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**REYKJAVÍK
GRAPEVINE**

LIFE, TRAVEL & ENTERTAINMENT IN ICELAND

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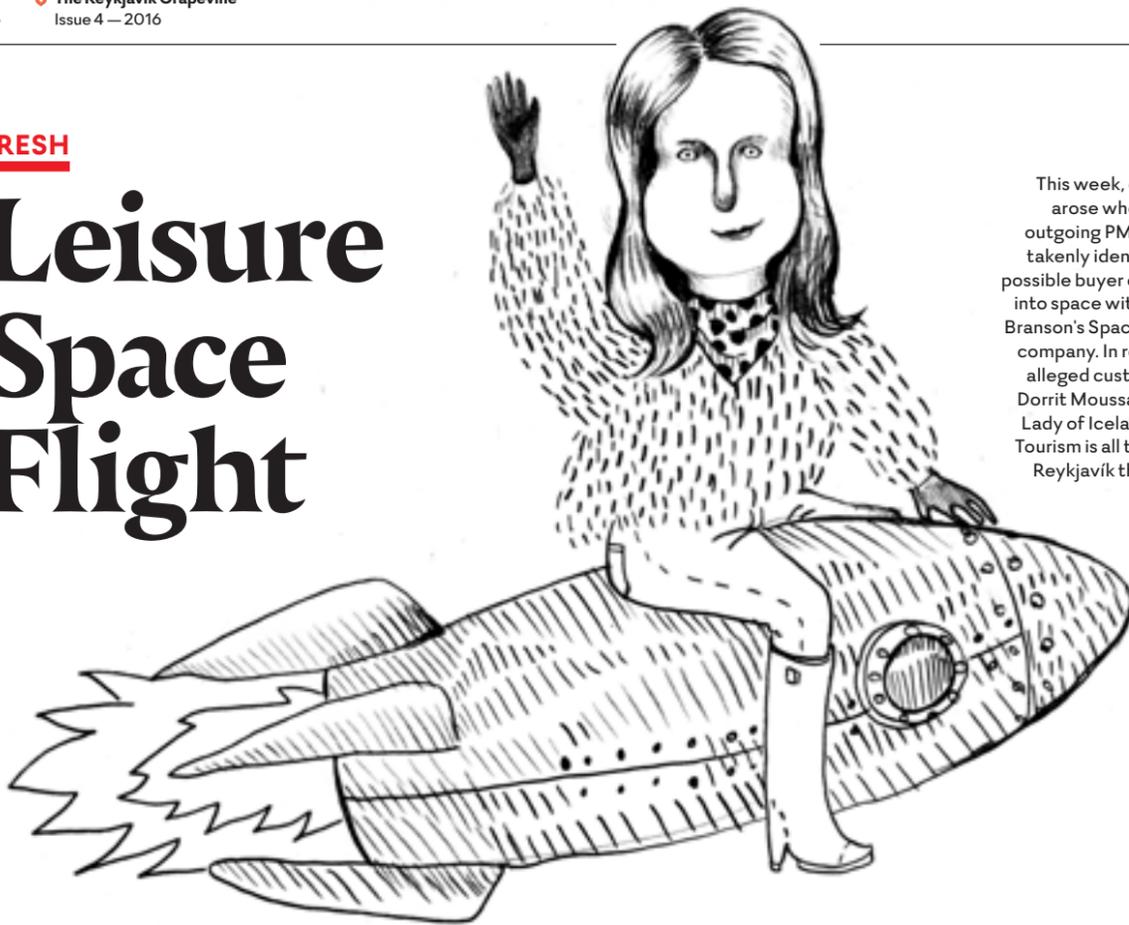
HUGLEIKUR DAGSSON

Feature Story:
The Panama Papers
& Iceland

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FRESH

Leisure Space Flight



This week, confusion arose when wife of outgoing PM was mistakenly identified as a possible buyer of a ticket into space with Richard Branson's Space Tourism company. In reality, the alleged customer was Dorrit Moussaieff, First Lady of Iceland. Space Tourism is all the rage in Reykjavik this month.



FEATURE

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The Panama Papers affair, The Wintris timeline, the political fallout, and the protests that rocked Iceland.



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THE HOT BUTTON

Offshore Tax Shelters

The Hot Button column looks at an single issue that's had Icelanders' chins wagging recently.

The hot button issue this issue is offshore tax shelters. This subject has been very prominent in the headlines lately, as it has come to light that the wife of our Prime Minister has a pile of money in a holding company called Wintris Inc, located in the British Virgin Islands, which is a very popular tax shelter. Wintris also happens to be a claimant against the Icelandic banks to the tune of half a billion ISK. What makes this particularly galling, apart from the rest of us having to deal with capital controls, is that our Prime Minister has spent a lot of time and energy touting the value and stability of the Icelandic króna, while describing the Icelandic bank claimants as "vultures." But the Prime Minister isn't alone in this—both the Minister of the Interior and the Minister of Finance have revealed they have money in offshore accounts. The matter has blown up in the government's collective face, prompting the opposition party to call for early elections, and for the people to organise a mass protest in front of parliament. Early Icelandic Elections v. 2.0 may be right around the corner, but until then, offshore tax shelters are the current hot button topic in the Icelandic news. **SHARE: gpv.is/hots1**

OUT WITH THE OLD

IN WITH THE OLD



Cover Art and Concept By: Hugleikur Dagsson Dagsson.com

Special thanks to: Valgeir twitter.com/valgeir for inspiration



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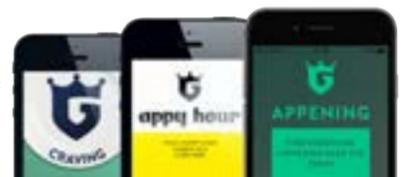
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SOUR GRAPES AND STUFF

THIS ISSUE'S LOVELIEST LETTER!

I recently returned to Iceland after a year's absence. In the past I did some consulting with the Gymnastics Federation and some of the gymnastics clubs (Gróttta Fimleikadeild in Seltjarnarnes and Fylkir fimleikahús Norðlingaholt).

I have loved every minute in Iceland and truthfully may try to move there if TRUMP is elected here!

This last trip there were so many tourists! It was actually hard for me to practice my limited Icelandic. Walking down Laugavegur I rarely heard any Icelandic. In Kaffitár I may have been at the only Icelandic speaking table. (Truthfully only three people spoke Icelandic—I struggled to keep up.)

All this tourism must be great for the economy but puts a huge strain on the beautiful natural resources. This trip for me was mostly a holiday. I had a small meeting at Fylkir. I had a

friend with me and I was anxious to show him around. I was ashamed to be American when I saw how some other tourists treated the land.

I believe that Iceland should impose a small fee to visitors. Much like is done through much of the Caribbean. \$20-\$40 US or equivalent per visitor would add a good amount of cash to pay for infrastructure, park attendants (to keep people on paths and from doing other stupid things), etc. This fee would not be so much as to keep anyone from visiting.

Just wanted to voice my opinion on a country and landscape I love.

– Tony Retrosi

Thanks for your concern, Tony. Icelanders are just as guilty as tourists of the mistreatment of nature. For years, Icelanders tossed rocks and soap into



LOVELIEST LETTER: FREE GRAPEVINE T!

Check it out! Whoever sent in this issue's LOVELIEST LETTER gets a free Grapevine T-shirt, featuring the regal G that adorns our cover. DON'T PANIC if your letter wasn't found to be this issue's loveliest. You can still get a tee for a low, low price over our website, www.grapevine.is. Give us your worst: letters@grapevine.is

Geysir to set it off. Monetizing nature sounds like a good revenue stream, but when have people respected something they've paid for? Have you ever rented a car?
– The Grapevine

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These days everything is just facts, facts, facts. You hop on social media and every armchair pundit is just posting statistics, research findings, and reasoned analysis. The Grapevine seeks to fill this void, with some much needed reasoning from the left and the right, those two directions that we all know and love. Our pundits shall remain nameless, as they are, like all pundits, humble people, shy of the spotlight.

**THIS
ISSUE'S
ISSUE**

Tax Shelters



From the movie Shelter, courtesy of Bifrost Pictures

FOR

It's my money, god damn it. A lot of people worked hard to get that money into my bank account. And they probably already paid taxes on it. Why should I be punished for being rich? Because that's what taxes are, you know. Punishment for being too successful.

I comes from humble beginnings. Like most people, I started life with just a few million in family money to back me up. Times were tough, and there were moments when I wondered if I'd ever make it. But I managed to pull myself up by the bootstraps, keep a stiff upper lip, put my nose to the grindstone and a lot of other metaphors for hard work. That hard work paid off for me, as it would for

anyone else willing to give their all and not accept any hand-outs.

Why, then, do I keep seeing all these people making such a big deal about the British Virgin Islands? Typical of a small-country mentality, these are people just looking to bully a country even smaller than they are. And what makes money so special, anyway? I don't hear anyone complaining about the sunglasses I left behind in the Seychelles. But if it happens to be half a billion ISK, suddenly everyone gets their knickers in a twist.

Look, I can't help it if people are jealous of my success. But I shouldn't be punished for being a hard-working, suc-

cessful capitalist who is smart about avoiding financial persecution. It's just common sense.

AGAINST

Why are we even having this discussion? Our Prime Minister kept telling us how awesome the króna is. He's the one who insisted we stick to capital controls. He's the one who called bank claimants "vultures". Yes, he is a great hypocrite for the whole Wintris thing, but the media are missing the bigger story here: why don't we all have tax shelters?

Here's the thing. I only make about a quarter million a month. That's not a lot of money. After paying my bills I have like maybe 50k to play around with for the rest of the month. I can blow that in a single weekend downtown.

Now, if my salary went into a bank account in the British Virgin Islands, I wouldn't have to worry about this kind of thing. If it's good enough for like half of the government, why isn't it good enough for the rest of us?

This is just another example of the poshies keeping all the best stuff for themselves. We need to shift our focus onto the real story here. Rather than cutting off our noses to spite our collective faces by trying to deny the PM his tax shelter, if we had any spine at all we would march down to Parliament, kick in the doors, and demand that we all get tax shelters of our own. It's just common sense.

SHARE: gpv.is/wintris

Figures Don't Lie



The number of government ministers found to have links to offshore companies—so far.



The percentage of Icelanders who told a University of Iceland survey that they are against more heavy industry in the country.



Estimated total value of the Prime Minister's overseas holdings in ISK.



The likelihood that the weather will be awful when you made plans to travel into the countryside.

A Poem By
Ingólfur Gíslason

Íslensk bókmenntasaga I-III

A review of the literature part 2

Hið hefðbunda ljóðform er nú loksins dautt. Við tekur tvinn-poemið, bi-kvæðið.

The traditional poem is fucked.

Say hello to to the new twinn-kvæði, tví-póem

Fyrst þetta klassíska: First, the old skool:

Fyrr var oft í koti kátt sumarkvöldin fögur. We had joy, we had fun, we had seasons in the sun.

A POEM BY is curated by Grapevine's poetry liaison, Jón Örn Loðmfjörð

There's no English word for:

Nenna

The Word of the Issue this issue is nenna. This is a very important Icelandic word to learn. As a verb, it means "to have the will to do something," and is almost always used negatively, e.g., "Ég nenni ekki út, ætla frekar að vera inni í tölvunni." ("I don't feel like going out, I'd rather stay in and go online.") However, our sources tell us English-speaking immigrants in Iceland have also started using it as a noun, e.g., "I would, but I just don't have the nenn for it." **SHARE:** gpv.is/nenna



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CINTAMANI

"Nobody called for him to resign. Nobody said he was morally corrupt and should be excluded from elected office."

Scandalous Iceland Style

Why scandals in Iceland have a distinctly local flair

Words MARY FRANCES DAVIDSON Illustration LÓA HLÍN

There are a lot of differences between what qualifies as a political scandal across the world, and Iceland has its own tortuously putrid version. I was raised in the US on politics littered with good ole' infidelity and prostitution rings. I was a teenager when the whole Clinton sex thing entered the spotlight of the three-ring circus that is US politics. I learned a lot through watching the story unfold, like new creative uses for cigars (smoking them is more comfortable) and how to handle sexually devious politicians.

Recent domestic hoopla in the land of fire and ice involving the Prime Minister's wife doesn't involve cigars (or mistresses) at all, but money in the British Virgin Islands, a popular tax haven. This indignity has recently blossomed

into full-fledged scandal with the emergence of news that two other ministers also have similar treasure chests tucked safely away in a far off place. This gives valuable insight into what really pisses the Icelandic nation off: hypocrisy, secrecy, and cheating the system.

Sex & politics in Iceland

The sex lives of Icelandic politicians are viewed, very rightly in my opinion, as nobody else's fucking business. When the Minister of Finance's name popped up on the list of clients for the website Ashley Madison, which caters to married people looking to start affairs, people here blinked a couple of times, rolled their eyes, and snickered at his user name: IceHot1. Then the story was over. Nobody called for him to resign.

Nobody said he was morally corrupt and should be excluded from elected office. When Johanna Sigurdardottir announced she was a lesbian, nobody questioned her "family values." People wanted to know what her policy plans were. Ok, you like to sleep with women. Who cares? What are you going to do for us? Then she became Prime Minister.

Contrast this to the US, where David Petraeus resigned from his post as Director of the CIA after it came to light that he had an affair. In a time when security seems pretty damned important, I remember wondering if this was a wise move. While having an affair undoubtedly makes you a shitty husband, does that mean you are a shitty intelligence official? Some of my friends in the US thought so.

One distant family member commented that if he wasn't able to keep his marriage vows, how could he be expected to keep his vows to serve his country? And there was Governor Eliot Spitzer, who resigned over threats of impeachment because he was involved in a prostitution ring. Anthony Weiner (hehe) texted a picture of his junk to some chick he was flirting with online and he was run of office on a rail, but not until after dragging his poor embarrassed wife around at press conferences, talking about how they were going to therapy to talk about his "problem." Gary Hart, Bill Clinton, John Edwards, Larry Craig, David Vitter, Newt Gingrich, Mark Foley, Strom Thurmond... There are countless others. American politics is like a bad porno with powerful sweaty

white men in suits doing shit behind closed doors we would all rather not think about.

An Icelandic scandal

Wanna know how to make a scandal in Iceland? Be a hypocrite. Keep the truth hidden. Tell the people of the nation that it is really important to keep your money here, and then, with gut-wrenching nationalistic fervor, diss the EU and preach the value of keeping the beautiful, sacred Icelandic króna intact. Then build up an economic policy centered around tax cuts for wealthy people like you and your friends. Insist on capital controls, and shun the "vultures" that demand repayment from the banks. Keep your money in offshore tax havens. Insist that you have done nothing wrong. Refuse to talk to the state run media, because the liberal media always make you look bad. Insist on speaking only with the right-wing Utvarp Saga and repeat the mantra that you are now stronger than you have ever been, in spite of the opposition threatening a vote of no confidence in your party's leadership. Elected officials are held to a higher moral standard than us regular people. When you represent us, you are supposed to have our best interests in mind, not your own. While it remains to be seen if laws were broken, the Icelandic people feel cheated, and they are outraged.

Maybe it has something to do with our roots. Americans are Puritans and Icelanders are Vikings. Puritans repress sex at all costs and tuck it into a little corner in the back of the bedroom, to be pulled out only when we need to make more babies to help us with the crops. Vikings go to war when their pride is bruised. Drink until you can't speak or stand. Fuck around a bit. Abuse some other substances, whatever. We all make mistakes in life. But. If you steal from us, lie to us, or cheat us out of our hard earned money, and it's pitchfork time, honey... you are ripe for the pillaging.

SHARE: gpv.is/scandal

HERO OF THE ISSUE

Civil Protection



Art Bicnick

The Hero of the Issue this issue is **Civil Protection in Iceland** (Almannavarnir). These are the unsung heroes who are the first to respond, not just to natural disasters such as earthquakes and volcanoes, but in any kind of event that shakes the stability and security of the country. Hurricane-force winds? No problem. Road completely closed because of a landslide? Piece of cake. Heaps of snow trapping people in their own tiny villages? One cup of coffee later, they're there with the plows. The winter is a very busy time for these brave souls, not least of all as tourism increases, and with it the number of foreign visitors facing danger in inclement weather. Civil Protection in Iceland is one of our most cherished institutions, but they so seldom get any word of thanks for it. So we're thanking them here. Thank you, Civil Protection in Iceland, for being the hero Iceland deserves.

VILLAIN OF THE ISSUE

Bottled Water



Freelimages.com/Michael Lorenzo

The Villain of the Issue this issue is **bottled water**. How many times do we need to tell you? You DO NOT need to buy bottled water in Iceland. Don't tell me you "just want the bottle." Go buy a Coke or something if you just need the bottle. Do not give away money to this crooked, fraudulent industry. Icelandic tap water gets top marks for quality and cleanliness in international environmental assessment reports, year after year. There is absolutely no reason to spend 1,200 ISK on a bottle of anything you can get for free. Not least of all when those empty plastic bottles more often than not end up in the trash or on the street. Buying bottled water in Iceland is like buying sunlight in Fiji. And yet it persists, a villain lurking in the shadows, serving no purpose but ripping off tourists and making someone rich as they laugh at you chumps. Don't be a chump. Don't buy bottled water.

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ANALYSIS

Iceland Is Getting Older

How Iceland treats its pensioners, and how the face of the country is changing

Words PAUL FONTAINE Photos ART BICNICK

Growing old isn't easy in any country in the world. As a person leaves the workforce, their available prospects for survival could range from a comfortable retirement to abject squalor. As far as Iceland is concerned, there are few better countries in the entire world in which to grow old, but this does not mean the country is invulnerable. In fact, as the population continues to age, new measures will be needed to ensure the elderly continue to get the high level of care they currently enjoy.

Global context

Before we take a look at what a retired person in Iceland is provided, by municipal and national offices alike, we should take a look at how Iceland stacks up against the rest of the world. The 2015 Global Age Watch Index currently ranks Iceland 7th in the world in terms of quality of care for the elderly.

Indeed, services ranging from housing and pensions to social activities and transport are well provided for by local and national government services alike. However, as with any other country in the developed world, funding for all these services rests upon the expectation that there will always be more young people paying into government coffers than elderly people drawing from them. Iceland is rapidly approaching the point where the treasury will have quite a burden to bear.

According to Statistics Iceland, Icelanders are getting older: in 1990, the average Icelander was 33. Today, the average age is up to 37.2. Currently, just over 19% of the population is over the age of 60. By 2030, that number will climb to over 25%; by 2050, over 30%. In order to continue to provide the numerous services available to the elderly that Iceland currently provides, there are a few options on the table: relax immigration, raises taxes, or both.

While this matter will have to be dealt with, and soon, the elderly in Iceland do currently have it pretty good. There still remain, however, certain groups of elderly people who are especially vulnerable.

The current situation

"Most senior citizens are doing well," Þórunn Sveinbjörnsdóttir, the chairperson of the Society of Senior Citizens, told the Grapevine. "But there are some who are struggling; who have too little. These are usually people on the rental market. There are also people who sustained losses during the [autumn 2008] bank crash. These are the kinds of people we hear about who don't have enough to live on by the time the 20th or the 25th of the month arrives."

Rental prices, in Reykjavik especially, have been increasing significantly, and many have attributed

this to an increase in demand from tourists willing to rent an apartment for a couple weeks or even days. But native Icelanders who rent are not the only ones at risk.

"There are also older immi-



grants arriving," Þórunn said. "They need, as they are not eligible for the national pension [from Social Insurance Administration], to look to local authorities for assistance. It's a pretty complicated system for new arrivals."

The point about older immigrants in Iceland is one immigrant councilor for the City of Reykjavik Barbara Kristvinsson is familiar with. She spoke with us about some of the obstacles these people face.

"One of the difficulties they encounter can be the language, as always. It's a hard enough system for Icelanders to understand in their own language," she said. "If you're over the age of 67, you shouldn't be getting social welfare payments from the municipalities anymore. You should be getting a pension from the Social Insurance Administration (Tryggingastofnun). But these people don't have any right to Tryggingastofnun. People are still trying to figure out the legalities of that, and they can be tricky legalities, because these immigrants have to prove that they don't have rights."

Barbara also mentions some of the social effects of being a senior

immigrant in Iceland.

"I think that integrating is tough," she told us. "It's hard enough having to integrate in a foreign country, but try having to integrate into a nursing home,

for us what Iceland is doing well for its senior citizens, and what it's doing not-so-well.

"Where we're doing well is we're living longer," she said, and the facts speak for themselves in this case—an Icelander who is 60 years old can expect to live, on average, for another 25 years. "At the same time, we've been fighting for many years for these people to have a little more money."

In fact, the national pension fund's full monthly allowance amounts to 25,700 ISK. As anyone who has gone grocery shopping in Iceland can attest, this may not necessarily be enough to even eat off of, let alone pay for other goods and services that a senior citizen might want to enjoy. At the same time, the combined powers of the local authorities and the state provide the elderly with services such as transportation, home-delivered food, social events and activities, home cleaning services, visiting nurses and, should the need arise, collective living run by municipalities and private companies alike.

One of the more recent examples of services for the elderly that have drawn national attention are the home-delivered meals provided by the city. These meals arrive cold, and need to be microwaved to be warmed up. Many senior citizens complained that these meals were unappetizing, or that they had difficulty preparing them for themselves. The criticism was so concerted that Reykjavik Mayor Dagur B. Eggertsson took it upon himself to eat these meals every day for a week, after which he concluded that the food was of the highest quality.

"Some people found the food good, others found it bad," Þórunn said. "Some other people found the packages difficult to open, or found it complicated to heat the food up in the right way."

This might be particularly the case where elderly single men are concerned. As Þórunn explained, these men belong to a generation used to having their mothers, and then their wives, attend to such matters as cooking and cleaning. Upon reaching retirement age, and perhaps outliving their spouses, they find themselves at a

loss when it comes to being able to attend to these basic needs—assuming they are even physically capable.

"We want increased respect"

While access to information about services for the elderly from the City of Reykjavik is fairly easy, for Icelanders and immigrants alike, the same cannot be said for the Ministry of Welfare. It was fairly easy to find a list of available services, and how to apply for them, on the Ministry's Icelandic page, but this information proved impossible to find in any other language.

Counselling services are available, both locally and nationally, for elderly immigrants who want to know their rights, but Þórunn believes Iceland could do even better.

"We want increased respect," she told us, when asked what the major goals were for Iceland's elderly. "And that goes for the immigrants, too. Those who are new to Iceland also want respect from others. We also want society to understand how important it is to have this group, too," she added, pointing out that the elderly are often tasked with babysitting younger relatives, picking them up from school and other family matters.

It should also be pointed out that not only do senior citizens comprise the highest percentage of voters for the ruling coalition of the Progressive Party and the Independence Party; senior citizens vote in higher percentages than any other age group in the country, according to the latest data from Market and Media Research.

As Iceland's population continues to age, being able to maintain, let alone improve, these globally high standards will prove increasingly challenging for the Icelandic government. As seniors continue to go to the polls more than any other age group, upcoming parliamentarians will need to have some idea of how to keep these standards high as demand grows. Not solely from the point of view of winning votes, but more importantly, to maintain the health of the country overall.

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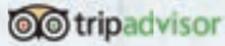
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ANALYSIS

Photo by **GETTY IMAGES**
Words by **GUÐRÚN MARGRÉT**
GUÐMUNDSDÓTTIR

ISLAMOPHOBIA IS HERE!

I had been waiting for it to show up in Iceland for a long time—or, more accurately, dreading the inevitability of it. It already had a stronghold in Europe, and I knew it was only a matter of time. Then suddenly it happened, following the City of Reykjavík's decision to allocate a plot of land for a mosque: a full-fledged Islamophobic eruption.

Some pig heads were found on the plot of land, and pages of the Holy Quran desecrated with blood. The usual rhetoric about mosques being a breeding ground for radical Islamism was heard, and also the argument that Islam is inherently violent. The very notion that Icelandic Muslims simply wanted an appropriate place for worship was

hardly mentioned.

Before the 2014 municipal elections, a new candidate joined the Progressive Party, proposing to withdraw the permit for the mosque, assuring people that her opinion was based on personal experience after living in Saudi Arabia—not on prejudice. This stance was received favourably and her party won two seats, contrary to earlier forecasts that indicated that they might not even get one.

The Ultimate "other"

The root cause of the friction and rift between the West and the Middle East, each considering the other a bitter rival, can be traced back to early days of Islam. Edward Said explains in his book 'Orientalism' that to justify colonising the Orient, the inhabitants became the ultimate "other," in the eyes of their colonisers, with them seen as "backward, uncivilized, and at times dangerous," and us the exact opposite. The modern version however is believed to have been reinforced by the War on Terror, triggered by the horrendous attacks on America in September 2001.

Ever since the declaration of that war, relentless efforts have been made to counter terror-

ism. Invasions and occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq, captures of "illegal enemy combatants," secret jails, torture and assassinations with drones. Over a million people, the majority of them Muslims, have been killed and many more have become refugees.

The Western media has played a vital role in reinforcing the fear of Muslims by demonizing them, both in the news and entertainment media, with endless coverage of dark-bearded, dangerous men, and oppressed female victims. Criminals and terrorists are predominantly portrayed as Muslims. The killing of Muslims is even glamorized in movies like 'American Sniper', a biopic about a soldier "heroically" assassinating terrorists, supposedly terrorists or those likely to become terrorists one day, in US-occupied Iraq.

Radical Islamists

One has to keep in mind firstly

that Salafi/Wahabi extremists do not represent Muslims as a whole, and most prominent Islamic scholars denounce them. Secondly, inhabitants of the Middle East are more likely to suffer under these groups than are Westerners, be they Sunni, Shia, Christians, Yazidi or anyone else of any religion.

Thirdly, one must always look at the context. Al-Qaeda would never have come into existence were it not for the CIA uniting like-minded men from all over the Muslim world in order to fight against the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, back in the early 90s. Likewise, Daesh (ISIS) would most definitely not exist if it was not for the invasion of Iraq.

If the objective of the War on Terror is to rid the world of extremism and to protect freedom and democracy, it has failed completely. However, if there is a hidden agenda, as many critics claim, to gain access to the rich resources of the Middle East, it has been a huge success—won by creating friction and hostility between different religious and ethnic groups in the region, killing the innocent, and invoking more hatred against the West.

Will the extremists prevail?

It is important to be self-critical when new fears come to existence, like in the case of imported Islamophobia, and to be aware of our orientalist racism-tainted lens. It is equally important to pay attention to stereotypes manufactured by the media and consider the absurdity of any presumption that 1.6 billion people, the total number of the world's Muslims, could share the same traits. The two extremist sides might end up taking our fate into their hands: the West behaving like political arsonists, starting a fire while neither knowing how to put it out nor envisioning how it might spread, and the extremists using obscure interpretations of Islam to justify murder and mayhem, and again reinforcing Islamophobia.

Everybody will lose except for the powerful, with Islamophobia the necessary lubricant for the vicious cycle to continue.

The Western media has played a vital role in reinforcing the fear of Muslims by demonizing them

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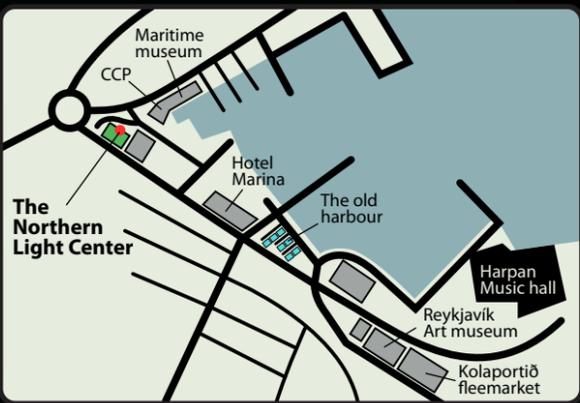
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Photo by ART BICNICK

SAFETY UNLEASHED: An Idiot's Guide To Avoiding Accidents, Mishaps, And Certain Death In Iceland

Top Ten Most Popular Accident Spots In Iceland: How To Avoid Death's Warm Embrace

By CIARÁN DALY

Iceland may be one of the safest countries in the world, but it is definitely not a safe island.

Since the settlement era, the history of Iceland is nothing if not a history of humans trying to learn from stupid, fatal mistakes in one of the most inhospitable lands on the planet. No matter how hard we try to conquer it—whether through dam projects, rope fences, or new roads—this island will always win. It does not care about you, your plans, or your dreams. It is unfuckwithable.

The people who live here are able to do so only thanks to a rich tradition of messing up and dying horribly. Tourists, on the other hand, have largely not grown up in a place where people once used to have bury food under shit in the hope that they wouldn't starve when the winter came to storm or avalanche its way through their hovels. For this reason, a lot of dumb, tragic shit has happened to visitors during this tourist boom.

With more and more clueless tourists flooding the countryside unaccompanied, Icelandic emergency services are finding it harder and harder to keep up. While there are ongoing improvements to safety measures being implemented, these have only come about as a result of a lot of pain, whoopsies and death.

Let me be clear—fatal accidents in Iceland are certainly tragedies, but the vast majority of them also tend to be the result of some monumentally stupid decisions. Just weeks ago, thirty people thought it would be a good idea to climb on some moving ice floes (!!!) to get a better look at some seals. Luckily nobody was hurt—but there's ignorance, and then there's stupidity, and then there's climbing on an iceberg.

This is a dangerous, unforgiving, and brutal landscape, and it demands the utmost respect. With that in mind, let's take a look at some important rules that need

to be attended to if you wish to ensure your corporal existence on this planet continues beyond your visit to Iceland.

1. Check conditions before leaving town

Check before you travel:
Safetravel.is
Road.is
Vedur.is

If, like me, you're from a country where the weather does not want to murder you, you probably don't put much faith into weather warnings. A "severe" storm warning back home rarely turns out to be more than light drizzle and a bit of tabloid hysteria. Nobody really pays attention to the public safety warnings, because there's usually nothing to actually be afraid of.

This is not the case in Iceland.

Just as you shouldn't touch a hot plate to find out if it's switched on or not, you should never neglect to check weather and road conditions before embarking. Doing so could mean setting yourself up for what will possibly be an extremely pointless death.

There have been many cases of tourists driving out into the countryside throughout the year and meeting grisly fates—even on the Ring Road. The Ring Road often suffers from a lack of traffic barriers, lampposts, and even tarmac and lanes. The F-roads are even more rudimentary. You're at risk of head-on collision, crashing off-road, or getting trapped in your car. (As a side note, driving off-road in Iceland is illegal and you're going to ruin the landscape for everybody else with your big, dumb 4x4 tracks.)

You might only have three days in Iceland during your stop-over, but it doesn't matter. There is plenty of stuff to do in Reykjavik that doesn't involve freezing, starving, suffocating, or colliding yourself to death. (Well, up to a point.) There are no souvenir shirts bearing the words "I Went To Iceland And All I Got Was This

Lousy Casket." Ensure the conditions are right for your trip and inform the rescue services of your whereabouts if you're planning to take an F-road. Basically, check that the big scary monster is sleeping before you drive straight into its gaping maw.

2. Read the fucking signs

Important signs:
ÓFÆRD / Ófærð
DO NOT PASS
DANGER

So you've ignored rule #1 and you're out on the road. The weather seems fine to you, and you don't know what any fuss could possibly be about. You carry on until you reach a giant sign that says ÓFÆRD (impassable), and drive round it, the sun still shining. Little do you know, your good fortune is diminishing dramatically with each kilometre travelled.

Ok, you probably don't speak Icelandic. The vast majority of the world doesn't. However, most signs have English translations, and even if they don't, it doesn't take an Icelander to know that road signs tend to imply something at least a bit scary and important. If you see any sign that doesn't tell you how far away the next town is, that sign is probably there for a very good reason: to keep you safe.

The same goes for natural attractions. If you ignore the cordons or KEEP BACK signs at Strokkur, you are going to receive some fun, boiling hot souvenirs from the heavens in the form of deep tissue scars, as tourists (and even children) before you have. You can expect similarly gruesome results if you choose to ignore the signage at Gullfoss or in front of giant floating ice cubes.

Out of the thousands who have come before you, you are not going to be the exception to the rule—no matter how experienced or smart you think you might be. Listen to the experts. Read the fucking signs.

Similarly, you should maintain a healthy suspicion of any awe-

inspiring natural wonder that doesn't have any signage. The majority of Iceland is not designed as a tourist attraction, nor is it designed for your safety or convenience—which brings us to our next (and most important) point.

3. Exercise common sense when confronted with the forces of nature

"Common sense" includes skills such as:

- Avoiding fights with millennia-old geographical formations
- Not climbing on floating things or walking towards the edge of large precipices
- Sticking to the path well-trodden by people who died of things like cancer and gout, rather than stupidity

The most important rule when it comes to not ending up knee-deep in the shitheap of your own mortality is, basically, to exercise common sense.

If you're trapped in your car during a storm, if you've been swept offshore by a brutal wave, or fallen off a rocky and/or icy ledge, you've already sort of crossed the Rubicon in terms of survival. You need to avoid that happening in the first place. You need to exercise some common sense. It is rarely apparent that something is dangerous, so it's up to you to not put yourself in danger.

You need to remember that you are a baby here, in the scheme of things. A big, useless baby. The difference is that nobody is going to be there to bail you out when your stupid baby head thinks it's a good idea to jump off the top of the toy box. Have you ever seen a baby try to climb over the bars on its cradle? Have you ever heard of it ending well? Those bars are on the cradle for a reason, baby. Exercise caution and stay in your crib.

It's important to have fun, but as Grapevine's HR department likes to tell us on a regular basis, fun isn't fun unless it's safe fun.

SHARE: gpv.is/dontdie

1. The roads

Check conditions. Give way. Keep your headlights on at all times. Pay attention to the signs. Watch out for other cars, people, sheep, and reindeer.

2. Reynisfjara beach

There are lots of great places to swim in Iceland. This is not one of them.

3. The ocean in general

This applies not just to Iceland, but to the ocean in general. Leave the ocean alone.

Not only is it way better at swimming than you, it is filled with monsters and condoms.

4. Jökulsárlón

Icebergs are not your friend. Don't try and walk on them. They will flip you over.

5. Goðafoss

See that giant waterfall? It's been eroding the rocks beneath your feet with water for centuries. They are icy and slippery. Stay behind the cordon.

6. Geysir

Exploding hot water is not your friend. Stay behind the cordon.

7. The Highlands

Don't go here, full stop. That is, unless you're accompanied by an experienced local or travel guide who knows their shit. A McCandless-style fate awaits you.

8. Glaciers

Like icebergs, glaciers are constantly moving—and melting—pieces of geography. Do not attempt to beat them with your feet, your hands, or your 3-door rental car. They will always win.

9. Active volcanoes

Have you seen the end of 'Lord of the Rings'? That wasn't a magical elf volcano. That was just a giant volcano. There are lots of those here. They spew hot jizz out of the ground and fart toxic gas. Need I say more?

10. The mean streets of Reykjavik

Do you like having an intact skeleton? Keep the sidewalk tomfoolery to a minimum during winter. Watch your head for icicles and those damn kids with their snowballs and beers and punk music, too.



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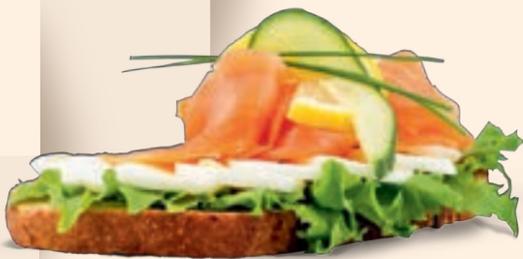
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NEWS IN BRIEF
(NON-PANAMA PAPERS EDITION)

Not everything is as it seems at the grocery store. It has come to light that Lambhagi's "spinach" is not really spinach. Rather, it's a very similar-looking plant called komatsuna, also known as Japanese mustard spinach. The owner of Lambhagi said that this was all about the limitations of the Icelandic language, as the word for this plant in Icelandic is "spínatlauf," or "spinach leaf." Brush up on your botany before the next time you go food shopping.

In response to the tragic events in Brussels last month, Icelandic authorities responded swiftly. Namely, the Police Commissioner announced that Keflavik International Airport police would be more heavily armed, given bomb-sniffing dogs, and backed up by Special Forces. In addition, the Commissioner issued a directive to every police chief in the country to check "certain individuals" against Schengen and Interpol records. And by that he means foreigners, apparently unaware that the perpetrators of the Brussels attacks were all Belgian.

Minister of Industry and Tourism Ragnheiður Elín Árnadóttir recently made headlines for her poor choice in gifts. When she met Chicago mayor Rahm Emanuel, she reportedly gave him a "lopapeysa," a traditional Icelandic sweater. However, it has since come to light that this sweater was made in China. Whoops! The Handknitting Association of Iceland was decidedly unhappy with the Minister shopping at 66°N for a lopapeysa instead of buying one handknit in Iceland. No word on whether Chicago's mayor was sent a replacement.

Icelanders will be voting for their next president in barely 10 weeks from now, but none of the candidates thus far have been particularly inspiring. Campaigning has been all but absent, and analysts believe Iceland's next president could be decided by as little as 10% of the vote. So unless some incredibly charismatic and unifying public figure steps forward at some point between now and June 25, we may end up with a considerably more boring president than the one we have now. Which wouldn't necessarily be a bad thing.

by Paul Fontaine



The Cold Creeps In Iceland has harsh winters ahead

By ARI TRAUSTI GUÐMUNDSSON Photo by ART BICNICK

Ari Trausti Guðmundsson has been active as a lecturer and non-fiction writer in the fields of geology, volcanology, astronomy, environmental science and mountaineering, with over 40 published book titles. Educated as a geophysicist in Norway and Iceland, Ari Trausti works as a freelance consultant in the fields of geoscience, tourism and environmental issues as well as writing and hosting numerous radio and television programs and documentaries.

When it finally set in last November, Iceland was seemingly headed for another severe winter in comparison to the years between 1998 and 2013, in a near to perfect chilly tandem with 2014.

On the dark morning of December 1st, a raging snowstorm thwarted traffic in Reykjavik. It passed across Iceland during the afternoon and evening, well into the night. Three days prior to the storm, a 33-year-old record for November snow depth in Reykjavik had been broken. The snow fell without any wind, followed by two perfectly calm, sunny days with nighttime northern lights in clear skies. The uniform snow depth in my garden was 38 cm (freshly fallen). A week later, it was about 50 cm. Such numbers are much more common in the north of Iceland.

A frosty New Year

The New Year greeted Iceland with a lull after two severe December storms. The former storm, a deep low-pressure system (or cyclone), affected the whole country on December 7th and 8th. The winds attained 30-40 m/s, depending on landscape and time, with gusts up to 50-70 m/s. The air was rather warm, so rain accompanied this severe storm of hurricane-like proportions. Some

damage was registered, especially to a number of old buildings and small boats in a few harbours. The latter storm, of similar force with heavy rain, hit eastern and northern Iceland on the 29th and 30th of December. This time, the damage was more extensive, hammering old buildings, harbours, roads and land. This former super-cyclone from the USA also caused problems in Britain.

The Iceland Meteorological Office report for 2015 tells us that last year was the coldest one of this century, albeit slightly warmer than the average year of the 1960-1991 period. The number of passing low-pressure systems was high and the weather windy with quite a lot of snow. The first months of 2016 have been much calmer, with "normal" storms and fine days in between, but still cold, especially very late in January and through most of February.

Glaciers: Mass gained

Telltale signs of two rather cold years are evident in some of Iceland's glaciers. In 2014, the weather was characterized by cold, stormy and snowy winter months, especially above 400 metres in altitude, and by a chilly

summer, except very late in the north-east of Iceland. The cold onslaught is clearly reflected by the glacier budget of the Hofsjökull Ice Cap in Central Iceland. The budget year lasts from autumn to autumn; the total 2014-2015 budget turned out to be positive, with a surplus snow mass, for the first time in 23 years. This welcome snow (from a glacial standpoint!) will slowly metamorphose into new ice.

The rather harsh winter weather of 2015-2016 has turned out to be similar to last year's, in most corners of Iceland. If the summer weather stays cool, the high North Atlantic region might be heading for a somewhat long-lasting cold spell, maybe like the one that reigned from the late 1960s until the mid 1990s. However, a chilly period could well be much shorter this time and it will definitely not affect the general trend of global warming. The proposed causes for the cold snap include plausible incidents like repositioning and size variations of near-to-permanent high-pressure systems over Greenland and the Azores region, a distinct drop in sea temperature due to frequent northern winds, and slight but influential variations of the ocean current system.

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Feature Story:

The Panama Papers & Iceland

The Unraveling Of A Government: The Panama Papers And Iceland By Paul Fontaine

In March, Anna Sigurlaug Pálsdóttir, the wife of outgoing Prime Minister Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson, posted a status update on Facebook that seemed to come out of nowhere. In that post, she went into some detail about a company called Wintris Inc. Located in the British Virgin Islands, this company was owned by her, and was tasked with managing the assets she received as an inheritance. Why she made this post would come to light a couple weeks later, with a remarkable investigative news broadcast that would end up unseating Sigmundur Davíð and, at the time of this writing, possibly dissolving Parliament alto-

gether. lation calling for his resignation, his assurances that he did nothing wrong. It seemed like just yet another road bump on Highway Sigmundur, and that it might even blow over in a couple days. That all changed on April 3.

That evening, thousands of Icelanders tuned in to public broadcasting station RÚV to watch a special edition of the investigative news show 'Kastljós'. While we knew that the programme was going to concern Sigmundur's offshore banking activities, no one was prepared for what the show revealed. But what the concerted efforts of German newspaper Sueddeutsche Zeitung, the International

from Mossack Fonseca, a Panamanian offshore provider, has implicated powerful figures from around the world in the use of tax shelters, letterbox companies and offshore accounts to conceal or obfuscate their financial activities. Amongst these people were at least three Icelandic government ministers, including the PM, at least three former and current members of Reykjavík City Council, and hundreds of other Icelanders.

Things came to a dramatic head when footage of an interview with the Prime Minister took with Swedish television company SVT was aired. This footage, which has circled the globe, shows the Prime Minister being asked some pointed questions about tax shelters and the people who use them. Once SVT was joined by Icelandic journalist Jóhannes Kr. Kristjánsson of Reykjavík Media, Sigmundur's attitude went from wary to outright defensive, accusing the two journalists of ambushing him and declaring that he had nothing to hide even as he walked out of the interview.

The video went viral. Numerous international news outlets picked up on it. Even Edward Snowden commented on it. By Monday morning there were few people in the country who hadn't seen it. The rumblings of mass discontent began. Overnight, thousands more had signed the petition calling for his resignation, and hundreds more joined the ranks of those intending to join the day's protests. Now we all knew why Sigmundur's wife had made that Facebook post: a disastrous interview, which his assistants demanded never be aired, and which he apparently never even mentioned to other members of his own party.

This could have been Sigmundur's moment to step aside gracefully, with dignity. Instead, he appeared before the nation on live television to apologise for his behaviour during the interview, repeating the mantra that he had done nothing wrong, and that he wasn't even considering resigning.

Firing a shotgun in an avalanche zone__

This statement did not have the effect the Prime Minister was probably hoping for. Instead of putting himself in a safer position, Sigmundur had effectively fired a shotgun in an avalanche zone.

Five hours later, some 23,000 people had converged on Parliament, an Icelandic record, demanding his resignation and new elections. Just to give

you a sense of scale, bear in mind that Iceland is a country of about 320,000 people. Monday's protests were the equivalent of some 2.3 million people protesting outside the US Congress. In fact, so much debris was hurled at the parliamentary building—eggs, skyr, toilet paper and bananas all went flying—that Members of Parliament reportedly had difficulty seeing the thousands of angry Icelanders outside their windows.

The protests even took the police by surprise. They had failed to close off Pósthússtræti, the street which roughly flanks the west side of Parliament, and cars were trapped in the incoming sea of people. Drivers gave up, abandoning their cars. The crowd swelled, spilling into adjoining streets. Fireworks were set off. This was all starting to look very familiar.

As late afternoon became evening, 2009 was very much on everyone's minds. Icelanders speculated, in the bars and cafés around downtown, in their homes and on the streets, whether we had just witnessed the first day of another popular movement—barely seven years after the previous one—that would once again break the ruling coalition and force early elections. By all accounts this was a safe bet to make, and still is. But nothing prepared us for what would happen on Tuesday.

Who the hell is the Prime Minister?_____

That morning, the Prime Minister—following in the footsteps of his wife—turned to Facebook to speak to the general public, expressing the desire to dissolve Parliament and get early elections underway. There was much rejoicing. The Prime Minister then went directly to the residence of President Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson, who had just come home that morning, having cut short his personal business in the US. After 40 minutes, the Prime Minister emerged, only to quickly duck into his car and get whisked away with barely a word to the press who were waiting outside. That was the first sign that something was amiss in this whole dissolution of Parliament/early elections thing.

The second sign was when the President called for a press conference shortly after the meeting. There, he informed reporters that the Prime Minister had contacted him personally, asking for a meeting. He said the Prime Minister brought his dissolution and early elections idea to the

✂ Instead of
putting himself in
a safer position,
Sigmundur has
effectively fired
a shotgun in an
avalanche zone.

gether.

The news that the Prime Minister's wife had an offshore company was galling to many Icelanders, and not just because of the obvious conflict of interest. Sigmundur Davíð rose to power as a self-appointed crusader for the Icelandic króna. He talked a lot about the importance of staying out of the EU. He called the króna "the strongest indexed currency in the world." He presided over capital controls, touted the importance of keeping business in Iceland, and railed against the claimants on Iceland's fallen banks as "vultures"—while neglecting to mention that Wintris, his wife's own company, was one of the vultures in question.

This prompted some of the usual: protests planned, a petition in circu-

Consortium of Investigative Journalism (ICIJ) and Reykjavík Media would reveal to the nation—and the world at large—sparked possibly the largest protest demonstration in Icelandic history, and the unraveling of the ruling coalition of the Progressive Party and the Independence Party.

As I write this, the man who was Prime Minister on Monday is today on his way out of that office, to be replaced by one of his own. Maybe. We'll get to that later.

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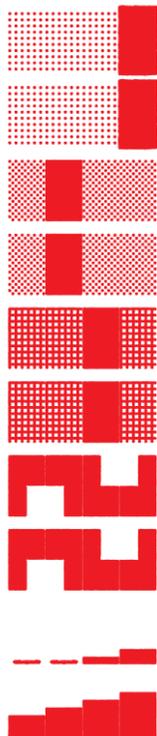
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Feature Story:

The Panama Papers & Iceland

The Unraveling Of A Government cont.



President, and asked the head of state to make it official. The President, however, refused, saying that he needed to see a “strong level of support” from both parties in the ruling coalition to dissolve Parliament.

It turned out that the Prime Minister had, apparently, not even discussed his plan with members of his own party. They then held an informal meeting to discuss matters—without him. Hours later, a story broke that swept international headlines: the Prime Minister was going to resign. True to fashion, Sigmundur would end up scuttling his own chances to exit with dignity.

First, there was the fact that there was not even to be a change of which party would hold the Prime Minister's office, let alone parliamentary dissolution and early elections—the coalition would hold, with the Progressives at the helm. Second, the Progressives decided party vice chairperson and Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries Sigurður Ingi Jóhannsson was to be the new Prime Minister, with Sigmundur continuing on as Progressive Party chairperson. If the Progressives were deliberately trying to pick the least suitable candidate for the job, they succeeded. In the wake of the Wintris news, Sigurður had been very diligent about defending not just the Prime Minister but also offshore accounts themselves, telling reporters that “it is complicated to have money in Iceland.” A poll taken the month before on trust in different government ministers showed that only 3% of respondents had any confidence in the man at all.

Understandably, the opposition was far from assuaged by this move. They said they were going to continue to push for dissolution and early elections, and protests continued for a second day. Later that evening, Sigmundur would once again inadvertently make matters much worse for himself than they ever needed to be.

Richard Milne, a journalist for the Financial Times in the Nordic and Baltic countries, took to Twitter that evening to post a screenshot of a press release Sigmundur's office had sent

the international media. In this press release, the office emphasised that Sigurður would only be taking over “for an unspecified amount of time,” and that “The Prime Minister has not resigned.”

When news of this reached Iceland, all hell broke loose, and the Progressive spin machine was fired up once again. Sigmundur's assistant, Jóhannes Þór Skúlason, told reporters that “an unspecified amount of time” could very well mean until new elections are held. Other MPs for the Progressive Party attempted to pretend that the whole thing was a big misunderstanding; that he really was leaving, kind of, or taking a break anyway, maybe to return; that “The Prime Minister has not resigned” was an easy-to-misunderstand statement, and it should nonetheless be clear that Sigmundur is no longer Prime Minister. In a way.

As I write this, on Wednesday morning, the opposition is still planning on pushing for dissolution and early elections. The Icelandic people are still planning on holding another round of protests a few hours from now. And all of this has distinct shades of 2009, on which we would do well to reflect in order to understand what may happen next.

Learn from history_

We should remember why the government fell apart seven years ago. Parliamentary protests were an almost daily occurrence months in a row. The Independence Party, which was leading the government with the Social Democrats, was plummeting in support. The two parties met to discuss the matter, with the Social Democrats proposing that they switch who controlled the Prime Minister's seat. The Independence Party refused. As a result, the coalition broke. The President was obliged to form an emergency opposition coalition—comprised of the Social Democrats, the Left-Greens and the Progressives—until such time as early elections could be held.

This is important to have in mind

as we follow how the Progressives and the Independence Party deal not only with this crisis, but with each other. Since this story broke, they have been speaking to each other primarily through the media. Which is never a good sign. The Independence Party may be just as corrupt as the Progressives, but they have some degree of political savviness. The same cannot be said of the Progressives.

Numerous media sources around the world have contacted the Grapevine over the past couple days to understand better why everyone is so angry. I've been telling reporters that the reason why the people want new elections, now, is not just because the Prime Minister might have broken the law. It's not just because the Prime Minister is a demonstrable hypocrite who imposes economic policies on the country that he doesn't even abide himself. It's also because these past 72 hours have encapsulated everything that is wrong with the political system in Iceland itself—that a group of wealthy people can insulate themselves from reality, ignore and dismiss criticism, accuse their detractors of making personal attacks, and still somehow manage to cling to power, no matter how universally despised they are.

Things are still very uncertain in Iceland, and the future of its government even more so. The only thing that is certain is that the Icelandic people want this government gone, and they want the chance to vote for a new one, soon. But if the Panama Papers have demonstrated anything, it's that the global political system is woefully broken and corrupt. If we mean to fix things here at home, we should bear in mind that simply electing new players is not going to be enough to fix things. We need a new system altogether. What form it would or could take is up for debate, but one thing is clear: changing the players does not change the game. Whether or not the rich and powerful will continue to get away with the activities the Panama Papers have revealed is up to us.

SHARE: gpv.is/unraveling

Feature Story:

Protestors: What do you want to happen?

Photos by
ART BICNICK
Written by
JOHN ROGERS



Curver

"It's been surreal. This has been outrageous. What I'd like to see in a utopian world is that if you own over 50 or 100 million krónur, you shouldn't be in politics. I thought that the 'bad guy' politicians were doing what they're doing because of their philosophy and doctrine—following their own passion. But now we know,

it's all about money for these guys. It's just business. And it's easy to pass a law to make more money, but the other parties in Iceland are politicians because it's their calling. And when people are doing something out of passion, and a feeling for the greater good—that's something else completely."



Sindri

"My personal opinion is that the President of Iceland should ask the minority to take control of the ship until we have an election this fall. The majority here has no trust, no momentum—the people don't want them.

We estimate that there were 5000 people at this protest, in the rain, in the middle of the week, with 24 hours of preparation. That states that a new coalition isn't a solution."

SHARE: gpv.is/protest



Alma

"I want to see not just Sigmundur but also Bjarni Ben resign. Bjarni gave an interview on Kastljós last night, and he was lying straight into Helgi Seljan's face—it's just scary how good he is at seeming like he's talking

straight. And how Sigmundur has been behaving is just crazy. He said the President was lying! The events of these last three days have just been ridiculous, and it's making all of us look ridiculous, too."



Benjamin

"I want them not to just replace one clown with another."



Sveinbjörn and Sigurlaug

"We want an election as soon as possible. I've heard to-day that we'll have it in the autumn, but that's too long. I want it as soon as possible. That's the main task of the nation—to get a fair

government that will build on humanistic values. We need to restructure things, reinvigorate our healthcare and education system. And that is just not on this government's agenda."

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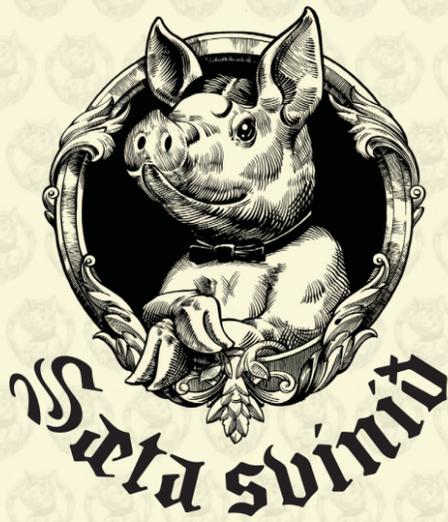
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SALTED BEEF TONGUE, truffle, soft boiled egg

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TRACK OF THE ISSUE

Spítali “You”

Written by **STEINDÓR GRÉTAR JÓNSSON**

The tight-knit Reykjavík music scene allows for some serious genre-bending. With their new project Spítali (which simply means “hospital”), longtime friends and collaborators Sindri Már Sigfússon and Halldór Ragnarsson break onto to the dancefloor. The former art school classmates previously worked together as members of the indie-folk outfit Seabear, founded by Sindri in 2003. Since then, Sindri has performed under the Sin Fang moniker and with clandestine r&b supergroup Gangly, whereas Halldór has plied his trade as a visual artist while rocking the clubs as DJ Pilsner on weekends.

Spítali’s first release “You” is a lush instrumental house track, driven by chopped samples and pulsating beats. The track will surely be a summer floor-filler in Reykjavík clubs, but its uplifting soundscape works just as well for the home listener. According to Halldór, it’s a mixture of the partnership’s distinct sensibilities. “We’re different people,” says Halldór. “I think that’s what led to the surprising result of our collaboration.”

Seabear reconvened on stage in March to raise funds for the victims of a devastating case of arson in downtown Reykjavík, which left Halldór and his girlfriend Rós without a home. Local mainstays Mammút, Singapore Sling and Serengeti joined in to perform at the event in a heartwarming show of support. “I won’t deny I shed a few tears that night and performing with Seabear again was an exhilarating feeling,” says Halldór. “It was like reuniting with lost family members. This has been an incredibly difficult period and I wouldn’t have wished this on my worst enemy, but we’re bouncing back. So many good people have provided invaluable help and I want to thank them all. You’re wonderful.”

Download it for free at gpv.is/toti02

High Quality House & Melting Hearts

STRAUMUR

Written by **ÓLI DÓRI & DAVID ROACH** Photo by **LILJA BIRGISDÓTTIR**

The editorial board of Straumur travelled all the way to Ísafjörður over Easter to witness the always extremely chilled and awesome Aldrei Fór Ég Suður (I Never Went South) music festival. It was two nights of festive fun with loads of bands playing in an old storehouse down by the harbor, with beautiful gigantic mountains towering over both sides of the fjord. The bands were both new and old, local and Reykjavík-ian, so everybody got something for their taste.

Some of our favorite artists performing were atmospheric electronic composer Tonik; newcomer normcore rapper GKR; old-timers Risaeðlan (which coincidentally translates as “Dinosaur”), who played Balkan-infused anarchic punk with sax and violins; and Emiliana Torrini, who melted our hearts like Greenland glaciers in the midst of global warming with an oh so

delicate rendition of her classic song “Sunny Road.” Then Sykur closed the festival with monumental electronic power pop and invited a half a dozen audience members onstage for a dance session to their closing number and megahit, “Reykjavík,” for which songstress Agnes appropriately changed the lyrics from “Reykjavík þú vekur mig” (“Reykjavík You Wake Me Up”) to “Ísafjörður þú vekur mig.” Thank you Ísafjörður and Aldrei Fór Ég Suður!

Contradicting the the title of the music festival we’ve just finished reviewing, we go south from Ísafjörður to tell you about the Reykjavík musicians Halldór Ragnarsson and Sindri Már Sigfússon (Sin Fang), previously together in the band Seabear. They have a brand new musical project together called Spítali (“Hospital”), and last month released their first song under that moniker. The two friends

say that they started to write house music jointly this winter, and the song “You” is first result of that collaboration. Mastered by electronic producer Oculus, and mixed by him and the band, “You” is a high-quality house number with a romantic ambience. It grinds and builds higher and higher over the course of its six minutes, with hard hitting drums, 80s-sounding synth pads and fractured vocal snippets that should hypnotize headphone listeners and late-night dance floors alike. Spítali also released a video for “You,” directed by Máni M. Sigfússon, that we encourage people to check out. It’s a dreamy concoction of aerial footage of big city skyscrapers at night interspersed with VHS-ish visual filters.

Straumur radio show airs on X977, Mon. at 23:00 - www.straum.is

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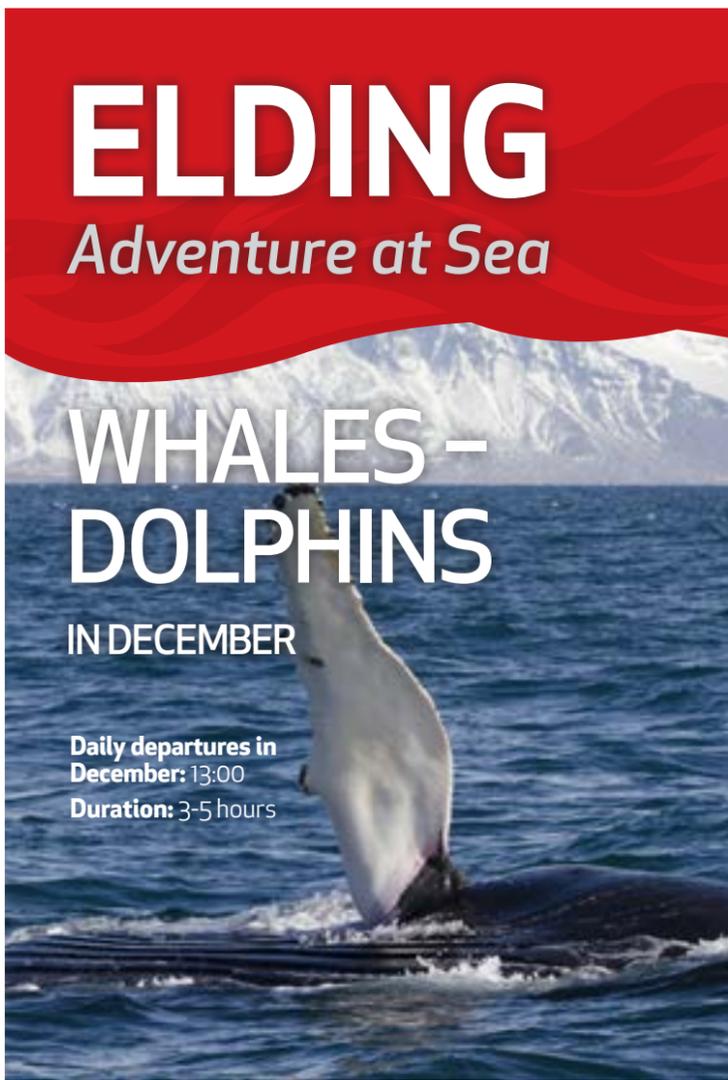
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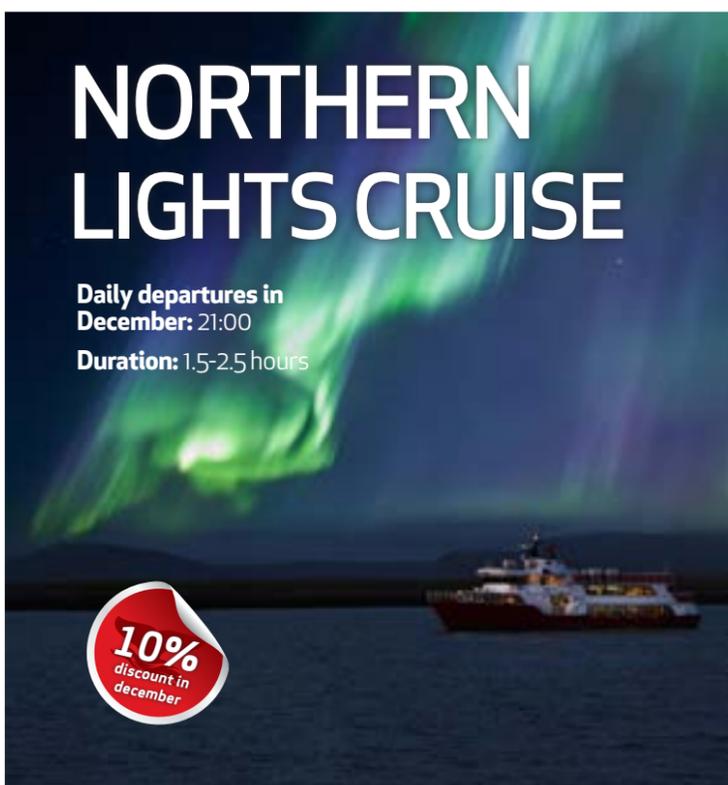
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Words **JOHN ROGERS**
Photo **ART BICNICK**

Deep Roots And Freaky Folk

Sóley talks about her musical beginnings

When you think of the spectral music of Sóley Stefansdóttir, folk is perhaps not the first genre that springs to mind. But the more you think about it, the more her presence as a headliner at the recent Reykjavík Folk Festival starts to make sense. Sóley is a singer-songwriter who sometimes performs onstage alone—when we meet, she has just returned from a UK tour, opening solo for John Grant—and her eerie, spidery songs contain stories that seem to offer half-glimpses of other worlds, whether dreams, dark imaginings, or tall tales from a faraway past.

“I do like to tell stories, more than doing personal lyrics,” says Sóley, who’s friendly, warm, and not at all spooky in person. “I’m getting into a routine when I write lyrics where I’ll read a lot of poems. I like poems because they’re short, and they get to the point right away. I’m actually planning on writing a book—I write poetry and stories, and have since I was young.”

Weird voices

Sóley has never identified primarily as a folk musician. But as we talk about what folk music is—from its historic roots through to the post-modern age, where boundaries between genres are continually dissolving—connections start to form, and doors open in her memory.

“Actually, now that I think about it, before I started making music I was working at Café Hljómalind,” she recalls. “It was a not-for-profit café, where Brennslan is now, and Hemmi og Valdi before that—a beautiful old house. I heard ‘The Milk-Eyed Mender’, the first Joanna Newsom album, and it totally opened my mind. I’d been listening to a lot of male musicians my whole life, and some female, but hadn’t really found that thing that I love. Hearing that weird voice and that harp, and the weird songs with beautiful lyrics... I’d never heard anything like that before. It pushed me into making music. It was a real turning point in my life.”

Sóley was fascinated by Newsom’s

thoroughly individual take on traditional folk songwriting, constructed of spiralling song structures and poetic lyrics that can be pithy, personal, or epic in scale. “I guess people were calling it freak folk,” says Sóley. “It wasn’t the same four chords all the time, like Bob Dylan and all that stuff... it was an evolution of folk music. But still acoustic, and still a person who just sits down with an instrument to play a song, and tell a story.”

The big subjects

Iceland’s literary culture is long and rich, but it’s not something that Sóley taps into directly. “I’ve been trying not to go into the whole ‘inspired by Iceland’ thing,” she says. “People ask about that all the time. But, some of those old stories really are very dark, like ‘Sofðu unga ástin mín,’ in which Halla, wife of the bandit Fjalla-Eyvindur, threw a baby over the edge of a waterfall. It would certainly be somewhere to get inspiration for some dark and horrible lyrics.”

And while Sóley’s signature sound is similarly gothic and spooky, it’s something she’s thinking about moving away from. She has just bought a grand piano that’s squeezed into a garage space at home, and has been composing new material.

“I’m going to try and turn a little bit away from darkness,” she says. “I’m not going to depress myself by writing lyrics that make me sad. It’s good to get that stuff out, but when you’re always thinking about it, your mind and soul end up being nourished by that fear. Because life is scary.”

We end by discussing Sam Amidon, another musician who has moved folk music forward by deconstructing and reworking traditional tunes and lyrics into new compositions. Sóley remarks that the lyrical inspirations of the past—love, loss, journeying through life and staving off death—are ever present. “I guess those big subjects haven’t changed over the years,” she finishes. “On those, we never get to a conclusion.”

SHARE: gpv.is/soley

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Reykjavík

April 8 - May 5

Keep it in your pocket

Four Weeks

The Grapevine picks the events, places and things to check out in the next five weeks.

Every Monday and Wednesday

Stand-up comedy in English

Every Monday, a group of comedians called the **GoldenGang** get together and perform a comedy set in English for expats and locals alike. Then on Wednesdays there are improv nights, and a story night at the end of the month—admission is free! **Gaukurinn at 21:00**

April 9

Artist's Talk - 'Envoi' by Monika Grzymala

The Berlin-based **Monika** talks with curator Ingibörg Jónsdóttir about her own work. 'Envoi' is literally about "drawing through space" or in her own words, "Raumzeichnung." The conversation will be in English.

Reykjavík Art Museum: Hafnarhús at 15:00

April 9

Vinnslan Art Festival

The 10th edition of this semi-regular art party will bring about 30 solo artists and groups together, for a program including music, fine art, installations, video art, dance, theatre and more. The bar will be open one hour in advance so come and have a drink before it all starts!

Tjarnarbió at 19:30

April 19

Múlinn Jazz Club: Richard Andersson Trio

Danish bassist **Richard Andersson** has been playing sweet jazz music since moving to Iceland in 2013. With two others, he'll be performing at Harpa's regular jazz night. Admission: 2,000 ISK.

Harpa at 21:00

April 15

Mc Bjór, Bland, Quest & Big Mint ★

Start off your weekend by listening to hip-hop with live funk instrumentalization. The performers **Mc Bjór, Bland, Quest and Big Mint** will make sure this will be a night you won't easily forget.

Gaukurinn at 22:00

April 23

Mikael Lind & Kira Kira with secret guests

Mikael Lind, a composer of ambient electronic music who is currently residing in Reykjavík, will perform at Kex alongside audio and visual artist, Kristín Björk Kristjánsdóttir of Kira Kira. The two artists will bring special guests along for this mysterious evening of music.

KEX Hostel at 21:00

13 & 20 April

Comedy

66°N Goes Down Under



Iceitalia

Café Rosenberg, Austurbakki 2 (E5) | 2,000 ISK

Icelandic comic and cartoonist **Hugleikur Dagsson** has teamed up with Aussie ex-pat **Jono Duffy** to put together this recurring comedy event. Their comedy, as they promise, is like themselves: the former "filthy and friendly," the latter "gay, Australian, and a bit desperate." Obscenities and musical numbers are certain. Food and drink are on offer. All jokes in the lowest common linguistic denominator—English, that is. Bring your own guffaws. **EP**

15 April

Concert

See Hell At Gamla Bíó



Agent Fresco,

Soffía Björg and Axel Flóvent ★

20:30, Gamla Bíó, Ingólfsstræti 2a (E4) | 2,900 ISK

Riding high after nabbing prizes for Record and Singer of the Year at the Icelandic Music Awards, prog-rock band **Agent Fresco** are bringing their live show to Gamla Bíó. Expect operatic vocals and raw emotion. The show also features two up and coming Icelandic singer-songwriters with folksy proclivities: **Soffía Björg** and **Axel Flóvent**. **EP**



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C

Eating

1 Apótek Restaurant Austurstræti 16

This restaurant is cosy and stylish with friendly staff and a South American-infused menu. The name joyfully refers to the fact that the building used to house a pharmacy in days past, and the cocktail menu reflects this, split up into painkillers, stimulants, tranquilizers and placebos.

2 The Cocoo's Nest Grandagarður 23

Nestled in a refurbished fishing hut in the newly flourishing area of Grandi, The Cocoo's Nest is a cosy and airy cafe, offering California-casual brunch, lunch, and dinner, with an Italian twist. With large windows and light wood throughout, this is perfect for a lazy Saturday get-together or an afternoon "aperitivo" after work. If you are in that part of town, head over for a warm-up. town, head over for a warm-up.

3 Kryddlegin Hjörtu Hverfisgata 33

Kryddlegin Hjörtu is a cosy restaurant that offers plenty of healthy options, including a salad and soup buffet. Swing by if you're starting to feel guilty for all of those hot dogs and want more wholesome and nutritious food. Make sure not to miss out on their on-location baked bread.

4 Hraðlestin Lækjargata 8

Despite being the faster and more affordable cousin to one of the top restaurants in the country, Austurindiafélagið, flavour is never compromised by promptness. Their short selection of authentic Indian cuisine is cooked with the finest ingredients, the spices are masterfully blended and the experience is wholly satisfying.

5 Snaps Þórsgata 1

This Reykjavík dining establishment has quickly become a popular spot for folks with a fine palate and a modest budget, offering a small menu drawn from local produce and a carefully selected wine list. It's also a cool hangout for artists and musicians, and we've selected it as our "Best Goddamn Restaurant" every year since 2012. Make sure to get there early—they take reservations until 18:30, but after that it's a free-for-all!

Drinking

6 Bravó Laugavegur 22

Bravó is your run-of-the-mill bar that serves decent drinks. They play good music at a comfortable volume, and provide good seating options even late, when most bars have removed their tables to make room for a dance floor.

7 Mikkeller & Friends Hverfisgata 12

Mikkeller & Friends offers twenty different craft beers on draft, and most of them are from Denmark's Mikkeller brewery. Even on a quiet night, this comfortable place is full of beer enthusiasts thirsty for something a little different.

8 Bar Ananas Klapparstígur 38

Bar Ananas is Reykjavík's only beach bar, and it is truly a breath of fresh air. This is no dive bar, but a club, with an indoor smoking lounge, stairs, a spacious bar, a tiny dance floor, and a solid line of DJs that all aim to make you bust a move.

9 Húrra Naustin

With numerous beers on tap, the place is ideal to sit down for a pint in the early evening, see a live band step on stage around ten or eleven, and then dance to sweet tunes by talented DJs until the wee hours of the night.

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TAX FREE Iceland Refund, Aðalstræti 2, tel: 564 6400

Pharmacies

Lyf og heilsa, Egilsgata 3, tel: 563 1020
Lyfja, Laugavegur 16, tel: 552 4045 and Lágmúla 5, tel: 533 2300

Tourist Information

Arctic Adventures, Laugavegur 11, tel: 562 7000
Tourist Info Centre, Aðalstræti 2, tel: 590 1550
Iceland Excursions – Grayline Iceland, Hafnarstræti 20, tel: 540 1300
The Icelandic Travel Market, Bankastræti 2, tel: 522 4979
Trip, Laugavegur 54, tel: 433 8747

Long Distance Coach Terminal

BSÍ, Vatnsmýrarvegur 10, tel: 562 1011, www.bsi.is

Domestic Airlines

Air Iceland, Reykjavíkflugvöllur, tel: 570 3030, www.flugfelag.is
Eagle Air, Hótel Loftleidir, tel: 562 4200

Public Transport

The only public transport available in Reykjavík is the bus. Most buses run every 20–30 minutes (the wait may be longer on weekends) and the price per fare is 420 ISK for adults and 210 ISK for children. Multiple day passes are available for purchase at select locations and through their eponymous app. Complete route map available at: www.bus.is. Tel: 540 2700. Buses run from 07:00–24:00 on weekdays and 10:00–24:00 on weekends. Main terminals are: Hlemmur and Lækjartorg.

Opening Hours

Bars and clubs: According to regulations, bars can stay open until 01:00 on weekdays and 04:30 on weekends.

Shops

Shops: Mon–Fri 10:00–18:00, Sat 10:00–16:00, Sun closed. The shopping centres Kringlan and Smáralind as well as most supermarkets and tourist shops have longer opening hours.

Post Offices

Banks in the centre are open Mon–Fri 09:00–16:00. Post offices are located around the city. The downtown post office is at Pósthússtræti 3–5, open Mon–Fri




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“You always have to wear some face—smile, show up to work, to school, constantly pleasing others. It’s really good to then go to our rehearsal space and work on how you’re feeling deep inside. Then you get onto the stage and you don’t have to be happy, but can be angry, scream, and break things.”

Kælan Mikla:

The Beauty In Sadness

Words **GABRIEL BENJAMIN**
Photo **ART BICNICK**

Sólveig Matthildur Kristjánsdóttir laughs uncontrollably and apologises for punching the wrong code into the drum machine and mucking up the intro for the third time. **Margrét Rósa Dóru-Harrydóttir** is lambasted for mindlessly strumming her bass in between songs, drowning out the conversation in which **Laufey Soffia Þórsdóttir** argues they should practice their older songs more because they don’t sound as sharp as they used to.

The trio are in high spirits, falling into a familiar rhythm, teasing each other and laughing together. And then, when the music starts, all is still. The dark synth and deep rumbling bass play off of each other, and Laufey’s voice goes effortlessly from softly whispered spoken-word poetry to howled choruses about the meaninglessness of everything.

This is **Kælan Mikla**, and in the three years they’ve been around they’ve evolved by leaps and bounds, completely changing their sound while keeping their core concept of wallowing in sorrow. The reason we’re cramped in a six-square-metre rehearsal space stuffed with instruments and gear is that they recently signed with Greek record label **Fabrika Records**, and are releasing their debut album this May.

After a lengthy practice in which the band goes through all of their standards, we crawl out onto a set of worn-down couches for some much-needed fresh air. The three tell me they met years ago at Menntaskólinn við Hamrahlíð, an upper secondary school renowned for attracting artistically oriented students, such as **Páll Óskar** and **Steinunn Eldflaug Harðadóttir** (aka dj, flugvél og geimskip).

They quickly became close friends and spent a lot of time together. Then, when Sólveig decided to enter a poetry slam competition in 2013, they decided to team up. They won the contest, though Sólveig had just started practicing on the drums a week before, Laufey hadn’t sung before, and Margrét had just picked up the bass.

They figured they had struck upon something that really interested them and threw whatever free time they had into the band, attracting a loyal following of disenfranchised young punks in the process. Then in 2015, they completely switched gears with Sólveig ditching the drums for a synth.

While Sólveig celebrates changing instruments, saying she’s no longer the “bull dyke of the band,” Margrét laughs at how amateurish they were in their early



days—never bringing drumsticks to shows, for example. “We started out learning how to play our instruments as we were making our music,” she says, “but now we’ve matured and actually know what we’re doing and how to prepare for a show.”

Embracing the darker side of life

The nihilistic lyrics rhythmically spouted by Laufey invariably come from her and Sólveig’s poetry books. Sólveig was one of the founders of the **Fríyrkjan** poetry collective, and although she retired after publishing two books, she and Laufey have no shortage of original material.

In describing the band’s identity, Sólveig brings up a poem she wrote in a bout of insomnia, about a child who was swallowed by the abyss and frozen but has now awakened—a scorned voice that was suppressed but is now free to paint everyone’s world black while speaking in the rhyme of broken hearts.

What brings this all together at their live performances is the importance the band places on its visual aesthetic. Draped in dark

and forbidding colours, Kælan Mikla project nothing but melancholy through their body language—Margrét stands sullen and unmoving, avoiding eye contact; Sólveig leans heavily on her synth, as if it’s the only thing keeping her standing; and Laufey shuts her eyes as she spits the words out, her whole body convulsing from the effort.

The three describe stepping onto the stage as like taking off their masks and connecting with the negative emotions that live in all of us. “You can’t be this sad in your daily life,” Margrét conveys somberly. “You always have to wear some face—smile, show up to work, to school, constantly pleasing others. It’s really good to then go to our rehearsal space and work on how you’re feeling deep inside. Then you get onto the stage and you don’t have to be happy, but can be angry, scream, and break things.”

Sólveig and Laufey nod along, saying performing the music has a very strong emotional effect on them. “I get filled with very deep sadness on stage,” says Sólveig. “All the feelings we’re expressing come flooding through me. At the last Airwaves, I always cried when we played ‘Glimmer og Aska,’

there’s something about that song...”

Laufey adds that when they recorded “Kalt” for the Orange Ear series of performance videos, the producers commented on how expressive her face becomes when she performs. “I want people to feel these emotions when we’re playing,” she elaborates. “One of my friends started crying at one of our shows, and that touched me. I thought it was beautiful.”

Stepping into the Fabrika family

Despite being welcome to play at all manner of shows and festivals, Kælan Mikla have always been an outsider in Iceland’s pop-dominated music scene. Laufey believes that their minimalistic sound would be better received in places like Leipzig, while Sólveig theorises that goth music is making a comeback: “When there’s war on the horizon, romanticism thrives, as does the goth scene.” Without commenting on that hypothesis, Laufey says she’s just happy and surprised when they get a full house at their shows.

The band had not received interest from any record labels—until this past December, that is,

when Fabrika Records contacted them. Laufey says the label has signed a lot of acts that they listen to and play on their DJ nights, such as She Past Away, Lebanon Hanover, and Doric, and that they had considered contacting them this past summer.

“**Joanna Badtrip**—who owns the label—had seen ‘Kalt’ on YouTube and offered us a spot on a compilation,” Sólveig says excitedly, “and then they asked us for more demos to consider for ‘further releases.’ And then they just said we were in the Fabrika Family!”

What’s followed has been a long recording session. The resulting eponymous album features eight songs, and will be released in May.

The three girls reflect on the sacrifices they’ve made to reach this point, but note as well that going professional hasn’t changed things all that much. Other than getting the album recorded and published, they still hold day jobs, go to school, and wear some face in their day-to-day lives.

For now though, Kælan Mikla is hunkering down and focusing on fitting in as much band practice as possible.

SHARE: gpv.is/kaelan

How to use the listings:

Events listed are all live performances and DJs. Venues are listed by day. For complete listings and detailed information on venues visit grapevine.is/happening. Send your listings to: listings@grapevine.is.

Friday April 8

Today's highlight:

The Wacken Metal Battle
Who'll be the biggest metal battle of 2016? Find out tonight! The evening's headliner is DIMMA.
19:00 Hlégarður

Concerts:

Faces of the walls rock
21:00 Dillon
Throwdown IV underground Hip-hop night hip-hop
21:00 Gaukurinn
The Cavern Beatles tribute band
20:00 Harpa
Mammút, Stereo Hypnosis, X Heart & Brilliantinus rock ★
22:00 Húrra
Troubadour Alexander covers
22:00 American Bar
Rafnæs #5 electronic
23:00 Paloma

DJs:

21:00 Óli Dóri	Bravó
21:00 TY / SUNSURA	Prikið
21:00 Maggi	Austur
22:00 Verkfall	Dúfnahólar 10
21:00 Styrmir Dansson	Bar Ananas
21:00 Maggi Lego	Boston
21:00 Júlía R. & Kolbrún	Kaffibarinn
23:00 Pétur	American Bar

Saturday April 9

Today's highlight:

Sölvi Kolbeinsson and Magnús Trygvason Elíasson ★
Two young musicians come together at Mengi for a night of smooth jazz.
21:00 Mengi

Concerts:

Major Pink alternative rock
21:00 Bar 11
Belleville house, techno
21:00 Café Rosenberg
Churchhouse creepers, Volcanova and O'bannion rock
21:00 Dillon
The Icelandic Music Experiments - final night experimental
17:00 Harpa
Beatmachinearon / Gunni Ewok hip-hop, dance
21:00 Prikið
Troubadour Siggi Þorsbergs covers
22:00 American Bar

DJs:

21:00 Einar Sonic	Bravó
22:00 Reagan and Gorbachev	Húrra
21:00 Bogi	Austur
22:00 Egill Spegill	Dúfnahólar 10
21:00 Silja Glömmi	Bar Ananas
21:00 Eyfjörð	Boston
21:00 Frímann	Kaffibarinn
23:00 Maggi	American Bar

Sunday April 10

Concerts:

Pearls of Icelandic Songs classical
12:00 Harpa
Bold Baroque-Brák Baroque Ensemble classical
20:00 Harpa
Troubadour Alexander covers
22:00 American Bar

DJs:

21:00 Bervit: Vinyl Sunday	Bravó
21:00 Símon FKNHNSM	Kaffibarinn

Monday April 11

Concerts:

Mánudjass // Monjazz jazz ★
21:00 Húrra



★ **Picker Of The Issue**

Sindri Freyr

As the singer in two prominent Icelandic bands—disco ensemble Boogie Trouble and surf-rock act Bárújárn—it's safe to say that our picker of the issue, Sindri Freyr, knows his ways around the Reykjavík music scene. Both are busy: disco-pop tunesters Boogie Trouble are releasing an album this month, and Bárújárn's infamous live show is basically the closest thing in Iceland to actually surfing—that is, cold and slightly sinister. When asked about his favourite artist, Sindri can't name just one, or even several. "I just like the Icelandic scene in general," he says, "so it's very hard to pick just one." That's the reason why he picks Húrra as his favourite venue—for having such a diverse selection of live music each month. He goes on to say that the music scene is the only reason to live here: "It's not the weather or the politics that really attracts anyone." If he has to recommend an Icelandic Festival, it's without a doubt Aldrei fór ég suður, because according to him: "It's so ridiculously fun. You just have to be there." **JP**

Sindri's picks are marked with ★

Troubadour Roland covers
22:00 American Bar

DJs:

21:00 Nazareth & Spegill	Prikið
21:00 John Brnlv	Kaffibarinn

Tuesday April 12

Concerts:

Fundraising concert
21:00 Café Rosenberg
Karaoke night
21:00 Gaukurinn
Orang Volante soule, house
21:00 Prikið
Troubadour Ellert covers
22:00 American Bar
Boogie Trouble Listening Party pop-disco ★
20:00 Húrra

DJs:

21:00 Ph. D.	Bravó
21:00 Krystal Carma	Kaffibarinn

Wednesday April 13

Today's highlight:

Tectonics Improv. Ilan Volkov and friends
An evening of improvisation hosted by Ilan Volkov. He will be accompanied by many different musicians, for example Ólöf Arnalds and Kira Kira. Admission is free.
21:00 Mengi

Concerts:

Iceland Symphony: Yrkja-Young composers classical
18:00 Harpa
Múlinn Jazz Club: Bananas Jazz Quintet jazz
21:00 Harpa
Consumer Electronics, Circuit Breaker / AMFJ electronic ★
20:00 Húrra
Fusion Groove Orchestra dance
21:00 Prikið
Elín Ey, Myrra Rós & Halla Norðfjörð experimental
21:00 Loft
Troubadours Siggi Þorsbergs & Ingunn covers

DJs:

21:00 Óli Dóri	Bravó
21:00 Pilsner	Kaffibarinn

Thursday April 14

Today's highlight:

Intro Beats
Introbeats started out as a turntablist, but got his hands on his first beat machine in 1998 and has since full embraced the DJ life. This veteran usually plays house, hip-hop, electronica and breakbeat music.
21:00 Prikið

Concerts:

Kristín Birna singer
21:00 Café Rosenberg
Ensími and 200.000 Naglbítar rock
21:00 Gaukurinn
Iceland Symphony: Tectonics Reykjavík Music Festival experimental
18:00 Harpa
HMM: III Ultraorthodox & Skrattar electronic
20:00 Húrra
Wesen & Antimony concert ★
experimental
21:00 Loft
Elín Ey dance
21:00 Hlemmur Square
Troubadour Hreimur covers
22:00 American Bar

DJs:

21:00 Ísar Logi	Bravó
22:00 Auður	Dúfnahólar 10
21:00 Styrmir Dansson	Bar Ananas
21:00 Skeng	Kaffibarinn

Friday April 15

Concerts:

Foreign Land classic rock
21:00 Café Rosenberg
Omotrack experimental
21:00 Dillon
Mc Bjór og bland, Quest & Big Mint Hip-hop concert hip-hop ★
22:00 Gaukurinn
Fames / Blkparty r&b, soul
21:00 Prikið
Volcanova and Captain Syrup rock
21:00 Quest

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7 course menuA unique
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national spirit “Brennivín“**Puffin**Smoked puffin with blueberries,
croutons, goats cheese, beetroot**Minke whale**

Date purée, wakame, teriaky

“Torched“ Arctic charrCucumber, truffle ponzu vinaigrette
and yuzu mayo**Icelandic roll – 4 pcs**Gravlax roll with Brennivín (Icelandic
traditional Snaps) and dill. Avokado, mango,
cucumber, dill mayo, rye bread crumble**Reindeer**Reindeer slider with blue cheese,
portobello, steamed bun**Rack of Icelandic lamb**Onion purée, slow cooked leeks,
chimichurri, baked carrot

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Music



Photo RUT SIGURDARDÓTTIR

Let The
Children Boogie
Iceland's Disco Saviors Emerge

By DAVID ROACH GUNNARSSON

The year 2012 was a big hit for disco dancers worldwide: they lost their queen, **Donna Summer**, and their prince, **Robin Gibb** (from the **Bee Gees**). But that year also saw the resurgence of Icelandic disco, in the form of ever-pretty and always on-beat group **Boogie Trouble**. After four years of honing their groovecraft they are finally pushing their debut album, ‘Í Bænum’, into the world. I met up with front-couple (not actual couple) **Klara Arnalds** and **Sindri Freyr** at Klara’s house, where they had set up a micro sweatshop packaging their brand-new album, and asked them a few questions about their offspring, ideology and escapism.

What took you so long to get it out?

“We came into the scene at a time

when the krútt/lo-fi wave was still going strong. We on the other hand were making shameless pop music and the resources we had at our disposal just weren’t quite enough to get the hi-fi sound we were aiming for,” Klara tells me. “The matter of members moving abroad multiple times and a rotating lineup also had an effect,” Sindri adds. “We also re-recorded almost all of the album because we just weren’t happy enough with the sound the first time.”

But why did five indie kids form a disco band, of all things, in 2012? Sindri says he just wanted to write pop songs and saw disco as an (of late) unused canvas. Bass player Ingibjörg (the funkiest woman in Iceland) was at that time knee-deep in Motown vibes, so she seemed like a natural fit. All of them were into different types of music but found common ground in disco. But as you can hear on the album, Boogie Trouble’s disco is not a pure breed: they also draw on elements from surf, funk and 60s Icelandic pop, to name a few strains. “When you ascribe to a certain type of music in 2012 you have to mix it with other elements, or else it’s just a replica, a costume party,” says Klara. “I feel that when we started, disco for most people was only bellbottomed pants and afro wigs; that was something we wanted to change.”

Some say disco emerged in the 70s out of the need for an escape from the hard political climate of that time. Is that a theory you think has some merits?

Sindri: “Well, disco began in gay clubs and the black community and then rises to surface, sort as a reflex to the failed hippie ideals

of the 60s. The political climate in the US was absolutely horrendous. Martin Luther King and Kennedy had been killed, the Black Panthers had been killed and imprisoned, everything more or less sucked. So escapism through dancing seemed to some the natural thing to do. In that light it could be possible to look at Boogie Trouble as “hrunmúsík,” but that has to be assessed later when more years have passed.”

Klara: “I can see that, but for me it had a lot to do with making up an alter ego for myself. Because I had never performed for an audience before I started Boogie Trouble I couldn’t set foot onstage without curling my hair A LOT and wearing an orange diva dress. You could call that escapism—I had to get out of my own persona, to put my regular life on hold and turn into this howling songstress in a disco band.”

Both Klara and Sindri are very happy with the sound of their debut album and the work of their producer **Janus** (of **Kiasmos** and **Bloodgroup** fame). “Of course you should always put it on while having a dance party, but if you give it a spin in some good headphones you should notice subtle new details with each listen you hadn’t heard before, endless layers and overdubs,” says Sindri.

“There is a listening party at **Húrra** on the 12th of April when you can listen to the album on an awesome sound system” Sindri added. “There will be **FREE BEER**, that is the most important part of the interview, can you print that in bold and Caps Lock? It starts at 8, the album will be sold, and we will be autographing it.”

SHARE: gvp.is/boogie



5. March – 1. May 2016

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Concerts & Nightlife Listings April 8 - May 5

Troubadours Maggi & Ívar covers

22:00 American Bar

Agent Fresco Soffía Björg and Axel Flovent ★

20:30 Gamla Bíó

DJs:

21:00	Símon FKNHNSM	Bravó
22:00	Atli	Gamla Bíó
21:00	André Ramirez	Austur
22:00	Young Nazareth	Dúfnahólar 10
21:00	Pabbi	Bar Ananas
21:00	Maya (BE)	Boston
21:00	Intro Beats	Kaffibarinn
23:00	Maggi	American Bar

Saturday April 16

Today's highlight:

Lady Boy Records release concerts

Dance music lovers around Iceland will be as happy as kids in a candy store as Harry Knuckles, russian.girls & more hit the stage. ★

21:00 Gaukurinn

Concerts:

Alchemia and guest heavy-metal

21:00 Bar 11

Guggurnar pop

21:00 Café Rosenberg

The Roulette rock

21:00 Dillon

Svanur Brass Band's Spring Concert

classical

15:00 Harpa

Mikael Lind's Release concert

experimental

21:00 Mengi

Redbull MA & Logi Pedro Pilatus

21:00 Prikið

Troubadour Biggi covers

22:00 American Bar

DJs:

21:00	Krystal Carma	Bravó
21:00	Maggi	Austur
22:00	Karítas	Dúfnahólar 10
21:00	Sunnananas 3.0	Bar Ananas
21:00	Ísar Logi	Boston
21:00	Margeir	Kaffibarinn
23:00	André	American Bar

Sunday April 17

Concerts:

Blúsbrot concerts jazz

21:00 Gaukurinn

Pearls of Icelandic Songs classical

12:30 Harpa

Álftagerðisbræður classical ★

20:00 Harpa

Troubadour Siggí Þorsbergs covers

22:00 American Bar

DJs:

21:00	Einar Sonic	Bravó
21:00	Silja Glömmi	Kaffibarinn

Monday April 18

Concerts:

Mánudjass // Monjazz jazz ★

21:00 Húrra

Travis Wyche opera classical

21:00 Mengi

Nígrita folk

17:00 Kaffisliptur

Troubadour Ellert covers

22:00 American Bar

DJs:

21:00	Pabbi	Kaffibarinn
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Tuesday April 19

Concerts:

The Soudation Project jazz, indie

21:00 Café Rosenberg

Karaoke night

22:00 Gaukurinn

The children Culture Festival classical

10:00 Harpa

Múlinn Jazz Club: Richard Andersson

trío jazz

21:00 Harpa

Curse Purse (US) Bárújárn indie ★

20:00 Húrra



See who'll become "the new Of Monsters & Men"

The Icelandic Music Experiments - final night

April 9, 17:00 at Harpa, Austurbakki 2 (C4). Admission: 2,000 ISK

The Icelandic Music Experiments is a five-day event during which 40 bands battle towards the finals. Tonight, you can vote along with a jury to decide who will win. It's a perfect opportunity to see the newest most promising acts of the Icelandic music scene: previous winners include Of Monsters and Men, Samaris and more. **JP**

Drullumall concert alternative rock

19:00 The Maritime Museum

Troubadour Roland covers

22:00 American Bar

DJs:

21:00	Óli Björn	Bravó
21:00	Berndsen	Prikið
21:00	Óli Dóri	Kaffibarinn

Wednesday April 20

Today's highlight:

Eve fanfest Karaoke

22:00 Húrra

Concerts:

Stalker, Brött Brekka and Gloryride

rock, indie ★

21:00 Bar 11

Cult Leader (USA) rock

21:00 Dillon

Mælginn Incorporated

21:00 Prikið

Dodda Maggý LHÍ graduation

concert experimental

21:00 Mengi

Boston in Velvet - Guilty Pleasure night with Janus (FO), Heiðrik (FO) and Cinnamon Sigrún dance ★

21:00 Boston

DJs:

21:00	Styrmir Dansson	Bravó
21:00	Bogi	Austur
22:00	Sonur Sæll	Dúfnahólar 10
21:00	Sunnananas	Bar Ananas
22:00	Áskell	Kaffibarinn

Thursday April 21

Today's highlight:

The first day of summer: Úlfur Úlfur

Prikið is rewarding the Reykjavík nightlife with a performance from Úlfur Úlfur!

21:00 Prikið

Concerts:

Graduation concert pop, dance

21:00 Café Rosenberg

Hiphop jam session hip-hop

21:00 Gaukurinn

Geimskot dance

21:00 Húrra

Jakob Gunnarsson & Snorri Skúlason

folk

21:00 Hlemmur Square

Troubadour Matti Matt covers

22:00 American Bar

DJs:

Friday April 22

Today's highlight:

"Drag-Súgar" Queer Variety Show

Enjoy this show with cabaret, drag queens, music and drinks.

21:00 Gaukurinn

Concerts:

Barr reggae ★

21:00 Bar 11

Pálmi Sigurhjartar and Ejólfur

Kristján's Tom Waits tribute tribute

concert

21:00 Café Rosenberg

The Dirty Deal Blues band jazz

21:00 Dillon

TY / Nazareth & Spegill dance

21:00 Prikið

Voces Thules classical

21:00 Mengi

For You / Polish Film Festival pop

21:00 Hlemmur Square

Troubadour Roland covers

22:00 American Bar

DJs:

21:00	Davíð Roach	Bravó
21:00	Styrmir Dansson	Húrra
21:00	André Ramirez	Austur
22:00	Sunna Ben	Dúfnahólar 10
21:00	Símon FKNHNSM	Bar Ananas
21:00	Davíð Roach	Boston
21:00	Kári	Kaffibarinn
23:00	Maggi	American Bar

Saturday April 23

Today's highlight:

Egill Spegill

DJ Egill Spegill cranks up the volume. Be there or be square!

22:00 Dúfnahólar 10

Concerts:

Nexion and Auðn death metal

21:00 Bar 11

Bjartmar Guðlaugs and Band

21:00 Café Rosenberg

FALK night: Radiator Greys /

Dulvitund / AAIIEENN experimental ★

21:00 Dillon

Major Pink and guests alternative

rock

21:00 Gaukurinn

Icelandic Hiphop Quiz with DJ

Kocoon hip-hop

BRUNCH MENU



BRUNCH PIZZAS

Mozzarella, home made tomato sauce, fire baked eggs, bacon, black pepper. **2.850 KR.**

Cream cheese, boiled potatoes, rocket salad, truffle mayo. **2.850 KR.**

Mozzarella, garlic oil, oregano. **2.450 KR.**

BRUNCH COURSES

Avocado on Gusti's rye bread with crème fraiche and herbs. **1.950 KR.**

Smoked trout on Gusti's rye bread, poached egg, hollandaise. **1.750 KR.**

Poached egg, sourdough bread, butter and Ísbúi cheese. **1.150 KR.**

Buffalo mozzarella, tomatoes, kale, basil and horseradish. **2.490 KR.**

Rocket salad, spinach, radish leaves, ricotta, parma ham, pumpkin seeds, cherries, crispy bread. **2.250 KR.**

Fried eggs and bacon, bean purée, spinach and sourdough bread. **2.350 KR.**

Sandwich with ham & cheese, fresh vegetables. **950 KR.**

Pancakes, jam and whipped cream. **950 KR.**

Fresh fruits. **500 KR.**



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Jaakko Eino Kalevi Wanders Through Scenes, Genres, The World

Words **JOHN ROGERS**
Photos **ART BICNICK**

Jaakko Eino Kalevi is an oddly compelling presence. Usually seen live with a small backing band, he plays languid, hazy, analogue pop music with shades of psychedelia

and disco, swaying onstage barely enough to make his long hair move. His eyes remain fixed on the keys of the synthesizer until he addresses the mic to sing in his deep, dispassionate

voice, gazing somewhere into the distance. He's at once a casual and slightly stiff performer—if it's possible to be effortlessly awkward, Jaakko manages it. It's a very

Finnish brand of charisma.

We meet the day after his show at a packed Loft Hostel, where Jaakko played a set gleaned mostly from his recent self-titled album. It's his second visit to Iceland—like many other musicians, his first was Airwaves. “It was a little bit wild,” smiles Jaakko. “There was a lot of drinking. The week after, I had a red mark on the bridge of my nose, and I was wondering how it got there. Then one day I took a sip from a pint glass, and realised the mark was exactly where the glass touched my nose...”

Doing something interesting

Party damage aside, Jaakko quickly found himself at home in Reykjavik 101. “It was crazy how many friends I made on that trip,” he recalls. “Reykjavik is such a special place. Everyone seems to know each other, and to be friends. There's no competition—people just support each other. It reminds me of my hometown, Tiituspohja—but everyone here seems to be doing something interesting.”

Jaakko now lives in Berlin, and recently released a self-titled album that's thrillingly fully formed. Employing everything from playful 80s pop references to flashes of psychedelia, disco textures and krautrock basslines, it remains sonically coherent, pulling from all over the musical spectrum in a way that feels instinctive and natural. One constant across the ten tracks is their warm, analogue sound. Is that something he strived for?

“I wouldn't want to admit it, but I guess it's true,” he smiles. “I

recorded all of it to my computer, but I do like the tape sound. There are no plug-ins—it's more inspiring to be hands-on. Instruments inspire me a lot. It's fun to play around with them, and you have to experiment more.”

Station to station

The album seems to have taken on a life of its own, and resulted in an emerging international audience. “In autumn we did a crazy tour—54 shows in two months,” he says. “We also went to Australia and Hong Kong. The scene in Hong Kong seemed small but active—we played in a small club, but it was a really nice show. I met a record seller called ‘Paul the record seller.’ He had this crazy life story—his mother had put him into a shipping container when he was young, during the Vietnam war, and he'd ended up in Hong Kong. He lived in the streets, and people started donating records to him. He ended up having a big collection and starting a shop. And now he has 300,000 records in a huge warehouse. He was a real character. I bought some Chinese electronic music and some Japanese stuff. It was a real mess in there, but he knew exactly where everything was.”

“It can be tiring,” he finishes, looking plaintively into the distance, just like he did onstage at Loft. “Sometimes I find myself somewhere and just think: ‘What am I doing here?’ But I guess you can get those feelings anywhere.”

SHARE: gpv.is/jaakko

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Concerts & Nightlife April 8 - May 5

21:00 Prikið
Mikael Lind & Kira Kira with secret guests *experimental*
 21:00 KEX Hostel
Sóley Stefánsdóttir & Katrín Helga Andrésdóttir *folk* ★
 21:00 Mengi
Troubadour Soggi Þorbergs *covers*
 22:00 American Bar

DJs:

21:00 Elvar	Bravó
22:00 KGB	Húrra
21:00 Maggi	Austur
21:00 Styrmir Dansson	Bar Ananas
21:00 Maggi Lego	Boston
21:00 Alfons X	Kaffibarinn
23:00 Bogi	American Bar

Sunday April 24

Concerts:

Sun Glow concert *folk*
 21:00 Gaukurinn
Pearls of Icelandic Songs *classical*
 12:30 Harpa
Troubadour Alexander *covers*
 22:00 American Bar

DJs:

21:00 Intro Beats	Bravó
21:00 Krystal Carma	Kaffibarinn

Monday April 25

Concerts:

Mánudjass // Monjazz *jazz* ★
 21:00 Húrra
Troubadour Roland *covers*
 22:00 American Bar

DJs:

21:00 Pilsner	Kaffibarinn
---------------	-------------

Tuesday April 26

Today's highlight:

100th Spring Concert of the Male Choir Fóstbræður
One of the leading male choirs in Iceland performs their 100th Spring Concert.
 20:00 Harpa

Concerts:

Magnús R. Einarsson *jazz*
 21:00 Café Rosenberg
Karaoke night
 21:00 Gaukurinn
Engelsholm concert *experimental*
 21:00 Mengi
Troubadour Ellert *covers*
 22:00 American Bar

DJs:

20:00 Api Pabbi	Húrra
21:00 John Brnlv	Kaffibarinn

Wednesday April 27

Today's highlight:

Housekell
DJ Housekell's sound has been described as deep chords and a groovy bassline!
 21:00 Prikið

Concerts:

Buff *dance*
 21:00 Café Rosenberg
100th Spring Concert of the Male Choir Fóstbræður *classical*
 20:00 Harpa
Troubadours Soggi Þorbergs & Ingunn *covers*
 22:00 American Bar

DJs:

21:00 Fusion	Bravó
21:00 Intro Beats	Kaffibarinn

Thursday April 28

Today's highlight:

Einar Scheving & Ólafur Björn Ólafsson
 21:00 Mengi

Concerts:

Mandolín band and singer Brynhildur *folk*



A Well-Groomed Evening Of Spring

Foxing / Teitur Magnússon / Markús and The Diversion Sessions

April 16, 21:00 at Húrra, Naustin (D3), Admission: 2,000 ISK

The Missourians of Foxing bring the fresh breeze of spring to Iceland with their 90s indie rock and different styles of beards. The well-groomed Markús and the Diversion Sessions are one of the opening acts and the oh-so hairy Teitur Magnússon also. Unwind to the sounds, and dance guided by the gentlemen of indie music. A perfect evening for welcoming spring, and hopefully a touch of summer. **HBG**

Avant-Gardestock

Tectonics Reykjavík Music Festival

April 14 - 15, at Harpa, Austurbakki 2 (C4). Admission: 5,000 ISK

You can expect an experimental twist on all kinds of instruments performed by the Iceland Symphony and conducted by Ilan Volkov. To top it all off, there will be wonderful performances by artists such as Roscoe Mitchell, Peter Ablinger and Séverine Ballon. **JP**

21:00 Café Rosenberg
100th Spring Concert of the Male Choir Fóstbræður *classical*
 20:00 Harpa
Múlinn Jazz Club: Janis Carol band *jazz*
 21:00 Harpa
Iceland Symphony: Open Rehearsal *classical*
 09:30 Harpa
Iceland Symphony: Orchestra: ★
Osborne plays Shostakovich *classical*
 19:30 Harpa
Benni Hemm Hemm *indie* ★
 22:00 Húrra
Gervisykur showcase *dance*
 21:00 Prikið
Sacha Bernardson *pop, alternative*
 21:00 Loft
Troubadour Hreimur *covers*
 22:00 American Bar

DJs:
 21:00 Óli Dóri Bravó
 22:00 Verkfall Dúfnahólar 10
 21:00 Davíð Roach Bar Ananas
 21:00 Alfons X Kaffibarinn

Friday April 29

Today's highlight:

AVÓKA, Arnliótur, DJ Flugvél and Geimskip ★
You'll be in for a night of dance!
 21:00 Gaukurinn

Concerts:

Moonbear *rock*
 21:00 Bar 11
Beggi Mood blús *jazz*
 21:00 Café Rosenberg
David Bowie in Memoriam
 19:30 Harpa
Gunnar Andreas Kristinsson *classical*
 21:00 Mengi
Troubadour Alexander *covers*
 22:00 American Bar

DJs:
 21:00 Ísar Logi Bravó
 22:00 Steindór Jónsson Húrra
 21:00 Karítas All Nighter Prikið
 21:00 André Ramirez Austur
 22:00 Egill Cali Dúfnahólar 10
 21:00 Pilsner 2.25% Bar Ananas
 21:00 Janus (FO) Boston
 21:00 KGB Kaffibarinn
 23:00 Bogi American Bar

Saturday April 30

Today's highlight:

Styrmir Dansson
Styrmir Dansson loves house, indie and r&b.
 21:00 Bar Ananas

Concerts:

KK and Maggi *folk*
 21:00 Café Rosenberg
Kuksu Cult *jazz*
 21:00 Dillon
Par-Ðar, Godchillam Caterpillarmen *indie* ★
 22:00 Gaukurinn
Pearls of Icelandic Songs *classical*
 17:00 Harpa
100th Spring Concert of the Male Choir Fóstbræður *classical*
 15:00 Harpa
Jacob Wiick and Eiríkur Orri Ólafsson *trumpet classical*
 21:00 Mengi
Troubadour Ellert *covers*
 22:00 American Bar

DJs:

21:00 Steindór Jónsson	Bravó
22:00 Símon FKNHNDMSM	Húrra
21:00 Emmsjé Gauti All Nighter	Prikið
21:00 Pétur	Austur



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Reykjavik Maritime Museum



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Reykjavik Museum of Photography



More information in the Museums & Galleries section.

Reykjavik
City Museum**Art**

Icelandic Pioneer

**Movie-Star, Painter, Man of the World****The Story of Muggur**

By VALUR GUNNARSSON



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“From Iceland’s Frigid Shore, Where Women Vote, Come Wondrous Fairy Tales.” Thus read a headline in the Evening Sun on November 3rd, 1915. The occasion was the first visit by Icelandic painter Guðmundur Thorsteinsson, or Muggur, to New York City. He was not there, however, to exhibit his works. This was in the middle of World War I and the waters around mainland Europe were infested with German submarines. For the first time ever, a trade mission was sent from Iceland, still a Danish dependency, to the still neutral United States to gather supplies for the isolated island nation. The ship Botnia set sail for the New World, carrying on board 5000 barrels of herring to exchange for goods. Leading the mission was the merchant Ólafur Johnson, and he had invited his brother-in-law Muggur along.

As is usual for Icelanders abroad, even in times of crisis, only the best was good enough, and Ólafur and Guðmundur stayed at the Hotel Astor on Times Square, where they soon caught the eye of the local press. The journalist in question was impressed by Muggur’s paintings of large-limbed trolls, and no less impressed by the fact that in Iceland, women could not only paint

pictures but houses as well.

A Life in Pictures

When women in the US finally got the right to vote in 1920, much had changed. The war was over, but Iceland, along with many other countries, had been decimated by the Spanish flu pandemic. The by now 29-year-old Muggur had gotten married and divorced again, which drove the previously life-loving artist to depression and drink. However, 1920 also brought the first exhibition of Icelandic painting abroad, in the royal capital of Copenhagen. Five artists were represented, and the one with the most works on display was none other than Muggur.

His good looks had also been put to use in ‘Sons of the Soil’ (‘Saga Borgarættarinnar’), a major Danish motion picture shot in Iceland. It would be released in the following year to good reviews, but film actors at the time were badly paid, and in any case, Muggur preferred to paint. This was not very lucrative either—but Muggur had for a long time been supported by his wealthy father.

Man vs. Horse

Muggur should have been riding high as Iceland’s best-known international actor and painter, but

events soon took a different turn. His father became bankrupt, as is often the case with the wealthy in Iceland, and as Muggur was known for giving away his money to friends or the poor, he found it increasingly hard to make his way in the world. In any case, he was not long for it.

In the summer of 1923, his health already deteriorating due to hard living, he was ignobly kicked in the back by his own horse. He never fully recovered, but still made one final trip abroad to France and then Denmark, where he died in early 1924 at the age of 32. His body was sent to Iceland and now rests in the old cemetery by Suðurgata.

But his story was not over. In the first major retrospective of Icelandic art in 1927, also held in Copenhagen, his work was well represented. Paintings from this very exhibition are now on display at the National Gallery of Iceland, overlooking the pond. Here, alongside a host of other artists, you can see Muggur’s paintings of elves and other creatures, his impressions of New York in 1915, as well as more social-realist works depicting such scenes as the one of women carrying coal at the harbour, perhaps his masterpiece.

SHARE: gpv.is/muggur



Where Children Meet Culture

Children's Culture Festival

April 19 - 24 | Admission: Free!

The Icelandic Children's Culture Festival is a platform for creativity, culture, art and, above all, having fun—all fields in which children seem to excel. The festival's events take place in various venues around Reykjavík, like swimming pools, schoolyards and even on the streets. Workshops, concerts and exhibitions are part of the program, including a journalism workshop, photography competition and a performance from the youth circus, to name a few. It's safe to say that there will be something for every child. The festival is a feast for the young and creative minds of children, parents and grand-parents alike! **HBG**

How to use the listings:

Events are listed alphabetically. For complete listings and detailed information on venues visit grapevine.is/happening. Send your listings to: listings@grapevine.is

Opening

Anarkía - 'Fölvun' by Elísabet Hákonardóttir

Elísabet exhibits paintings where she focuses on injuries, physical and emotional.

Opens on April 9 - Runs until May 1

Anarkía - 'Kjól' by Vilborg Edda Jóhannsdóttir

Vilborg exhibits paintings of dresses focusing on their role.

Opens on April 9 - Runs until May 1

ASÍ Art Gallery - Eggert Pétursson & Helgi Þorgils Friðjónsson

These painters will exhibit new paintings.

Opens April 9 at 15:00 - Runs until May 8

Bar Ananas - Pub Quiz in English

Enjoy the Pub Quiz!

Runs April 12, 19 and 26 at 21:00

Children's Culture Festival

Árbær Open Air Festival will be open on the first day of summer in celebration of the Children's Culture Festival. Admission is free!

Runs April 21 at 13:00

Ekkisens - 'Courage, don't leave me' by Victor Guzman

An exhibition focusing on immigration and the refugee crisis. Victor projects his own experiences as an immigrant.

Opens April 16 - Runs until April 19

Ekkisens - '109 Cats in Sweaters' by Auður Lóa Guðnadóttir and Una Sigtryggisdóttir

A collaboration between two graduates of the Iceland Academy of the Arts who look into cats wearing sweaters.

Opens April 29 at 20:00

Gallerí Fold - Kári Svensson

The Faroese painter will exhibit his artwork at Gallerí Fold.

Opens April 23 - Runs until May 7

Gallerí Fold - Soffía Sæmundsdóttir

The painter and visual artist will exhibit her vibrant and colourful art pieces at Gallerí Fold.

Opens April 23 - Runs until May 7

Gerðuberg Cultural Center - Children's Culture Festival

Introducing 'Von be don' by Bergljót & Brynhildur J Bjarnadóttir. Children from 'Móðurmál' will read parts from the book.

Runs on April 23 at 14:30

Gaukurinn - Slam poetry competition

The slam poetry competition is open for all poets. Admission is free.

Runs April 28 at 21:00

Gaukurinn - English Comedy night

The Goldengang comedy troupe host an improvised stand-up night. Admission is free.

Runs April 11, 13, 18, 20, 25, 27, May 2 & 4 at 21:00

Hlemmur - Reykjavík Wine & Print Fair

Hlemmur is usually a bus station but will become a book-galore for one day. Comics, posters, drawings and artist's books will be for sale.

Runs April 8 at 16:00

Icelandic Academy of the Arts - 'Misbrigði' by second years students

Students from the Iceland Academy of the Arts will be showcasing their designs made in collaboration with The Red Cross.

Opens April 8 - Runs until April 10

Kópavogur Art Museum Gerðarsafn - MA Degree Show in Design and Fine Art

This show from students of the Iceland Academy of the Arts will exhibit the students' final projects and artworks.

Opens April 16 - Runs until May 8

Listhús - The End: The meeting in Iceland

A solo exhibition by Abercromby.

Opens April 8 - Runs until April 10 from 12:00 until 15:00

Listastofan - The Apocalypse: A Post-Life Drawing Session

Life drawing session with a post-civilization twist.

Runs April 9 at 15:00

Listastofan - 'Photographs 1962 - 1997' by Þorgeir Logi Árnason

An exhibition of personal photographs taken by the famous Icelandic printer.

Opens April 14 - Runs until April 24

Loft - 'Kósý Ljósár' vol #5: Visual arts and craft night

Loft hosts an art collective with live performances. Come and enjoy.

Runs April 19 at 21:00

Mengi - Kriðpleir

Kriðpleir is an ambitious theatre group that hosts unusual performances fuelled by a passion for truth, acknowledgement and respect.

Runs on April 14, 15 and May 1 at 21:00

Mengi - Apples in Iceland: The Way Out?

A lecture about the Icelandic financial crisis by artist turned apple farmer, Karl Ágúst Þorbergsson.

Runs on April 17 at 17:00

Mengi - Cage for Kids

A concert dedicated to John Cage curated by Berglind María Tómasdóttir and Curver Thoroddsen. Children are very welcome.

Runs on April 21 at 15:00

Mengi - Partus Press Release Part

New poetry by Elías Knör, Sigurbjörg Friðriksdóttir & Þorvaldur Sigurbjörn Helgason.

Runs on April 21 at 20:00

Mengi - Creative Music Lab For Children

Mengi hosts a creative music lab for children aged 6-10 and their parents, led by Benedikt Hermann Hermannsson.

Runs on April 24 at 10:30

Mengi - Beyond Human Impulses

A visual performance show will be held at Mengi.

Runs on May 2 at 21:00

Mokka-Kaffi - 'Transformation' by Rósa Sigrún Jónsdóttir

Rósa will be showing drawings and rock collage images.

Opens April 17 - Runs until May 18

Núllið - 'Being Boring'

Foreign artists come together to research boringness in art.

Opens April 8

Prikið - Drink & Draw

Come enjoy a night of drawing while drinking!

Runs April 18 at 21:00

Reykjavík Art Museum / Ásmundarsafn - 'Uppbrot' by Ásmundur Sveinsson and Elín Hansdóttir

Works from these artists are extremely different and seeing them together makes for an interesting vision.

Opens April 16 - Runs until October 9

Reykjavík Art Museum: Hafnarhús - 'Symposium: Art and Radical Pedagogy: Power to Change?'

Susan Gollifer, Ingimar Ólafsson Waage and Guðrún Vera Hjartardóttir discuss the exhibition 'Back to the Sandbox: Art and Radical Pedagogy'.

Runs on April 9 at 15:00

Reykjavík Art Museum: Hafnarhús - 'Envoi' by Monika Grzymala

Monika talks with curator Ingibjörg Jónsdóttir about the exhibition 'Envoi'. The conversation will be in English.

Runs on April 09 at 15:00

Reykjavík Art Museum: Hafnarhús - Anchoring Ground: Iceland Academy of the Arts graduation exhibition

This year's graduates from architecture, design and fine arts exhibit their final projects.

Opens April 23 - Runs until May 8

Reykjavík Art Museum: Kjarvalsstaðir - Guided tour in English

Runs on April 8, 15, 22 and 29 at 14:00

Reykjavík Maritime Museum - Lunchtime lecture with Illugi Jökulsson

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Framing

March 18th - May 22nd
An installation by the artist duo Hugsteypan where viewers creative participation is encouraged.

MA Degree Show in Design and Fine Art

The Iceland Academy of the Arts
16. April - 8. May

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Icelandic design highlights, from the Collection

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Gerðarsafn - Kópavogur Art Museum

Hamraborg 4, Kópavogur
Open 11-17 / Closed on Mondays
www.gerdarsafn.is

Hönnunarsafn Íslands / Museum of Design and Applied Art

Garðatorg 1, Garðabær
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www.honnunarsafn.is

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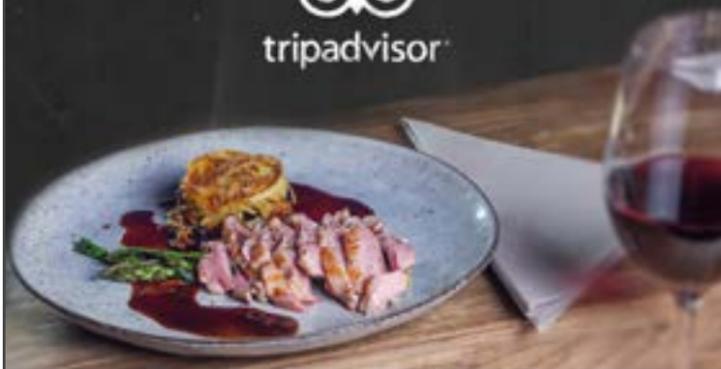
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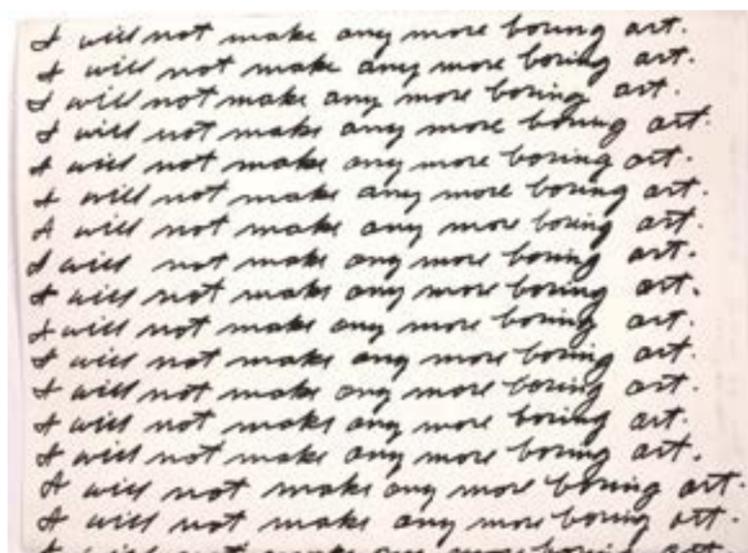
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Get Bored With Baldessari At Nýló

by REBECCA SCOTT LORD

John Baldessari is a revered conceptual artist who has inspired dozens of other big names. Now, his touch will be felt all the way here in Iceland at the opening of Nýló's exhibition 'Being Boring' on Friday, April 8. Three students from the Iceland Academy of the Arts (Listaháskóli) will be recreating his classic 1971 piece 'I Will Not Make Any More Boring Art,' in which he asked students at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design to write the titular phrase endlessly on the gallery walls. This performance will begin at the opening, which starts at 20:00, and will continue for the duration of the show.

The exhibition as a whole will

touch on the theme of boredom, a feeling familiar to just about everyone. If you've ever spent hours endlessly refreshing your Instagram feed or scrolling again and again over the same stories on Facebook, you've felt that dreaded boredom that seems so inescapable. The artists whose work is a part of this show have forced themselves to reject the endless scrolling, and to be productive in the face of it.

The title itself implies that boredom is crucial to the act of making art. It comes from a quote by Zelda Fitzgerald's in her 1922 essay "Eulogy on the Flapper": "She refused to be bored chiefly because she wasn't boring." The works on display are

the result of this refusal, the product of people staring down that boredom and turning it into art. In addition to John Baldessari's work, the works of Phil Coy, Lucy Clout, Emma Hart, William Hunt, Sam Porritt and Peter Wächtler will also be a part of the exhibition, which is curated by Gareth Bell-Jones and Gemma Lloyd.

So if you can tear yourself away from your boring Instagram feed which still hasn't changed since you checked it for the twentieth time five minutes ago, you should go experience some curated boredom at Nýló's project space Núllið. The show runs until May 1.

SHARE: gpv.is/baldess

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Art Listings



Raising Awareness About Refugees

'Courage, don't leave me' by Victor Guzman - Ekkisens

Bergstaðastræti 25B (F4) | April 16 – April 19 | Admission: Free!

The exhibition 'Courage, don't leave me' is the first solo exhibition of Victor Guzman and tackles the issue of immigration and the refugee crisis. He projects – in a narrative way - his own experiences as a 10-year-old immigrant integrating into a small Norwegian town. With this exhibit he wants to raise awareness about the refugee crisis, xenophobia and bullying. JP

Icelandic author Illugi Jökulsson hosts an interesting lecture commemorating the 110th anniversary of a maritime tragedy. Free entrance.

Runs on April 7 at 12:10

Reykjavík Maritime Museum - Photo fun at Children's Culture Festival

A photography exhibition for children where the entrance is free!

Opens April 18

Runs until April 24

SÍM (CIA) - 'Missing Memories' by Beate Körner

Beate will be exhibiting her work at SÍM. She is the first non-Icelandic to do so.

Opens April 8 - Runs until April 26

Tjarnarbíó - Vinnslan Art Festival

About 30 solo artists and groups will exhibit at Tjarnarbíó: Theater, music, paintings, installations and more.

Runs on April 9 at 19:30

University of Iceland - Lunch hour talk with Kevin Larimer from Poets & Writers

A talk during the Iceland Writers Retreat with Kevin Larimer, editor in chief of Poets and Writers.

Runs April 14 at 12:00

Ongoing

Gallerí Gróttta - Daði Guðbjörnsson

Daði Guðbjörnsson exhibits paintings where he researches the connection between life and a journey.

Runs until further notice

i8 Gallery - 'In the Genes' by Sofia Hultén

Sofia is known for her postindustrial streak. Her exhibit is a wordplay on "genes" and "jeans."

Runs until April 30

Kópavogur Art Museum Gerðarsafn - 'Blind Date + The Collection'

A selection of some of Gerðarsafn's 4200 works.

Runs until April 10

Listasafnið Akureyri - 'Fólk / People'

The photo gallery is presenting 7 artists with different perspectives. Admission is free.

Runs until May 29

Listastofan - 'Everness: Revolutions of Time'

This Listastofan group show includes works by Martyna Daniel, Emma Sanderson and Juliette Rowland.

Runs until April 14

Living Art Museum (Nýló) - 'Double Bind - Reykjavík'

This group show has travelled the world since October, making its fifth and final stop in Reykjavík.

Runs until April 17

Museum of Design and Applied Art 'TRIAD' by Aníta Hirlekar, Bjarni Viðar Sigurðsson, & Helga Ragnhildur Mogensen

A joint exhibit by fashion designer Aníta, ceramic artist Bjarni, and jeweler Helga.

Runs until May 29

Reykjavík City Library - 'Í fullorðinna manna tölu'

This exhibition focuses on the Conformation, with a host of items and gifts on display.

Runs until April 14

Solon Bistro & Bar - Davíð Art Sigurðsson

Artist Davíð Art Sigurðsson exhibits abstract paintings in celebration of Spring.

Runs until May 5

The Reykjavík Museum of Photography - 'In Between' by Dána Júlíusdóttir

Pictures by Dána she captured during hiking trips exhibited. Admission is free.

Runs until May 31

The National Museum of Iceland 'Unionize! Icelandic confederation of Labour 1916 - 2016' ★

This exhibit celebrates the centennial anniversary of the Icelandic Confederation of Labour (ASÍ).

Runs until May 22



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Very occasionally, arriving in a new place can feel like stepping into another world, like at Dyrhólaey beach, where the violent waves lift thousands of black pebbles before dashing them into the surf in an overwhelming, cacophonous clatter.

The Weather Diaries, by Austrian-American artist duo Cooper & Gorfer, plucks the viewer out of reality in a similar way. The dimly lit, grey-walled exhibition uses the work of North Atlantic fashion designers to create an immersive take on the windblown, mountainous lands of Iceland, Greenland and the Faroe Islands, linking their interconnected histories, landscapes and environments to the creative practises of today.

Somewhat fittingly, Sarah Cooper and Nina Gorfer's artistic partnership was born in Iceland, eleven years ago. "Our very first project dealt with an experience of travel in Iceland," says Sarah, "so it's part of us, you could say. It's what catapulted us into this in the first place, and it set the stage for our process and the way we work together today."

Collaboration, wildness, fearlessness

After agreeing to create The Weather Diaries for the Nordic Fashion Biennale, Cooper & Gorfer began with an investigation into the fashion designers of Greenland, Iceland, and the Faroes. Working alongside The Nordic House, they drew up a list of participants, meeting with them for interviews about their practices, philosophies, problems, and commonalities.

"As a collaborative and curatorial project, this was very new to

us—this kind of blended exhibition where the photographs are with installations and work by other people," they say. "That was really interesting—the curation, the collaboration, looking at the brief from different angles."

The "red thread" they found was a shared experience of the stormy, unpredictable, ever-changing weather. Alongside the beautiful installations of clothing and large portraits sit several textural, turbulent landscapes.

"When you are in these places, the power of the nature leaves an imprint on you," says Sarah. "The creativity that comes from here has a wildness and a fearlessness to it. In that way, the weather and the nature was important to incorporate into the images. We wanted to portray that outside of the picture-postcard way—to get under your skin more."

Nordic Flavour

This wild nature, brutal weather, relative isolation, unrestrained creativity and dark mythology all contribute to the recent swell in attention to the Nordic and polar region. In fact, the Icelandic opening of The Weather Diaries follows shows in Tórshavn, Copenhagen and Frankfurt; a duplicate Weather Diaries exhibition has also opened in Beijing, and it will open in Seattle this summer.

"We noticed in Beijing that the Nordic identity, and cultural flavour, is so intensely strong—there's a real power in it, and people are fascinated by it," says Sarah. "We focussed on the North Atlantic, and in Beijing that's considered incredibly exotic. But just in general, the Nor-



Making The Weather

Cooper & Gorfer have turned North Atlantic fashion design into a mesmerising exhibition

By JOHN ROGERS

From the exhibition

dic region shouldn't be underestimated right now. We noticed a pulse from that in China. It's an interest-

ing identity to have, and to use." The Weather Diaries is showing at The Nordic House until July 5. Get more

info at www.nordichouse.is.

SHARE: gvp.is/wdiaries

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B5

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Bar 7

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Beer **350 ISK**, Shot **350 ISK**.

Bar 11

Friday to Saturday from 21:00 to 01:00.
Beer **500 ISK**.

Bar Ananas

Every day from 16:00 to 20:00.
Beer **600 ISK**, Cocktails **1,650 ISK**.

Barber Bar

Every day from 17:00 to 20:00.
Beer **650 ISK**, Wine **700 ISK**, selected cocktails **1,150 ISK**.

Beer Garden

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500 ISK discount off a selected beer.

Bíó Paradís

Every day from 17:00 to 20:00.
Beer **700 ISK**, Wine **900 ISK**.

Bjarni Fel

Sunday to Friday from 21:00 to 23:00.
2-for-1 Beer 1,190 ISK, single with mixer **1,600 ISK**.

Boston

Every day from 16:00 to 20:00.
Beer **600 ISK**, Wine **650 ISK**.

Bravó

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Beer **500 ISK**, Wine **850 ISK**.

Bryggjan Brugghús

Every day from 16:00 to 19:00.
Beer **750 ISK**.

Bunk Bar

Every day from 16:00 to 20:00.
Beer **600 ISK**, Wine **750 ISK**.

Café Haiti

Every day from 16:00 to 19:00.
Beer **650 ISK**, Wine **800 ISK**.

Den Danske Kro

Every day from 16:00 to 19:00. **2-for-1 Beer 1,000 ISK** and Wine **1,200 ISK**.

Dillon

Every day from 16:00 to 20:00.
Beer **550 ISK**, Wine **700 ISK**, Whiskey **550 ISK**.

Dubliner

Every day from 12:00 to 22:00
Beer **700 ISK**, Wine **800 ISK**

Dúfnhólar 10

Every day from 17:00 to 22:00.
Beer **490 ISK**, Wine for **700 ISK**.

Einar Ben

Every day from 17:30 to 20:00.
Beer **700 ISK**, Wine **800 ISK**.

English Pub

Every day from 16:00 to 19:00.
Beer **650 ISK**, Wine **750 ISK**.

Frederiksen Ale House

Every day from 16:00 to 19:00. **2-for-1 Beer 900 ISK** and Wine **1,100 ISK**.

Forréttabarin

Every day from 16:00 to 20:00.
Beer **500 ISK**, Wine **650 ISK**.

Gaukurinn

Every day from 14:00 to 21:00 Beer **600 ISK**, Wine **750 ISK**, Shots **750 ISK**.

Glaubar

Thursday to Saturday from 20:00 to 00:00. Beer **500 ISK**, Shot **390 ISK**.

Hótel 1919

Every day from 16:00 to 19:00.
Beer **600 ISK**, Wine **575 ISK**, selected cocktails **1,090 ISK**.

Hótel Holt Gallery Bar

Every day from 16:00 to 19:00.
Beer **600 ISK**, Wine **750 ISK**, selected cocktails **1,200 ISK**.

Hótel Natura

Every day from 16:00 to 18:00. **50% off all drinks**. Beer **550 ISK**, Wine **1,000 ISK**, selected cocktails **1,600 ISK**.

Hótel Plaza Bar

Every day from 17:00 to 19:00.
Beer **600 ISK**, Wine **900 ISK**.

Hraðlestin

Monday to Friday from 16:00 to 18:00.
Beer **590 ISK**, Wine **590 ISK**.

Húrra

Every day from 18:00 to 21:00.
Beer **500 ISK**, Wine **700 ISK**.

Íslenski Barinn

Everyday from 16:00 to 18:00.
Beer **700 ISK**, Wine **700 ISK**, selected cocktails **1,000 ISK**.

Iða Zimsen

Every day from 17:00 to 22:00.
Beer **450 ISK**.

Ísafold Bistro

Every day from 17:00 to 19:00.
Beer **600 ISK**, Wine **900 ISK**.

Kaffibarinn

Every day from 15:00 to 20:00.
Beer **650 ISK**.

Kaldi Bar

Every day from 16:00 to 19:00.
Beer **650 ISK**, Wine **650 ISK**.

Kiki Queer Bar

Thursday from 16:00 to 19:00.
Beer **500 ISK**, Shots **500 ISK**.

Kitchen & Wine Bar

Thursday from 16:00 to 18:30.
Beer **750 ISK**, Wine **900 ISK**, selected cocktails **1,500 ISK**.

Klaustur Bar

Every day from 16:00 to 19:00.
Beer **800 ISK**, Wine **800 ISK**.

Konsúll Café

Every day from 16:00 to 20:00.
Beer **600 ISK**, Wine **900 ISK**.

Kryddlegin Hjörtu

Mon-Fri 15:00-17:00, Sat 12:00-15:00. Beer **650 ISK**, Wine **750 ISK**, Mojito **1,500 ISK**.

Lebowski Bar

Every day from 16:00 to 19:00. **2-for-1 Beer 1,100 ISK** and Wine **1,100 ISK**.

Loft Hostel Bar

Every day from 16:00 to 20:00.
Beer **600 ISK**, Wine **700 ISK**.

MarBar

Every day from 16:00 to 20:00.
Beer **600 ISK**, Wine **700 ISK**.

Matur og Drykkur

Thursday to Sunday, 21:00-22:00.
Beer **500 ISK**, Wine **500 ISK**.

Micro Bar

Every day from 17:00 to 19:00.
Beer **700 ISK**.

Nora Magasin

Every day from 16:00 to 19:00.
Beer **650 ISK**, Wine **600 ISK**.

Petersen Svítan

Wed-Sat from 17:00 to 20:00.
Beer **800 ISK**, Wine **900 ISK**.

Prikið

Monday to Friday from 16:00 to 20:00.
Beer **500 ISK**.

Public House

Every day from 14:00 to 18:00. **50% off beer and wine**. Beer **495 ISK**, Wine **695 ISK**.

Reykjavík Chips

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Beer **750 ISK**, Wine **800 ISK**.

SKY Bar & Lounge

Every day from 17:00 to 19:00.
Beer **600 ISK**, Wine **900 ISK**.

Skuggi Bar

Every day from 16:00 to 19:00. **2-for-1 Beer 500 ISK**, Wine **700 ISK**.

Skúli Craft Bar

Every day from 14:00 to 19:00.
Beer **700 ISK**, Wine **1,000 ISK**.

Slipparinn

Every day from 15:00 to 18:00.
Beer **500 ISK**, Wine **600 ISK**, selected cocktails **1,000 ISK**.

Sólun Bistro

Every day from 15:00 to 18:00.
Beer **650 ISK**, Wine **700 ISK**.

Sushisamba

Every day from 17:00 to 18:30.
Beer **645 ISK**, Wine **745 ISK**.

Tíu Dropar

Every day from 18:00 to 21:00. **2-for-1 Beer 1,000 ISK** and Wine **1,000 ISK**.

Tacobarinn

Mon-Sat from 16:00 to 19:00.
Fri-Sat from 22:30 to 01:00.
Beer **600 ISK**, Wine **700 ISK**.

Uno

Every day from 17:00 to 19:00.
Beer **545 ISK**, Wine **600 ISK**.

Uppsálar

Every day from 17:00 to 19:00. **2-for-1 Beer 950 ISK** and Wine **1,200 ISK**.

Vinsmakkarinn

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Written In The Stars

'O, Brazen Age' at Bíó Paradís

By MARK ASCH

"Letting nostalgia wash over me—I find this extremely satisfying and also heartbreaking at the same time," says Canadian writer-director Alexander Carson, whose first feature, 'O, Brazen Age', plays at Bíó Paradís this weekend.

In the film, a constellation of characters orbit one another, old friends in Toronto grappling with the existential sadness of young adulthood. (Asked why her eye makeup is running, one explains: "My twenties.") Some are artists or actors, some are in advertising or homemaking, all are pretty and melancholy; "Lost Reference," the title of a gallery show they attend, seems equally applicable to all. Some road-trip to take photographs of the diners and graveyards of rural Western Quebec, seeking the spiritual in the everyday; others tell about their dreams.

The stars, by which we might navigate, are a motif in the film, with astrology and astronomy referenced throughout. Constellations, says Carson, are "a metaphor for any kind of narrative construction or any method of creating meaning—you look at something in the sky that has no natural sense to you, and then you draw these links, make these connections." 'O, Brazen Age' is "about that search for meaning [...] whether it's looking for faith, or burying yourself in the past," he continues, pondering the

"Eden before the Fall that these characters associate with childhood and with the 20th century." Determinedly poetic original dialogue ("And so I am employed. Let us drink," is the way one dodges a question about his

notably free of the longstanding intimate entanglements that entrap his friends, for better and for worse.

Carson is close with many of the cast: one was sitting just offscreen when he and I talked on Skype; an-



career choices) mingles with passages from King Lear to imply a mythic scope to their inquiries.

The film has an Icelandic connection through Atli Bollason, a local actor, producer, artist, DJ and even occasional Grapevine contributor. Atli was a friend of Carson's at university, and appears in the film as a sort of rogue planet; his character (also Atli) is infamous for never brushing his teeth, shows up at an art opening wearing a set of angel wings, and is

other is his brother. He prefers an open-ended process, though a finite budget and timespan demanded concessions—much of the film was shot in October 2014, with the cast flying in from all over North America, as well as Iceland, and they stuck very close to the script. But that script was put together the course of several years, over table readings in which Carson and collaborators would sit down to read and think through a new draft of the script, as well as

work through a few beers; the conversation continued through several rough cuts of the film. Carson's non-hierarchical outlook echoes what he calls the finished film's "meandering, pageant-like structure," with its emphasis on discrete chapters, montage (with two songs by Dan Bejar) and digressions—itsself a kind of constellation.

The film's look, a heterogeneous mix of image sources and aesthetics, constitutes a few stars in that

souvenirs," but it's compelling, this "way of making these weird somehow meaningful but also complicated and perhaps completely contrived connection with an idea about the past."

The film's characters are grasping for these connections as well, for better and for worse: "They're stuck in a pre-digital worldview," Carson explains, with their land-line telephones, answering machines, and Calvin Klein clothes. "They have this romantic association with analog technologies, that represents what they feel like they're missing in the world they discovered as adults. The characters very much associate the 90s with the world they were promised as children, before they had to reckon with adulthood, 9/11, this awakening that happened, at least for me, around that time—when I left my hometown, discovered that the world was different."

For Carson, all of this—childhood memories, the grand narratives of Western literature and film, material objects—are both "beautiful and tragic," ways of "making your present world resemble some sort of fairytale version you have of the world that does not really exist." The morose, starry-eyed characters of 'O, Brazen Age' palpably ache with a yearning for a kind of wholeness that remains elusive. So it's over to us in the audience: "I'm interested," Carson says, "in challenging the audience to participate in the construction of their own narrative experience."

SHARE: gpv.is/brazen

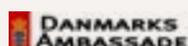
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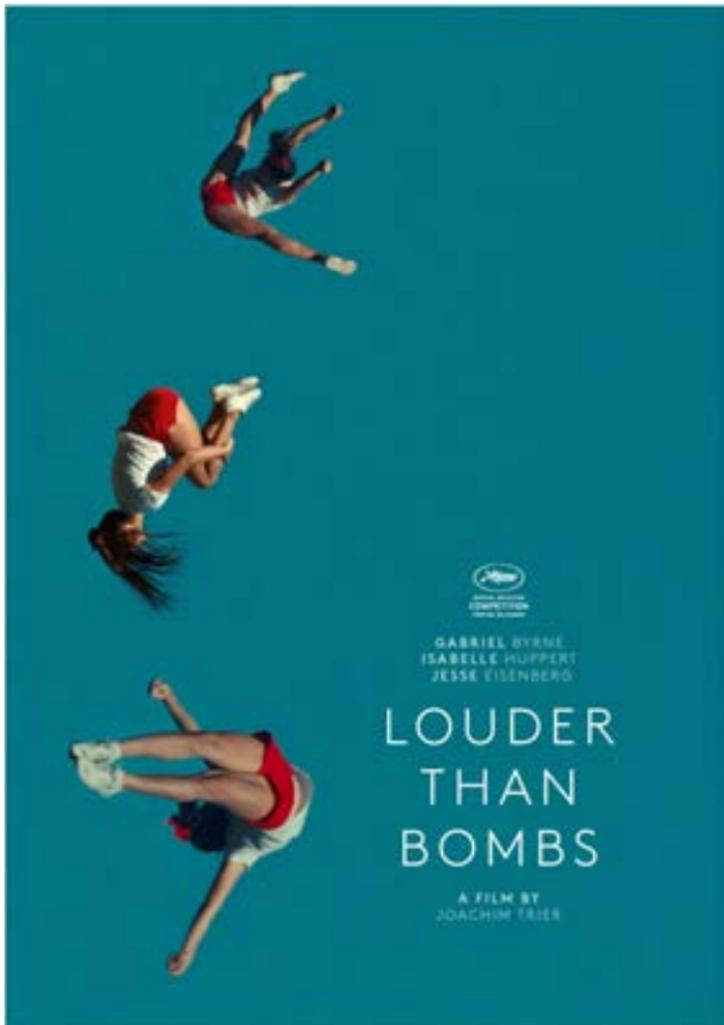
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Flocking (SE)
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Louder than bombs* (NO/DK/FR)
Becoming Zlatan (SE)
The Idealist (DK)
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Program www.nordichouse.is
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English subtitles

* At Bíó Paradís 1400 ISK



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Nordisk Film Festival

April 12 - 20 at The Nordic House, Sturlugata 5. Admission: Free

A cinematic feast for Scandinav-o-philes and movie enthusiasts can be found at the Nordic House during the Nordic Film Festival. The movies included in the festival are rarely shown in cinemas, and the opportunity to see them should not be missed. The movies are of a wide variety: horror, animation, action, documentaries and drama, including 'Facebookistan', about how social networking is dysfunctional when it comes to privacy and freedom of speech. A Q&A with the director, Jakob Gottschau, and RÚV news reporter Baldvin Þór Bergsson will be held April 15 at 18:00. All films screen free of charge with English subtitles. **HBG**

The Fencer / Miekkalija (FIN)

A drama about a young man, Endel Nelis, teaching others about fencing.
Runs April 13 at 17:00 and April 16 at 16:00

Facebookistan (DK)

"Like" it or not, Facebook wants you to share everything, but how much information are they willing to share with you?
Runs April 13 at 19:30 and April 15 at 17:00

Flocking (SE)

A drama about a small Swedish community, idyllic on the surface until someone claims to have been raped ...
Runs April 13 at 21:00 and April 19 at 21:00

Et hjem i verden (DK)

A documentary that follows five asylum-seeking children. By the award-winning documentary filmmaker Andreas Koefoed.
Runs April 14 at 17:00 and April 19 at 18:00

Bikes vs Cars (DK)

A documentary about activists and cities all over the world moving towards a new system. But will the economic powers allow it?
Runs April 14 at 19:30 and April 18 at 18:00

Louder than Bombs (NO/DK)

This drama brings a father and two sons together to reconcile their feelings about the woman they remember so differently.
Runs April 15 at 20:00

Kort & Gøy / Short movies for Children (NO)

Award-winning animation films without texts for children.
Runs April 16 at 12:00 and April 17 at 12:00

Den Unge Zlatan / Becoming Zlatan (SE)

A documentary about the decisive years of Swedish soccer player Zlatan Ibrahimović.
Runs April 16 at 14:00 and April 17 at 14:00

Idealisten (DK)

A thriller about a whistleblower trying to reveal the secret behind a nuclear disaster that occurred during the Cold War.
Runs April 16 at 18:00 and April 17 at 16:00

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Words by **YORK UNDERWOOD**

Reykjavík is filled with great restaurants, ranging from simple bar food to Nordic haute cuisine. Food trends and a restaurant's popularity wax and wane, but there is always a constant missing ingredient in the scene: inexpensive-and-plentiful.

Veislumiðstöðin is that missing ingredient. Nested in Borgatún, it has been a staple lunch spot for business and industry employees in the area, but it could be the answer to every tourist's third-day-here question: "Where can we go that's good, but not too much money?"

It's the perfect lunch for recuperating after a few days hiking in the countryside or a night of heavy drinking.

In an open, cafeteria-style space you see: pork roast with crackling, fresh and fried cod, fajitas, Plokkfiskur (basically a fish version of Shepherd's Pie), fajitas, potatoes, rice, gravy,

Photos by **ART BICNICK**

curry sauce, six different salads and a soup of the day. And beverages: coffee, tea and Icelandic tap water.

It's the same owners as Jóhansen's Deli, so you know the food is great. There is one catch, though. It's all-you-can-eat. That's right: You can eat as much as you need, without worry of a significant hit on your bank balance.

Oh, I haven't mentioned the price. Well, that's the big finale. Are you ready?

1,970 ISK, or the average price of a burger and fries with a drink, or three happy hour beers, or one and a half regular hour beers, or five hot dogs sans drink.

Basically, it's the best lunch deal in Reykjavík and you get to eat it amongst Icelanders: businesspeople, labourers, lawyers, security guards. It's a rotating cast of characters. I saw Prins Puffin from Shades Of Reykjavík there.

Viva la Revolución!



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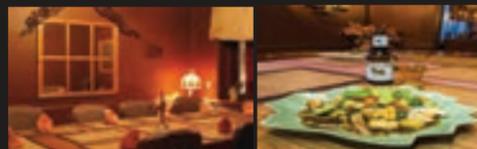
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Sæta Svínið & Johansen Deli

Words by ELIJAH PETZOLD
Photos by HREFNA BJÖRG



Sæta Svínið

We were lucky to be among the first customers at the opening of Reykjavík's newest gastropub, Sæta Svínið, because, after having visited the friendly joint, we are convinced it'll be fully packed soon. It's a restaurant with a pub atmosphere (or perhaps vice versa?). With mismatched tables and an assortment of pig paintings and statuettes—the restaurant's name means "The Cute Pig"—the mood is rustic and casual. Despite (or perhaps because of) the piggy memorabilia, neither of us was brave enough to try the pig's ear (ideal for the courageous foodie), instead choosing the more basic alternatives: the rib steak burger and lamb sandwich. Both receive high marks for taste and affordability, but it was the flourless chocolate cake that really took the, uh, cake.

There's a second opening party on April 14, when they open the basement, but we suspect the place will be completely swamped by then.

Hafnarstræti 1-3

Opening hours: Kitchen 11:30 - 23:30
(00:30 on weekends)

Johansen Deli

Inspired by the take-away restaurants found on street corners in Denmark, the Johansen family have set up shop. Johansen Delishop is a multigenerational endeavor: Ámundi Óskar Johansen works alongside his father Carl Jónas and grandfather Sveinn, offering up an ever-shifting selection of daily specials. "We try our best to buy fresh products when it comes to ham, cheese and other things, without having too much go to waste," said Ámundi.

In the middle of Borgartún, Reykjavík's financial district, sur-



rounded by high-rises and hotels, this friendly joint serves food and goods to locals—and tourists savvy enough to stop by. "When we saw this venue, we jumped at the chance to open a new place and spice up this area," Ámundi told us. "We liked it so much, we put our name on it."

As any proper deli should, Johansen Deli offers both take-away meals and cold cuts to assemble on your own. They make their own pastrami in-house—no doubt a rarity on this island. In addition to various other foodie wares, they serve homemade ice cream. We had their coconut ice cream and loved it. You can try before you buy, which gives the retailers a chance to show off a product you might not have bought otherwise.

Dórunnartún 2

Opening hours:

Monday-Friday, 8:00 - 18:00

#109



Lífið er saltfiskur

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GRAPEVINE TRAVEL



(More Than) Drive-Through Towns Pt. 1

Borgarnes Is Worldly And Warm

By REBECCA CONWAY

Photos by HREFNA BJÖRG GYLFADÓTTIR

Borgarnes is perhaps best known as the last-chance gas and Bónus stop before the long drive onward to the remote Westfjords or the north of Iceland. Passing through, this diminutive town appears to have been dramatically sliced off just past the local N1 station. Today, though, Borgarnes will be different.

After parking outside of the tourist information centre, Hrefna and I embark on a travel adventure, past the gas station and grocery stops, and into the city beyond.

Our first stop in Borgarnes is Café Kyrrö (“Café Tranquility”), which sits attached to the flower and gift shop Blómasetrið. Svava Víglundsdóttir, the owner, meets us at the door, immediately introducing us to her dog, Pinocchio, and a loitering cat named Amy Winehouse. Svava is welcoming—almost motherly—as we shake hands and fawn over the animals.

Svava takes us through a gorgeously decorated flower shop brimming with treasures, into the café. She sets rich, belly-warming hot chocolates before us, following this wonderful surprise with waffles topped with whipped cream, jam, and chocolate.

“Fairly dark and very quiet”

Hrefna and I agree this place is special not only because of its unique and well-crafted decorations, but because it isn't trying too hard to be Icelandic. The focus is more on the general atmosphere, the Icelandic-ness of which is provided by the sweeping view from the window. Later, Svava leads us through the rooms she rents upstairs, the decorations of which are also worldly and warm,

with views just as spectacular as those on the lower floor.

With full stomachs and big smiles, we head down the street to Borgarfjörður museum. Guðrún Jónsdóttir, the museum's curator, walks us through the current exhibit, ‘Children for 100 years’. Designed by Snorri Freyr Hilmarsson, a set designer, the museum contains dark grey walls, painted to mimic the pages of a scrapbook. Photos of Icelandic children throughout modern history are arranged sequentially atop them. Some of the photos even swing open, revealing related artefacts.

The second part of the exhibit begins with a child's room in the early 20th century style. The room is fairly dark and very quiet, filled with beds and woollen blankets, obviously for a family rather than a single child. “I always ask people to be quiet for a few seconds,” says



novative curation. The birds all face the same direction, and a series of mirrors washes into infinity, giving us a literal bird's eye view.

Upstairs in the museum is both a library and an art exhibit. The current exhibit features works by Michelle Bird, an American artist currently living in Borgarnes. In the exhibit ‘Beloved Borgarnes’, Michelle paints local residents from photographs, residents she has come to consider friends, even family. She even painted a portrait of Svava's daughter in exchange for a year's worth of waffles.

The paintings are wild and ecological—American gothic done up in a Klimt-esque style. A homey reality permeates them, as the subjects are often people Michelle knows well. She has been living in Borgarnes for about two years now, and after buying a house in the city, she began to invite artists to stay and collaborate with her through Fluxus Design Tribe. These collaborations have resulted in a wide series of projects, from a recycled-material chandelier to an upcoming rewrite of Egil's Saga.

Land-taking

After the Borgarfjörður museum, we move on to the famed Settlement Centre, a museum that contains exhibits on Egil's Saga and Iceland's early settlement years. Hrefna and I go through the Landnám (“land-taking”) exhibit, armed with our audio guides. This exhibit also exudes a sense of creativity—at times, the floor changes density to mimic a more boggy location, and maps with lights allow guests to interact with the geographical scope of early settlement events.

Eiríkur, a guide at the museum, tells us about a new Locatify feature, an app that acts as an audio guide to various historic sites around the Settlement Centre. Most of these sites have to do with the early childhood of the rebel-poet Egill, the violent yet lovable main character of Egil's Saga. His father, the grouchy Skallagrímur, lived in Borgarnes, and his burial mound can be sat upon today.

After our morning in the city, Hrefna and I both wish we could stay deeper into the day. But mostly, we wish that each of the times we'd pulled over for gas in previous years, we'd taken a few hours to look around at all the riches Borgarfjörður has to offer.

Guðrún, “so they can hear how silent it is in here, without the hum of a refrigerator or the sound of the television.” We let the silence settle over us.

The next room is a sharp contrast—a modern child's room filled with sleek IKEA furnishings and toy dinosaurs. Discarded clothing is artfully arranged on the floor, so as to mimic the whimsy of prepubescent outfit changes. Guðrún tells us visitors will often fold the clothes, not realizing their haphazard arrangement is actually a part of the exhibit.

Adventures of birds

Next is the ‘Adventures of Birds’ exhibit, also designed by Snorri. Featuring a wide variety of birds, the exhibit is another example of Snorri and Guðrún's careful and in-

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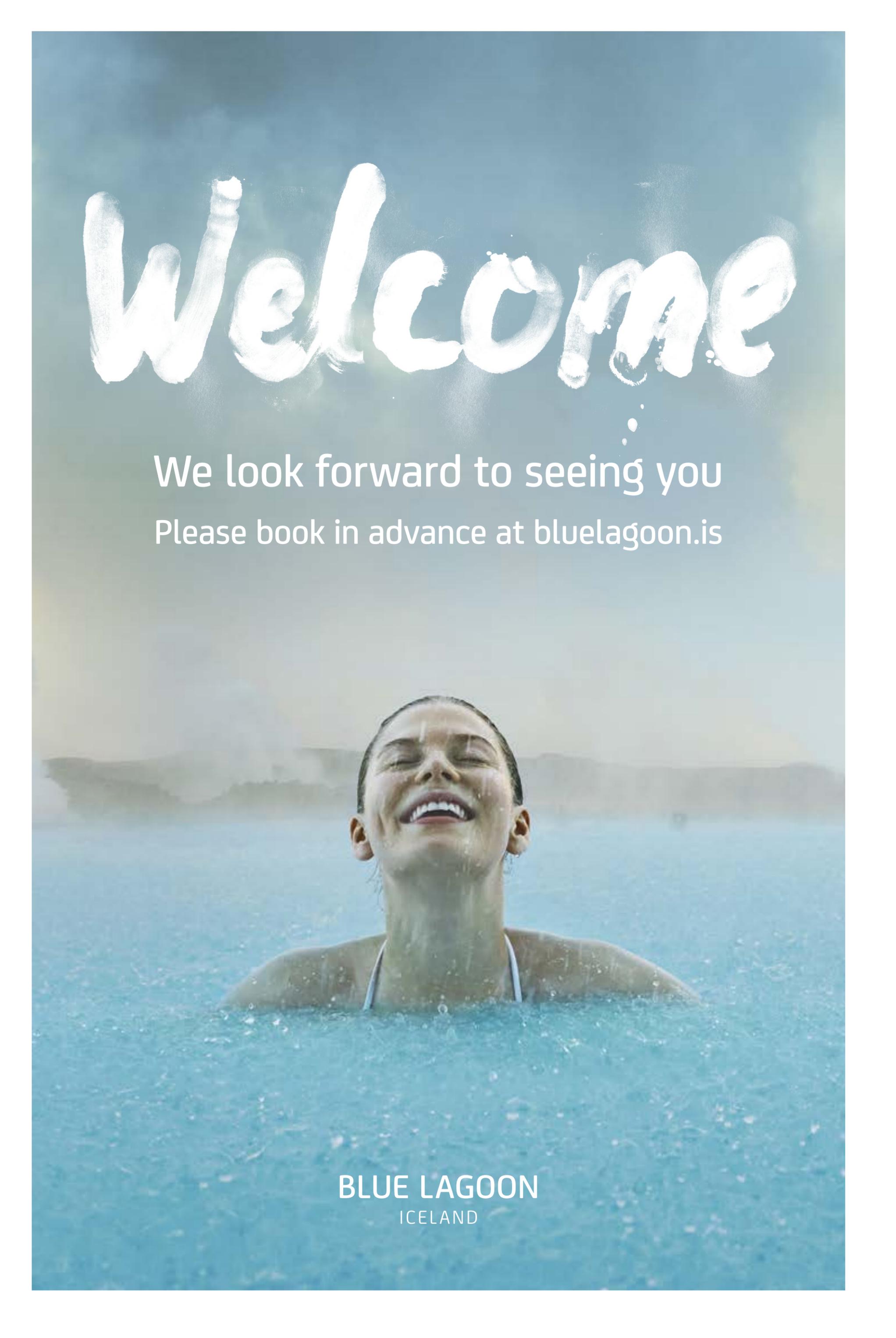


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Of Horses And Men

Over hill and under... water: an Icelandic horse-riding experience

By ANDY BATTAGLIA

Horse Riding

The Icelandic word for horse is hestur, which translates as “peaceful creature with floating hooves and blow-dried hair as if lifted from the scalp of a 1980s supermodel.” These animals are notably wily and smart, many of them published poets. It has been suggested that Iceland’s earliest laws were drafted by horses and certain of the Sagas owe their enduring power to authorial assistance provided by distinguished horse editors, who provided their riders/writers with shrewd notes as to narrative pacing and plot.

None of the above is true in any demonstrable sense, but the breed—so unusual and distinct to anyone with even a passing familiarity with horses—does occasion certain adventures of the mind. Their small size can confuse one’s idea of scale, so that the sight of an Icelandic horse in the country-

side might, like an optical illusion, make the animal appear as if far off in the distance when in fact it is just a few paces away. And their comportment! No more than a fleeting look is needed to discern and even begin to feel the breed’s disquieting combination of elegance and poise. They are calm, tranquil animals with an aura of beatific ease.

Serenity serves horses well when tasked to withstand the kind of indignities visited upon them when enlisted to give novice jockeys a ride. The horses at Laxnes Horse Farm, a 20-minute drive northeast from Reykjavik, have been trained to do so since 1968, when Þórarinn “Dóri” Jónasson and his delightful wife Ragnheiður “Heiða” Gíslason started the farm with designs to be the first real activity company in Iceland.

“Everybody thought I was crazy,” Dóri laughs now about those prescient days decades ago. “I still am, but I’m undercover so nobody knows.”

Dragon rider

A visit to Laxnes just a few weeks ago started with a warm greeting from Dóri and two animals even smaller than Icelandic horses: a bushy sheepdog named Kalli and a yapping counterpart whose presence was the reason for a sign on a wall inside: “Warning! Chihuahua on Duty.”

The horses, however, were the star of the show. “Are you ready to rock ‘n’ roll?” Dóri asked once the scene was fully surveyed, prompting an answer along the lines of “Hmm, well, yes, I haven’t ever really done this but I guess so...” Inside, Heiða hooked us up with

all the warm clothes we could possibly want—us being my wife and I, neither previously wrapped in enough wool or the least bit experienced in the equestrian arts.

To the horse pen we went, to be matched up with animals suited to our demeanor and size. For me, Dreki—a fine light-brown specimen whose name translates as “dragon.” Imagine, if you will: a formidable beast, untamable to all but the most intrepid and commanding in stature. Now amend that imagining to: a quiet and strong soul, described as sometimes a little moody and imperious but overall a fun and easy ride.

The journey started off in brilliant afternoon light, white with golden hues glinting against the inviting snow. Basic instructions are given as to how to distribute your weight and maneuver the reins, but nothing too detailed—

you will get a handle on it all as the walk goes on. About ten of us ventured out, ranging in age from around eight to fifty. Some clearly knew how to ride, especially the youngest ones, whose confidence and control was a bit disarming at the start. But many did not, their uncertainty masked by what can only be described as the very cool feeling of being on the back of an Icelandic horse.

Near-death experience

The breed is famous for its unique gaits, including an unusually stable and sure-footed one and especially a “flying pace” during which long spells of no hooves touching the ground lend a sense of levitation. None of that, mercifully, figures in a beginner’s leisurely tour,





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which focuses instead on easy walking and trotting with nice open views of the countryside.

The views have a lot to offer: mountains, streams, sky. The streams roll by at your side until, in a move that proves a little nerve-jangling for the rookie rider, the call comes to cross over, with the horse going down into the wetness and through and then up again. Dreki, it turned out, had ideas of his own, so mid-river he stopped and lurched his neck forward to take a drink, almost throwing off his lumbering rider in the process. It made for a thrill and a little jolt of fear, not least for the sudden suspicion that maybe the horse was in actual fact the nykur, the mythical Icelandic water-horse creature that prowls the land only to carry its riders deep down to aquatic recesses and a drowning death.

It turned out Dreki was innocent and just thirsty, so the realization was more simple but no less profound: You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make it NOT drink.

Fully charged

The ride continued on through the valley, with a brief pause during which everyone got out of their saddles and took a break. Asked for his thoughts about the ride so far, with a recorder on-hand to document any answer, Dreki demurred. Questioned about his rider's clumsy but hopefully still somehow charming manner, again: no comment. The interview was cut short when, instead of sharing his thoughts, Dreki showed his teeth and tried to eat my notebook.

Fair enough—sometimes silence says all that need be said. So we rode on, all of us in the group with greater finesse as the trek stretched on. It's clear that the horses know what they're doing and who they're doing it for, but the two Laxnes guides leading the ride let them open up and play around a little too. A lot of walking, a little trotting and some parts where you start to feel the full charge of bouncing up and down—the range is good and comfortable for a two-hour stroll.

Back at the farm, it was hard to say goodbye. Dreki appeared a little broken up too, or at least savvy enough to make it seem so in the service of procuring food or whatever else he might like back in the pen. He deserved it—he earned it. He's a real pro.

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Djúpavík, Population: 2

Or: what would you do if there were two of you left in a town frozen in time?

Words by **RAGNA Ó. GUÐMUNDSDÓTTIR**
Photos by **ART BICNICK**

It's late spring and the mountains of the Westfjords are still covered in snow after a harsh winter. The undulating, unpaved coastal road to Strandir is a challenging drive at this time of year, with steep slopes, the risk of landslides, and sheer cliffs down to the sea. After a while weaving carefully around the curves of the mountainside, you eventually glimpse a few buildings—the remains of what was once the thriving village of Djúpavík.

On the gentle descent into this remote hamlet, you pass a scenic waterfall that tumbles from the high cliffs, before reaching a huge run-down industrial building with a rusty old shipwreck in front of it. This hulking structure is the old herring factory, which was shut down in the 1950s when the herring stock crashed.

In the 1980s, the dilapidated structure was bought by Ásbjörn Þorgilsson and his wife Eva Sigurbjörnsdóttir, currently Djúpavík's only year-round residents. They run a hotel and a tourist service which is one of the most popular attractions in Strandir, along with the Museum of Sorcery and Witchcraft in Hólmavík and Krossneslaug swimming pool in Norðurfjörður.

Coming to Djúpavík

Upon entering the hotel, housed in a building that was once the factory workers' quarters, you find yourself in a cosy lobby and dining hall, where walls and shelves are tastefully crammed with all kinds of bric-a-brac. Eva, who exudes a calm and kind presence, is busy in the kitchen as it's approaching dinnertime, but allows for a short-

ish interview.

"I first came here in 1984 when my husband bought the factory," says Eva. "I remember my first thought, when I drove past it and stared up at it, was: 'It's huge!'"

Indeed, the factory was the largest concrete building in the country in the 1930s. Eva says the couple's original plan was to start up a fish breeding programme and revive the factory for it, but they had difficulties financing that venture, so instead they founded the hotel. "We saw that there was a need for some tourist services here," she says. "There weren't even any toilets or anything, and we needed to make a living space for ourselves anyway so it was two birds with one stone."

A mystic pull

Neither Eva nor Ásbjörn had any connections to Strandir or Djúpavík before moving there, but quickly fell in love with the place. "I never meant to be in this role, standing over pots and pans," says Eva. "I wasn't too happy about moving here at first. I was educated as a preschool teacher, and I would have liked to use that education. But then I was just so smitten with Djúpavík, as were the whole family. We love this place—probably more than anything else." Eva pauses, not quite able to articulate why Djúpavík has such a pull.

But the hotel is there nonetheless, and has drawn an ever-growing number of visitors in the thirty years it has been in business. The traffic started slowly, but has been increasing rapidly, particularly in the last five years or so. "Of course, the boom in winter tourism didn't quite reach us here," she says, "be-



cause of the bad roads. But it's still growing, and when the roads are open, people do come. They come for the peace and quiet and the nature and the northern lights and all those typical things."

It seems that once people have been to Djúpavík, they are drawn in, and return again and again. "We have some regular visitors," says Eva. "There are people who come here every year, even many times a year." She recounts a story of an elderly man from Germany who first came to stay at the hotel the year it opened. "He kept coming back more and more frequently until he was coming here every year and he would stay for three weeks. It was just like having your grandpa over for a visit, everyone got excited when he was about to arrive and I think he enjoyed being around us. He took photos and used them in a calendar which he sent us for Christmas, and we sent him presents back. Ási [Ásbjörn] and I went to visit him in Germany once and we meant to do it again but he passed away before we could. He was a regular like no other, he had become like family."

Culture and eco-tourism

It's not only tourists who are drawn to Djúpavík—the town also attracts many artists who are inspired by the location. Djúpavík has a rich history, and the hotel staff provide daily guided tours through an exhibition on the subject, located in the factory's spacious halls and crumbling corridors.

Each summer, several artists exhibit their works in the factory and musicians perform at the hotel. According to Eva, musician Svavar Knútur is a regular performer who often visits, and staff member Claus Sterneck has displayed his photos in the factory for several years. In 2006, Sigur Rós held a memorable concert there as part of their "Heima" tour. Last year, there was a design exhibit showcasing several designers' work with driftwood, which is plentiful in Strandir, and historically important for local economy.

By hosting such exhibits and

events, Eva and Ásbjörn support the tiny cultural scene of the area. They also pride themselves on being the only eco-friendly tourism service in Strandir, with a strong environmental policy. "We always buy our goods in eco-friendly packaging, and use refillables. I also sort all our waste, and we don't have showers in every room. It's not ecological that everyone's messing with water and soap at the same time."

Future Djúpavík

Eva and Ásbjörn have been running their hotel for thirty years, and Eva says that they've just started thinking about what they will do when they get too long in the tooth to continue. "I hope someone will take over the business," she says. "Maybe our children. They've all helped with the business—increasingly so, in the past few years. Then us oldies can retire and relax. Or maybe," she adds with a grin, "we'd just stick around to grumble over all the things we'd feel they'd be doing wrong."

But Eva cannot quit just yet—she feels an obligation to the region, being the chairwoman of the Árneshreppur municipality council, which entails all kinds of official duties. There are three years left of her term, and the future after that is undecided. But with tourism in Strandir still booming, and the increasing popularity of its more remote parts, it seems likely that the hotel will continue from the strong foundations laid by Ásbjörn and Eva.

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RECAP: Episode 6— The Eddic Poetry Special

WORDS: Grayson Del Faro
PHOTO: Aldís Pálsdóttir

Although I'd like to think that every month in Iceland is National Poetry Month, the reality is that Iceland doesn't have an official National Poetry Month. In lieu of this, we're going to take a break from recapping the dusty, repetitive Sagas in honor of April being National Poetry Month in the United States and Canada because why the hell not? This month, I'm going to recap the crown jewel of Icelandic literature and Norse mythology known mysteriously as the Edda.

I mean, if you can drink a discounted Guinness on St Patrick's Day to celebrate Irish culture even though you live in Iceland, you can read at least one goddamn poem in all of April to celebrate poetry even though it's National Poetry Month in another country. Or if not, you can just read this article about poetry with unnecessary swearing. I know you love that shit.

Dragons and Drag Queens

The Edda is the name given to a collection of poems, most of which only exist in a single manuscript from around 1270. No one really knows where the name Edda comes from, but it was first used by that fat dude with the Farrah Fawcett beard on the 1,000 krónur bill. He gave away arguably the most precious artifact in all Icelandic history to the smelly, witch-hating king of Denmark in 1643. It wouldn't be returned for over three hundred years. That wasn't very punk rock of him but it got the sellout's dumb face on some money forever, so capitalism or whatever. Congratufuckinglations, Brynjólfur. You made it.

Anyway, don't let anyone sell you some dumb shit about the poems all being connected because

the Edda is more like a sort of anthology of several smaller collections of poems centering on different themes and characters. They range from Peter Jackson-status apocalyptic fantasy to pagan dating advice to dumbshit slapstick comedies to travel guides to stories of violence against women to guessing games. For anyone looking for a killer costume idea for Drag-Súgur, there's even a poem where Þórr and Loki have to dress in drag as bride and bridesmaid to recover Þórr's stolen hammer

from a giants' wedding. Bring the whole family because there's something for everyone.

What the Vulva Says

The most famous of them all is Völuspá, the Prophecy of the Seeress. In this one, an Icelandic fortune-teller known as a völvu (why yes it does sound like the English word vulva, making any Norse literature class a lot of fun) tells Óðinn some stuff. She tells how

the world came from dwarves, then she lists dwarves' names for several pages (many of the names were later used in 'The Hobbit'—including Gandalf). She's just re-

Morals of the story:

1. Read a fucking poem. It can be a medieval Icelandic one or one by Anne Carson or anything in between.
2. Read another one.
3. See how great they are? Shut up, I know.

ally into dwarves right now.

Then she tells him how his sissy, pretty-boy son Baldur is gonna get killed by mistletoe and then all the gods will get killed by giants and a sea monster and a wolf in the apocalypse known as Ragnarök. There's fire and blood and all kinds of dope shit just waiting to be turned into a narratively idiotic blockbuster film whose only redeeming quality is amazing special effects. I'd totally pay one and a half Brynjólfurs to see that.

Racism and Another Vulva

While the first half revolves around the gods of Norse mythology, the poems in the second half of the Edda all tell the story of Sigurður, Brynhildur, and Guðrún, which was turned into one of the weirdest and best sagas, Völsunga Saga, which I've already recapped. There are also a few poems considered "eddic" by their meters and content even though they aren't included in the main manuscript.

The weirdest of these is the super white supremacist Rigspula, where some guy travels around having threesomes with couples of various socioeconomic classes, whose women then beget the different races. The poor farmers have black children with names like "slave" and "servant," the middle-class people have ginger children with names like "smith" and "shepherd," and of course the rich couple beget blonde children with names like "earl" and "nobleman." Yep. I'll just leave that there.

On a happier note, there's also a poem called Hyndluljóð in which another, even sassier völvu calls Frigg, queen mother of the gods, a goat-slut, and then sets her on fire. I always prefer a sassy völvu, don't you?

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Útburdur

MUSEUM OF HIDDEN BEINGS "Monster of the Month" is a spin off of 'The Museum of Hidden Beings', by artist Arngímur Sigurðsson. He delved into Iceland's mythological history, taking creature encounters from across the centuries and bringing them to life through painting in an act of creative cryptozoology. Find the book at bookstores, or order it online at arngimur.com.

When mothers expose their newborn children, leaving them where they will not be found, they turn into a ghost known as útburdur. When they are seen, their appearance resembles that of a bird, such as a raven. They raise themselves up on one knee and one hand and flutter about. Their colour depends on the colour of the rag in which they were wrapped. Those who see an útburdur should not hesitate to follow it, as it will eventually flee to its mother. They howl intensely during bad weather, but rarely speak. An exception to this is the tale of an útburdur visiting its mother in a sheepfold and reciting the following verse to her:

*My mother in the fold of sheep,
Do not worry, do not weep,
I shall lend you my blood-red rag
For you to wear, for you to wear.*

Jón Árnason, Íslenskar þjóðsögur og ævintýri III, bls.290



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REYKJAVÍK LIFE



Why doesn't anyone whistle to me on the street?

By JÓHANNA PÉTURSDÓTTIR

Having grown up in Belgium, where you get catcalled often, I was surprised that no one whistled or looked at me in an inappropriate way while I walked the streets of Reykjavík. This made me think about feminism in a different way.

Let's put aside whether or not you've experienced catcalling in Iceland. Just the fact that I questioned myself when it didn't occur disturbed me. I have always seen myself as a feminist, but this made me wonder: "When can you consider yourself a feminist?"

It's easy, at least for people with some common sense—being a feminist is as simple as wanting equal rights for men and women. But for women, another question arises: At what cost will you pronounce yourself to be one?

Things like catcalling shouldn't be seen as common, but there are other acts, expected by women and performed by men, that might appear less offensive but are still, in my opinion, rooted in inequality.

At what point does the fact that we want equal rights interfere with some of the things we now take for granted? Do you still think the guy should pay on the first date even though you want to—and of course should—earn as much as he does for the same job? To what degree will you flirt to score a free drink or any other advantage that you might get because you are a woman?

Does it still make you a feminist if you expect all the above? Or haven't you considered these circumstances as symptoms of inequality between men and women?

The line separating men and women, identity and privileges, has blurred over the years to the point that being a feminist is about much more than facing up to the most obvious examples of inequality.

Iceland may be more gender-equal than Belgium. That's fine for Iceland, but not enough. Women can never quit questioning and never quit challenging all forms of inequality. It can be a little absurd constantly questioning yourself, but I've realized calling myself a feminist isn't enough. It's something I need to shout in the streets everyday.

SHARE: gvp.is/whistlers

HUMANS OF REYKJAVÍK

By ELIJAH PETZOLD

This issue's human:
Hinrik Hrafn Marinósson

On Reykjavík
Reykjavík is cool but these hotels bother me. I mean it doesn't matter if your hotel is in Laugardalur or downtown. You can walk everywhere. One day Reykjavík will be full of hotels and no one to fill them. We're wrecking Iceland with hotels.

On sunny days
I go out on my cruiser and cruise around. With my beats of course.

On hot dog preferences
10-11. You can get two bacon-wrapped hot dogs and a coke for like 600 krónur. But Bæjarins Beztu will always be the best hot dog.

On the superiority of Bæjarins Beztu hot dogs
I don't know. It's just—I cannot answer that.



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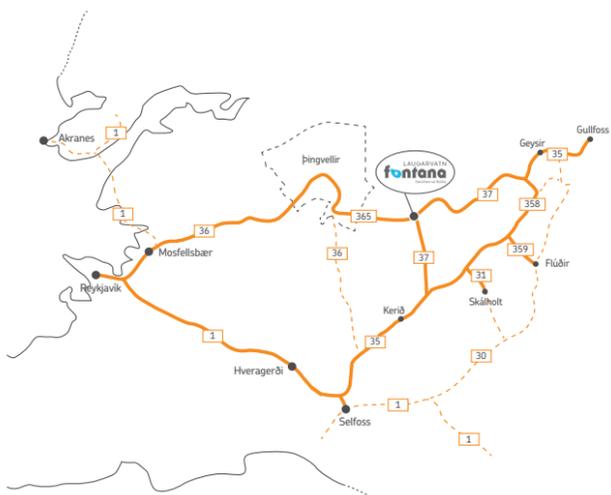
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LAST WORDS

The Ghost Of Sigmundur Davíð



Halldór Armand

It's the age of the crowd.

Events, leaders, history. Nothing escapes it. Everything is instantly consumed by the ever-expanding crowd. The crowd's dialogue with the world is both aimless and eternal and there's something almighty and monstrous about it. A true mysterium tremendum.

The necessary aim of every crowd is to kill the individual—the most dangerous force in the world—and slowly this is happening now, in digital times. The likes and retweets. The shares and trends. They shoot across horizons at the speed of light, streamlining human absurdity and convictions, converging markets and minds, styles of writing and ways of thinking.

The individual is doomed.

Meeting the most powerful man in the world, he wore a single Nike shoe. Black. Matching the suit. In the brilliant final moments of his Wagnerian downfall, he became Schrödinger's Prime Minister, alive and dead, both flesh and not. A constitutional ghost haunting the day. A quantum politician, belonging to several dimensions at once, like all important historical leaders.

He was the arch-individual and this is what I liked about him. On the ropes from the very beginning, he was a beautifully Nixonian character to watch, bent on taking advantage of every single opportunity to display his first-class paranoia and self-destructive fantasies. So gloriously incapable of forged expressions and pretence, of appearing graceful or friendly, condemned by the naked realness of his deeply flawed character. A political Moses, a corrupt liar, a relentless mind and frail body. Sigmundur Davíð. A perfect name for a poet of politics.

Not even on the most banal of Sunday talk shows was he able to hide his obsessions, his deep struggle, the mesmerizing terror and dread of his gaze. In the eyes of the professionally smiling host he saw the smug pride of the digital crowd that hated him. The Seinfeld-quoting intellectuals, the Liverpool-supporting atheists, the vegan saints. He despised all their silent riots. Constantly mocking him, rearranging his arguments, provoking his fading old world with empty commercial selfie rebellions. Every day they fabricated new versions of his exiles, forcing him to answer to the details of their creation.

They said he collected napkins and boiled meatballs in coffee makers. They said he stumbled out of toilets in front of foreign royals, zipper down. They said his billionaire wife dreamed of being propelled into space. I liked to picture him alone in small rooms at night, sinking deeper into the erotic oblivion of great plots and conspiracies, escaping his own small reveries and desperations, just for little while. I always found it gratifying to disagree with him on every issue. I couldn't help finding his complete lack of charm somehow moving and always knew in the back of my mind that one day I would fall in love with his memory. In the end they exposed him with a decoy, pedophile-style, cameras rolling. It was an agonizing watch but also deeply human and poetic.

A godless nation will never forgive him. Everything will be dull in comparison to the spectacle he was. This will be our curse.

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