation is more like us trying to remember the songs.

THE LYRICAL CONTENT IS PRETTY MINIMAL.

**Óttar:** The lyrics are maybe only eight words or so.

**Þórgeir:** I only go up to ten.

**Óttar:** They're usually pretty simple. It's our strength, especially for our audience of below five.

**Björn:** They're very to the point. Basically against something.

**Óttar:** That's the philosophy that's been built up over the years. The politics of opposition.

IT SEEMS AS THOUGH THERE'S BEEN A RESURGENCE IN RECENT YEARS OF BANDS PLAYING LOUDER AND FASTER. HOW DO YOU ACCOUNT FOR THAT?

**Björn:** I think it comes in waves. Maybe people are getting a bit tired of the lo-fi shit.

**Þórgeir:** The krúttkynslóð (the "cute generation," an appellation given to many modern Icelandic musicians, including Múm and Sigur Rós).

**Óttar:** You have so many slow bands out there that if you want to get through, you have to do something else.

**Þórgeir:** Icelandic bands are supposedly influenced by elves. We're not influenced by elves, OK?

**Björn:** You get tired of playing the same chord for a whole minute. Why not have 15 songs in 20 minutes?

**Óttar:** I think it's also because often the same people coming to the concerts

are in bands themselves, so maybe they want to hear something different, and do something different.

SO YOU THINK THE OTHER MUSICIANS IN THE SCENE ARE SUPPORTIVE?

**Óttar:** Yes. We've never owned any instruments, for example. Equipment has never been a problem.

WHAT YOU WERE SAYING EARLIER ABOUT 15 SONGS IN 20 MINUTES SEEMS LIKE A STRONG INFLUENCE FROM EARLY 80S HARDCORE PUNK.

**Óttar:** That might be part of it. But it's also that the songs are so old that we get tired of playing them.

**Björn:** Yeah, we just want to get them over with.

**Óttar:** Well, they're simple songs, so why play a simple song for three minutes? Everyone's going to get bored by it, especially us. I would say some of the best songs on the album are the shortest ones, the ones under a minute. And also because there's just one political lyrical concept to each song, usually with the same line being shouted, and there's only so long you can do that.

ONE OF THE THINGS I'VE ALWAYS LIKED ABOUT GOING TO A PUNK ROCK SHOW IS THE HIGH ENERGY, WHICH CAN OFTEN INSPIRE SOME INTERESTING BEHAVIOUR IN PEOPLE. WHAT'S THE CRAZIEST THING YOU'VE SEEN GOING ON IN THE CROWD AT ONE OF YOUR SHOWS?

**Björn:** (to Óttar) How about that show at Grand Rokk when we were playing behind chicken wire? People were throwing beer bottles at us and everything.

**Óttar:** There's a beautiful moment that we caught on video where someone threw a beer bottle and it stuck in the chicken wire, by its neck. That was really nice.

DON'T YOU THINK THAT IN PUTTING UP CHICKEN WIRE YOU WERE KIND OF ASKING FOR IT?

**All of Rass:** Yes, yes.

**Óttar:** We also had one show where the audience ended up tearing down the chicken wire.

**Björn:** We wanted to try it out. We've never done it again.

ARE YOU HOPING THAT THE POLITICAL MESSAGE IN YOUR SONGS WILL INSPIRE PEOPLE TO ACT?

**Björn:** We're not trying to force anything on anybody, but maybe our lyrics get people talking about things they don't normally think about.

**Óttar:** Obviously the reason is to say something. But as Icelandic musicians we're not used to being listened to as much, so it's not a very serious political statement. Which is why we're a bit taken aback when somebody is listening. The motive is very important.

AND WHAT WOULD YOU SAY THE MOTIVE IS?

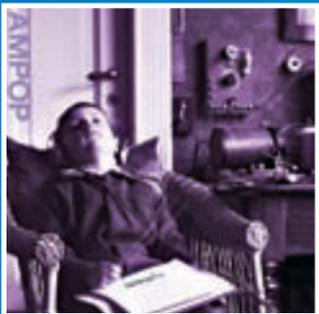
**Óttar:** The motive is opposing; being in opposition even if there are only two people listening.

>>> **Rass** played **Reykjavík Art Museum** on **Saturday, Oct. 22.** <<<

→ Singer Óttar of RASS, who also serves as a vocalist in the party band Doctor Spock, is a book buyer for the Mál og Menning bookstore. He is also a novelist.

→ The RASS album *Andstaða* received the best review the Grapevine has ever given to a new release.

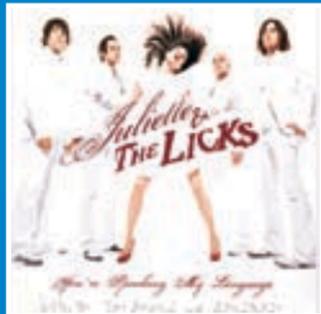
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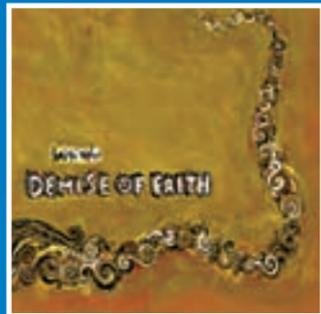
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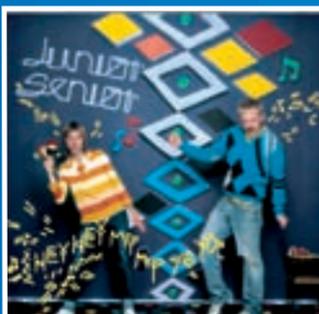
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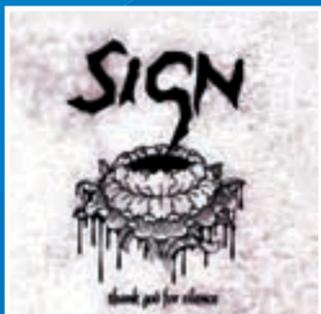
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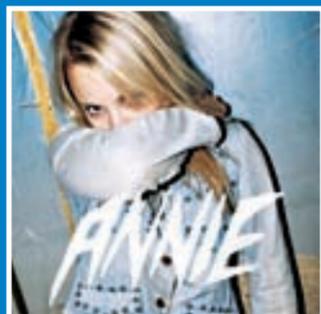
Junior Senior



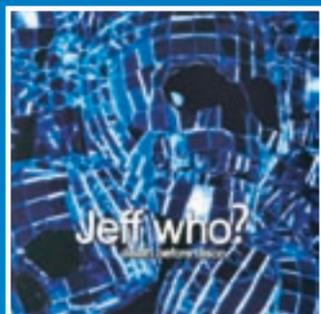
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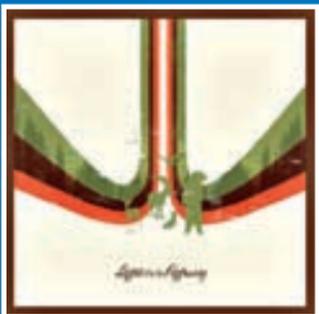
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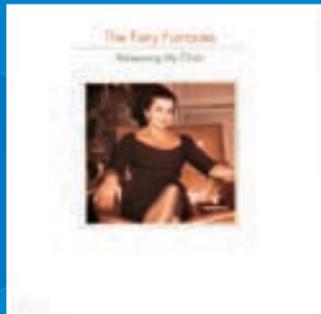
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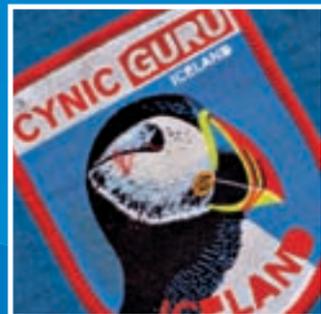
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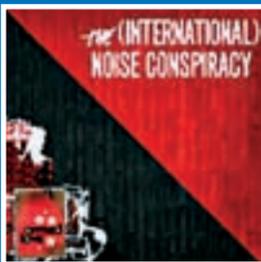
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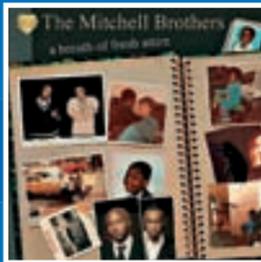
The Fiery Furnaces



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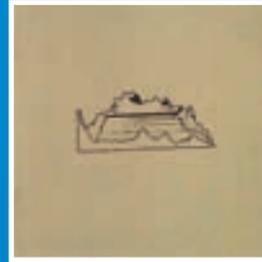
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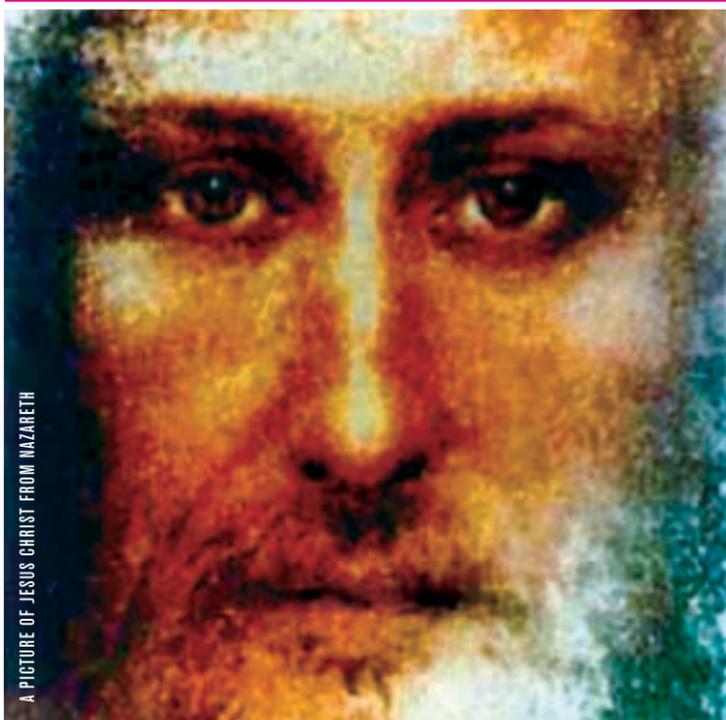
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## Life After the Prom Gowns

### An Interview with Æla

BY PAUL F NIKOLOV PHOTO: GÚNDI

>>> **Æla** (Vomit) is a punk band from **Keflavík** - the birthplace of **Icelandic rock** - and are known for their explosive live performances, as well as their tendency to stand on chairs while playing. **The Grapevine** sat down with **Halli, Sveinn, Ævar** and **Hafþór** to give our readers an idea of what to expect from their show during **Iceland Airwaves**. <<<

IS IT TRUE YOU FORMED YOUR BAND FOR BEER?

**Halli:** We decided to play a show in Sandgerði, because you'd get a case of beer if you played. So we decided to form a band.

FOR A CASE OF BEER?

**Halli:** Yeah. And that's about it.

**Sveinn:** But it had to be a punk band.

**Halli:** It was the Sailor's Day bands in Sandgerði. And as you probably know, Sandgerði is a big sailor town.

AND SAILORS LOVE PUNK ROCK?

**Halli:** No, actually we decided to form a punk band to shock as many people as we could, both with loud punk music and with a loud stage performance.

HENCE THE NAME. SO HOW DID THE SAILORS REACT?

**Sveinn:** There were people

actually dancing when we were playing, and we were playing during another band's break. The band asked us to leave after two songs, but it was a really good show.

HALLI, I NOTICED THAT YOU LIKE TO PLAY STANDING ON A CHAIR.

**Halli:** Always. If you've got something special about yourself, you have to point it out. But it's also an extension of the stage. I've fallen quite a few times.

**Sveinn:** I have no idea why he uses a chair actually. It started out he brought a chair to rehearsal and played on it.

IS THIS A SPECIAL CHAIR YOU BRING WITH YOU, OR DO YOU USE WHATEVER CHAIR IS AVAILABLE AT THE SHOW?

**Halli:** I use whatever chair is there. It would be a lot of trouble to always bring our own chair. But I've considered getting a designer to make me a special chair. We were all playing on chairs at the Sandgerði show.

**Sveinn:** And we've played a lot of concerts where we were wearing dresses and he (pointing at Halli) was wearing a tuxedo. He always wears a tuxedo.

**Halli:** I think that's just because when you put on a show, it's supposed to be festive. I've tried playing in my regular clothes and I just don't get the same feeling.

YOU NEED TO BE IN A TUXEDO TO PLAY PUNK ROCK.

**Halli:** Yeah, maybe it brings out the punk in me.

**Sveinn:** If you're going to play punk you could at least look good.

**Halli:** I think I might be in a new costume for the Airwaves show, but I can't say what it will be. It could be anything.

SO IT COULD BE A PROM DRESS?

**Halli:** Well -

MAYBE A TOGA?

**Halli:** Let's just say I'm not going to be one of the brides in Brúðarbandið (a band known for wearing wedding gowns on stage).

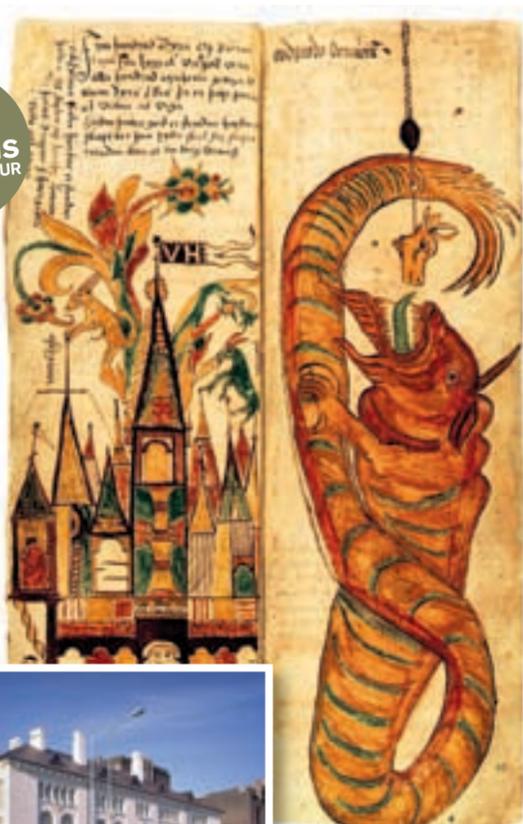
WHAT SHOULD THE FOREIGN PRESS COMING HERE FOR AIRWAVES KNOW ABOUT THE ICELANDIC MUSIC SCENE?

**Halli:** That the bands who play here are playing from the heart. You don't make any money playing music here. They're not in it for the money.

**Sveinn:** Most of the Icelandic bands playing try to do whatever they want to do. They don't have anything to lose.

>>> **Æla** play **Grand Rokk** on **Saturday, Oct. 22**. <<<

- Æla is from Keflavík, the birthplace of rock in Iceland, and the home to the UN NATO base - these two facts about Keflavík are not coincidental.



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## INTERVIEW



## We Remember Who Threw Us Out

### An Interview with Jakobínarína

BY BART CAMERON WITH HELP FROM IGGY  
SNIFF OF SINGAPORE SLING  
PHOTO: JULIA STAPLES

>>> Since winning the **Icelandic Battle of the Bands** this year, a little has changed for **Jakobínarína**—they have free practice space, and more people know them. The youth and energy that got so much attention during the competition has continued to attract fans, but the same youthfulness has kept them from being fully involved in the scene. **Gunnar, Hallberg, Sigurður** and **Heimir** sat down with the **Grapevine** to discuss life after the battle. <<<

ANOTHER YOUNG BAND FROM HAFNARFJÖRÐUR—WHAT IS THAT TOWN DOING TO DEVELOP SO MANY YOUNG MUSICIANS? LADA SPORT, ÚLPA, SIGN, PAN.

**Gunnar:** We got a free practice space... after we won.

**Iggy:** Hafnarfjörður? Have you heard the new Sign album?

**Sigurður:** We're playing with them on Monday at a student party in Hafnarfjörður.

**Iggy:** That's right; that is a weird place. People out there have concerts on Mondays.

And we're playing a show this Friday at Kaffi Hljómalind, a benefit show against animal cruelty.

WHAT? ARE YOU VEGETARIANS? DO WE HAVE MEMBERS OF THE STRAIGHT EDGE MOVEMENT HERE?

**Everybody but Sigurður:** (Laughing) No.

**Sigurður:** I am straight edge. **Jakobínarína, turning:** Since

when?

**Sigurður:** Since always.

AND IGGY, YOU'VE HAD A STRAIGHT EDGE MEMBER OF SINGAPORE SLING.

**Iggy:** Never.

PÓRÍR.

**Iggy:** Oh. That was just a... well, he played for last Airwaves. He's a strange guy.

HE'S STRAIGHT EDGE AND PROMISING. I THINK SOBRIETY HELPS.

**Iggy:** It's difficult being straight edge and being a troubadour like him. Cat Power, she drinks like a bottle or two of whiskey before she gets on stage. And even then she might break down and run off stage.

WHICH KIND OF HAPPENED WHEN SHE PLAYED IN REYKJAVÍK FOR INNIPÚKINN.

**Gunnar:** We were kicked out of Innipúkinn.

HARD CORE. WAS IT THE STRAIGHT EDGER? WERE YOU BEING PUNK ROCK?

**Gunnar:** No, we were underage.

QUICK STATEMENT OF AGES.

**Gunnar:** (Pointing) 15, 16, 19, 15, 17. And our keyboardist is not here, and he's young, too.

**Iggy:** You're a six piece. So who plays the tambourine?

Silence.

**Iggy:** I guess not every band has a silly tambourine shaker.

YOU GUYS REFERRED TO THE BAD BANDS AT THE BATTLE

OF THE BANDS. I HAVE TO SAY, AS A SPECTATOR, I WAS TAKEN ABACK BY THE JAKOBÍNARÍNA ATTITUDE. YOU SEEMED SO COCKY, THAT IT WAS OFF-PUTTING. WHAT AM I NOT GETTING?

**Gunnar:** It's our reputation.

The band in second place, Hello Norbert, they were a good typical indie band. We Painted the Walls, they were good.

**Iggy:** Are you a typical indie band?

**Gunnar:** No.

BUT THE COMPLAINT IS THAT THE MANCHESTER INFLUENCE IS TOO STRONG.

**Sigurður:** It's really cool.

**Gunnar:** I don't listen to that many Manchester bands. A little Joy Division, but not much. We like it, but we don't think let's copy that. We just play what comes to our heads and people say it's like the Manchester scene. I don't think so.

IT HAS TO BE DIFFICULT, AS A YOUNG BAND, TO NOT SOUND LIKE YOUR INFLUENCES. YOU ALMOST HAVE TO PLAN AGAINST IT.

**Iggy:** So did you see Happy Mondays play when they came here?

**Gunnar:** (Laughing) That would be when?

**Iggy:** In 1990.

**Gunnar:** I missed it. I think I was one.

HOW MANY OF YOU WERE IN THE WOMB? WAIT A SECOND, THE TIMING IS CLOSE, THIS COULD EXPLAIN THE SOUND.

**Iggy:** If you're that young, do you have trouble playing at bars?

**Hallberg:** Our first gig, at Bar 11, we got thrown out. But after that, we haven't had too much trouble.

>>> **Jakobínarína** played **Grand Rokk** on **Wednesday, Oct. 19.** <<<

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# FRIDAY NIGHT LIVE REVIEWS

Late Friday Night reviews

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# SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE REVIEWS

FONTMASTER FERRIS



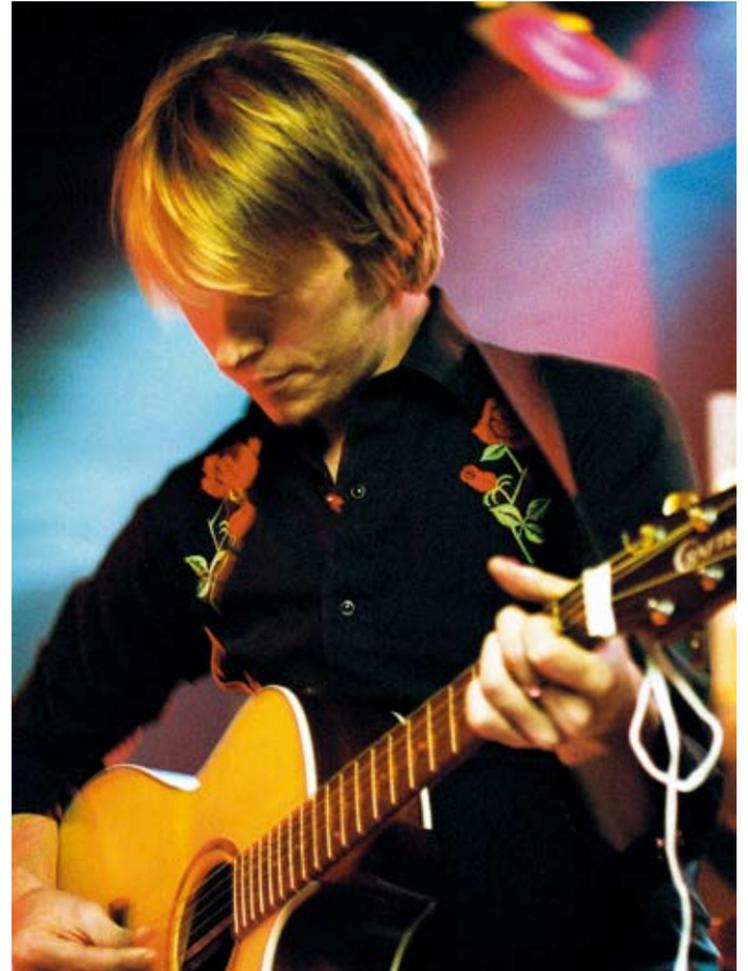
HJÁLMAR

PHOTO BY HÖRÐUR SVEINSSON

**PRAVDA** This late in the evening, the tanned and gelled crowd at Pravda was ready to be entertained. It was a shame, then, that a band such as **Plat** seemed to have little effect. This duo churned out multi-layered hardcore electronic numbers with fury, pausing very little if at all between songs, all the while dancing to their own music. The only flaw in the performance - often these layers became stacked so high that they toppled over, spilling out great waves of pointless noise. ¶ Following up was **Donna Mess**, a trio of singers backed by a laptop. The girls had their hair done up in a hairspray chaos, their faces slathered with glitter and gaudy mid-80s jumpsuits. Whether or not this was supposed to be satirical of the 80s nostalgia that currently plagues Reykjavík was hard to tell at first. After waiting nearly half an hour for them to figure out how to get their songs down from an iTunes programme, they began screeching like preteens sent to bed without dessert on top of beats that could have been Peaches throw-aways. On witnessing their last number - a coordinated dance routine mercifully devoid of "singing" - it became painfully obvious that there was no irony in the 80s worship after all. ¶ **DJ Óli** spun some safe, predictable coke techno, which this crowd responded to very well. Not so well received was **Exos**, maybe because he spun drum and bass. Known ten years ago as the "cerebral" dance music,

drum and bass is making a comeback in Europe; in the UK in particular. Should this craze catch on in Iceland, **Exos** will undoubtedly be leading the pack. **PAUL F NIKOLOV** ¶ ¶ **GAUKUR Á STÖNG** >>>An Encore for Safety<<< ¶ **Forgotten Lores** worked up a frenzy to close out Gaukur á Stöng on Friday. With ten performers, the stage looked almost as crowded as the floor. The three rappers and a DJ who cuts prolific scratches were true to their hip-hop influences, but it was the organ that truly set the **Forgotten Lores** apart. Blending nicely with the early hard-rock sounding guitars, this was how the Onyx and The Doors collaboration would have sounded. ¶ A steaming audience demanded an encore, which they got. That was probably the safest way out, as I imagine the hysteric audience would have torn the place apart otherwise. **SVEINN BIRKIR BJÖRNSSON** ¶ ¶ **GRAND ROKK** >>>Mongolian Joggin<<< ¶ Not the first band to have problems with the sound system at this venue, **Delicia Mini** nevertheless started promisingly. At about one minute into every song though, their endlessly repeated bridges and simple melodies became just plain annoying. Also, it never quite surfaced whether singer **Kristján's** inability to sing was meant to be charming. The **Croisztans** managed to draw people back into the venue with their mixture of fast punk rock drumming,

pounding guitars and the occasional mandolin or accordion adding a good touch of Eastern European folksong. Singer **Siggi** looked like Benicio del Toro in Fear and Loathing, with the same face, hairstyle and drug-crazed grimaces - only the perfectly ironed three-piece suit broke the image. Shouting at the audience like an angry boar, the lyrics, better defined as wild babbling, were probably intended to sound like Mongolian, if anything from this world. The band shared their enthusiasm with the audience, many of whom danced rococo-style with each other, their limbs kicking and bashing out of control. The eccentric show got slightly out of hand when **Siggi** decided to jog through the venue and engage in small talk with the audience during a song, leaving the mic to a confused member of the audience. **JULIKA HUETHER NASA** >>>Jamaican Ice Hockey Gold<<< ¶ Coming to the Hjalmar concert at NASA yesterday was an experience in itself, and it started at the door. There was a crowd of some two hundred people waiting to get in and after they were told by the security guards that there was no more space inside, they almost started a riot, trying to push their way in despite the rejection. When the crowd understood that the security guys were relentless, they decided to sing one of Hjalmar's hits in unison instead. ¶ The temperature inside the club was heating up in the meantime, and when Hjalmar jumped



THE RUSHES

PHOTO BY BILLI

onstage and started playing some fifteen minutes later than scheduled, the audience was like a one big melting pot. The atmosphere was very laid back, even though there were maybe only a handful of real Rastas in the crowd. This band was just adored here. ¶ Seeing Hjalmar for the first time, I was stupefied, staring in silent amazement at the beginning. After the second song, I just gave in and started jamming to this true 70s-style kinky reggae. How bizarre is it to hear reggae sung in Icelandic? Something like seeing a Jamaican ice hockey team winning a world championship. Bizarre and amazing at the same time. Respect. **PATRICIA DRATI** ¶ **ÞJÓÐLEIKHÚSKJALLARINN** >>>Instrumental Perfection and Moments between Songs<<< **Small Colin's** mellow, heartfelt beats had a unique twist: they could instantly shift into hyper-caffeinated break beats, soaring gloriously into ambient territory with extraordinary ease. As the show progressed, it quickly became apparent he was not so much a very gifted musician as a genius. His set was a modest piece of perfection,

careening into emotional territory I would not have deemed possible for instrumental music to touch. ¶ **Ske**. The very mention of this incredibly awful band's name could strike fear into the heart of the bravest scenester. Their stale, brainless music has even been deemed dull enough to win Icelandic music awards. The fact that some of the numbers they played were three years old helped put their song writing into perspective; music that might have seemed quirky and abstract when it was released now seems simply idiotic. I have never seen a band look more stupid or less professional than **Ske** playing their opening song. ¶ **Ske** weren't even bad enough to be funny, but the crowd was swaying and shimmying along to their Sunday afternoon shit like they were being paid for it. There were, however, points in their performance where the sheer honesty of their awfulness almost won me over; **Happy In A Sad Way** proved for the umpteenth time that purity and simplicity can still win the day. Their forays into minimal lo-fi made for their best songs, and when they truly

## Eleven Reasons to Visit Reykjavík's Thermal Pools and Baths



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**FUTURE FUTURE GRAND ROKK**

Atli told the audience it was "dangerous not to dance to this song."

**NORTÓN PRAVDA**

Who the hell would use a hair dryer instead of a microphone?

**HAIR DOCTOR NASA**

let go of all their indie-rock posturing, they actually became a fairly good band. ¶ So **Ske** didn't quite earn their reputation as the worst band in the universe, although they came pretty damn close. No, the title of tonight's worst act goes to **Stranger**. Singer **Hjörvar's** sad, pathetic hollers punctuated unimaginative instrumentation from the ubiquitous **Ensími** boys (you can find members of **Ensími** in **Rass**, **Dr.Spock** and **Bob Justman**) throughout **Stranger's** remarkably unremarkable set. Sheer boredom. The sheer lack of quality is commendable in itself. The best moments all had one thing in common: they were between the songs and no one was playing. SINDRI ELDON

**PRAVDA >>>Dangerous Not to Dance<<<** ¶ **Nortón's** Atli Bollason refused to acknowledge the cold at Pravda, standing in tiny shorts and a sleeveless shirt while the audience froze. During the song *Mom Has Been Set On Fire* (trans. from Icelandic), Atli told the audience it was "dangerous not to dance to this song," following his own advice and breaking it down like Jane Fonda on crack. The audience followed, unleashing wild dance moves while still sober. Guitarist Högni Egilsson couldn't be heard very well, but apart from that, the rich sounds of keyboard samplings and computer beats had the audience swept back to the early 90s when Snap ruled the dance floor. ¶ **DJ Beatmakin Troopa** started off with sounds of rain and muffled thunder, setting the tone for a melancholic, dreamy set. He played a relaxed, lounge-chill fusion of different music styles, including hip-hop, funk, and Latin jazz. Precise as a surgeon, the crowd was mostly awestruck at the lesson in style the **Troopa** provided. ¶ **Steve Sampling** didn't start off well due to technical difficulties. After an embarrassing five minutes of silence, the audience started to engage in loud conversation or simply left. When the music got going, **Sampling's** tracks were simplistic and honest. Accompanying **Sampling** on one of his last tracks was a performer who delivered a slick, political rap in Icelandic about the dark side of drug use. ÞÓRDÍS ELVA ÞORVALDSDÓTTIR BACHMANN ¶¶ **GRAND ROKK >>>The Only Nordic Country Smaller than Iceland Steals the Show<<<** ¶ **Motörhead** clones **Nine-Elevens** put on a show so painfully derivative of their muse that at one point they even played a cover of *The Ace of Spades*, which was possibly inspired by the ace of spades tattoo on the bass player's arm. No amount of dry ice fog was able to make this band sound convincing or engaging, and the

crowd's reaction remained lukewarm throughout. **Future Future's** sheer unpredictability seemed to confuse the crowd more than it drew them in. But be advised: this was to no fault of the band, who continued to work tightly composed and choppy art rock numbers with great panache. ¶

Effects featured prominently in **Future Future's** live show, both in terms of the guitar work and the vocals, especially in loops and reverb. This was a band with amazing charisma - the lead singer demonstrated his ninja stylings with the microphone, whipping it around with martial arts dexterity

while dancing about the stage like a man possessed. Their stage presence was so explosive in fact, that for the very first (and only) time that evening I counted a total of six photographers pushing their way through the crowd to get close enough. This was also the only time I've seen someone play a

hooter and make it sound appropriate, and the ability to play in 5/4 time without sounding like a Rush cover band helped, too. ¶ Within the first few minutes of Faroese band **200's** set it seemed as though everyone in the joint was trying their damndest to push their way to the front. The energy from their songs was so intense that even the bass player from the **Nine-Elevens** felt obliged to hook up his fog machine for them. By the time this band was fifteen minutes into their set, the crowd was going completely ape shit: a pit had formed, a girl was banging her fists on the stage, and even the photographers were bopping along. At the end of their explosive set, the band was bellowed into playing an encore which, as the lead singer promised, was "loud, fast, and short." PAUL F NIKOLOV ¶ **>>>Thrashing Professionals<<<** Roaring guitars, hammering bass and drums plus dadaistic screaming: **Bootlegs**, Iceland's thrash metal veterans, played so fast even the most determinedly nodding audience had difficulties keeping up with their speed. Their drummer, who looked like Jesus but played like Schwarzenegger, gave an awe-inspiring performance, though much of the band's effort seemed more set on quantity than quality. And that, after all, is presumably the point of thrash metal. A cover of Pink Floyd's *The Wall* (naturally thrash) finally got the dance floor crowded not long before it turned into a moshpit of the violent kind. JULIKA HUETHER ¶¶ **NASA >>>Musical Missile Strike <<<** ¶ Who the hell would use a hairdryer instead of a microphone? And who would hand out a free single-use shampoo to the audience? One concession: one thing must be admitted about the opening act of this evening - **Hairdoctor** sure had a sense of humour. But other than that, it was hard to find something else interesting about their performance. ¶ Yes, it must be very difficult to stand out from the crowd in a country where everybody seems to be dressed to impress even when they are on their way to a supermarket. But it seems like members of **Dr. Mista & Mr. Handsome** focus too much on their image and too little on the music they play. How could they possibly change the genre with every song they performed, shifting from hip-hop beats to pure rave party mood and think they could still get away with it? They seemed like an angst-ridden group of teenagers unable to decide what music they actually wanted to play. ¶ By the time **Worm is Green** got onstage, **NASA** was packed up to the ceiling. And as soon as this electronica

- CONTINUES ON PAGE 62



HAIRDOCTOR

PHOTO BY ÓSKAR HALLGRÍMSSON

**Carlsberg**  
light beer

Probably the best ... in the world



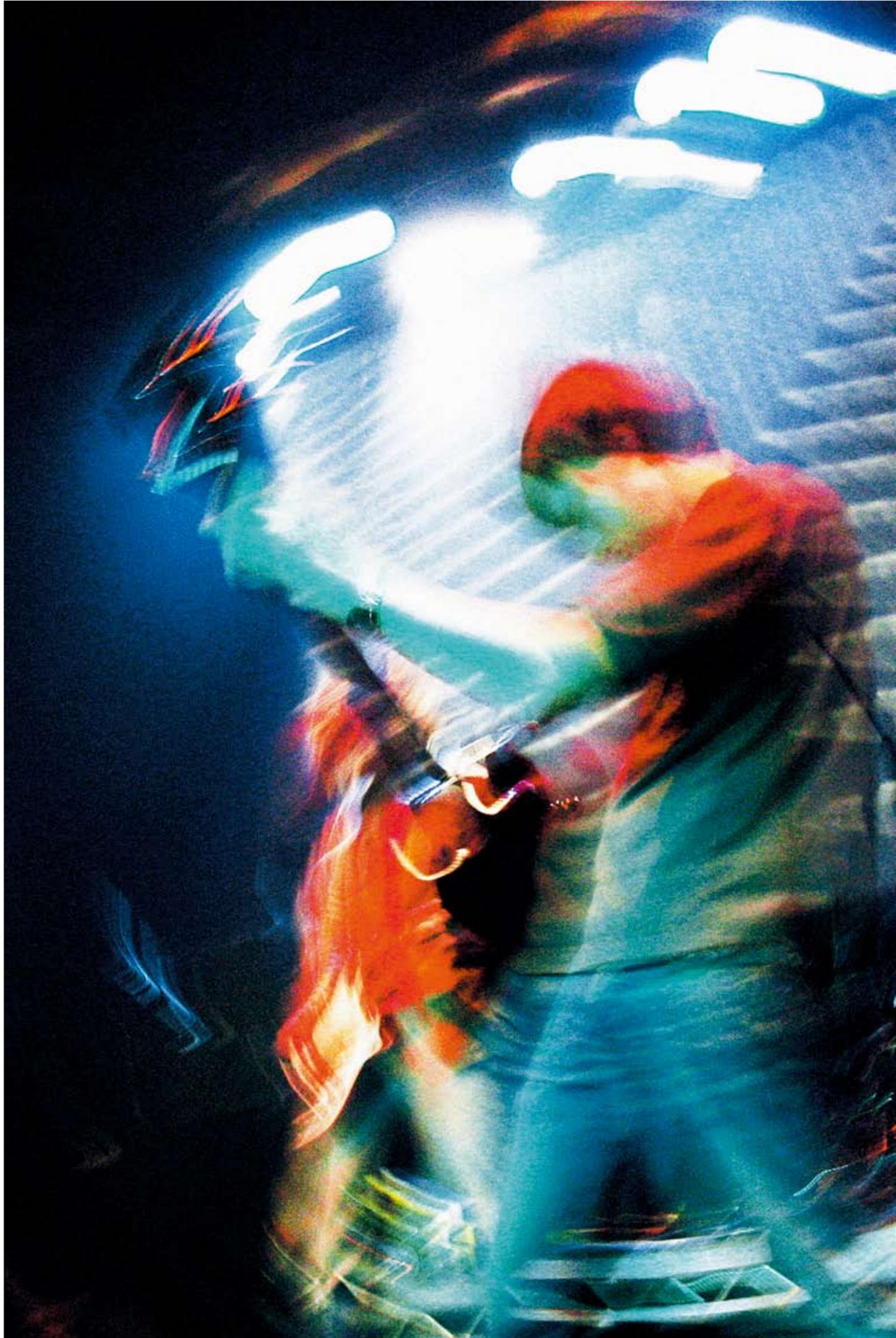
## ARTIST

**Ratatat**

PLACE: NASA

TIME: 01:00

**BLOOD AND GUTS BROOKLYN** ¶ In this pristine club where the ladies were covered in make-up, sparkling things and not much else, and filling the air with perfume and air kisses, what NASA needed more than anything else Saturday night was a little dirtying up—Brooklyn style. ¶ After redecorating the joint with their spit, blood, and a few thrown beers, **Clap Your Hands Say Yeah** and **Ratatat** (both hailing from New York's dingiest borough) left NASA a little worse for the wear. And thank God for that. With all the glitz, the conspicuously constant line to the bathroom, and the club-heavy between sets DJ sessions, you couldn't help but wonder whether these two bands with a boatload of American indie rock buzz would resonate here. ¶ Perhaps sensing the possible disconnect, **Clap Your Hands** cleansed the air by opening their set with a blast of screeching, sustained feedback. Properly refocused, or possibly deaf, the room quickly latched on to the band's sloppy, jangling pop-rock—think the innocence of the Shins holding hands with the nasally squawks and barks of early Talking Heads. ¶ Album highlights like *The Skin of My Yellow Country Teeth*, *Details of The War*, and *Is This Love?* were met with pogo-ing, howls of approval, and, well, clapping. Quite the reception for a band that is still considered a music snob's secret back in the States. All the while, though, lead singer **Alec Ounsworth** made sure the tension onstage remained high: braying like an angry child, cussing soundlessly into the spotlights, skulking about the stage, and beating his guitar with his fist. ¶ Ounsworth even managed to get the crowd chanting "Satan" over and over again during closer *Satan Said Dance*. Which probably hasn't been done since Ozzy could still communicate in complete sentences. ¶ **Ratatat** kept the taste (or was that the smell?) of Brooklyn in everybody's mouth with a set of non-stop shock and awe. With their beards and greasy long hair, the duo rocked harder than anyone expected. Especially guitarist **Mike Stroud**. Skinny and awkward offstage, once he plugged in he morphed into some kind of hipster Hendrix, stomping around the stage and flailing about so hard he actually gave himself a bloody nose. ¶ Within just a few songs, this unrelenting mash-up of heavy metal and hip-hop (shred n'bass, if you will) pushed things dangerously close to the brink of anarchy. Somebody even tossed a beer onstage. A sign of respect, no doubt. ¶ Compared to **Ounsworth** and **Stroud**, who gave their sweat and blood respectively, **Bang Gang's** earlier set of soulless stylized pop was a seamless exercise in boredom. **Johnny Blake**, with his tailored suit and close-cropped blonde hair, looked like one of those European villains from the *Die Hard* films. The crowd seemed into it, but set in company of the visceral sets later in the night, **Bang Gang's** gloss just rang hollow. BART BLASENGAME



RATATAT

PHOTO BY ÁRNI TORFA

rokk  
og rósið

Laugarvegur 32  
101 Reykjavík

ROK  
OG RÓ



ÆLA

PHOTO BY GUNDI



TOMMYGUN

PHOTO BY GUNDI

ARTISTS

Æla and Tommygun

PLACE: GRAND ROKK

TIME: 22:40 and 20:00

**GRAND ROKK >>> Odd-Men-Out Make the Night <<<** Saturday night at Grand Rokk featured a load of home-grown metal acts, all of whom showed off their impressive chops and skull-rattling riffs but ultimately served to set the stage for hometown heroes Æla, who were both the odd-band-out and a satisfying surprise for the handful of out-of-towners in the audience. ¶ **Tommygun's** singer - a chubby guy with shoulder-length dirty-blonde hair and goatee - came off like a Viking Danzig, punctuating his angry bellowing with larynx-shredding screams and punching the drummer's cymbals whenever the mood struck him. Choruses, melodies and such were more or less non-existent, but the band's speedy attack was more or less bullet proof. Like **Tommygun**, **Perfect Disorder** blasted through English-language originals, but they sounded more or less like an accomplished Iron Maiden cover band, with a baby-faced singer (clad in a "bitch" t-shirt) sporting a cavalcade of cheesy rock moves: Christ-like splayed arms, venomous finger pointing, mic-fondling, etc. Though his sustained notes sometimes warbled off key, his metalhead screech was in fine form, and the band's chugging apocalyptic blues and headbangable stomp kept things interesting even when their sleazeball chants were in short supply. ¶ **Revolution** - who recently opened for Iron Maiden - were just as ferocious, with a few modifications, including their costumes (ties and unchecked white button-downs) and the darker emotional territory they explored in their songs. With two guitarists - one looking like a young Karl Marx, the other like J. Mascis, both playing flying-Vs - harmonizing their riffs and sending ornate solos heavenward, the bassist-singer was free to indulge his constipated croon, busting black-hearted couplets like "as I step into the light / the end is nigh." Thankfully, once his pain had been documented, near the set's end, his mates worked up some soaring, arena-ready jams. ¶ **Noise** were sloppier and more loveable for it. A bunch of t-shirt-sporting kids dropping jagged supercharged riffs and decently catchy hard-rock barnburners. Overall the band's sound was alternately oppressive and sprightly: The skinny, black-haired singer howled his pain with enough angst for several teenage diaries, but most of the time the band's songs zipped along, reserving a few stray bars for some hair-metal solos. ¶ **Æla** were clearly the evening's main attraction, and for good reason. They came on like an Icelandic version of the Minutemen, with the tuxedo-clad singer climbed on tables and yelped feverishly over warped jazz grooves, rubbery punk-funk and spidery guitar flourishes. One song kicked off with an eerie minor-key groove that could have been featured in some '60s spy movie, morphed into a cracked country shuffle, then back again, all in less than 90 seconds. Many of Æla's very short songs felt like dadaist anthems - but between their nuanced arthouse stomp and the singer's cracked David Byrne declamation, they were a hoot and a half. CHRISTIAN HOARD

Airwaves Opening Hours

|          |       |   |       |
|----------|-------|---|-------|
| Thursday | 10:00 | - | 20:00 |
| Friday   | 10:00 | - | 20:00 |
| Saturday | 10:00 | - | 18:00 |
| Sunday   | 13:00 | - | 18:00 |

rokk  
og rósið  
Laugarvegur 32  
101 Reykjavík

His Music should be dreamt, not played.

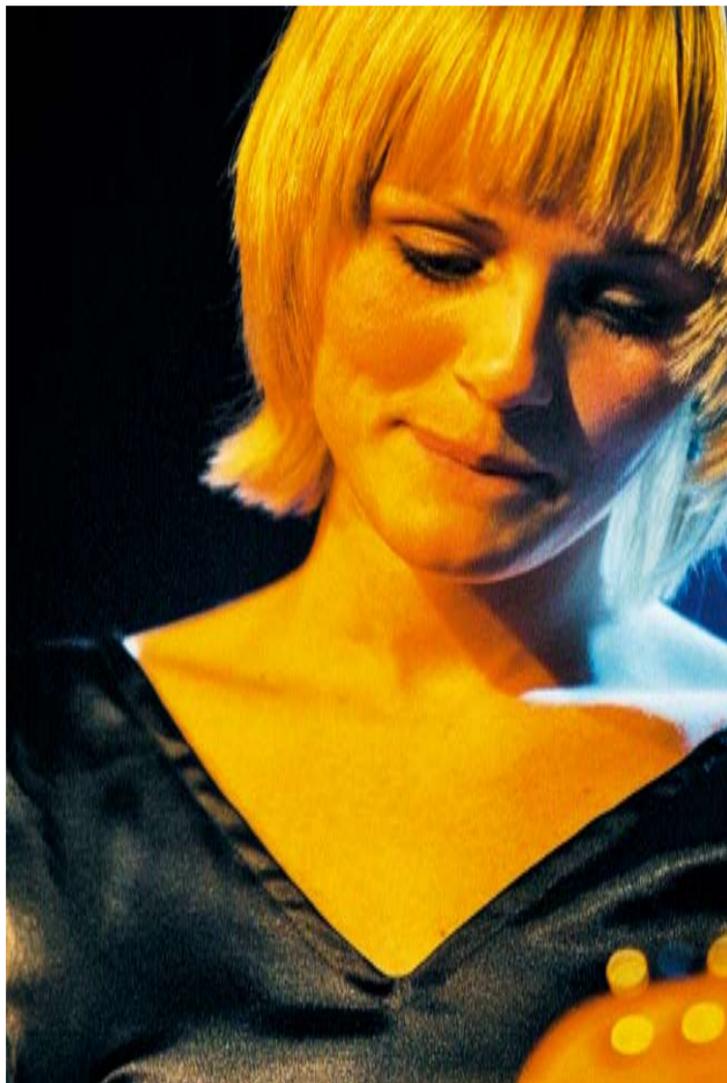
BANG GANG NASA

THE RUSHES [should] catch on big time with starry-eyed youngsters, David Gray fans, and your mom.

THE RUSHES ÞJÓÐLEIKHÚSKJALLARINN

ÞÓRIR'S songs hold up well against Oberst's.

ÞÓRIR ÞJÓÐLEIKHÚSKJALLARINN



LÁRA

PHOTO BY AUI



200

PHOTO BY KARL PETERSSON

project opened their act, it was clear that the mood was going to turn around 180 degrees. The mood went melancholy, with some captivating pieces bulging with hypnotically arranged tirades. The fragile, almost ethereal music of **Worm is Green** definitely has an atmosphere, depth and decency. And decency may not be perfection, but it is at least its cousin. A shame this group has not been truly discovered by the international audience yet. ¶ What followed next was the best performance of this year's Airwaves. **Bang Gang** opened just beautifully with Find Me, and for most of the foreigners in the audience it was clear that **Barði Jóhannsson** is a treasure of the Icelandic music scene. His music should be dreamt, not played. It can be light as a feather one moment and straightforward, insistent and edgy the next. Maybe the most obvious difference between **Barði** and the other bands is that this

guy knows exactly what he is doing and what effect he wants. SEE PAGE (60) FOR MORE DETAILS PATRICIA DRATI ¶ ¶ **Gus Gus** Report ¶ Limitations of staff and access to printers being what they are, The Grapevine could not fully review **Gus Gus**, who, as of press time, are still playing. We can say this: **Daniel Ágúst** continued to charm the festival, joining his bandmates for some tunes from the last millennium. And local Eurovision icon and Icelandic Idol judge **Páll Óskar** joined the band onstage, in a move that had a great deal more resonance to locals than visitors. BART CAMERON ¶ ¶ **HAFNARHÚSIÐ** >>>BROKE<<< The members of **Rass** are actually old enough to have witnessed the start of the punk wave. This gives them a certain authority in the delivery of their music—they can truly run rampant through their punk-anthem sounding songs. But as a member

of the audience pointed out, despite all their bravado, or perhaps even because of it, they ended up coming off as a joke. Maybe it is because it's already been 25 years since the year punk broke, or maybe it's because beer bellies and leather pants look comical at best. The mockery they put on display eventually fails to represent anything punk. To me, Saturday's performance earned **Rass** the most shameful label a "punk" band can be tagged with: Posers. SVEINN BIRKIR BJÖRNSSON >>>Dance Breaks Out at the Punk Show<<< Usually, when I go to a punk show, I worry about losing things—a tooth, the hearing in my left ear, my virginity (again). Once, at a particularly rowdy Pennywise show in Anchorage, Alaska I even lost a shoe. But at tonight's punk show the only thing that really got lost was the momentary boom of **Rass**, the reputed darlings of the Icelandic punk scene. Well, **Ottur Proppl**, the lead singer lost his shirt, I guess. And when he did—when he tore off his wife beater (which, like the wife beaters of the rest of his band mates, had RASS scrawled across the front) and threw it into the crowd, nobody even tried to pick it up. Which made it all the more awkward that he'd gone through the trouble of writing RASS in big black letters on his chest. ¶ There was one woman dancing. She had on a silver dress. It seemed like she knew someone from the band. Usually, at a punk show, the band can be counted on to do some crazy shit. Saturday, one of the guitarists had a sleeping mask on his head (perhaps in case he'd wanted to sleep through the first two acts). Another poured a beer on his head. The whole band was colour coordinated—and rowdy and loud and generally obnoxious. But nobody cared. Nobody pogo stuck

(except that one girl) and nobody threw a beer back. If you ask **Rass**, I'm sure they'll tell you that they put on a punk show. Same if you asked the girl in the silver dress. But as for the rest of us, I think we'd say that it wasn't a punk show at all. I think we'd say that it just kind of sucked. ¶ But maybe it wasn't all **Rass's** fault. Maybe it was a fundamental crisis of band order. The two opening acts certainly didn't do them any favours. The first, **Lights on the Highway**, were two thermals and a flannel shirt away from being a grunge tribute band (a well-studied tribute band, mind you, but who doesn't already own the Soundgarden oeuvre?) The second, **Viking Giant Show**, suffered a major crisis of personality mid-way through the show—they started out like the kind of band who learned to harmonize from Kenny Loggins; they ended like the kind of band who yells. Neither Jekyll nor Hyde was very satisfying. ¶ Which is why it's so good that **Jeff Who?** stepped in after the **Rass** attack and saved the day. Sure, Franz Ferdinand are the elephant in the room with these guys, but that doesn't really change the fact that after three bombs in a row, a girl is just mighty glad to get her hands on a hook. When they came onstage people crowded the front, lips started moving, the crowd started having fun. Word on street was that **Rass** was the band to catch at Hafnarhúsið last night, but **Jeff Who?** are the band I danced to. ¶ Someone else's dancing, that of local marshal arts expert **Ægar**, who tore up the front rows with kicks mixed in to break dancing, distracted from the **The Union of Knives**. Which is a shame, because even though the **Knives'** greatest attribute is their ability to program a drum, they still put on a solid show. The backbeat

had a tendency to drown out the melodies. ¶ All of this—the colour of the first three bands, the bright light of **Jeff Who?**, the weird dancing—didn't change the one truly solid event of the evening, which is that **The Zutons** showed up ready to be rock stars. ¶ It is standard that, at a rock concert when the band claps, the audience claps back. When **The Zutons** clapped, so did everybody else. When **Abi Harding** picked up her saxophone and played the living daylights out of it, they clapped even harder. **Dave McCabe** and his band of rapscallions put on a show with a new kind of music—a little funk, a little soul, just enough rock and roll to make it work in an arena and an encore so full of Egypt you'd think you were hearing the Bangles. It was like being at a different venue—a different concert, a different festival, even. GENEVIEVE ROTH ¶ ¶ **GAUKURINN** >>>Mini-Rammsteins and a Pork Pie<<< ¶ The Kerrang Palace of Reykjavík with characteristic ketchup-smear tables and a predominantly male crowd had a line up of mini Rammsteins - one heavy rock or metal act after another with very little or no ingenuity coming up for air, a presentation of Sonic Youth and Beastie Boys shirts behind a Maiden-worthy barrier, which never really had to prove itself. ¶ **Lada Sport** contributed an American-style college boy rock combined with Weezer tank-tops and glasses. Playing to a majority press crowd they got their biggest cheer just by mentioning **Babysambles**. With the "ingenious" decision of putting the lead singer far left you began to wonder why there was a mic in front of the shoe gazing mid-stage bass player, until the super girl singer from **Mammút** made a cameo appearance for one chorus, significantly raising the game. ¶ **Solid IV** went heavier. With a lead resembling that guy from The Commitments, this was pure motorbike metal. They had anti-Bush stickers and skulls on T-shirts - you get the picture. ¶ One thing that was plain was that this night was just not very sexy... until **Hoffman** appeared and, accordingly, the crowd gained some oestrogen. **Hoffman** were easier on the eye, with a lead who kept dry-humping the mic stand over timid and dull chord progressions, all while sticking his tongue out Kiss-style. Gaukurinn take note at this point, your smoke machine is far removed from atmospheric and gives instead the impression that the crowd should start observing the fire exits. ¶ A knackered **Vonbrigði** picked up the night. Twenty years on from a so-so punk career, they look and sound like they've been doing this for a



Vinyl were what bars like Gaukur á Stöng were built for.

VINYL GAUKURINN

HOFFMAN appeared and, accordingly, the crowd gained some oestrogen.

HOFFMAN GAUKURINN

There is a distinct randomness to Jan Mayen's song writing, but it is a strangely uniform randomness.

JAN MAYEN GAUKURINN



THE ZUTONS

PHOTO BY RÓBERT STEFÁNSSON

while. The crowd got bigger and older while some of the band looked like they would rather have been in bed. ¶ The place suddenly got packed and everyone picked up as Vinyl came on. A big synth rock 'n' roll with leather trousers and a pork pie hat, Vinyl earned points for being the first band that seemed into their own music. With a powerful singer, stadium-worthy endings and surprisingly a Ghost Town-esque reggae beat on their second number, Vinyl were what bars like Gaukur á Stöng were built for. DEBORAH COUGHLIN ¶ >>> **Bigger Than Christmas** <<< ¶ There is a distinct randomness to Jan Mayen's song writing, but it is a strangely uniform randomness, and although their music was remarkably restrained for such obviously talented guitar players, the songs never quite reached the peak they were intended to. They were, admittedly, very well rehearsed, and it's a pity they didn't spend all that time in the garage writing more interesting songs than the dull power-chord pop they belched out at Gaukurinn. ¶ **Hrafn Thoroddsen** is the sexiest man in Icelandic rock, I am sure of it. His lanky frame, unsure posture and hawkish, sallow features so perfectly match his soul-scathingly honest voice that it's almost unbearable to watch him. **Ensími's** music, however, is getting weary with age; their guitar-and-synth prog-punk is a style that requires constant change and evolution, and were it not for the tongue-in-cheek daring of songs like Little Bit and Set A Date, I would have deemed them fallen into the same egocentric trappings as far too many Icelandic rock bands. ¶ Some woman I'm supposed to know spoke to me before Jan Mayen's set, saying that she "loved Noise Conspiracy. They're serious, political and loud as hell." ¶ I

failed to spot the qualities in the first two, but the third certainly rang true: **The (International) Noise Conspiracy** blasted the enthusiastic crowd with nine or so pretentious, cocksure and completely unoriginal punk songs with no lasting impact whatsoever. Their stage performance did rock immensely, though. After all a bunch of pretentious Swedes with a sharp dress code and a perfect sense of timing gyrating and skipping to banal rock music is a party if I ever heard of one. ¶ Swedish bands often seem to exist in their own odd little world, a world of absolutely shameless clichés and pure honesty and things like restraint and modesty are apparently unheard of. These guys were no exception; singer **Dennis** posed for photos while strutting around amongst the crowd - in mid-song. And they made for an appropriate close to an equally indulgent and confident festival. ¶ Airwaves has apparently become the new Christmas here, exploding into people's faces and ears after a year's tough waiting like so much tickertape. Perhaps the organizers of next year's festival should be made aware of this shift in priorities, because as we all know, nothing sells quite like sacrilege, and as far as slogans go, "We're bigger than Christmas right now" is pretty hard to beat. SINDRI ELDON ¶ ¶ **ÞJÓÐLEIKHÚSKJALLARINN** >>> **Tender Moods** <<< It was a tender mood at Þjóðleikhúskjallarinn. Despite relatively unknown performers, the venue was surprisingly crammed. **Helgi Valur** opened the night with a confident and emotional delivery of Jeff Buckley's Hallelujah. Accompanied by cellist **Edda Björgvinsdóttir**, he proceeded with material from his record, Demise of Faith. He closed his set with a creative version for guitar and cello of Snoop Dogg's Gin & Juice, which the crowd



VIKING GIANT SHOW

PHOTO BY HÖRÐUR SVEINSSON

happily accompanied him on. ¶ String additions proved popular, as next performer, **Ilda** (Guðjón Ingi) was accompanied by a violinist. This was Guðjón's debut performance, and he could hardly have wished for a more welcoming audience. The patrons cheered him on as he struggled with minor technical difficulties, and he rewarded them with a glowing performance of original material. ¶ The receptive crowd welcomed singer **Lára**, performing with a band of five people. She gave it her best, but her band proved to be her Achilles heel. In the quiet setting, her subdued voice seldom managed to overpower the instruments, especially her drummer who either miscalculated the size of the auditorium or the volume of Lára's voice. SVEINN BIRKIR BJÖRNSSON

>>> **Starry-Eyed Youngsters and Your Mom** <<< ¶ Everybody now: swoon! "This is our first ever gig abroad," said **Gez O'Connell** of **The Rushes** midway through his band's set. Apparently, however, word got around about this English piano-guitar-drums trio: Þjóðleikhúskjallarinn was packed, and despite the abundance of weird haircuts, the crowd wasn't too hip to respond enthusiastically to **The Rushes'** lush folk-pop. **O'Connell** indulged his little-lost-boy croon on ballads like I'm Rushing, which began with massaged piano chords and ended up setting glacially pretty harmonies over a countrified

two-step. As if their songs weren't endearing enough, the band offered to give away CDs after the show and recited a bit of Icelandic ("for the girls") that translated to "I want to be your honey tonight." Between the song's gentle come-ons and abundant lushness, pop romanticism was in full effect, and it wouldn't be surprising at all if **The Ruses** catch on big time with starry-eyed youngsters, David Gray fans, and your mom.

¶ **Ampop** sounded a little cold by comparison, but also more accomplished: With keyboards aflutter and guitar lines swirling everywhere, their songs worked up a desperate, elliptical beauty. A surfeit of waltz-rhythmed tearjerkers were built around cathedral-sized organ riffs, with the black-haired singer employing a heartfelt murmur and spicing things up with a little Thom York angst-wail for dramatic effect. The crowd responded mostly with polite applause - perhaps because they were too busy navigating the big-ass tables that should have been moved out of the basement venue before the festival began. ¶ By the time **Úlpa** hit the stage, the crowd had thinned out a bit, but plenty of faithful fans were there to get worked up over the band's widescreen electro-gloom. Chock full of eerie keyboard echoes, arty guitar spills and moody melodies, they sometimes sounded like Joy Division with a less passionate singer

and more expensive equipment. Running more than 45 minutes, their set was at least twice as long as it needed to be, but they scored with a handful of space-rock elegies that exploited the singer's elegantly wasted croon. ¶ Much of the crowd had dissipated by the time **Þórir** came on, which was a shame. After all the stylized hoo-hah, his rainy-day folk songs proved immensely touching. Backed by a bassist and a quietly grooving drummer, Kid Heartbreak switched between piano and electric and acoustic guitar, dropping quietly beautiful melodies and going on in a sweet whimper about late-night payphone calls, not drinking to kill the pain, and not liking himself too much.

¶ The obvious point of reference is **Conor Oberst**, who plumbs the same emotional territory in a similarly cracked voice. **Þórir's** songs hold up well against Oberst's - they're more depressed but, strangely enough, also more hopeful: Despite a load of F-bombs dropped in self-flagellation, **Þórir's** apparently sincere vows to turn himself into a better person rendered his songs even more affecting than they already were. "I stayed up all night, talking to myself," said **Þórir**, who on Thursday manned the merch table at Hafnarhúsið and keeps watch over Reykjavík's hardcore scene in his spare time. Keep turning out songs like these, kid, and you'll have plenty of fans to talk to. CHRISTIAN HOARD



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SWIM

# The Most Fun You Can Have in Reykjavík with Your Clothes Off

BY BART CAMERON

First things first, if you're reading this, then you know English and are therefore suspect: if you decide to go to any pool in Iceland, you'll have to take off all your clothes and scrub your crotch in front of a bunch of other people before entering the pool. If you aren't public enough about scrubbing yourself, people will think you're a modest Englishman, American or Frenchie, and they'll yell at you. So be prepared to do some parading.

What would be so fun that it would be worth shoving your wedding tackle about in front of a mass of strangers? (That is assuming you don't just enjoy the aforementioned act.) Well, it's swimming in geothermal pools (all pools in Reykjavík are heated by geothermal energy).

Why is swimming fun? A few key reasons: 1) By standing in warm water, one can be outdoors in any temperature or weather and still enjoy physical comfort. Want to watch Northern Lights, you'll be fine. Want to look at a sunset, you're golden. Want to just get a little sun despite the bone-chilling cold, all good. 2) Warm water relaxes most people. It's a basic thing. And there aren't many negative side effects to standing in warm water for hours. 3) If you go to the effort of swimming, (not usually done by Icelanders), it makes your heart feel good. 4) Locals go the same pool regularly, and they go there sober. Relaxed and warm, they often speak with each other. The pools are the place to get a feel for your local community.

Here is a list of our favourite pools, with reasons we like them, reasons we don't live there, and typical quotes from a day at each pool.

## Laugardalslaug

**Reason we like it:** With an Olympic-sized pool, Laugardalslaug is also located next to the youth hostel, next to World Class gym, and next to one of the best hot dog stands in town. The crowd is diverse; you are most likely to strike up a conversation with a tourist here. But you are also most likely to see people who really enjoy their gym time.

**Reason we don't live here:** Odd tendency for locals to swim using FLIPPERS and other devices. Locker room is often overcrowded, and swimming 50-meter lengths can be daunting.

**Typical Quote:** How do you like Iceland?

Open on weekdays from 6:50 to 22:00, Saturdays and Sundays from 8:00 to 20:00.

## Seltjarnarnesslaug

**Reason we like it:** Salt water pool with a very local crowd, this is the most relaxed pool in town. Except on Sundays, when unruly ocean swimmers crash the pool after their chilling Atlantic swim.

**Reason we don't live here:** The pool is frequented by locals, and none of us live in Seltjarnarnes. If we move to that neighbourhood, we will definitely live at this

pool.

**Typical Quote:** Lífið er dásamlegt. (Life is good.)

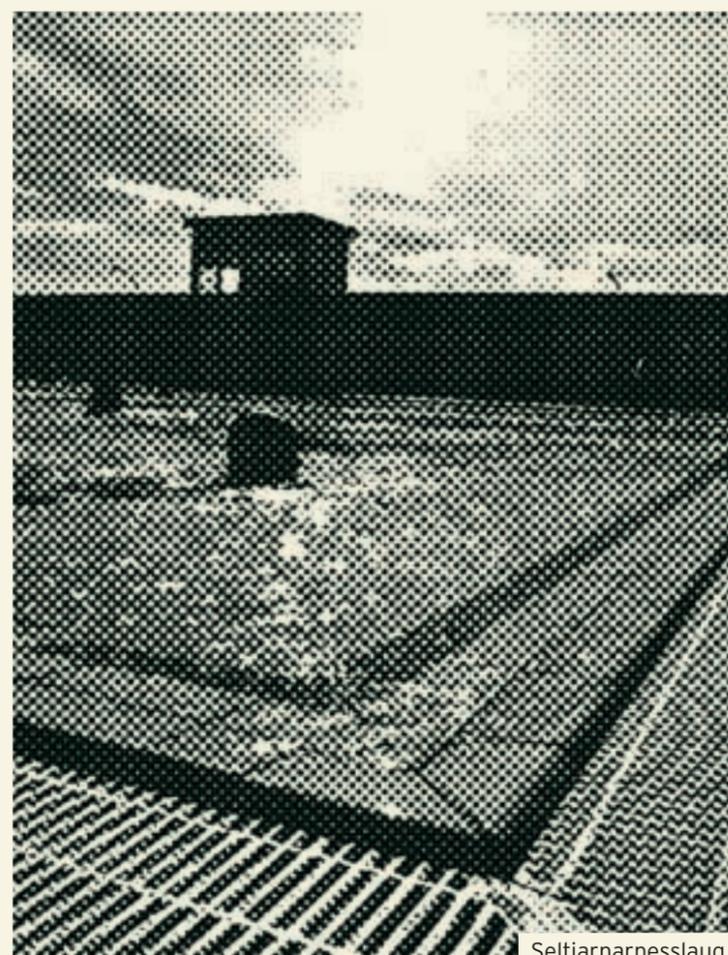
Open weekdays from 06:45 to 20:30, Saturdays and Sundays from 08:00 until 17:30.

## Vesturbæjarlaug

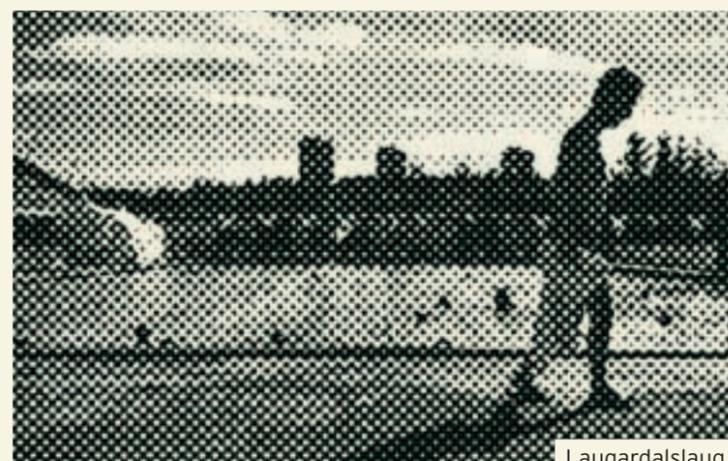
**Reason we like it:** Located near the University of Iceland, and in the historically open-minded but working class neighbourhood of Vesturbær, this pool has a reputation among some as a gay pool. We have seen nothing to suggest that any pool is more gay than any other, but there are fewer homophobe types, which is nice.

**Reason we don't live here:** This pool is especially popular for young parents, and the children can intrude a little on the tranquillity. **Typical Quote:** When the hydrogen bus leaves in six months, something will have to be done to show that we're committed to reform.

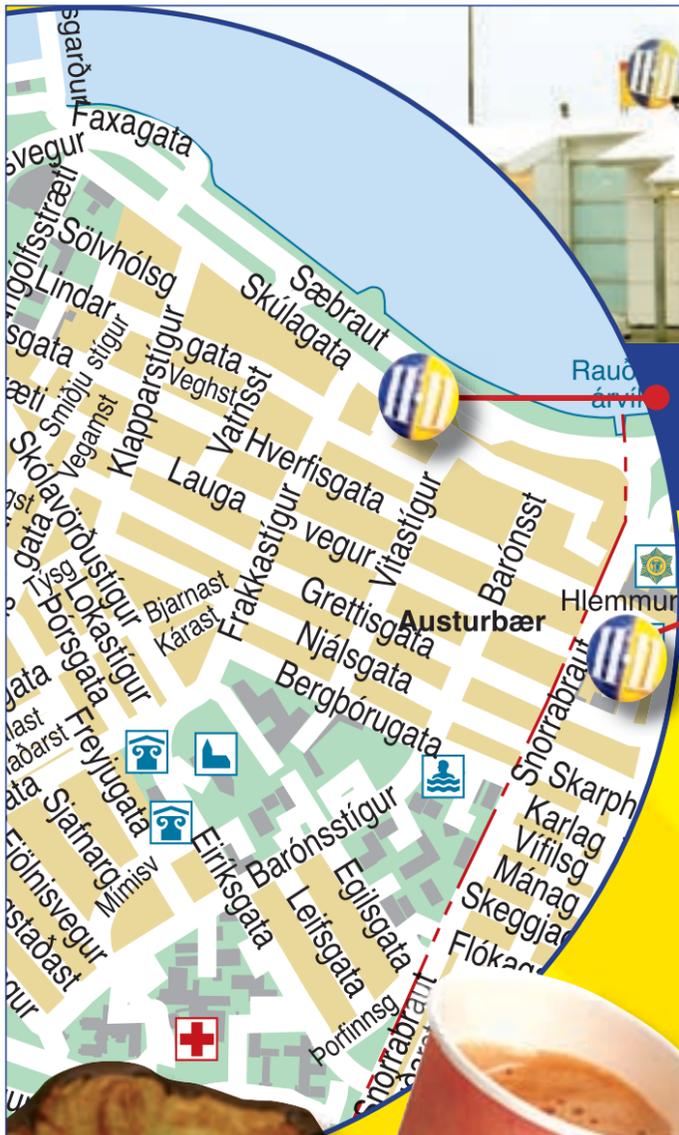
Open on weekdays from 6:30 to 22:00, Saturdays and Sundays from 8:00 to 20:00.



Seltjarnarnesslaug



Laugardalslaug

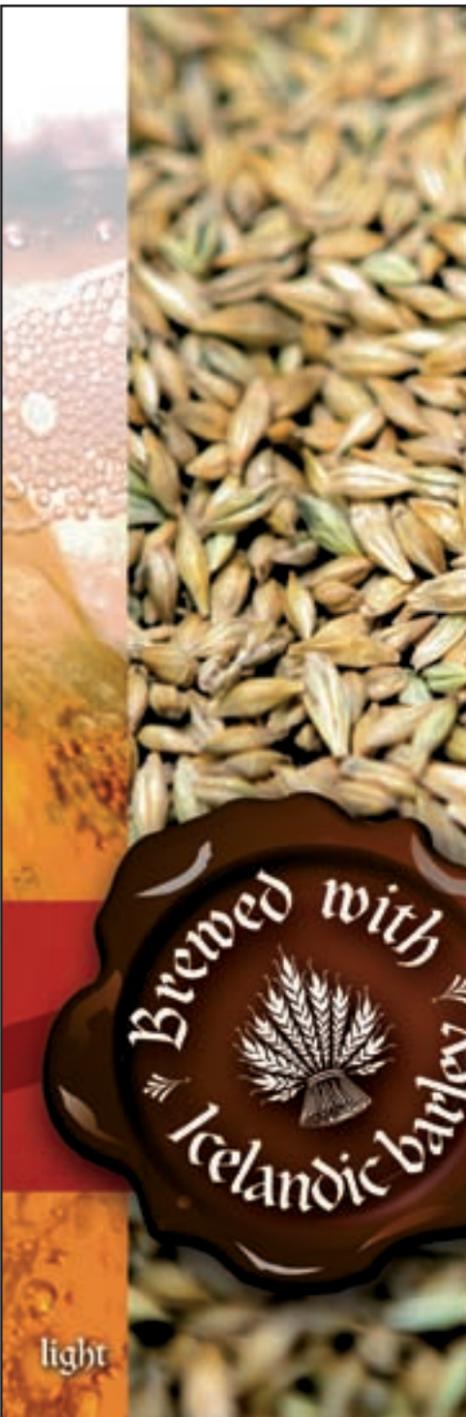


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EAT

# Grapevine Guide to Vegetarian Eating... You Murdering BASTARD

BY PAUL F NIKOLOV

AS MOST FRUITS AND VEGETABLES HAVE TO BE IMPORTED, THEY TEND TO BE MORE EXPENSIVE THAN LOCALLY RAISED, GRASS-FED MEAT-MAKERS. BUT IT IS POSSIBLE TO EAT VEGETARIAN IN ICELAND.

### Shopping

On the low end of vegetarian shopping, there's always our favourite standby, Bónus. At the time of this writing, whole wheat flour is going for 68 ISK/kg, loose potatoes for 47 ISK/kg, and onions are going for a laughable 1 ISK/kg. A kilo of onions for a single króna - don't let anyone tell you that you can't live the high life in this country. On the higher end is Heilsuhúsið. This corner store is a hybrid of vegetarian shop, vegan shop, gourmet shop, miniature library and small pharmacy. Here you'll find more than the standard bird-and-rabbit food fare of most vegetarian shops: for those uncertain how to eat healthier - vegetarian or otherwise - there are a few shelves of books on the subject to choose from. The current meat alternative - soy meat - is for sale there for 350 ISK/500g. Organic fruits and vegetables are also available, but with grapefruits going for 622 ISK/kg and oranges for 422 ISK/kg, you might be better off just eating the pesticides on regular fruit and hoping for the best.

### Dining Out

Through some New Age twist of fate, three of Reykjavík's vegetarian restaurants are located within a few seconds' walk from each other.

Grænn Kostur boasts heaping portions of both vegan and vegetarian fare with most meals under 1000 ISK. Two blocks away is Á Næstu Grösum, a restaurant that might change their menu now and then but always has the same prices: 1200 ISK for lunch, 1490 ISK for dinner, and 550 ISK for soup.

Not too shabby, especially with unlimited bread and hummus to go along with it. Across the street is Kaffi Hljómalind, which advertises itself as a nonprofit organic café. Meals there hover around 1000 ISK while offering sidewalk dining in nice weather, which makes for great people-watching as this restaurant is on Laugavegur. Not only can you watch people from your perch at Hljómalind, you can judge them as inferior, both for eating meat, and for eating for profit.

Beyond the cosmic vegetarian block, in the more distant but just as worthy Borgartún, is Maður Lifandi, a combination vegetarian restaurant/health food store. The vegetarian dining is consistent there, but most of the clientele - typically a rush around lunch and early dinner - are interested in the organic chicken, said to be the only not sugar-saturated chicken in Iceland.

The most traditional way to eat vegetarian in Iceland, though, is to eat at an Asian restaurant. Shalimar, a North Indian restaurant, has an extensive vegetarian menu. There you can eat your fill for between 1200 ISK and 1500 ISK. A little further west is Krua Thai, which we personally consider to be the best Thai restaurant in town: large portions and limitless rice, with most meals under 1000 ISK. Smack-dab in the middle of downtown is Indokína, a combination Chinese-Vietnamese restaurant with a number of soy, noodle and vegetarian dishes that are all reasonably priced.

- |  |                                       |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| Bónus, Laugavegur 59, 562 8200             | Maður lifandi, Borgartún 24, 585 8700 |
| Heilsuhúsið, Skólavörðustígur 12, 568 9266 | Shalimar, Austurstræti 4, 551 0292    |
| Grænn Kostur, Skólavörðustígur 8, 552 2028 | Krua Thai, Tryggvagata 14, 561 0039   |
| Á næstu grösum, Laugavegur 20b, 552 8410   | Indokína, Laugavegur 19, 552 2399     |
| Kaffi Hljómalind, Laugavegur 21, 517 1980  |                                       |

LOOK

## Napoleon Banggangomite

BY BART CAMERON

This summer, an exhibit from the Culture House, The Road to Zion, displayed just how much of an impact Icelanders have had in the American West, with 28,000 ancestors in Utah alone. Maybe this is the reason that a recent film from Idaho, Napoleon Dynamite, seems so incredibly Icelandic. Perhaps it is filmmaker Jared Hess's dedication to landscape in contrast with a closed and isolated society. Or perhaps it is just that the title character, played by Idaho native Jon Heder, looks and talks exactly like one of Iceland's most famous exports, Barði Jóhannsson of Bang Gang. The love interest of Napoleon, Deb, also bears a striking resemblance to another famous Icelandic singer.



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*flower hairpiece by Thelma @ KRON*

*and red suede shoes from SPÚÚTNIK*

*Photo by Gúndi*

*Stylist: Anna Clausen*

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