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ISSUE 17 x 2012



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# Don't Get Too Excited, It's Only Paper

Editorial: Haukur S. Magnússon

One morning this fall, I woke up on a couch and it was strange. September. The news, I could no longer read them.

Here is an anecdote:  
I ventured inside that Alþingi building the other day. I believe it was a Tuesday. The time was 3pm. The weather was mostly OK.

I was there to help this tall wunderkind, the redhead superstar photographer man, that integral part of this magazine since always and beyond. His name is Hörður Sveinsson.

Hörður Sveinsson was there to document the three Pirate MPs (they are named Ásta, Helgi and Birgitta) for this magazine's cover. Flip the page for a minute. It's a nice shot, right? Kind of blurry. But that's intentional. Trust me, we use some very sophisticated, state of the art equipment to create photographs for this magazine.

Anyway, I was there to provide assistance and moral support, in case the Pirates turned out to be mean assholes, or if—I don't know—we'd get lost in the hallway or something. Also to carry stuff. That's where I'm a Viking!

What a fun experience that was, being inside the Alþingi building!

The first person I met was the MP named Hanna Birna Kristjánsdóttir. She is a card-carrying member of the Independence Party. Traditionally, that party is Iceland's Official Party For Winners. I have often wondered what it would feel like to be an accredited member of a party for winners. I imagine it must feel great. But, I have never come close to trying to join. I am afraid they would see right through me, that they would make fun of me, that it would be a humiliating experience.

The MP Hanna Birna did not come off as much of a winner as we briefly passed one another in that corner of the Alþingi building's hallway where you're supposed to hang your coat. She kind of scowled at me. We have never met, it was weird. The look she gave me was that special mix of Worried, Annoyed and Angry that the Assistant Principals, bus drivers and school janitors have down to a science. I wondered if I had done something to anger her. Whether she was maybe angry that a kind of messy guy such as myself was in Her House.

Then I remembered that The MP Hanna Birna was once The Minister Hanna Birna, which is a title that better suits a Winner. I now believe she must always feel sad about the ill fortune of having to revert to being The MP after getting a taste of being The Minister—that this was the reason why she looked angry.

Angry people often seem sad, and vice versa, I have learned.



But this was an aside. Back to the anecdote:  
Hörður Sveinsson and I were greeted by The Building Guards once we made it inside of the Alþingi building. These Guards are tasked with defending our valuable MPs and Ministers, and they take that job seriously. They are good people, but they maybe felt a sense of unease about Hörður Sveinsson and I. I can't blame them for doing their job, part of which I imagine must entail standing around and being suspicious.

The Pirate MP Birgitta Jónsdóttir came and met us. She has long, dark hair. She was wearing the clothes she is wearing on the cover image (flip the page again if you don't remember what she looks like there). She was also wearing a very big smile. And she laughed a lot.

I like it when people smile and laugh. I think that is a nice way to welcome strangers. I wondered why Birgitta was being so nice. I thought: We have never met. Is she one of those people who always likes to smile and laugh? Or is she smiling and laughing because she considers us to be teammates? Are we teammates? I do not remember joining any team. I am not interested in pursuing team membership. I admit that I sometimes fantasize about being in a successful team, but those dreams are burnt down by my worries that such a team would reject me.

I thought some more: Are we maybe teammates because we are the kind of people who do not want to be in teams? Does everyone who never joined any team get automatically enlisted in a team that's made up of people who don't like the idea of teams?

Birgitta is a member of a political party that I think might emphasize that they are

“not a team.” Does this make that my political party? Is she smiling because she wants to trick me into joining her no-team political party?

No dice, Birgitta. I like your smiles and I will smile back, because I like smiling and also because it is The Right Thing To Do. But a no-team team is still a team.

Wait, this wasn't the anecdote. OK I gotta hurry. I'm running outta space. Here goes:

We were looking for a space to shoot photos. Birgitta suggested we try doing it in the Alþingi building's basement sauna room (they have a sauna room? WTF?!). Birgitta walked us down to the basement. It smelled like a swimming pool. That amused me. I looked at my phone. I was a little behind Birgitta and Hörður, because I was texting, so the sauna door shut in my face. I finished texting. It was an important work text. I am not rude.

One of The Building Guards came running. He was the younger one of the two. He looked very anxious, and worried. He told me I was not supposed to be down there. I said I was sorry. I motioned to the sauna room, to indicate that I was not alone in the swimming pool basement, and told him we were there to create photographs. He said that photography was banned everywhere in the house, except for two places that I knew Hörður did not want to photograph in, because he has done it before and they are boring places.

I was worried. Hörður Sveinsson came out, and some Pirate MPs. The Building Guard approached Birgitta. He told her that she was not supposed to bring anyone down there. She smiled and waved her hand and said, fine OK.

We went upstairs, to The Pirate Office. We were going to photograph in there. The Building Guard followed. He approached Birgitta again, and told her that there was to be absolutely no photography in The Pirate Office. He said this as Hörður Sveinsson and I carried sophisticated, bulky photography equipment to The Pirate Office. The Building Guard Looked worried. He asserted The Rules.

Birgitta told him, of course we can photograph in The Pirate Office, and waved him away.

I might not want to join Birgitta's no team team. I don't like teams (also their quota system policy is stupid). But I still think she is kind of a badass. A Smiley Badass, the best kind of badass.

Alright that was the anecdote.



## TRACK OF THE ISSUE

Milkywhale - "Invisible"

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Milkywhale are a new electronic pop duo who recently set Iceland Airwaves 2015 alight with five fabulously fun shows. So catchy were the tracks of Árni "Plúseinn" Hlöðversson (you might know him from such bands as FM Belfast, Hairdoctor and Blazing Inferno) and so explosively joyful were the performances of singer Melkorka Sigríður Magnúsdóttir, that several of Grapevine's festival review team immediately formed a fandom (#Hvalmjólurmenningin) and trailed around town watching each and every gig they played.

So, they fully deserve to be our post-Airwaves featured track. Also, it's a damn good track. For fun, check out this "Best Of Milkywhale Fawning 2015" collection we assembled from the many glowing words our resident fanboys wrote about them.

"Melkorka is an inspired, somewhat divine individual who has decided to use her time on earth to plant an immovable smile on the faces of every human being possible. She jumps, writhes, spins, stamps, pumps her hips, reaches for the crowd's faces, throws herself to the ground, stretches for the sky, pops her shoulders, and is a generally unstoppable maelstrom of movement. The energy that pours from her isn't that kind of "let me entertain you" professional-but-practiced stagey dancer feeling, but rather a channelling of a deep love for life, dance, music and movement. I guarantee that seeing Milkywhale is the most fun you'll have with any kind of whale during your stay in Iceland. Of all the things we've learned watching and reporting on the sightings of "the glamorous whale" (their lyrics), we have one conclusion: In our expert, scientific opinion, Milkywhale basically won Airwaves."

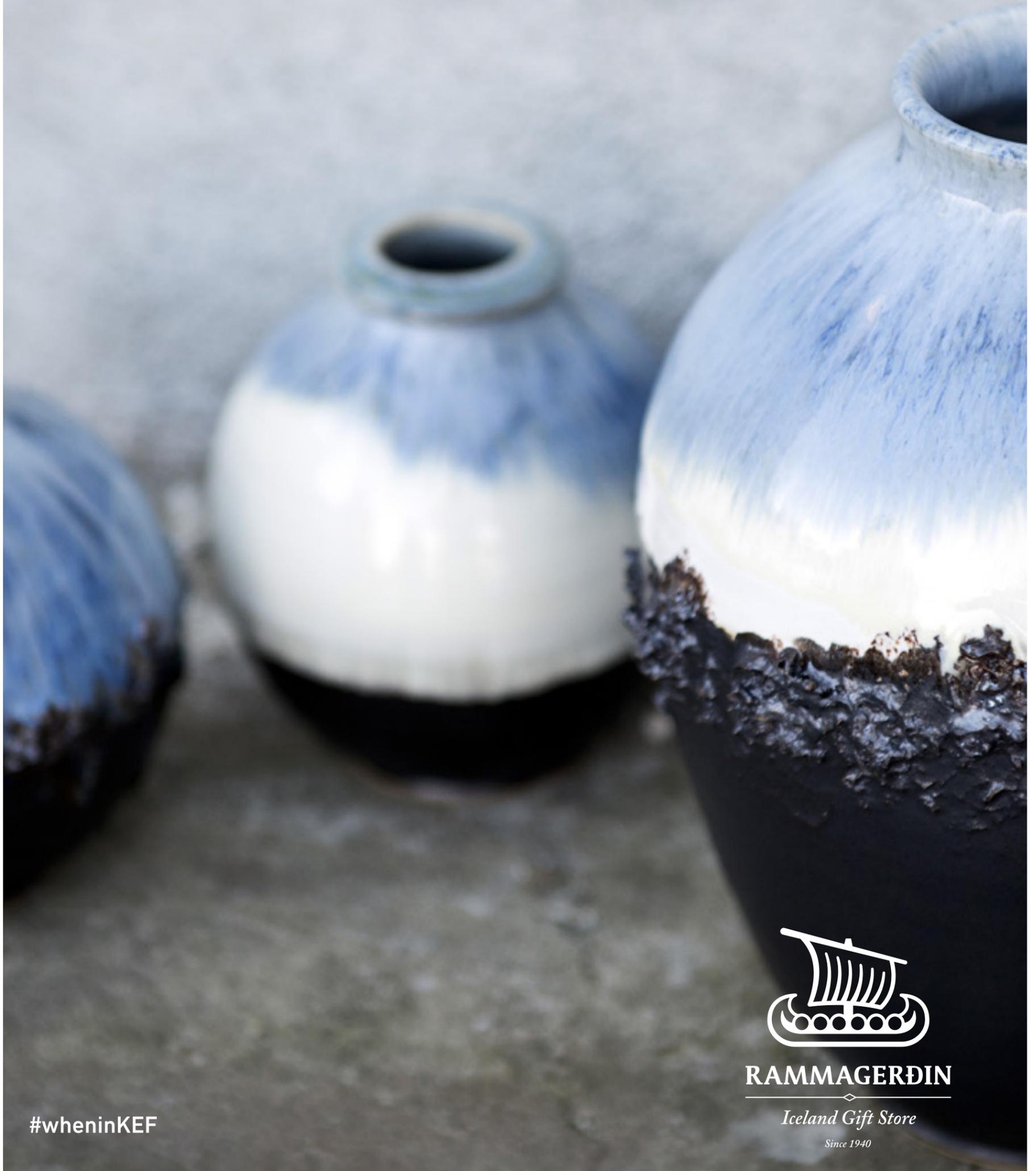
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# SOUR GRAPES & STUFF

## THIS ISSUE'S LOVELIEST LETTER!

Hello and hi there,

*I had the supreme pleasure of visiting your sunny (not quite in temperature but certainly in disposition) shores the other week, and thoroughly enjoyed the various local kerfuffles and monkeyshines.*

*Though I must concede the component that took me the most aback and sent me into fits of flabbergastation was the unflagging courtesy of Reykjavik drivers. Coming from Los Angeles, I'm basically a rivulet of red smeared across a roving Prius grille typing this correspondence. Most Angelenos are just a collection of red stuff and teeth festooned all over the flank of a car. Read: Visit LA and run the risk of vehicular maiming. It's just the very nature of Southern California. London has fog. LA has thoughtless, perpetually-late-for-jazzercise drivers. Drivers eager to plow into you if it'll shave off a few more minutes off*

*PCH traffic.*

*So suffice it to say it was most refreshing to waltz around Reykjavik and actually make eye contact with drivers and have them stop and give pedestrians the right of way. One saint of a commuter actually waived his right of way (gnarling traffic momentarily) and waited while I crossed the street. I was weeping from the selfless gesture.*

*So I commend and applaud the fair people of your city. Take this both as a lauding of the Icelandic people and a scathing indictment of shitty American drivers. I tip my hat to you... spilling brain matter in the process, as it doubles as a makeshift tourniquet I fashioned after a particularly invigorating hit-and-run this morning.*

*It's good to be home.*

*Yours concussedly,  
Tommy*

Hi Tommy,

You are absolutely right, Icelandic drivers are completely different from US ones! This is because Icelanders live in perpetual fear of offending our North American overlords. Simply establishing in eye contact as an American is a clear sign of dominance, and the Icelandic in question will typically respond with utter submission.

It's very different with European foreigners. Screw those guys—we go out of our ways to bother them. But not you. You're swell.

- The Reykjavik Grapevine

Dear Sir or Madam

*I am from Spain and I have been desperately looking for work since being here in Iceland for the last 14 days.*

*I am not one to complain about much, I know it is hard to find work anywhere, especially a new country. ... but as an EU person I should have, in my understanding about travelling and working in Iceland, rights over a NON - EU person.*

*[content cut for brevity]*

*I am dismayed and sad that there is a list as fat as the bible in the unemployment agency for people—Icelandic, and EU residents like me—who are all looking for work and we are all fit and wanting work and don't want to be getting a stupid tiny unemployment benefit forever, but all these non-EU people come in and work without a worry for 1 day to 1 year, with-*

*out any disregard to the system. Not only are these people stealing from the people who are desperately looking for work like me, they are stealing from the government and the immediate community of Reykjavik.*

*[content cut for brevity]*

*Where is the justice for people like me, who want to migrate and make a new life in a new country? These Icelandic employers and illegal employees are taking the piss out of the people who are looking hard to find work, and want to be in Iceland for a new life and it makes me frustrated, angry and disappointed that Iceland and its people would have these problems in the Reykjavik city area.*

*Thank you for listening  
Roberto Carlos*

Hi Roberto,

While the Icelandic food service industry isn't without fault, as you rightly pointed out, have you considered that people from outside the Schengen area maybe also want to start a life in Reykjavik? Maybe they're better suited for the jobs you're applying for.

Maybe you should stop buying into the populist propaganda that foreigners are stealing EU jobs? I mean, that's some lazy xenophobic rhetoric right there.

Or maybe you shouldn't be asking a tourist magazine for structural life advice? We have an advice columnist you could reach out to, but you shouldn't really ask her questions either.

- The Reykjavik Grapevine

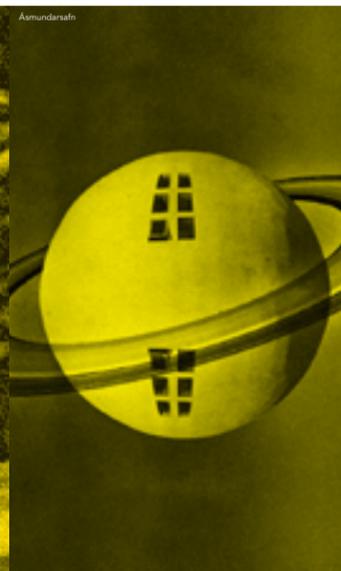
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# OMG FREE COOL STUFF! WOW!

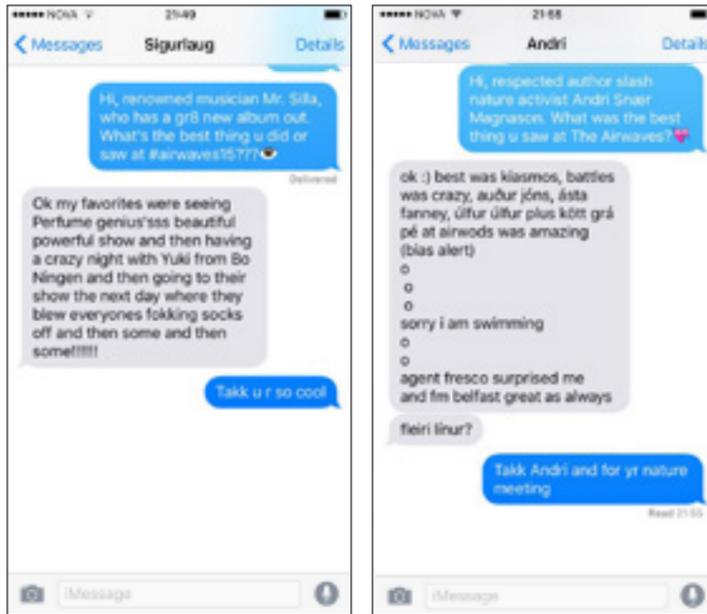
**Iceland Whatever CDs up for grabs** And guess what: you can win one for no reason. Yup, the first few folks who drop us a line at [secretparty@grapevine.is](mailto:secretparty@grapevine.is) are getting that limited edition comp 4 Fr€€! #WOW!  
We were visited the other day by Theory Of Whatever giant indie-label boss man Bryan Riebeek, who was in town for some music festival. He brought along his latest release: a nice ol' 14-track compilation CD, illustrated by FM Belfast's mighty Lóa and featuring a bunch of great Icelandic music. It's great, wow.

A POEM BY JÓN ÖRN LOÐMFJÖRD

## spleen

the spleen is large and has the right high response like a mud when you carve into the spleen you get mud like from a road construction that hangs from the slipper field towards empty beer can where I sit with a banging empty head

# #AIRWAVES15 DEEP ANALYSIS



## "Fertugsaldri"

Ragnar Egilsson Explains Some Words!

When referring to a person's age (the verb is "dilapidating"), we sometimes refer to the decade of existence that person is currently struggling through instead of using their exact age. However, the name of the age bracket is always dictated by that decade's upper limit. So, if you're 21, people say you're on "þrítugsaldur" ("on your thirties"?), and if you're 31, you're now proudly on "fertugsaldur" ("on your forties"??). We do this because we all hate one another and our language is an unholy amalgam of silence and passive-aggression.

## Some Iceland Things That Scare Americans

By The American Intern

**Letters that don't look like our letters** Maybe 'ð' and 'þ' both make sounds we can easily pronounce, but those symbols still look weird and alien, almost Lovecraftian. And make us uncomfortable. Like public nudity.

**The lack of Fritos** Doritos are a poor substitute and you know it, Iceland. I want my corn chips and I want them slightly curled. Also, am I really complaining about this? Wow, being American sure is, uh, something.

**European fashion** How do you dance in those black super thick-soled heel things? This is a serious

question. I have a pair and I fell once.

**Card readers, apparently?** Some customer at my workplace: "I don't understand you people or your card machines." Sorry, Californian. This is one of those situations where 'you people' doesn't cut it. Just stick the damn thing in and be done with it already. Some people have work in the morning.

**Accessible healthcare** Meep.

**Ghosts** Though, those are almost always scary.

# NEWS IN BRIEF

By Paul Fontaine



This past month sure has been a busy one where immigration is concerned. Over these past few weeks, we saw a **Vietnamese** couple accused of having a sham marriage (an accusation that was revealed to be way off the mark), and the impending deportations of two asylum-seeking families: one from Albania, and the other from **Syria**. That's right, Syria: the country from whence Iceland intends to voluntarily bring in an untold number of refugees. At the time of writing, the two families are still in a state of limbo, but at least the Vietnamese couple had their marriage validated as legitimate and real and based on love—by bureaucrats working in an immigration office.



Speaking of international headlines, one story that spread like wildfire was **Minister of Finance Bjarni Benediktsson** proposing to members of the Independence Party (which he chairs) that every Icelander be paid about 30,000 ISK (about \$230) from the proposed sale of the State's recently acquired bank, Íslandsbanki. The government handing out cash might make for fine image macro and Iceland-Meme material, until you consider that this money represents 5% of the government's soon-to-be 100% share in the bank, divided by 320,000. Kind of like how if you and your buddies all chipped in to buy a keg, and then the guy who brought the keg back offered everyone a single red Solo cup of beer, but kept the rest for himself. Not such a great deal now, is it?



The **IKEA Christmas goat** returned to our fair shores to grace the property in front of the store's

Continues Over...

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**CINTAMANI**

Words by ..... Haukur Már Helgason

# Paint An Open Gate On This Wall!

In a single day at the end of August, ten thousand Icelanders, three percent of the country's minuscule population, signed up to the Facebook event "Dear Eygló Harðar – Syria Calling." Addressed to Welfare Minister Eygló Harðardóttir, the online event was created to show—and demand—Iceland's support to Syrian refugees. Signatories offered hosting, language lessons, legal aid etc.

Illustration by ..... Lóa Hjálmtýsdóttir

This call for solidarity instantly caught international attention: "Icelanders Use Facebook to Open Door to Refugees," claimed the New York Times, while Time.com headlined: "Thousands of Icelanders Have Volunteered to Take Syrian Refugees Into Their Homes." While the country's centre-right government gratefully accepted the campaign's value for nation-branding, looking good does not necessitate doing good. The number of refugees to receive protection in Iceland this year remains between fifty and one hundred persons.

## Public relations

Geographically, Iceland is remote from Europe's southern borders. Politically, it is not. "Fifty refugees?" people asked when late summer's impossible images appeared. Children by the shore, drowned. A truck in the alps, filled with corpses, suffocated. Is asylum for fifty people really the most we can provide? On August 30, Welfare Minister Eygló declared her joy over people's solidarity with refugees, calling it "strong support for the Government's refugee policies." "What will the government do, then?" pressed the radio host. The minister equivocated: "The matter is under review." Right. What will that mean, materially? "For this to work out and work well, we need help," said the Minister. "I want to encourage those thousands of people to step forward, contact us, at the Ministry of Welfare or the Red Cross, and ask what they can do to help."

In response to the minister's open call, author Bryndís Björgvinsdóttir created the Facebook event cited above. Within a day, Prime Minister Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson responded. Many Icelanders want to accept more refugees, interviewers pointed out—what is your perspective? The Minister sounded viscerally ill at ease at such questions, and spoke at length about the enormity of the challenge, before replying that he intended to swiftly... "form a ministerial committee."

The following night, three-year-old Aylan Kurdi's family made the journey which ended as an icon of our evil,

an image that will continue to haunt us. The boy's dead body was found by Turkey's shore on the morning of September 2. The subsequent wave of sorrow may have fuelled the demand for any sign of hope. In any case, the good news from Iceland spread through headlines like wildfire: 10,000 Icelanders offer to house Syrian refugees after author's call, 10,000 Heroes Open Their Homes to Syrian Refugees, and so on.

## The company you keep

A few days later, PM Sigmundur Davíð began his annual policy statement by mentioning the refugee crisis. Syrian refugees remind us, he said, "how grateful we can be for the life which our good and peaceful society has given us, so far away from the world's field of massacres." Through the 20th century, however, Iceland rarely proved too far away from massacres to partake in their profits. The first significant example may be when Iceland opted out of the interwar League of Nations, in order to maintain fish exports to Italy, at the time under sanctions for war crimes in Ethiopia. Mussolini showed his appreciation by personally signing the two countries' trade agreement.

More significant in the current context, however, is Iceland's approach to refugees before and during World War II. Hermann Jónasson,

Sigmundur Davíð's precursor as both Prime Minister and leader of the Progressive Party, refused entry to any Jewish refugees "on principle." When Icelandic families sought to foster ten Austrian Jewish children through the war, Hermann proved principled enough to reject their applications for permits. Why? At the time, Germany was a major importer of Iceland's fish, the country's main export product. Economics may not, however, fully explain the Minister's choice of principles. Only after the war did Iceland's parliament learn that in July 1939, Hermann had sent the 24-year-old Agnar Kofoed-Hansen to Berlin, for police training. The young air captain was greeted as "Heinrich Himmler's personal guest," then studied for 40 days with Police chief Kurt Dalüge, who was later tried and hanged for war crimes.

Bypassing Agnar Kofoed-Hansen's lack of academic credentials, Hermann appointed him as Police Chief in January of 1940. When the British army occupied Iceland that April, they saw reason to disarm Agnar's paramilitary forces. As Police Chief, however, he remained in office until 1947. Among his duties was the establishment and organization of Iceland's first immigration office. In 2002, the institute's mandate and name were altered, but to this day the Directorate of Immigration processes all applications for residence permits and asylum.

## "No coloured troops"

The current relevance of Agnar Kofoed-Hansen's Nazi internship remains unclear. On the one hand, the actual reasoning behind Agnar's training in Germany has never come to light. His report from the journey has not been made public, and Prime Minister Hermann Jónasson seems to have easily evaded all relevant questions. On the other hand, Iceland's immigration policies remain obscure. No Icelandic government has ever declared an official immigration policy. Some patterns may, however, be deciphered through authorities' actual practices.

In 1941, as American forces replaced the British occupiers, Iceland made eight official requirements of the newcomers. Stipulation number four in the two countries' agreement was that only "select soldiers" would be deployed to Iceland. Prime Minister Hermann Jónasson clarified the euphemism to a concerned Alþingi: "Due to internal affairs in the USA, it was not considered proper to state this explicitly in the agreement, but we have made it clear to the parties involved that what was meant is that no coloured troops shall be deployed here."

At the establishment of a permanent NATO air base in Keflavík in 1951, Iceland reiterated the demand.

Whenever the racist policy was publicly criticized in the US, however, Icelandic media not only downplayed the criticism but actually denied that the well-documented policy existed. "No racial discrimination in Keflavík," headlined the social-democratic daily *Alþýðublaðið* as late as 1964, in response to a mention of the policy in an American academic publication. As refutation, the newspaper pointed out that "there are now two negroes" at the Keflavík air base.

Little data is available on Iceland's exclusionary policies, but anecdotes run endless. Lest anyone think Iceland's exclusion of minorities is limited to African-Americans or a bygone era, consider what transpired when twenty-one Romanians of Roma ethnicity ventured to Iceland in 2007. As members of the Schengen area, the Romanians were by then officially free to travel and stay in the country. None of them were known to have broken any law. Unable to officially deport the group, then, police officers instead slandered the newcomers in the media—"it is well known that criminality follows these kinds of people," and so on—until hotels collectively refused to accommodate them. Within a week of their arrival, all the Romanians had accepted return flight tickets, "offered" to them by the Police, according to whom the group thereby "voluntarily" left the country. This extra-legal process received little critical media coverage. It has been repeated since. There are no Roma communities in Iceland.

In a twisted variety of egalitarianism, Iceland discriminates against all ethnic minority groups equally.

## Dependencies

Icelandic had no word for the Holocaust until an eponymous American TV series needed translation in 1980. For decades, Icelanders spoke of World War II as "the blessed war": occupying forces brought about a swift process of modernization. Without any ruined cities or fallen soldiers, Iceland then received the greatest amount of post-war Marshall aid, per capita, followed by the permanent air base in Keflavík. Beyond the country's first rural road system, provided by the Brits, and the first international airport, provided by the US, the air base gave Iceland leverage to make high demands throughout the Cold War. Threats of closing the facility or exiting NATO secured victory against the Royal British Navy in the so-called Cod Wars, through which Iceland extended its exclusive fishing grounds from four nautical miles to an eventual 200 nautical mile radius. In return, Iceland ardently supported US military ventures through Korea, Vietnam, Afghanistan—and Iraq.

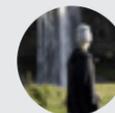
At the end of the Cold War, the future of the Keflavík base became uncertain. To gain the Bush administration's favour and keep the base, Iceland signed up to the 2003 "coalition of the willing." In July of 2004, Prime Minister Davíð Oddsson visited the White House to further deter US authorities from leaving. In a subsequent joint press conference, Davíð claimed that the "future of Iraq and the world is much better" due to the US invasion, adding: "There is hope now, there was no hope before." Then, along with journalists, Davíð sang happy birthday to the president.

Regardless, in 2006 the base shut down. Davíð Oddsson may have been more cunningly realist than delu-

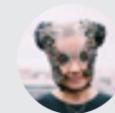
Continues on p.12

# NEWS IN BRIEF

**Garðabær** location. In the past, arsonists have more often than not set the goat aflame, when our robust winds haven't torn it to pieces. Taking no chances, IKEA set up an electrical fence and CCTV around the goat... only for the goat to set itself on fire, most likely through faulty wiring in string lights festooned around the creature. Who could've predicted that stringing electrical wiring around a giant pile of straw would result in a fire?



Are you a **Belieber**? Chances are, then, that you've seen **Justin Bieber's** video, shot in Iceland. The video, for the song "I'll Show You," shows Bieber gallivanting and cavorting around the country. Most notably, it seems he also tromped through some naturally protected areas—some of which are covered with fragile moss that takes decades to grow—before taking a swim in the waters of **Jökulsárlón**. Tourism industry workers in Iceland were none too pleased with the example the young pop star set, and said so. We're just lucky Bieber's video didn't also show him doing **donuts** in a Land Rover and offroading, which is also frowned upon in Iceland.



**Björk** has once again spoken out to protect Iceland's wilderness. In particular, she recently held a press conference with author Andri Snær Magnason, wherein the two outlined government plans to develop the highlands for power cables and hydroelectric dams. Her call to action to prevent this from happening made international headlines—and also drew the attention of **Minister of Industry** Ragnheiður Elín Arnadóttir, who contends that Björk has it all wrong. There are only plans to develop the Highlands, the minister said, and those plans haven't been approved, yet. Right. Maybe not the slam-dunk retort Ragnheiður was shooting for.



Lastly, the police questioned and then released two men accused of **raping and torturing** at least two women. These two guys subsequently left the country. The outrage this sparked, exacerbated by stonewalling from the police, culminated in a massive demonstration in front of Reykjavík police HQ by Hlemmur. The lawyer for the accused, **Vilhjálmur H. Vilhjálmsson** (a guy who recently noted that the media spends too much time covering sex crimes), denies the allegations, has filed countercharges of false accusation against the two women, and is planning to sue not only newspaper **Fréttablaðið**, for covering the story, but also every person on social media who shared the names and faces of the accused. Where this case goes from here is anyone's guess, but we'll keep you posted.

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# **“In a twisted variety of egalitarianism, Iceland discriminates against all ethnic minority groups equally.”**

*Continued from p. 8*

tation. The method may not have been new—but the consequences were. Ardent journalists, led by DV’s Jón Bjarki Magnússon and Jóhann Páll Jóhannsson, uncovered the leak, as well as the Minister’s subsequent series of lies and deceit. After a full year of stubborn investigative reporting, the Minister, Hanna Birna Kristjánsdóttir, was forced to resign. Never before have xenophobic governmental practices had such severe consequences for a politician’s career.

While the country’s exclusionary politics are thus being exposed and opposed, the underlying xenophobic attitudes become more explicit. After stalling an application for fifteen years, in autumn 2013 Reykjavik city authorities finally allocated a plot of land to Iceland’s Muslim Society for what would be the country’s first mosque. A few weeks later, a bleeding, severed pig’s head was left on the site, along with a blood-soaked copy of the Quran.

Any alleged investigation of the matter was inconclusive. “I see no difference between this and any other act of protest,” declared police officer Benedikt Lund. Case closed.

## **Iceland’s Got Talent**

Iceland’s tourist industry is booming. Since 2008, tourism has grown from a marginal sector of the economy to the

country’s largest industry: the turnover of one million tourists per year has now surpassed the value of the nation’s fish exports. The mercurial nature of the field, essentially a popularity contest, means appearances are economically vital. Promote Iceland, the bureau responsible for co-ordinated nation-branding since 2010, recently updated its marketing guidelines for the whole sector, defining Iceland’s target group as “the enlightened tourist.” According to the guidelines, the enlightened tourist has “education and income above average,” wants to “stand out from the herd, travel independently” and is “interested in being acquainted with the culture, ideals and lifestyle of others.”

And Iceland itself? We should make the impression, they say, that “we are so very happy to see you and to make you feel right at home. You could say welcoming is our second nature.”

Against one million welcome tourists, as of mid-September, the Directorate of Immigration had processed 167 asylum applications this year. And rejected 113. Habitually, rejected applicants are fetched by the police in the middle of the night, with only a few hours notice before the departure of their deportation flights. According to rumours, this method is supposed to thwart suicides, common among those with a longer notice. As Aleksandr

Solzhenitsyn wrote in 1974, night arrests have other important advantages: “Everyone living in the apartment is thrown into a state of terror by the first knock at the door. The arrested person is torn from the warmth of his bed. He is in a daze, half-asleep, helpless, and his judgment is befogged. In

bouring apartment houses nor those on the city streets can see how many have been taken away. Arrests which frighten the closest neighbours are no event at all to those farther away. It’s as if they had not taken place.”

## **The Committee’s Committee**

Following September’s Facebook event, calls for solidarity with Syrian refugees soared: twenty-five municipalities in Iceland declared their will to host refugees. All opposition parties proposed a parliamentary resolution to immediately offer asylum to 500 people. A thousand new volunteers signed up with The Icelandic Red Cross overnight, which in turn encouraged authorities to receive at least hundreds of refugees. On September 20, the ministerial committee, announced by the Prime Minister three weeks before, responded to the pressure, held a press conference and declared its plan: to establish and fund a specialists’ committee. According to Prime Minister Sigmundur Davíð, next year’s budget will see € million allocated to the committee’s projects. As to whether any of the money will be used to significantly increase the number of refugees to be received, the ministers chose not to comment.

Current evidence indicates that this

means no, and that Iceland’s population density will safely remain three persons per square kilometre. In late October, Welfare Minister Eygló announced that her Ministry had received the profiles of thirteen Syrian families currently residing in camps, including, she noted, “an electrician, a plumber, an engineer and a driver.” The specialists’ committee, appointed by the ministerial committee, currently evaluates these people’s applications, swiping left and right to choose which ones among them will be granted asylum. According to the Minister, the lucky ones might arrive before the end of the year.

Wael Aliyadah and Feryal Aldahash, a couple from Syria, arrived in Iceland last July, along with their kindergarten-aged daughters. In mid-October, the Directorate of Immigration ruled against substantially examining their application, meaning that the family shall be deported to Greece, their first country of arrival within the Schengen area.

The family’s lawyer appealed the decision. Extensive media coverage, an online petition and protest gatherings in their support do not ascertain a reversal of the decision, but have already delayed the deportation.

So far, contrary to the public solidarity on display this autumn, this delayed deportation is Icelandic authorities’ only material contribution to the Syrian refugee crisis.

*Originally researched for Internazionale, Italy. Read it in Italian there!*

**“By leasing vessels and crew to FRONTEX for operations in the Mediterranean, Icelanders have since 2010 turned refugees into revenue, gaining around €4 million in annual net profits.”**

a night arrest the State Security men have a superiority in numbers, there are many of them, armed, against one person who hasn’t even finished buttoning his trousers.” No less importantly, “neither the people in neigh-

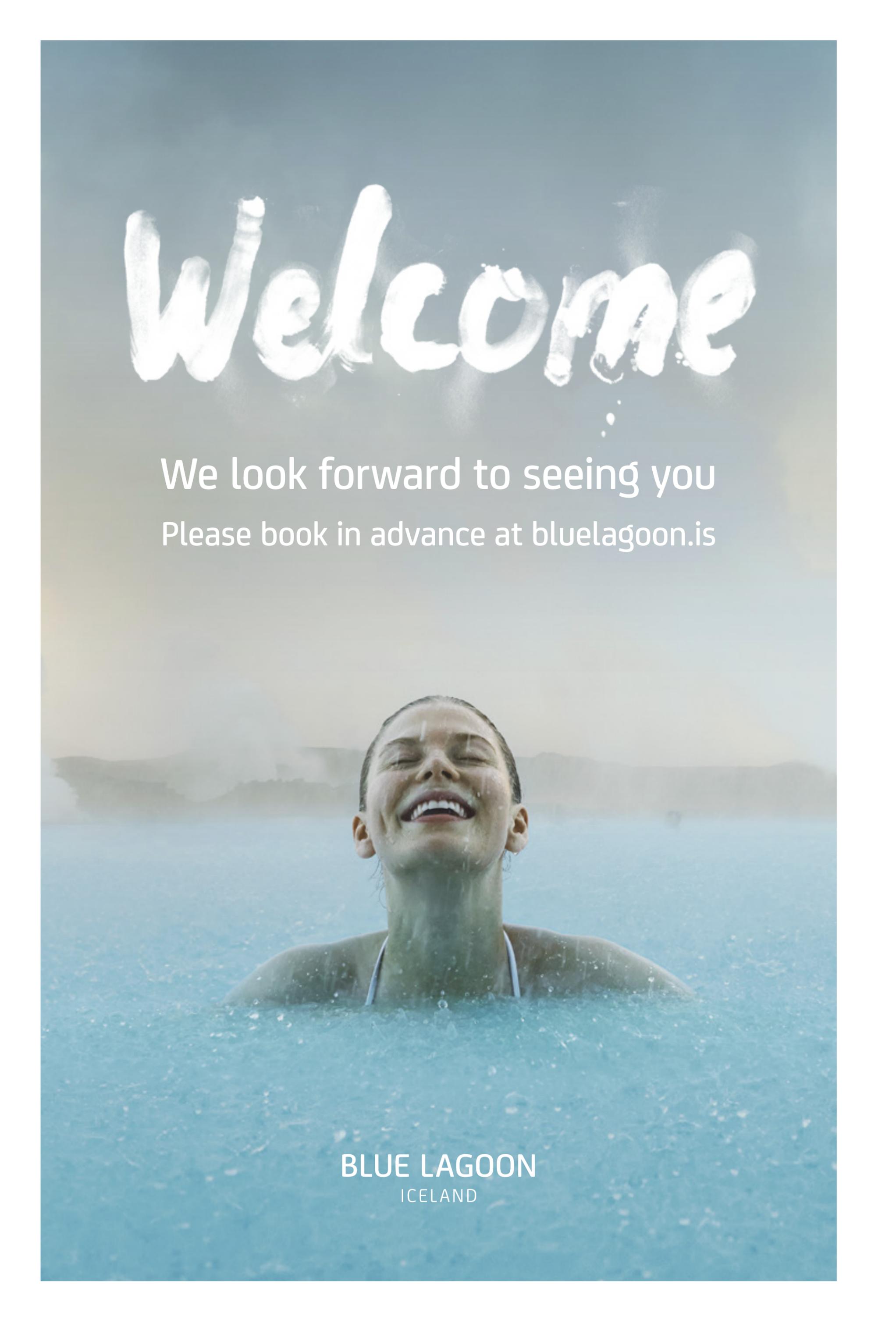
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A woman is shown from the chest up, submerged in clear, bright blue water. She has her eyes closed and a wide, joyful smile, with water droplets splashing over her face and neck. The background is a soft-focus view of a lagoon with distant hills under a hazy sky.

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# Iceland's Pirate Party has topped the opinion polls all summer.

## Could they be Iceland's next government?

by John Rogers\_

/// **Hacking Politics** ///

**Alþingishúsið, The Parliament House, is a hulking grey stone building that sits on the edge of the sleepy Austurvöllur square in downtown Reykjavík. It's the seat of Iceland's Alþingi, an institution that was famously inaugurated in the year 930 by a coalition of chieftains who, in essence, founded the world's first parliament, and began governing over what many claim to be the world's oldest functioning democracy.**

One or two things have changed in Icelandic politics during the intervening millennium. For example, people no longer gather annually around Lögberg, the Law Rock, at Þingvellir national park, to hear the new laws of the land being read out. Blasphemy is now legal (thank fucking god). And you can't kill Basque sailors on sight in the Westfjords these days. After more than a thousand years, though, democracy remains quite popular with the Icelanders, with around 80% of Icelanders voting in general elections.

Now, the Alþingi might be heading for another big moment in political history. This summer, Píratarpartíið (The Pirate Party)—a small, radically forward-thinking, activism-based political organisation—stormed from being a marginal presence with three sitting MPs (out of

63), to being the front-runner in the national opinion polls. Amongst many reformist policies, their agenda includes an eye-catching reboot of democracy itself, via increased voter participation that allows the people to guide parliament on key issues via e-democracy, direct influence on policymaking, and referendums.

The Pirate Party is an international organisation that began in Sweden, and first made their name championing copyright reform and freedom of information. But the Icelandic group took an ingenious next step when they extrapolated their political philosophy into a framework they call the Core Policy. These guidelines were employed to create the Pirate Platform—a wide-ranging manifesto that covers everything from fishing quotas and healthcare to internet

porn and data protection (both the Core Policy and the Pirate Platform can be found on their website: [www.piratar.is](http://www.piratar.is)).

Their message has clearly resonated with the public, with the impressive poll numbers holding steady since March. At the last count, the Pirates had 34.5% of the vote, making them de-facto favourites to lead Iceland's next government.

Two years is, of course, a long time in politics. But should this current swell in popularity hold until the 2017 parliamentary election, the Pirates will be tasked with governing Iceland. And they'll be aiming to make those thick stone walls a lot more transparent.

### Pirates in parliament

After years of articles and movies about terrorist threats, "ring of steel" security, armed police guards and elite bodyguard units, it's a strange feeling to walk up to Alþingishúsið completely unchallenged and just try the handle. I find the building's imposing front door locked and no longer in use—around the corner, there's a modern metal and glass extension, where an old security guard takes my name, checks the computer, hands me a clippy visitor's badge, and waves me inside with a minimum of fuss.

In the airy atrium lobby I find former Wikileaks volunteer, freedom of information activist, Icelandic MP and sometime Pirate Party figurehead Birgitta Jónsdóttir, dressed in a smart skirt-suit, a colourful scarf draped over her shoulders. She's standing with a camera crew, and shoots me her trademark mischievous smile from beneath a distinctive shock of black hair. "I'll be with you in just a minute," she says, "I just have this interview."

I wander down the hall, feeling like something of an invader, looking at framed prints and glancing into half-open doorways. Austere meeting rooms sit ready for use, with pitchers of water and plates of uneaten pastries (the Prime Minister must be away). One room is different—the shades are drawn, and there's a large pirate flag hanging over the window, next to 'V For Vendetta' and (hand-altered) "Free Bradley Chelsea Manning"

posters. A laptop covered in stickers (Tor project, pi symbol, pirate flag) sits on the table, and a wall-mounted TV blares out the ongoing discussion of the Alþingi's chamber. Birgitta soon reappears and shows me into the Pirates' parliamentary office.

I ask if things are always this hectic for an MP. "You know, I didn't realise until I got here how badly organised all this is," she says, smiling breathlessly. "And I think it's intentional. You can never fully prepare yourself before you enter the chamber, because you just get to know the agenda in the morning... you can't do the research. I almost always miss the Foreign Affairs committee meetings because I'm in another committee at the time; and all three of us Pirate MPs are in our main committees simultaneously, so we can't even have someone jump in for us. And the office of parliament shows no will to change it to make it work."

### The hacker perspective

Coming up against the bureaucratic realities of government seems to act less as a deterrent than as an additional motivation for the Pirates. Their shared interest in hacking—that is, examining systems, identifying their characteristics and weaknesses, and modifying them through experimentation—comes in useful. In fact, as the Pirates seemingly come

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## WHO ARE THOSE PIRATES?



**Helgi**  
Age: 35

**Former occupation:**

Software engineering

**Political hero:** Edward Snowden

**Favorite book, band, pool:** “I have no answers to the remaining questions.”

**Top 3 problems that we most urgently need to solve in Iceland:**

1. Adopt a new constitution, as has been the intention since the founding of the so-called Republic. The current constitution is a royal constitution, and this fact is not merely symbolic

but actually permeates all the way down to how elections are confirmed. 2. Figure out how on Earth we’re going to retain any semblance of a sane economy alongside a floating króna. 3. Find ways for people whose rights are fragile to seek and defend their rights, most notably the elderly and handicapped people. It’s extraordinarily difficult for these groups to seek and defend their rights under the current system.



**Birgitta**  
Age: 48

**Former occupation:** Poet, web developer, journalist, graphic designer, translator, maker of books

**Favorite band of the moment:**

Muse

**Favorite book:** ‘The Master & Margarita’, and most recently, ‘The Dispossessed’

**Political hero:** “I can’t think of anybody I’d define as political hero, but I seek inspiration from fellow writer Vaclav Havel—and I think the current Pope is a rock star.”

**Favorite Reykjavik swimming pool:** Seltjarnarnes

**Top 3 problems that we most urgently need to solve in Iceland:**

1. We need the new constitution to be made into law. 2. We need to show with legislation that we learned something from the banking crisis so that we will not repeat history (very soon). 3. We need to make the Heart of Iceland into a national park, before it’s too late to conserve it.



**Ásta**  
Age: 25

**Former occupation:** Student, and then working for the Democratic Society and The Tactical Tech Collective

**Favorite band of the moment:** “I don’t listen to music.”

**Favorite book:** Currently, ‘The Book Thief’. Otherwise I’m a boring Harry Potter fan.

**Political “hero”:** “The Suffragettes, Sylvia Pankhurst and others. They were basically punks that made a statement about women’s suffrage rights.”

**Favorite Reykjavik**

**swimming pool:** Vesturbæjarlaug

**Top 3 problems that we most urgently need to solve in Iceland:**

1. Figure out what to do with the fact that we now own two banks, instead of just one, and what we’re going to do with it. 2. We also need to have a broad discussion about the future of the Icelandic króna and its sustainability as a currency if we’re going to move away from capital controls. 3. Fix the constitution.



from disparate points on the traditional left/right political spectrum, this methodology is part of what unites them.

“I definitely approach this job from the perspective of the hacker,” explains Birgitta. “I don’t want to learn what isn’t possible, because as soon as I know about limitations, I start to respect them. It’s better to pretend you don’t know the limitations, so you can break them.”

Birgitta employed this wilful naiveté to great effect during the formation of IMMI—the Icelandic Modern Media Initiative—a bill that she championed and shepherded through parliament and into law. The result was a groundbreaking piece of legislation designed to protect freedom of expression for both the press and private individuals. The bill sailed through Alþingi, achieving an unprecedented level of cross-party support.

“It was a big job,” recalls Birgitta. “We tasked the government with changing ten different laws in four different ministries. Not only was it a vision on where we were going as a nation, but it set the bar high—we wanted the best laws in all

those fields. The bill was unanimously adopted, which had never happened before. And something all good activists know is that once you’ve crossed a threshold, the way is open for others to follow. So there’s been much more of this type of work in parliament since then.”

Even so, Birgitta has found that bringing the different laws through the system and into effect is a long road. “It has been a disappointment for me and many others how slowly the writing of the laws has progressed,” she says. “It’s an ongoing process of applying pressure on all fronts in order to make sure that the various different laws of IMMI will be written and adopted. The good news regarding IMMI and the tasks involved is that the IMMI laws are being written by a very active steering committee in one of the ministries.”

### Fishing and porn

The rejection of party-political dogma that the Pirates demonstrated in the

IMMI process is perhaps part of what’s endeared them to an electorate jaded by traditional politics following a catastrophic economic crash, and the subsequent return to “business as usual.” Ásta Guðrún Helgadóttir is the newest Pirate MP in parliament, having recently completed her political history studies and stepped into the seat vacated by retired MP Jón Þór Ólafsson. She’s a perfect testament to the power of the Pirate Party’s inclusivity—a newly-minted 25-year-old MP who’s been in the job for just a week when we first meet.

“I started in Icelandic politics in 2013,” says Ásta, sitting in the Pirate Party office on the nearby Austurstræti. “I’d been following what happened after the crash in 2008. A lot of kids were pretty disengaged, I don’t think they realised the seriousness of it—at least amongst my peers, I was the only one who was following it. But in 2013 the Pirate Party came along. The freedom of information aspect attracted me—I’m very much against censorship.”

One idea being mooted at the time

## How Do You Like Those Pirates, Government?

Compiled and translated by *Gabriel Benjamin*

“They fight for civil rights, like they said on TV yesterday, but I want to point out that their battle involves a certain double standard, in that they are fonder of some civil rights than others—this includes, for example, the ones I think are the most important ones, property rights. It is, or was, a left-wing idea, to think of the individual and their property as irrelevant, as part of the greater whole. This is just the old left and right politics. Their most experienced MP [Birgitta Jónsdóttir] says, and has been quoted as saying, that property rights are part of society’s ills. She has said that re-

peatedly, and people are obviously aware of [the party’s] opinion on property rights. That’s why I say they’re really just a normal left-wing party.”

**-Brynjar Nielsson, Independence Party MP, radio X-ið 97.7, April 8, 2015**

“If people’s resentment were to lead to revolutionary parties—and parties with very unclear ideas of democracy, and parties that want to revolutionize the foundations of society—to come to power, it would be cause for concern for society as a whole [...] it would lead to society going on a com-

pletely different course, in which it would be difficult to preserve the values that we’ve championed in the past few decades.”

**-Prime Minister Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson, Progressive Party, DV, June 25, 2015**

“You’re really asking me if the Pirates are a party that can govern. I don’t think anyone is in a position to disqualify those with a strong democratic mandate. But I feel certain individuals in the party are not well grounded [...] for example, I believe Birgitta was first seen in Parliament as an employ-

ee of the Left Greens. Then she went to Borgarahreyfingin as an MP, but that party didn’t live long so she started working with Hreyfingin. Then she ran with the Pirates. To run the country with any integrity you of course need some grounding. The big question regarding new parties like the Pirates is: What do they stand for? Do they have any grounding? I think the Pirates are mostly a blank page.”

**-Minister of Finance Bjarni Benediktsson, Independence Party, DV, August 28**

was the blocking of porn sites in Iceland, which set alarm bells ringing for Ásta. “According to Icelandic law, pornography is illegal,” she says. “It’s a law from the 19th century, and it hasn’t been enforced for fifteen years now. Then the idea of building a ‘pornography shield’ around Iceland came up. And I thought, ‘No, you can’t do that! It’s censorship!’ And they were like, ‘No, it’s not censorship, we’re thinking about the children!’”

“The Pirate Party is trying to infiltrate the system and change these ‘heritage laws,’” she continues, “because when you read a law, you have to understand the root of that law—when was it written, what was the context, and the culture. And now we’re in the 21st century, with the internet, which changes everything.”

Ásta is a keen study of Icelandic political history, talking in broad strokes about the country’s traditional social conservatism and market liberalism, the historical legacy of the powerful farming and fishing lobbies, and ongoing debates in everything from censorship to industrial reform.

“Iceland is an unusual place, politically speaking,” she says. “There’s a void in Icelandic politics when it comes to liberal parties. In Denmark and Sweden, there are many liberal parties, so there is less space for a Pirate Party. They have parties that are consistently liberal, and have been since the ‘60s. There’s a reason Denmark was the first country to legalise porn in 1969. In Iceland there’s a lot of social conservatism, even though people want to be libertarians as far as the market, etcetera. What the Pirates are trying to do is more of social liberalism.”

She pauses, stressing her next point word by word. “We don’t want to micro-manage the market, but my way of thinking is: first we want to protect the individual; then the society; and then the market. If a policy protects the market, but is not good for the society or the individual, then in my view it’s a bad policy.”

And this is one area where the touchstone Pirate issue of transparency comes to the fore. “As a party, our platform has been evolving, and is still evolving,” says Ásta. “Our core policies are moral and ethical guidelines about how we want to function as a party. Explaining for example, what transparency is—it’s something we can apply to governments or institutions. Individuals are not transparent—me for example, you cannot apply transparency to me. But you can apply it to my work as a legislator. Public figures are also individuals, and therefore have a right to privacy.”

## We know where you live

In practice, protecting individual rights is a thornier, more difficult task than it might seem. The joins between Iceland’s traditional, sometimes antique civil infrastructure and new information technologies give rise to some worrying questions.

Helgi Hrafn Gunnarsson, the third Pirate Party MP, has been considering such questions for years. A former programmer and hacker, he’s become something of a popular public figure of late for his studious approach to politics, whether speaking in Alþingi, or responding at length in the comments section of a fellow politician’s blog. Sporting a plain t-shirt, a tidy ponytail and small spectacles, he combines a confident, fluent speaking style with a self-admittedly nerdy sense of logic and precision.

“Iceland has a number of things that have always been considered normal, okay and not dangerous,” he says, in an American-English drawl. “For example, the national registry. In Iceland, you’re bound by law to tell people where you live. But if you’re a controversial figure, let’s say, you’re arguing with Muslims, or you’re a Muslim arguing with atheists, or you’re a homosexual Jehovah’s Witness...

you might want a little anonymity. It turns out that’s not legal here. You have to have a national ID number, and be in the register. You also have to register your religious beliefs, because the state sort of assumes it depending on the religious beliefs of your parents. The government has a central database of individual religious beliefs, which is used to apportion money to the different religious organisations. They don’t allow that in Germany any more. And you know why?”

He pauses for effect, before continuing. “Yeah, you do! Of course you know why. But the thing is, here, people don’t realise the threat this creates. Our entire national database has leaked a billion times—any hacker in the world has free access to it. A plethora of quite hackable systems have a copy of it. And we think it’s okay because we don’t have anything to hide. But here’s the thing—innocent information can be abused. If someone has your name, address, phone number and bank or ID number, they can do bad things even if you have nothing to hide. I think people are slowly—and, slowest of all, in Parliament—recognising this. And they don’t know what to do about it.”

## 3D printed, drone delivered handguns

This high level of engagement with contemporary issues is what attracted Helgi to the Pirate Party in the first place. “The big problem is that information technology evolves quite a lot faster than society and politics,” he says. “So policy tends to be outdated as soon as it’s born. The Pirate Party is the first political movement, that I’m aware of, which recognises this.”

“It’s a problem even for us,” he continues. “For example—drones. What are we gonna do about them? Then there’s 3D printing—we now have people exchanging instructions on how to make homemade guns with a 3D printer. That immediately changes a bunch of things. It requires us to acknowledge a certain powerlessness, and to rethink prior solutions to particular problems—and to know what we can and can’t do in response.”

The policy of staying on-point with breaking topics and emerging technologies has slowly made more traditionally-minded MPs in Alþingi realise the Pirate MPs are a valuable resource. “At first, we were perceived as somewhat childish,” says Helgi, “and maybe some of that is fair. But as we run into more and more ‘told you so!’ situations... like when we’re the first to see something coming, and then we have to remind people. Or when we have a point of view that nobody else realises beforehand, until they start thinking about it... people do respect us now on certain areas. If you have a new problem—3D printing and drones are just two examples—people might want to see what the Pirates have to say about it. They’re happy to have us as a resource, and pride themselves in being able to ask. Just as we should pride ourselves in being able to listen to them.”

## A big megaphone

Listening to the Pirate Party is something Iceland’s political establishment might have to get used to. The Pirates have topped the Gallup opinion polls for six consecutive months, and currently sit at 34.5%—more than the combined numbers for the ruling coalition of Independence and Progressive parties. But the three MPs are at a bit of a loss when it comes to explaining their impressive rise

in prominence.

“First we went to 14.2%, and I was like: ‘Woah, that’s a record!’,” recalls Helgi. “We’d usually been polling around 10%. When it’s at 8% we’d start to worry, when it was at 12%, it’s a good day. Then it spiked to 14.2%. When it went to 21%, I thought: ‘Okay, surely it’ll go down after this.’ The same day, I learned that the Foreign Minister had just unilaterally withdrawn Iceland from the EU negotiations. A lot of people put these events together as the cause of our poll numbers, but we’d started spiking before those were public knowledge.”

“I preferred the slow growth, I think,” he continues. “We knew where it was coming from. And so many things will happen between now and the elections—other parties will adjust.”

In fact, there are signs they’re adjusting already. Prime Minister Sigmundur Davíð slammed the Pirate Party’s growing influence as “cause for concern for society as a whole” (see sidebar). “In their defence,” laughs Helgi, “whenever someone in government speaks about the Pirates, we go up in the polls. It’s actually surprising how weak their attacks are. They’re kind of shallow and borderline childish. We wonder whether to answer

them or not. It says more about them than us, and that’s a mistake. These old forces are used to a discourse confined to newspapers, television and linear schedules. It’s manageable, polite, contained and slow. But now, when the Prime Minister says something, it’s immediately talked

about publicly, via social media. The public is part of the conversation about news. It’s not just friends and family members talking—there’s a conversation and exchange going on that wasn’t there before. They cannot control that. Smirky, clever one-liners about the opponents don’t work any more. People are used to it. It doesn’t appear clever. To be clever now, you have to say something with content and information. Those kind of quips and sound-bites just seem throwaway—like a Facebook comment. People are past this.”

Ásta is also circumspect when it comes to interpreting the polls. “In honesty, we don’t exactly know why we’re getting so much support,” she says. “But we’re very thankful, and we’ll continue doing our work. The next issue becomes scalability—we’re now asking, ‘Can we become so big, so fast, without failing?’ It’s a big question—how we’ll scale the policy work, and the grassroots work. Like asking: ‘If we had fifteen people in Parliament, how would we work together, and what could we do?’ We will figure it out as we go. It’s worked for us so far—we have clearly been doing something right, and we’ll keep doing it.”

Veteran campaigner Birgitta takes a pragmatic view of the numbers. “I know from a life full of experience that the tide can completely turn,” she smiles. “You can’t take the popular winds of the moment as hard fact. But as activists, we now have a very big megaphone to put forward our vision—and people are listening to what we are saying.”

## Do, make, fix, break

“However, people should not allow themselves to believe that we are going to save them,” continues Birgitta. “They are going to save themselves, and we’ll give them the tools to do it. We want to look for the wisdom of the masses. No one person is going to get us out of this mess we’re in... both as Icelanders and as a human species. It’ll happen through collective effort.”

# CORE POLICY

Below you can find the core policy of The Pirate Party of Iceland. The policy is written as a series of statements so it is easy to quote them, but sometimes it can be a bit tricky to understand what is being referred to. Here are some definitions:

- » Civil rights are the legally protected rights that an individual has to participation in a democratic society. Civil rights include but are not limited to the right to vote, religious freedom, freedom of expression, freedom of the press and the right to engage in peaceful protest.
- » Information is that which informs, i.e., that from which data can be derived. Information is conveyed either as the contents of a message or through direct or indirect observation of some thing. That which is perceived can be construed as a message in its own right, and in that sense, information is always conveyed as the contents of a message. Information can be encoded into various forms for transmission and interpretation. For example, information may be encoded into signs, and transmitted via signals.

1. Critical thinking and well-informed policy
  - 1.1 Pirates emphasize critical thinking and well-informed decisions.
  - 1.2 This entails that Pirates shape their policy on the basis of data and knowledge which is gathered irrespective of whether or not the policy seems desirable or not at first. The position of Pirates on ideas is not based on who promotes them.
  - 1.3 Former decisions made by Pirates always need to be open for revisions.
  - 1.4 The right of individuals to be informed shall never be impaired.
2. Civil rights
  - 2.1 Pirates exert themselves for the enhancement and protection of civil rights.
  - 2.2 The expansion of civil rights shall aim to enhance other rights.
  - 2.3 Current rights must be guarded so that they will not be impaired.
  - 2.4 Pirates believe that civil rights belong to individuals and that the rights of every person are equally strong.
3. A right to privacy
  - 3.1 A right to privacy is about protecting the powerless from the abuse and mistreatment of the powerful.
  - 3.2 Pirates believe that all individuals should have a right to privacy in their own personal lives.
  - 3.3 Privacy includes the rights to discretion, the right to be anonymous and the right to self-determination.
  - 3.4 Secrecy should never go further than to protect the individual and never go so far as to affect other individuals.
  - 3.5 Anonymity does not relieve any person of responsibility for their actions.
4. Transparency and responsibility
  - 4.1 Transparency gives the powerless the power to monitor the powerful.
  - 4.2 Pirates believe that transparency is an important part of making the public informed and thereby capable of making democratic decisions.
  - 4.3 Information should be accessible to the public.
  - 4.4 Information should be accessible in open data formats, in a form that is most convenient for the usability of the information.
  - 4.5 In order for an individual to be able to take responsibility, she needs to have the ability to make decisions.
  - 4.6 Pirates believe that everyone has an unlimited right to be involved in decisions that relate to their own affairs, and a right to knowledge about how such decisions are made.
5. Freedom of information and expression
  - 5.1 Limits to people’s freedom to collect and share information are unacceptable, except for the purpose of protecting the rights of individuals.
  - 5.2 Any limits to people’s freedom to express themselves are unacceptable, except for the purpose of protecting the rights of individuals.
6. Direct democracy and the right to self-determination
  - 6.1 Pirates believe that everyone has an unlimited right to be involved in decisions that relate to their own affairs.
  - 6.2 That right is guaranteed with the empowerment of direct democracy and the promotion of transparent governance.
  - 6.3 Pirates believe that centralization needs to be reduced in all areas and democracy needs to be promoted in all the forms that are available.

Retrieved from [www.piratar.is](http://www.piratar.is)

In keeping with this thinking, The Pirate Party holds meetings that are open to the public, where people with some opinion or insight on certain subjects can attend and have their say. Their policy-making process is also a democratic system, with Pirate Party members able to vote, comment, and present policies for consideration.

“Anyone who cares can walk into a Pirate Party meeting,” says Ásta. “And they do—we’ve seen a vast growth in the number of people engaging. People come in and say ‘hey, I have expertise

in this, do you want to know about it?’ And of course, we welcome that. I think it has something to do with the hacker ‘do, make, fix, break’ culture—the idea that, to know or feel the ethical or moral guidelines of how we want our society to be, you don’t have to be an expert. You just need to be able to debate, to learn, to process and understand information and arrive at a good conclusion.”

One example of this M.O. in action is the Pirate Party’s policy on fishing quotas. While it’s an issue that lies far outside of the international Pirate Party’s

**"Whenever someone in government speaks about the Pirates, we go up in the polls. It's actually surprising how weak the attacks are. They're kind of shallow and borderline childish. We wonder whether to answer them or not." - Helgi Hrafn**

## The Core Policy and Pirate Platform

The Pirate Party use its so-called Core Policy as a foundation for forming wider issue-based policies, which are approved through a vote by party members, "in conjunction with issue meetings and executive meetings away from keyboard."

We've summarised all of the Pirate Party's key stated positions below, as laid out in their "Pirate Platform." You can read the full policies at [www.piratar.is](http://www.piratar.is).

### Direct democracy:

Public involvement in policy making.

### Transparency:

Allowing public access to all pertinent information required to make informed decisions.

### Copyright reform:

Updating copyright in order to, amongst other things, enable free communication.

### Humane drug policy:

Treating addicts medically rather than criminally.

### Education:

Updating education to be "more diverse, flexible, connected to the internet and directly connected to society" plus mandatory sex education focussed on "mutual respect, communication, and informed consent."

### Equality:

Guaranteeing equality by law: "Pirates want not just tolerance but for everyone to be accepted and appreciated."

### The EU:

An open, transparent debate followed by a referendum.

### The Constitution:

Pirates want to amend the constitution in a way that is materially identical to The Constitutional Council's proposed bill.

### Home Debt:

A variety of proposed changes to loan fees, mortgage and loan laws.

### Employment & Economy:

More attention for small businesses and the internet economy.

### Welfare:

Introduce a minimum wage, increase opportunities for benefit claimants, changes to improve property rental situation.

core mission, it's a hot topic for Icelanders, and the Core Policy meant there's a framework for its creation according to an agreed foundational criteria.

"Our fishing policy is a good policy in my opinion," says Ásta. "We in the parliamentary group didn't touch it, but what came out is a really good policy. At the moment, the rights belong to boats that were allowed to fish years and years ago, bringing no revenue to the state. The conclusion reached by our grassroots members, after talking to people working with fishing rights and the quota system, was that the quota should be put on the market and sold to the highest bidder, which is how it's done in most places, and is a known format for dealing with natural resources. The grassroots members made this, without any parliamentary experience or expertise—they were quite able to find the people they needed to talk to, figure out the problem, discuss it, and reach a conclusion. And that's great."

Empowering members in policy-making is just one facet of the Pirates' commitment to direct democracy. All three MPs express enthusiasm for creating structures that allow for much greater political involvement than putting a cross in a box every four years.

"We would have done more direct democracy initiatives already if we had more people in Parliament," says Helgi.

"We currently have just three MPs out of 63, which is not even 5%. So it wouldn't have that much impact if we opened up our votes that way. Also, it wouldn't work on every issue, because we need to go by the party's core policy first. But there are certain issues where we would like the

populace to decide for themselves. Preferably not even through MPs at all."

Another form of direct participation is the website Ventill.is. This intentionally non-partisan online voting platform allows individuals—having been validated by their "Icekey" digital ID—to upvote or downvote the political questions of the day. It's an experiment, and Helgi admits the results are skewed by the fact that the majority of the site's users—those aware that it exists—are Pirate-affiliated at this early stage. But it's another illustration of the creativity that the Pirates want to apply to crowd-sourcing opinion and feeding the results into policy positions.

### Nü-democracy

Wanting to be heard, and to be more active and more involved, is a sentiment that's sweeping through democracies (and non-democracies) far outside of

Iceland. From the Arab Spring to Bernie Sanders's internet-led, grassroots presidential campaign, to Podemos (trans: "We can") in Spain, Syriza (trans: "From the roots") in Greece, and a newly invigorated Labour movement in the UK under veteran socialist MP Jeremy Corbyn, change is in the air. Around the world, old political parties and established power structures are creaking under a desire for real change from individuals who have more access to information than at any time in history.

"It's all a part of the transformative times we're living in," says Birgitta. "People are realising their democracies are

not what they are supposed to be. That's why it's important for us to strengthen the powers of Parliament here in Iceland, so the people can have more access to what's happening—how policies are being formed and put forward. Or even a chance to form policies by themselves. Young people in particular find it unacceptable that they can only wield influence once every four years."

Birgitta believes the disparate international movements are all energising the same demographics, including a disenfranchised new generation with an appetite for a different kind of politics, and other groups who feel excluded and ignored, including ethnic minorities, people in low-wage jobs, and the disabled and elderly.

"Bernie Sanders, Jeremy Corbyn and the Pirate Party are all attracting these people," says Birgitta. She pauses for a moment, coming over serious. "And I hope these movements don't take away that hope by disappointing them. If you make a mistake, you're not forgiven. It's an emotional tie, and it's important not to play with it. It's important to take it seriously."

And the Pirates do. They offer an alternative to the mainstream parties to a public who hope that the Pirate Party's sharp-eyed, technologically literate, forward-thinking take on politics can help make sense of a rapidly-changing world.

"I think it's very important that people understand that we have to start to develop a vision for what kind of world we want to live in," finishes Birgitta. "I sometimes ask people: 'Have you thought about how you want things to be in 25 years?' As a writer, I know it's important that we start to tell each other stories, to start this discussion—to develop a collective vision, through all means possible. It doesn't have to be utopian... but this is a fucking fantastic world."

"And I'd like to see people thinking more about where it's going."

**"To know or feel the ethical or moral guidelines of how we want our society to be, you don't have to be an expert. You just need to be able to debate, to learn, to process and understand information and arrive at a good conclusion."**

**- Ásta**



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“In the past, English pilots led “Turkish” pirates to the shores of Iceland under a Dutch captain to capture and sell Icelanders into slavery. From 2000 to 2008, “Vikings” led Dutch and English investors into Icelandic banking (Icesave), while laying the groundwork for the financial slavery of Icelanders.”

## The Pirates Came And The Vikings Conquered: Reading history and seeing it repeat itself

By York Underwood

Icelanders ignored the warnings. Nobody took notice. Well, most people took no notice. Others were convinced that the threat had gone away. Internationally, people boasted that the people of Iceland, a Viking settlement, would flee at the first sight of trouble. Then it happened. There was a crash.

It happened on a Monday.

I'm not referring to the financial crash of 2008, which incidentally also happened on a Monday, September 15 to be exact.

The crash I'm talking about was just as figurative. The day pirates first crashed the shores of Heimaey (“Home Island”)—a small isle on the Vestmannaeyjar archipelago, off the south coast of Iceland—July 16, 1627.

### Time is a flat circle

‘The Travels Of Reverend Ólafur Egilsson’ (‘Reisubók séra Ólafs Egilssonar’) is the only English translation of one of the most famous pieces of 17<sup>th</sup> century Icelandic literature. It's a diary of reverend Ólafur Egilsson, an account of what transpired after he, his wife, his children and 400 fellow Icelanders were captured by Moorish corsairs to be sold into slavery in North Africa.

In Icelandic, this incident is known as “Tyrkjaránið,” or The Turkish Raid. At the time, “Turk” was a generic term for all Muslims, regardless of their place of origin. The “Turks” that raided Heimaey originated from Algeria and Morocco, selling slaves on the Barbary Coast. They were just following the whim of the market, grabbing commodities that just happened to have sentience. But why Iceland? How did they get here?

They were led by the English and the Dutch. It's easy to miss, if you read quickly, but Ólafur says in Chapter IV of his diary, “In the boats were English pilots who had guided the pirates to Iceland, where none had ever managed to come ashore.” He then adds, three paragraphs down, when describing the raid on his town, “Most of those attacking us were English[.]” All the pirates were under the command of the Dutch pirate Murat Reis—originally Jan Janszoon van Haarlem.

Pirates are steeped in folklore and non-history as much as Iceland's Vikings. Yet the old adage, “Those who don't understand history are doomed to repeat it” proves relevant. The “Pirate Invasion” and the “Viking Outvasion” seem similar, a modern update on a past event. In the past English pilots led “Turkish” pirates to the shores

of Iceland under a Dutch captain to capture and sell Icelanders into slavery. From 2000 to 2008, “Vikings” led Dutch and English investors into Icelandic banking (Icesave), while laying the groundwork for the financial slavery of Icelanders.

### Making the myth fit the story

The style of ‘The Travels Of Reverend Ólafur Egilsson’ also has modern incarnations. In structure, the book is a cross between Carrie Bradshaw's ‘Sex and the City’ monologues and the artistic license of Quentin Tarantino. Each chapter has a few remarks to set the tone of the entry, with a Bible quote at the end providing the take-away conclusion—actually, this is almost a cross between ‘Sex and the City’ and ‘Gossip Girl’. Ólafur's Bible quotes are rarely correct or from the Bible. Ólafur seems to be quoting scripture from memory, or just making up things that sounds nice, similar to Samuel L. Jackson's famous ‘Pulp Fiction’ monologue.

Despite Ólafur's commitment to keeping a Lutheran lens on his abduction, his Icelandic interests and fancies come through. In Chapter XII, while being held captive in Algeria, he gives a detailed description of the local birds and farm animals—a fine display of that Icelandic interest in animal husbandry that's evident throughout the nation's literature:

“Because the sun is always high in the sky, the land grows two crops during the year, and all the fruits of the earth—corn, grapes, grain (groats)—grow like this. The grass is never cut, and sheep and cattle are never put into houses because there is no winter here, never any frost or snow at any time the whole year round. The sheep, which are both big and very fat, lamb two times a year. There are no barren or gelded sheep. In one day, [a fellow captive] and I saw 100 rams, with tails hanging nearly down to the ground.”

It's easy to imagine Bjartur from Halldór Laxness's ‘Independent People’ speaking in this manner, in some bizarre time-travelling sequel. Bjartur no doubt inherited his materialism from characters in Icelandic literature dating back far further than the 17<sup>th</sup> century. This remains an active trait of the Icelanders, one you can observe on television, in fashion, in the grocery stores and at the bars. Icelanders have a particular eye for material things, for the splendours and riches of other lands.

This is neither completely negative,

nor entirely positive. This desire drives the small nation's almost unbelievable creative and innovative output—but it's also the desire that led the “Vikings” of the “Outvasion” to sell out their country.

### The future and the dark irony of pirates in Iceland

If you managed to remember the Dutch and English connection to Ólafur's capture, Chapter XXIV is prefaced with a darkly ironic sentiment, as Ólafur finally reaches Copenhagen after arranging his ransom to be released.

“About my arrival in Copenhagen, my good reception, and donations from honest men, learned and not.”

Ólafur is writing about the one of the Danish King's Men, Jens Hesselberg, who helped organize his release, but also about the “Dutch Sailors” who “knew him” and gave him several small coins—to which he responded with an enthusiastic “Thanks and glory be to God, always!” This sort of irony is found in every society, but the idea that the same people who rob you will be there to cheer you on when you're set free has modern incarnations in the current economic and political status of Iceland.

It's the myth of Vikings and pirates that runs as the cover story of this very issue, wherein we speculate on whether The Pirate Party has the potential to save Icelanders from their political woes. The irony of pirates saving Icelanders from “Vikings” is almost paradoxical as The Pirate Party's success in Iceland. As its name betrays, The Pirate Party was founded as a political outlet for those who believe they have an inherent right to freely share intellectual property without considering its creators. This is now the most popular political party in a nation that prides itself on its creative endeavours—a country whose identity and international reputation revolves around the idea that it is an island of artists, writers and musicians. The very people who have been most affected by groups such as The Pirate Bay.

Unfortunately, ‘The Travels Of Reverend Ólafur Egilsson’ is no longer available for purchase. The website says, “Due to the effects of the continuing economic crisis in Iceland, the Reisubók is temporarily unavailable.”

It can however be read for free online at [www.reisubok.net](http://www.reisubok.net), with no profits going to its translators or publishers.



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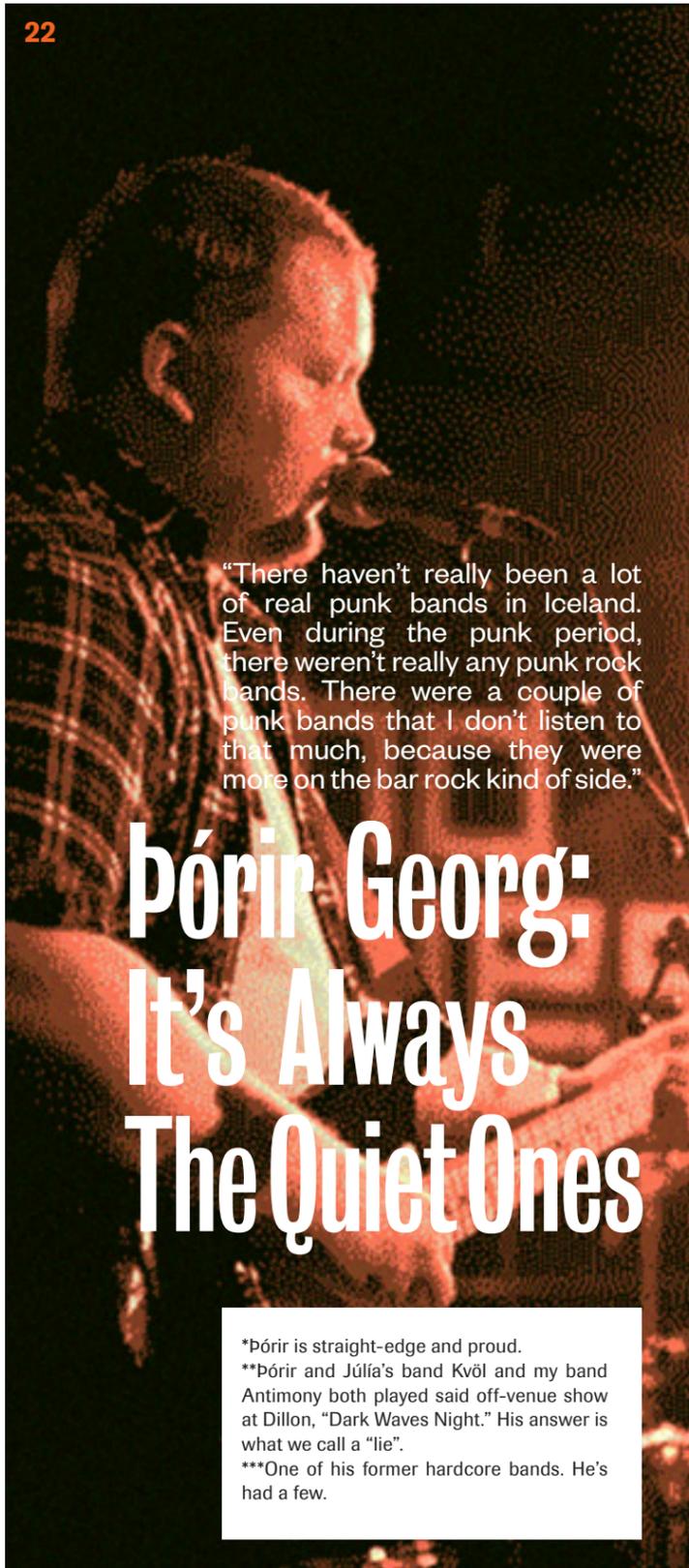


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"There haven't really been a lot of real punk bands in Iceland. Even during the punk period, there weren't really any punk rock bands. There were a couple of punk bands that I don't listen to that much, because they were more on the bar rock kind of side."

## Pórir Georg: It's Always The Quiet Ones

\*Pórir is straight-edge and proud.  
\*\*Pórir and Júlía's band Kvöl and my band Antimony both played said off-venue show at Dillon, "Dark Waves Night." His answer is what we call a "lie".  
\*\*\*One of his former hardcore bands. He's had a few.

By RX Beckett

Pórir Georg is the first to admit that he's not much for interviews or self-promotion of any kind. Although he's enjoyed a diverse, overly active career as a musician over the past decade-plus, driven by a strong work ethic that's resulted in a substantial back-catalogue that spans various monikers and genres, Pórir Georg is a name known by few other than some really nerdy Icelandic music critics and fans. I know he would like to keep it that way, letting his self-named slop-rock trio and his goth rock project Kvöl stay on the down-low. However, when I arrived at Harpa this past Airwaves, planning to hang out before Ariel Pink's set, I stumbled upon Pórir and his wife and bandmate, Júlía Aradóttir, sitting by the bar, I decided to press through and get him on the record. **You have a good moustache going on right now. Did you get a haircut for the festival?**

I just shaved my head and my beard yesterday. I do this fairly regularly. I'm surprised you haven't seen it before. It's very common, it's like, every other time that I shave.

**Júlía:** And I'm always like, are you gonna leave that moustache?

**How quickly does your facial hair grow? Like, how long would it take you to grow out that moustache?**

Fairly quickly. I dunno, like, two weeks. **That's impressive. And how much does your facial hair affect your performance?**

That's a difficult question.

**So how is Airwaves going for you?**

Same as always. This is my eleventh year and I always go into it thinking it will be fun, and I never have as much fun as I think I'm going to have. But that just has more to do with me getting tired very easily from everything.

**Is that because everyone around you is getting shitfaced and you're just like, ugh?**

Hmm, that's probably part of it\*. There's just too much going on.

**Have you seen anything good, though, or have you just given up?**

Yes [laughs]. No! I saw a show today at Dillon, and that was all very good. All the bands that played there were great. **Who was playing again? Just remind me?**

I think it was HAM and ghostigal and The Sugarcubes.\*\*

**Those are good bands! Solid groups.**

Of course, I like all the bands that were playing but I see them pretty much every time they play. I saw Misþyrming on Wednesday at Gaukurinn. I liked that a lot.

**At Airwaves, do you spend more time seeing your friends bands or—**

Yes, definitely. I realised that the pattern I've fallen into is: I'll usually see one or two foreign acts, and then I'll just see the same bands I'll see every year. I probably see more bands now than I used to. There are a bunch of bands going on right now that sort of fit into my taste in music, more usual.

**In terms of playing has the experience changed? Does any memory stand out?**

It's always nice. I don't have a very good memory for details though. My shows have always gone very smoothly. I remember the couple of times that Gavin Portland\*\*\* played. Those were really good memories. We played two or three times, and it was always nice. Now I'm trying to remember bands that I've seen, but it's not going very well. [Turns to Júlía] What have I seen that I really liked?

**Júlía:** You saw The Knife last year.

Yeah, The Knife. That was really good.

Oh, and Fucked Up were really good when they played. But I'd seen them a couple of times before. Contrary to what everyone else seems to think, I really loved the Yo La Tengo show a couple of years ago. Everyone I meet is like, nah I didn't like it that much, but I thought it was really good. I got into a fairly heated argument with a couple of mutual friends of ours over whether The Pixies or Yo La Tengo were a better band.

**You're not gonna tell me who, are you?**

We don't have very many mutual friends that would have an opinion on this! One of them definitely plays drums in a couple of bands that we are in, and the other guy has definitely been a member of one of those bands before, but they're not anymore [laughter]. They were really offended when I said that The Pixies only had a couple of good songs. I may have been exaggerating to benefit my argument, but still. But I still maintain that Yo La Tengo are probably a better band than The Pixies. In my

opinion, of course.

But yeah... Börn are one the bands I love to see, they've played the last couple of years. But of course, I pretty much see every single show they play in Iceland, so...

**You stage a lot of them, in fact.**

Yes. If I am to be completely honest, Börn might be my favourite Icelandic band in the history of Icelandic music.

**Whoa! Elaborate.**

They just play exactly the kind of music I love. There haven't really been a lot of real punk bands in Iceland. Even during the punk period, there weren't really any punk rock bands. There were a couple of punk bands that I don't listen to that much, because they were more on the bar rock kind of side.

**And it seems like anything that actually sounded like straight-up punk was actually a lot of macho bullshit.**

Yeah, exactly. There was the post-punk stuff, which I obviously love, like the weirder darker stuff. [Peyr, Kukl].

**Which would venture into some really strange, experimental territory...**

Yes, which is cool. I like that. I much prefer that to that manly Bubbi Morthens punk rock kind of thing. So yeah, so I like Börn a lot. Can this interview just be about how much I like Börn?

**Yeah! Fuck yes.**

Even the band they had before that, Tentacles of Doom, that was an incredible rock band. That was Alexandra, Júlíana and Fannar, with a guy named Siggí on the guitar. I think he's a Park Ranger now. They were really good as well. My opinion is probably affected by my best friend being in that band. Still, I think that even if I didn't know them they, would be my favourite band.

**I feel like there's always a bit of a natural overlap between who one hangs out with and what kind of music one likes.**

I've had friends in a bunch of bands that I didn't like.

**Of course, who doesn't? But you wouldn't necessarily organise or play shows together...**

No no, but I just mean through the years as well. So I don't think it's just because they're friends of mine that I like them. In fact, most of that band are assholes [pauses. Breaks. Laughs]. No, they're not. None of them are assholes.

Historian Stefán Pálsson tells us all about Iceland's political history and the role of small parties

By Gabriel Benjamin

Information about Icelandic politics is anything but accessible to outsiders (hell, most of us natives don't know jack shit about them, either). Luckily, we found a political pundit and historian type who was all into explaining it to us. Straight outta Iceland's left-est, greenest pastures, meet Stefán Pálsson! Read on to learn more about Iceland's political roots, how small parties get on in Iceland, and the reliability of mid-term polls.

**How would you describe Iceland's recent political history?**

Speaking in broad strokes—100+ years ago, Icelandic politics focused on the nation's struggle for independence from Danish rule. While most agreed on that objective, they disagreed on how far they were willing to go to make it happen, which necessitated the creation of separate parties. Politics with some semblance of a left/right axis—where parties seek their voter base from different classes and

# Tender Trends, Fickle Fashion, Party Politics

regions—commenced around the time of the First World War, laying the foundation for Iceland's modern politics.

Unlike what happened in the other Nordic countries, where the process of urbanisation began far earlier, securing social democratic parties a stronger position, Iceland has been under the rule of the right-wing Independence Party (Sjálfstæðisflokkurinn) and the centre-right Progressive Party (Framsókn) for much longer than the two major left-wing parties [the People's Alliance (Alþýðubandalagið), which eventually morphed into the Left-Green Movement (Vinstri-Grænir), and the Social Democratic Party (Alþýðflokkurinn), which eventually became the Social Democratic Alliance (Samfylkingin)].

**How have these four parties changed over the last century?**

Well, the Progressive Party, for example, used to be associated with the cooperative movement—people used to joke was it was merely their politi-

cal arm, which is no longer the case. Then, the Progressive leaders primarily spoke for the countryside. Iceland's demography has undergone major changes since, and the current divide makes it impossible to run on a platform that appeals only to a rural base.

Similarly, the left-wing parties used to be in bed with the unions, with Alþýðflokkurinn and ASÍ ("the Icelandic Confederation of Labour") basically acting as two sides of the same coin. That, too, has changed.

Generally speaking, the parties have grown much more diverse. Alþingi used to be almost entirely made up of male lawyers, doctors, or public officials. Now, it comprises much more of a cross-section of society, with MPs of various backgrounds and both genders.

Another big change came through the increased importance of primaries from 1970 and onwards, where individuals could rise through the political ranks and secure a seat in Parli-

ament simply by merit of being famous, personable, or popular—instead of having to remain loyal to the party for extended periods of time.

It's worth mentioning that while the aforementioned parties—which have remained a constant in Icelandic politics since the advent of modern politics—we have often had a fifth, or even sixth party in Parliament since 1983. Grouping the "Big Four" together as "the establishment" has primarily been a form of rhetoric employed by supporters of smaller parties, a way to define their identities and ideas in contrast to them. Many of those smaller parties have been lead by former members of one of the four, folks who defected after getting upset, for instance, or losing an election.

These smaller parties are often very fluid, able to change their policies with very short notice, and not needing to place themselves on the traditional left-right spectrum. For example, the Liberal Party changed a lot over the time it was active; it went from being

centred on fishing quota system reforms, to basically flirting with populist racism.

**These new parties seem to pop up every few years, maybe surviving one or two terms before disappearing. The Pirates, however, seem to be doing exceptionally well in polls...**

I'd be careful not to read too much into poll movements in the middle of a term—things that quickly become fashionable also quickly fall out of fashion, and if their numbers dip, the same media that covered their rise to popularity with fervour will be more than happy to report on their demise.

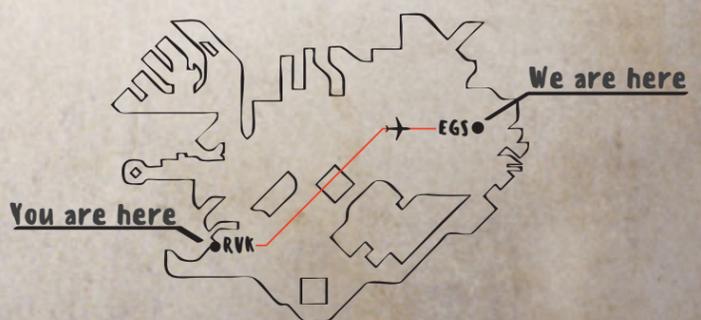
They've managed to sustain high popularity for half a year, which in itself is remarkable—however, it's not unprecedented. The Left Greens, for example, ranked very high in the polls for most of the term following their first election in 1999, and were projected to get more MPs than the Social Democrats. Despite this, they lost a seat in the following 2003 elections.



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13:00	13:00	13:00	13:00	13:00	13:00	13:00	13:00	13:00	13:00	13:00	13:00	13:00
				17:00*	17:00	17:00	17:00	17:00	17:00	17:00*		
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# Icelandic Language Day: Dog-Paw Drifts And Creamy Fair Weather

Words Alexander de Ridder

November 16 is a special day in Iceland. It is the birth date of one of Iceland's most influential poets, Jónas Hallgrímsson, who essentially introduced romanticism (and all that entails, like the pentameter) to Iceland. This is exactly why Icelanders decided it would be a good time to celebrate their language, which is why November 16 is also known as "Dagur íslenskrar tungu" (literally "Day Of The Icelandic Tongue," i.e. "Icelandic Language Day"), a day that celebrates the potential and beauty of the Icelandic language, raising awareness for Icelandic education and conservation. It's great (or, if you want to practice some Icelandic, "æði")!

To learn more about it all, we spoke with one of this year's event organisers, Hjördís Erna Sigurðardóttir, who's currently working on her MA degree at Árnastofnun, the University of Iceland's Institute for Icelandic Studies.

### The Dagur íslenskrar what now?

In 1995, the Minister of Education declared that Jónas Hallgrímsson's birthday, November 16, would be dedicated to celebrating the Icelandic language. The first iteration of Dagur íslenskrar tungu was in 1996, and it's been ongoing ever since. Traditionally, there are events in schools and libraries around the country celebrating the language. The Minister also awards the Jónas Hallgrímsson Prize for the special promotion of the Icelandic tongue, to an honoree chosen by a special committee.

The event has nothing to do with the people or the culture—there's no nationalistic aspect to it. It's just meant to emphasise the Icelandic tongue and its many uses. How words are used in poems, literature, things like that.

Hjördís participates in communication and promotion for the day, raising awareness with schools and businesses. "I try to find fun things that people can do with the language. I sometimes make my own riddles, like: 'Það er í upphafi efa, enginn hefur það, ekkert heldur því, og frelsi geymir það' ('It's at the beginning of doubt, nobody has it, nothing contains it and freedom stores it'). It's wordplay, based on an English riddle. The answer is 'E,' which is at the beginning of 'efi,' and also found in 'enginn,' 'ekkert' and 'frelsi,'" Hjördís says enthusiastically.

"Events include poetry reading and

writing, concerts, and Menntamálastofnun often stages a poetry competition. A poet writes the first two lines of a poem, and then the children write the last two lines to the poems. We encourage children to play with the language," she continues. This year's theme for the day is words for the weather, "veðurorð." While Icelandic used to have an incredible variety of words for weather, modern technology has rendered many of them obsolete, while others have taken on a different meaning altogether.

As part of her interest in Icelandic, and for this year's Language Day, Hjördís has been researching these words that have fallen out of favour, and she showed me a file that was over forty pages long. "I could understand most of them, but in my research I came across some compounds I'd never heard of," she happily shares with me. "That's why I like throwing them out there, to see what people like and relate to. For me, 'hundslappadrífa' is a very normal word for a type of snowfall, but it's apparent that people are starting to use 'jólásnjór,' 'Christmas snow,' in its stead. That's a fine compound word, but I would rather we have both."

Many words that are not thought of as related to the weather originally had different meanings, though they might still be used. "One example of the 'lost' words that are somewhat related to weather is 'afæta' [basically 'moocher']," Hjördís explains. Afæta used to also refer to water that had eaten through ice and softened it—a very dangerous condition. "You'd never want to be called an afæta—likewise, you'd never go out on ice that's called afæta."

### Caring about dog-paw drifts and mooching ice

The richness of the Icelandic language allows for the variety of expression that is part of its appeal. Words like "creamy fair weather" and "dog-paw drifts" give Icelandic an unusual charm, as Hjördís emphatically agrees. "There's something powerful and charming about having good command of a language. With each word you add to your language, your language becomes bigger, more fluent. You can describe your feelings, your wants, more accurately," she says.

Therefore, on November 16, be sure you lament the derringur as it blows over the dalalæða, while you look forward to the hundslappadrífa that's sure to fall in December. It would be the worst kind of shame if people of the future couldn't enjoy dog-paw snow, and YOU can prevent that.

## Crazy Weather Words

**Dalalæða** (a grounded mist)  
*"A very romantic, misty word."*

**Bylsnæðingur** (a snowstorm)  
*"You can feel the cold, and you kind of want to crawl under a blanket as soon as you've said it."*

**Derringur** (a cold wind).  
*Also, an arrogant person.  
"It's weather with an attitude."*

**Amra** (a slow breeze)  
*"It doesn't have to be just a good breeze, just a breeze. It can be a little cold, but it's never a horrible one."*

**Blálogn** (very calm weather)  
*"Like blue skies, when the wind is very still, but not necessarily hot."*

**Rjómablíða**  
(literally "creamy fair weather")  
*"It's one of the best weather words. It's warm, it's nice; you're sunbathing. It's when you would sit outside and eat cream."*

**Hundslappadrífa**  
(literally "dog-paw drift")  
*"It means very large snowflakes, very soft."*

The Jónas Hallgrímsson prize will be awarded on November 16 at the Mosfellsbær library at 16:00—all are welcome. There will be poetry readings, songs, and an address by the Minister of Education, Illugi Gunnarsson. Also in the area, Hundur í óskilum will play a free show at Gljúfrasteinn, the Halldór Laxness Museum, at 17:00.



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# “But Were You Not Amazed?” 'The Summerland' by Guðmundur Kristinsson

By Grayson Del Faro

When I was handed 'The Summerland: The Deceased Describe Their Passing and Reunion in The Other World' to review, I thought it was a joke (hahaha, give the new guy this ancient book to review, hahaha). The cover design looks like it came straight from the '80s: a painting of a First Nations person in a war bonnet, poorly superimposed over a fluorescent rendering of a boat sailing through an open door. Two words in the subtitle were left randomly uncapitalised.

The book was still shrink-wrapped and I wondered how long it had been sitting around the office. I was startled to discover it had first been printed in 2010 and reprinted subsequently; the English translation was released in July 2014. Perhaps I'd fallen into that cliché: books and their covers. So I checked my attitude and read it.

## The bad news

'The Summerland' appears to be without any kind of structure, meandering aimlessly through multiple subjects and approaches. Author Guðmundur Kristinsson alternates between the first and third person in reference to himself, and random words and passages are bolded throughout. He describes the life of one particular English medium, Horace S. Hambling, in the first 50 pages, before launching into a stream of vignettes on séances and spirits as reported by various mediums. These

include reports on the afterlife from the author's dead son and British soldiers who occupied Iceland during World War II, among many others. The book concludes with a long, episodic narrative description of passing through The Summerland itself as told by the spirit of Einar Loftsson; it comes off as quite similar to John Bunyan's parable 'The Pilgrim's Progress.'

Guðmundur has written books on both Spiritualism (the belief and practice of communicating with spirits) and Icelandic history, and both passions are clear throughout the book. His ability to report history works better in his favour, however. The strongest section of the book is that detailing the history of the British occupation of Iceland, interspersed with reports from beyond by its now passed airmen. The historical passages read lightly and clearly.

His prose is clipped and frank, lending ease to the reader here. At times this style is endearing in its frankness, especially when detailing otherwise wildly farfetched claims such as levitation, transfiguration, and conjuring, but more often falls completely flat. Between the allegations and the style, entire paragraphs are dead in the water from the first bland sentence: "Although none of Abraham Lincoln's biographies state that he was a Spiritualist, it was well-known in his time. His mother was a physic."

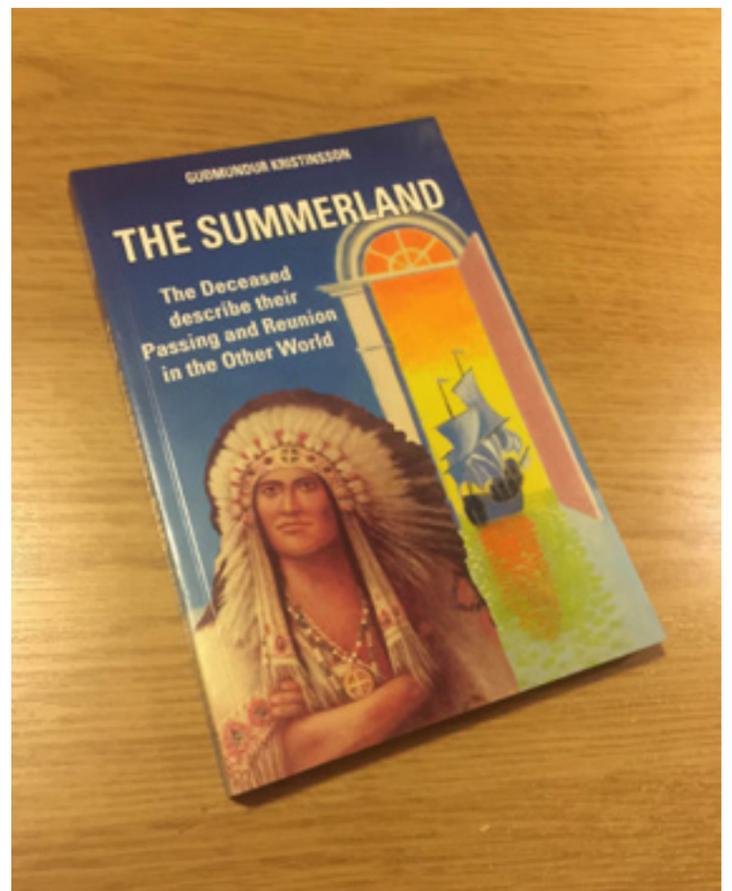
## Serving you Joan of Arc realness

I must admit here that I am not the staunchest of realists; I have quite

esoteric leanings. I am down with Tarot readings, aura colours, Numerology, vibes, and the like. So I don't say this lightly. The book is clearly aimed only at those acquainted with and devoted to Spiritualism, making no concessions to any noobs. One is expected to know the difference between healing and trance séances, ether and ectoplasm, a medium's spirit guide and their special guardian "doorkeeper."

A few scenes stand out. Guðmundur has a séance with the spirit of Abraham Lincoln, who was convinced to abolish slavery by a medium telling him of the future in the voice of a male spirit. A blind British woman is possessed by the spirit of Leonardo da Vinci to paint a portrait of Horace's favourite spirit guide, a wildly inaccurate stereotype of a Sioux native named Moon Trail; it is then declared "a live-long study [of] da Vinci" by "specialists at the Tate Gallery in London." (I haven't even mentioned the English-speaking Ming Dynasty "Chinaman" guide.)

An Icelandic medium visits France and has a vision of Joan of Arc: "Sitting behind her was a man, a 'dead' man, who guided and protected her... She obeyed all his commands. With his help she was able to achieve a great deal... which otherwise would have seemed an impossible task for such a young girl." Some sections read like fantastically revisionist historical fiction. At one point, a spirit is asked "But were you not amazed?" about passing on; he was. I could ask myself the same of the book. Convinced? Not quite. But



amazed? Absolutely.

## The good news

Spoiler alert. The good news is that the spirit world sounds quite pleasant. The spirit of the author's deceased son visits him years later to talk about his spirit girlfriend from Akureyri and their adopted spirit child. Death is described as quite similar to depictions from cartoons: a younger, prettier spirit replica of yourself emerges from the head of your earthly body until your ethereal umbilical cord detaches. You awake in a spirit hospital attended by spirit doctors and nurses, where you get dressed and go move into your spirit life. In Summerland, there are nice jobs,

houses, weather, pets, and even tourist cruises to spirit islands, all memories of happiness and fulfilment brought over from life.

For those interested in Spiritualism and undaunted by a hearty peppering of typos and self-published design and editing flaws, you've found your encyclopaedia. The book is an undeniable glut of information on the specifics of Spiritualism. But sceptics and fence-sitters are unlikely to be convinced and would be better advised to start their New Age edification with something a little more accessible. Say Eckhart Tolle, or even Patrick Swayze and Demi Moore's 1990 film 'Ghost,' for example.

## So, I'm In Iceland And I Want To Be A Writer—Where Do I Start?

To celebrate the annual BOOKFLOOD SEASON, it's a Very Special 'So What's This!'

By Kári Tulinius

To get the most obvious question out of the way, you need to write. You can write in any language in the world, but if you want to take part in Icelandic literary society, it helps to have translations into Icelandic, or at least English. What type of literature you write is not as important as it perhaps was in the last few decades of the last century, when realist fiction and poetry were completely dominant. In recent years, writers have debuted with anything from excerpts from their teenage diaries to science fiction novels. The important part is to write and then share your writing in some way.

## I have written! Where do I share my writing?

There are many places. Online you can make a blog, post on Facebook or send something to a webzine. In the physical world it is a bit trickier. There are two literary magazines you can send Icelandic language poetry, essays and fiction to, the quarterly *Tímarit Máls og menningar* and the biannual *Stína*. But the most fun way to share your writing is to take part in a reading. If none of your friends are organizing a reading, do it yourself and ask other writers to join you. Plenty of bars and cafés in Reykjavík are more than happy to host events like that.

**But I'm a recluse who's afraid of public speaking and have neither friends nor an internet connection...** In which case you better print out your

writing and mail it to a publisher. Due to the tininess of Icelandic society, there are no agents. Writers generally deal with their publishers themselves. After you have sent your manuscript to a publisher you will generally have to wait a few months for an answer. If you get rejected, send your manuscript somewhere else and start writing a new one. If you do get accepted, then a long process of editing and rewriting will take place, and at the end of it you will have a book published. There are some publishers that are open to publishing books in languages other than Icelandic, but most do not.

## I want my book out now! The world can't wait for my genius!

If you are fine with an ebook, then you can publish your manuscript online. Otherwise you take your manuscript to a printing press and pay them to print it. You will probably have to hire a designer to take care of the layout and cover, if you do not know how to do those things yourself. The same goes for proofreading and editing. This will all cost a considerable sum of money. But in the end you will have a book, which you can sell in bookstores and deposit to the National Library. And generally, if it is a good book, Icelanders do not look down on writers who self-publish. In fact, Gyrðir Elíasson, Sjón and Einar Már Guðmundsson—the last three Icelandic writers to have won the Nordic Council Literature Prize (the biggest prize Icelandic-language books can receive)—all started out by self-publishing. So if you have no patience for regular publishing, go for it.

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Words Rebecca Conway  
& Alexander de Ridder

Photo Gabrielle Motola

# Winter diaries #1

Winter is kind of scary, especially on this ungodly windy, hella random rock in the middle of the ocean. And it's even scarier when the sun all but vanishes from the heavens above. So after hearing and sharing horror stories about three-hour days, blizzards and seasonal depression, we (two interns fond of co-writing things and referring to ourselves in the third person) are all-out terrified of the coming months.

## Who are we?

Allow us to introduce ourselves. Becky has one terrible, awful, soul-stifling Icelandic winter under her belt. You'd think this would be good experience and all that, except sometimes when she thinks of last year's November-March, she can only remember begging any and all deities for just, like, a minute of sunlight.

Alex is spending his first winter north of ye ole lands of Nether. He's also nervous, maybe even more so because Becky will often sputter horror stories about Icelandic winter, completely unprompted. But he has Icelandic blood in him and a great

er strength of will, so he might be fine. He'll be fine... Probably.

In preparation for this dalliance with weather god and planetary overlord alike, we sat down with Erla Björnsdóttir, a psychologist and sleep expert, as well as the CEO of Betri svefn and vice president of the Icelandic Sleep Research Society. Since she knows a thing or two about Seasonal Affective Disorder, she helped us hammer down the facts and fallacies of SAD. During our talk with Erla, we learned many things, which we've summarized in the section below. All quotes are from Erla.

## FAQs about SAD / the SAD truth

### What is Seasonal Affective Disorder?

"It is the form of depression that gets worse when the days start to get shorter. It's bound with the season. That's the distinctive factor."

### What are the symptoms?

"You sleep a lot and you eat a lot. And you eat a lot of carbohydrate-heavy foods."

### Is it a clinical condition?

"Yes. You have to be pretty affected to have the clinical diagnosis of Seasonal Affective Disorder, that's when it's having some negative impact on your life other than just a lack of energy that many of us feel during these dark months in Iceland."

### Who should I contact if I'm feeling the affects of SAD?

"The GP is often a good start because he knows you, he knows your history. He can then refer you to experts who are working with this."

### When should I seek help?

"I think if you are at the point where you think, 'I should seek help,' then you should. You never go to a psychologist for too little reason. If you are there, there is a reason."

### What treatments are used to help with the symptoms of SAD?

"We know that the sunlight is the best cure for this kind of depression. So we have these artificial sunlight lamps that we can use, and sometimes that's enough.

But sometimes it's more severe, and you need medication or some behavioral therapy to go along with it."

### What does SAD have to do with sleep?

"Many of my patients who suffer from insomnia also have SAD. I often see there's a high peak during the dark months at my [sleep] clinic."

## The serious side

During the interview, we also discovered that larger-scale, politically debated changes could help the battle with SAD. Erla is the vice president of the Icelandic Sleep Research Society, and one of the main objectives of the society has been to change Iceland's time zone to observe daylight savings time.

She thinks this change could come with important benefits: "If we were on the right time zone, we would have, for example, six weeks more of bright mornings. And it's the morning brightness that really sets our internal clock... it's most important for us to get brightness in the

mornings." Erla even linked the effects of time zone and daytime darkness with high school dropout rates, noting that she sees many smart young boys in her sleep clinic in the winter. Many young men end up dropping out of school because of trouble getting up in the morning.

Coming away from our meeting with Erla, we learned that SAD is a serious thing. It's funny because its acronym spells the name of a common emotion, but it's not funny because it's something that really affects people's lives. As you go about the darkened days, please keep a sharp mind and a sharp eye out for the symptoms of SAD. Though our advice may seem silly at times, we are taking this disorder seriously. And we admire all comrades out there doing the same.

Stay tuned for our future accounts of winter struggles. We'll be keeping track of the winter blues and giving you everything you need to make it through this semi-endless night.



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# The Secret's Out

In Flúðir, a repurposed 124-year-old swimming spot has become a local success story

Words John Rogers

Photos Art Bicnick



Flúðir is a sleepy village of around 400 people, just over an hour's drive from Reykjavík. After turning off the well-beaten path of the southbound Route 1 at the town of Selfoss, it's a 45km inland drive through some some surprisingly verdant farmland, with bales of hay lying bagged for collection and tractors chugging through the fields. The road runs alongside broad, gleaming rivers and lakes, and occasional tiny hamlets, with the high peak of the Eyjafjallajökull glacier looming majestically in the background.

The village first becomes visible by the plumes of steam rising from its multitudinous geothermal hotspots, then from the yellow glow of the greenhouses that can produce vegetables year-round due to this advantageous heat source. It's a low-key, quiet, spread-out kind of place, with plenty of space between the industrial-looking

plots and peaceful residential streets, a gas station, a modern Icelandair hotel, and an unexpected Ethiopian food joint, all surrounded by distant, picturesque, craggy mountains.

Tucked away down a humble dirt track by the river Mjóitangi, which flows through the town centre, lies a relatively new and increasingly famous attraction. Known to locals as Gamla Laugin ("The Old Pool"), it was re-branded as "The Secret Lagoon" two summers ago by a local called Björn "Bjössí" Kjartansson, who renovated the antique swimming place and re-opened it for business in 2014.

### Getting lucky

Bjössí is a burly and practical man of few words, who now spends his time maintaining the pool and its facilities, along with greeting guests all year-

round. "I'm from around here," he says, sitting in the lagoon's lobby area. "My parents live just 200 metres from the pool. I bought this land in 2006, and had the idea to open the old pool again."

Bjössí had been away for a while, working as a mechanic in Greenland, before he embarked on this new venture. "I'd been saving up money," he says. "My uncle owned the land, then. It was very lucky—I just had the money right when he was selling. This building we're in now was a greenhouse back then—I renovated it into these changing rooms and lobby."

After bathers change and descend the metal stairs from the deck into the pool, the ground beneath their feet is unpaved and pebble-strewn as the hot water closes around their shoulders. There are various boulders lurking just under the surface that can be used to lounge around on. The walls of the pool

are built from rough stone, and a crumbling shed sits abandoned on one shore, its two empty doorways gaping like sad eyes. Despite the renovation, it still feels slightly wild, particularly as we visit before the doors have opened for the day.

### Attainable dreams

This rugged charm gives the Secret Lagoon a similar feel to some of Iceland's unmarked natural hotpots, while offering visitor-friendly boons like easy access and changing facilities. And there's some history there, too. "It was first used in 1891," explains Bjössí, "right until 1937. But then nobody used it for 67 years. It was unused, but always full of warm water, for all those years."

The water trickles in from a hot spring, which can be viewed by walking around a new path. There's a small gey-

ser that erupts every ten minutes, and some bubbling cauldrons of hot water. Steam rises over the river all over this area of Flúðir. I wonder if the lagoon, which has become a popular must-see fixture on many visitors' itineraries, has brought some fresh air to this small, tucked away village.

"It's been building up," says Bjössí. "It was not so busy the first summer, but there were many more people this summer." And was there a tipping point, where he knew it was going well? "Last autumn, after the summer, I thought: 'This is going to be big,'" he replies. "It's been my main job running the place since we opened. I've met people from all around the world. Mostly people from Europe—Germany, France, The Netherlands—and the US and Canada. But we've had people from Africa, and Asian people—a lot of Chinese and Japanese visitors."



Distance from Reykjavík  
Around 97 km



“That’s a funny thing to see. All these people just floating around. Those groups are regular now — they listen to Sigur Rós music, make boiled eggs in the hot spring, and watch for the northern lights.”

#### Onwards and upwards

Bjössi has another employee who helps him to run the pool—a Polish worker named Aga. “It’s just two of us working here,” Aga says. “It gets very, very busy. And there’s so much to be done—we need bigger changing rooms. We don’t sell souvenirs or anything like that, and we’re proud of that. We only charge for entry for the pool—we want to keep it as uncommercial as possible, just about the swimming.”

They’ve also found partners in other new travel businesses. Breathe Iceland is a young company running day-long excursions in which people do yoga classes in the Icelandic nature, including Gamla Laugin, and there have also been groups who arrive with swimwear kits that allow them to float freely in the water. “That’s a funny thing to see,”

says Bjössi. “All these people just floating around. Those groups are regular now—they listen to Sigur Rós music, make boiled eggs in the hot spring, and watch for the northern lights.”

Bjössi’s take on Iceland’s tourist influx is, understandably, a positive one. “I think Icelanders are happy with it,” he says. “It’s good for the economy.” He pauses for a long time, suddenly red in the face and looking like he’d rather be doing anything else other than being interviewed. “I don’t really have much to say!” he smiles. “I don’t talk much.”

With his Secret Lagoon project still growing rapidly in popularity, something tells me this reticent but resourceful Icelander will be just fine.

“When it comes to sightseeing in Iceland, I’m your girl. I’ve fanny-packed, camera-bagged and way-too-big-rucksacked with the most over-prepared of tourists, and I’m far from done.”

## Driving The Ring Road In Two Days: Speed-Dating An Old Friend

Words Rebecca Conway

In a direct challenge to most internet commentators, two friends and I decided to spend two days circling the island in a grey rental car. While certainly not “preferable” to taking one’s time, driving Iceland’s storied Route 1—the ring road—in thirty-eight hours is by no means “pure folly.” Maintaining such a pace certainly results in many lost opportunities to explore alluring sites—at the same time it provides a distinct sense of the raw, sometimes infuriating beauty (here’s looking at you, fog) the island reveals when taken in as a whole.

#### For goodness’ sake

When it comes to sightseeing in Iceland, I’m your girl. I’ve fanny-packed, camera-bagged and way-too-big-rucksacked with the most over-prepared of tourists, and I’m far from done. Thus, when a friend needed a ride to Seyðisfjörður, I figured that since I had yet to see the east, my scant free time would be best spent driving him there. We called it the “Fury Road Trip.”

Our driver barely blinked as we drove north from the city, winding around the near-empty roads. The mountains were half-swathed in snow, the countryside horses propped so picturesquely in front of them you’d think some nearby farmer was offer-

ing equine modeling classes. The light alternated between a faded yellow and green-blue, sometimes cradling both colors. It was beautiful, while it lasted.

#### Pure folly

Nice as it was, my arm reached longingly to the window as we sped past old friends like Goðafoss, Fjaðrárgljúfur and Reynisfjara. I desperately craved pulling over to reconnect with these fine entities, but we had so little time. To say nothing of the rain-fog. Oh, the rain-fog.

In general, visibility was low. For most of the trip, we could barely see ten feet ahead. We bounced uncomfortably over the pot-holed roads. It rained intermittently until darkness set in, and the fog returned in surges, even when the dark had completely taken over (this happened by 7pm, mind you). We missed a lot of things: historic sites, landscapes and small coffee shops. I drank too much RedBull, and saw the inside of too many N1s.

#### The ring road in two days

Yet, despite all that rainy, foggy darkness, I saw things I never thought I’d see. Iceland revealed itself to us from the angles that tourists lose when they seek nightly refuge in their hotels. Did you know that a spotlight shines on Foss á Síðu at night? That Akureyri looks so much bigger when seen from a nearby mountainside in

the evening, once the locals have lit up their porch lights? That I can, in fact, drive straight through a cloud on a curvy gravel road for forty-five minutes, without any accidents?

It’s rare to see the varied landscapes of Iceland in rapid-fire succession. I liked tracing the island all at once, like a ribbon. I liked comparing western Iceland with northeastern Iceland, since we had driven by both at the same time of day. I know Mývatn doesn’t usually look much like the South Coast. But it does, in dense dark and even denser fog.

As I watched a German tourist use his jeep’s high beams to illuminate a night-enshrouded Jökulsárlón, I thought about how different the shards of glacier would look tomorrow. How different they had looked when I visited them earlier this year.

Iceland is a landscape that changes. Nothing accentuates this fact more than seeing so much of it change in so little time.

It was terrifying and comforting, and I felt it all at once.

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# Hrafnkels Saga Freysgoða Recap: Season premiere: The one where that goddamn horse ruins everything

Words Grayson Del Faro

Photo Still from Hrafninn Flýgur

This Saga begins the same way Iceland did, and the same way many Sagas do: some Norwegian guy (this one is named Hallfreður) settles his family in Iceland to farm. Welcome to Iceland, Hallfreður. All this would normally be fine, but it becomes complicated as his son Hrafnkell turns out to be a total asshole.

When Hrafnkell grows up, he starts his own farm in the same valley. He begins to obsess creepily over the god Freyr. You might call it “faith,” but I think of it more like Hrafnkell is Eminem circa 2009 and Freyr is Mariah Carey, sitting up there in Ásgarður like, “lol why r u so obsessed with me?” This is an unfair analogy because Mariah Carey is the worst, but you get the idea. He builds a temple to Freyr, dedicates half of everything he owns to the god, has sacrifices in his honor, and bargains off parts of his land to new settlers on the condition that he be their chieftain and priestly overlord.

He has a favorite horse, whose name is naturally Freyfaxi, which means “Freyr’s black-maned stallion.” He has sworn to kill anyone who ever rides the horse. Again, I picture Freyr: “chill out, dude, I don’t even care about ur dumb horse.” But Hrafnkell is totally not kidding.

Well known as a bully, he kills many men in duels but categorically refuses to pay compensation for the killings, something that was considered super rude at the time. In Medieval Northern Europe, you could generally kill anyone

as long as you gave their family something in return. The typical response to, “Sorry I killed your husband; have this sheep instead,” was, “Cool, no problem.” And things, strangely, just moved right on.

## Blood and milk and other bodily fluids

Not for Þorbjörn, though. He tells his son, “Einar, all my other kids totally suck and although I obviously love you the most, if you keep living here we’ll all starve to death because we’re poor. So GTFO and get a job.” Einar, his son, finds work as a shepherd on Hrafnkell’s farm and is immediately warned about the deathly implications of riding the horse.

He soon loses many of the sheep and requires a horse to find them. To no one’s surprise, every mare runs away when he approaches it, while Freyfaxi is basically like, “Hey, man. I’m just standing here, chillin’. You could totally ride me if you want.” (The horse obviously doesn’t talk, but you get the picture. Some scholars interpret the ominous actions of the horse as the will of Freyr, so he’s probably just fucking with

all these idiots and LOLing up a storm in Ásgarður.) So Einar rides the horse like dipshit with a death-wish and the wish comes true. To Hrafnkell’s credit, he at least has the decency to tell Einar how sad he is about the killing before he sticks an axe in Einar’s face.

Like most humans today, but unlike many characters in the Sagas, Þorbjörn feels some feels. Even if he doesn’t cry. He’s so upset about the killing of his son that he goes to Hrafnkell and demands compensation. Hrafnkell is so regretful about that whole axe-in-face business that he offers to give Þorbjörn milk for all eternity, and to generally make sure his poor family doesn’t ever starve to death, and allow Þorbjörn to live in Hrafnkell’s house when he’s too old to farm. Despite being an extremely generous compensation (especially considering Hrafnkell’s cheap ass), Þorbjörn still has a lot of feels and insists milk is not fair payment for blood. Hrafnkell politely tells him to fuck off.

## Law and order and torture and stuff

Seeking assistance to prosecute Hrafnkell in court, Þorbjörn goes to his brother, who refuses to help because he believes Hrafnkell is too powerful. His son Sámur, however, reluctantly agrees to help and sets off a chain of class dynamics and legal events that are all super boring until someone gets tortured, so I’ll fast-forward to that. All you need to know is that some rando named Þorkell shows up from the Westfjords and uses his powerful fam-

ily connections to help win the case against Hrafnkell, thereby humiliating him. There was much rejoicing.

Then there was some torture. Sámur, Þorkell, and others storm Hrafnkell’s house early in the morning, taking

**“Who is the truly the Eminem and who is truly the Mariah Carey of this situation remains a lively matter of scholarly debate to this day.”**

him and all able-bodied men outside. They cut holes through each of their heels and then string them all up like some kind of giant, fucked-up torture-necklace. Although he won the right to kill the shit out of Hrafnkell (and all his bros advise to do so or regret it), Sámur lets Hrafnkell choose between death and life in humiliation. He chooses humiliation. Sámur keeps all of Hrafnkell’s stuff, including his chieftaincy and his valley and his special fancy horse, which his bros promptly shove off a cliff. And guess what, Freyr totally doesn’t even care.

## The Return Of The Asshole

Hrafnkell moves away and becomes less of an asshole, as well as finally giving up on Freyr. (He’s just not that into you, dude!) He eventually gets rich and gains another chieftaincy because people hate him way less. Maybe they even like him. But he’s still an asshole. No one ever mentions his possible inability to walk due to the loss of his Achilles tendon, which seems kind of important to the whole farming thing. But whatever.

Six years later, Sámur’s brother is passing by Hrafnkell’s valley and Hrafnkell, apparently still enough of an asshole for revenge, does the thing with the axe again. Then he takes Sámur by surprise, but with like no torture at all, and offers him the same choice Sámur offered Hrafnkell before. Sámur also chooses humiliation. He then goes his bros for help, but they serve him a brimming milk-jug of “I told u so, bro.” And he lives modestly ever after as Hrafnkell’s bitch. Who is the truly the Eminem and who is truly the Mariah Carey of this situation remains a lively matter of scholarly debate to this day.

Moral of the story: if someone says they’ll literally kill you if you ride the horse, don’t ride the fucking horse. Also, in general, don’t be an asshole.

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P.8



"Looking good does not necessitate doing good. The number of refugees to receive protection in Iceland this year remains between fifty and one hundred persons."

The internationally-reported news that 10,000 Icelanders would gladly welcome Syrian refugees into their homes may have been slightly optimistic as the government drags its feet.

P.16



"I don't want to learn what isn't possible, because as soon as I know about limitations, I start to respect them. It's better to pretend you don't know the limitations, so you can break them."

The Pirate Party's "do, make, fix, break" hacker approach to politics is resonating with voters—but, why?

P.24



"Many beautiful weather words have disappeared. If nobody is using them, they are essentially dead."

Do you know your Derringur (cold wind) from your Amra (slow breeze)? And that Icelanders have a day for celebrating their language, that's almost upon us?

INFO P.16



"I get inspiration from the weather, the time of year, where I am in the circle of the year. It's been a year since I started writing it... it's like completing a circle. That's the big concept I'm working on with this—the circling of everything."

Samaris, Pascal Pinon and GANGLY singer Jófríður Ákadóttir talks about her poetic new solo project.



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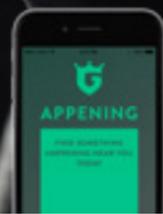
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### Nov 13 - Dec 3

How to use the listings: Venues are listed alphabetically by day. Events listed are all live performances, with troubadours and DJs specifically highlighted. For complete listings and detailed information on venues visit [listings.grapevine.is](http://listings.grapevine.is). Send your listings to: [listings@grapevine.is](mailto:listings@grapevine.is).

### Friday November 13

- Bar 11**  
23:30 Deffice
- Bar Ananas**  
22:00 DJ Pabbi
- Boston**  
22:00 DJ Herr Gott
- Dillon**  
22:00 Vopn / DJ Andrea
- English Bar**  
21:00 Troubadour Alexander / Ingi Valur & Trygvvi
- Frederiksen Ale House**  
22:00 DJ Eyfjörð
- Gamla Bíó**  
20:00 Mugison
- Gerðuberg Cultural Centre**  
12:15 Jazz At Noon: My Favourite Hits
- Harpa**  
20:00 The Barber of Seville   
21:00 Sólstafr
- Hitt Húsid**  
20:00 Everything For A Song: Erna Mist / Magnús Thorlacius / Oddur Örn / Gringlombian / Cease Tone
- Húrra**  
22:00 DJ Óli Dóri
- Kaffibarinn**  
22:00 DJ Simon FKNHNSM
- Mengi**  
21:00 Ljunggren, Rosenbaum, deWaal Trio
- Prikið**  
22:00 Auðunn vs. Logi Pedro
- Stofan**  
21:00 Nolo DJ Set

### ★ PICKER OF THE ISSUE ★

Curver



This issue's picker, **Curver Thoroddsen**, has been a fixture of Reykjavík's cultural scene since 1993, devoting his considerable talent to relentlessly pushing forward music and visual arts. Alongside his constant creative endeavours, Curver is a renowned music producer—AND he somehow finds time to teach fine art, sound-art and audio engineering, among other disciplines.

Curver attends lot of concerts and exhibits. He says he's especially drawn to artists that he's never seen before, or events that take place in well-curated venues like Mengi. Of course, he also ardently checks in on fellow artist friends to see what they're working on. An expert in the arts if there ever was one, you have full reason to heed Curver's event recommendations.

You can find the events our picker of the issue found to be interesting spread out over the music and art pages, marked with this ★ icon.



24  
November

**November Blues? Nah, November Rock!**  
Every Time I Die / Celestine / Mercy Buckets

### Húrra

Naustin (D3) | November 24 21:00 | Admission: 3,000 ISK

Can you feel the winter cold seep into your bones, clasp at your very soul as the days grow shorter? Are you all spooked about it? If so, quit it—**Húrra's** got you covered. They're hosting the meeting of three banging hXc punk acts to keep your blood pumpin'. Known for their unrelenting, savage live shows (and great debut/middling rest-of-catalogue) Americans **Every Time I Die** headline a night of ultra-cathartic heaviness that also features **Mercy Buckets**—and legendary Icelandic punks **Celestine** (they're back? That's AMAZING NEWS!!!). Expect a full house, with just enough room to headbang your way into an emergency chiropractor appointment the day after. **AJdR**

### HÚBERT NÓI JÓHANNESSON

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ÓLI G. JÓHANNESSON  
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Also works by:  
GEORG ÓSKAR  
HADDA FJÓLA REYKDAL  
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## CONCERTS & NIGHTLIFE

**Stúdentakjallarinn**  
22:00 Bangouraband 🎸🎸

### Saturday November 14

**Bar 11**  
22:30 Alchemia 🍷 / Hemúllin 🍷  
**Bar Ananas**  
22:00 DJ Davíð Roach ⚡  
**Boston**  
22:00 DJ Silja Glömmi vs. Byssukisi ⚡  
**Café Rosenberg**  
22:00 KK & Maggi 🎸  
**Dillon**  
22:00 Brot 🍷 / DJ Andrea ⚡🎸  
**English Bar**  
21:00 Troubadour Siggí Þorbergs 🎸 / Hjálmur & Dagur 🎸  
**Frederiksen Ale House**  
22:00 DJ Hrönn ⚡  
**Gamla Bíó**  
21:00 Nanook 🎸🎸  
**Gaukurinn**  
20:00 Fuzz Fest: Black Desert Sun 🍷 / ONI 🍷 / Churthouse Creepers 🍷 / Electric Space Orchestra 🍷 / O'Bannion 🍷 / Ashton Cut 🍷★  
**Hannesarholt**  
20:00 Og þá kom stríðið... 🎸  
**Harpa**  
15:00 St. Petersburg Festival Ballet: Swan Lake 🎭  
19:30 St. Petersburg Festival Ballet: Swan Lake 🎭  
**Húrra**  
22:00 DJ KGB Soundsystem ⚡★★★★  
**Kaffibarinn**  
22:00 DJ Margeir 🎸  
**Mengi**  
21:00 Hráefni & Bergþór Morthens 🎸  
**Paloma**  
00:00 RVK Soundsystem's Reggae Night 🎸🎸  
**Prikið**  
22:00 Sunsurá DJ Set ⚡  
**Stofan**  
21:00 DJ Dorrit 🎸

### Sunday November 15

**American Bar**  
22:00 Troubadour Siggí Þorbergs 🎸  
**English Bar**  
22:00 Troubadour Alexander 🎸  
**Gamla Bíó**  
20:00 Mugison 🎸★★★★  
**Gerðuberg Cultural Centre**  
13:15 Jazz At Noon: My Favourite Hits 🎸  
**Hamraborg**  
20:00 The Reykjavík Big Bang: Frank Sinatra 100 Yeats 🎸  
**Hannesarholt**  
16:00 Ljóðasöngur 🎸  
**Harpa**  
11:00 Icelandic Wind Bands 🎸  
15:00 St. Petersburg Festival Ballet: Swan Lake 🎭  
19:30 St. Petersburg Festival Ballet: Swan Lake 🎭  
**Hressó**  
21:00 Jazz Jam Session 🎸  
**Húrra**  
20:00 Maggasín 🎸  
**Kaffibarinn**  
22:00 Krystal Carma DJ Set ⚡🎸★  
**Langholtskirkja**  
18:30 Langholtskirkja Choir: Works By Knut Nystedt & Ola Gjeilo 🎭  
**Mengi**  
21:00 Panos From Komodo 🍷 / 3moonboys 🎸★

### Monday November 16

**American Bar**  
22:00 Troubadour Roland 🎸  
**English Bar**  
22:00 Troubadours Ingi Valur & Tryggvi 🎸  
**Húrra**  
21:00 Monday Night Jazz 🎸  
**Kaffibarinn**  
22:00 DJ De La Rosa ⚡★

### Tuesday November 17

**American Bar**  
22:00 Troubadour Ellert 🎸  
**Café Rosenberg**  
22:00 Skúli Mennski & Kyle Woolard 🎸  
**English Bar**  
22:00 Troubadours Arnar & Ingunn 🎸  
**Gaukurinn**  
21:00 Karaoke Night



**Kött Scratch Fever**  
Kött Grá Þjé / Forgotten Lores

### Húrra

Naustin (D3) | 🎧 20:00 | Admission: 1,000

Icelandic rapper **Kött Grá Þjé's** shows are just as good as his photos. And believe me, his photos are good (see above: he's the one wearing pearls). Slide fucking legendary old-skool hip-hop group **Forgotten Lores** into the line-up (their first show in what seems like forever—WE'VE MISSED U FL!) and you have a pretty noteworthy affair. Afterwards, the honourable DJs **Gísli Galdur** and **Benni B-Ruff** will take the stage, so you can dance away all the embarrassing stuff that happened over the course of the work week. But seriously, FL+KGP! WOW! This one's a no-brainer, and it will sell out, so get some tickets while you can. **RTC**  
*Photo by A.K.A*

**Harpa**  
19:30 Reykjavík City Band Autumn Concert 🎸  
**Húrra**  
22:00 DJ Sunna Ben 🎸  
**Kaffibarinn**  
22:00 DJ John BRNLV 🎸★  
**KEX Hostel**  
21:00 KexJazz 🎸  
**Mengi**  
21:00 Kvikyndi 🎸★  
**Prikið**  
22:00 Berndsen 🎸

### Wednesday November 18

**American Bar**  
22:00 Pub Quiz with Troubadour Hreimur 🎸  
**English Bar**  
22:00 Troubadours Ellert & Roland 🎸  
**Gaukurinn**  
21:00 CeaseTone 🎸 / Wendy Rule 🎸  
**Harpa**  
21:00 Múlinn Jazz Club: Leifur Gunnarsson 🎸  
**Kaffibarinn**  
22:00 DJ Árni Kocoon ⚡  
**Mengi**  
21:00 Gyða Valtýsdóttir & Josephine Foster 🎸★  
**Prikið**  
22:00 Vibes DJ Set ⚡  
**Salurinn**  
12:15 Noon Concert: Skært lúðrar hljóma 🎸  
**Stofan**  
21:00 Skúli Mennski 🎸  
**Stúdentakjallarinn**  
20:00 Bingo / Sacha Bernardson 🎸🎸

### Thursday November 19

**American Bar**  
22:00 Troubadour Matti 🎸  
**Bar Ananas**  
22:00 DJ Óli Dóri 🎸  
**Café Rosenberg**  
22:00 Sharon Robinson 🎸  
**Dillon**  
22:00 Nola 🎸  
**English Bar**  
22:00 Troubadours Hjálmar & Dagur 🎸  
**Gaukurinn**  
22:00 Mosi Musik 🎸 / Trúboðarnir 🎸  
**Hlemmur Square**  
21:00 Blöndal Trío 🎸  
**Húrra**  
22:00 DJ Ísar Logi ⚡★

**Kaffibarinn**  
22:00 DJ YAMAHO ⚡★  
**Prikið**  
22:00 DJ Hendrik P. Sig 🎸🎸  
**Stofan**  
21:00 Hráefni 🎸

### Friday November 20

**Bar 11**  
22:30 Nola 🎸  
**Bar Ananas**  
22:00 DJ Silja Glömmi ⚡  
**Boston**  
22:00 DJ Davíð Roach ⚡  
**Café Rosenberg**  
22:00 Glódis, Björn Thoroddsen, Dan Cassidy & co. 🎸  
**Dillon**  
22:00 The Restless 🎸 / While My City Burns 🎸 / DJ Andrea ⚡🎸  
**English Bar**  
21:00 Troubadour Andri P 🎸 / Ingi Valur & Tryggvi 🎸  
**Gamla Bíó**  
21:00 Stuðmenn 🎸🎸★★★★★  
**Gerðuberg Cultural Centre**  
12:15 Lunchtime Classics With Guitar And Piano 🎭  
**Húrra**  
22:00 DJ Óli Dóri ⚡  
**Kaffibarinn**  
22:00 DJ Gunni Ewok ⚡ / Andrés Nielsen ⚡★  
**Mengi**  
21:00 Leslie Ann Leytham 🎸★  
**Prikið**  
22:00 DJ Björn Valur vs. Egill Cali ⚡  
**Salurinn**  
20:30 Af fingrum fram: Laddi 🎸★  
**Stofan**  
21:00 DJ Myth ⚡

### Saturday November 21

**Bar Ananas**  
22:00 DJ Steindór Grétar ⚡★  
**Boston**  
22:00 DJ John BRNLV 🎸🎸★  
**Café Rosenberg**  
22:00 Belleville 🎸  
**Dillon**  
22:00 DJ Andrea ⚡🎸  
**English Bar**  
21:00 Troubadour Biggi 🎸 / Eiki & Steinni 🎸  
**Gaukurinn**  
22:00 VNM 🎸 / DJ Krug ⚡

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# MUSIC

## CONCERTS & NIGHTLIFE

**Kaffibarinn**  
22:00 DJ Kári vs. KGB Soundsystem ⚡

**Mengi**  
21:00 Eysteinn Pétursson 🎷

**Prikið**  
22:00 DJ Logi Pedro 🎧 ⚡ ⭐ ⭐

**Salurinn**  
20:00 Ágústa Sigrún Ágústsdóttir Album  
Release Concert 🎧

**Stofan**  
21:00 Krystal Carma DJ Set 🎧 ⚡ ⭐

### Sunday November 22

**American Bar**  
22:00 Troubadour Alexander 🎸

**Bar 11**  
22:30 Atómsbræður 🎸

**English Bar**  
22:00 Troubadour Siggí Þorbergs 🎸

**Gerðuberg Cultural Centre**  
13:15 Lunchtime Classics with Guitar and  
Piano 🎹

**Harpa**  
19:30 Chamber Music Society #3 🎹

**Hressó**  
21:00 Jazz Jam Session 🎷

**Kaffibarinn**  
22:00 DJ Vector ⚡ ⭐

**Kristskirkja**  
16:00 Caritas Advent Charity Concert 🎹

**Prikið**  
22:00 Lowercase Sunday 🎷 ⚡ ⭐

**Stofan**  
21:00 Sveimsunnudagur: DJ Dorrit &  
Bervit ⚡

### Monday November 23

**American Bar**  
22:00 Troubadour Ellert 🎸

**Café Rosenberg**  
21:00 Brynjur og Útlagar 🎸

**English Bar**  
22:00 Troubadour Ingi Valur & Tryggvi 🎸

**Húrra**  
21:00 Monday Night Jazz 🎷

**Kaffibarinn**  
22:00 DJ Pilsner 2.25% ⚡ ⭐

### Tuesday November 24

**American Bar**  
22:00 Troubadour Roland 🎸

**Café Rosenberg**  
21:00 Hemmi 🎸

**English Bar**  
22:00 Troubadour Arnar 🎸

**Gaukurinn**  
21:00 Open Jam Session

**Grafarvogskirkja**  
20:00 Reykjalundar Charity Concert 🎹

**Húrra**  
20:00 Every Time I Die 🎸 / Celestine 🎷 /  
Mercy Buckets 🎸 ⭐

**Kaffibarinn**  
22:00 DJ Óli Dóri ⚡

**KEX Hostel**  
21:00 KexJazz 🎷

**Prikið**  
22:00 DJ Volante & co. ⚡ ⭐

### Wednesday November 25

**American Bar**  
22:00 Pop Quiz with Troubadour  
Hreimur 🎸



### HOLY SHIT MUGISON'S BACK! <3 Mugison Concert

Gamla Bíó, Ingólfsstræti 2a (E4)

Nov 13 🎧 21:00 | Nov 15 🎧 20:00 | Admission: 2,500 ISK

There's no denying that **Mugison's** got a whole lot of boogie up his sleeve. But he almost never shares it these days! Since dropping his best-selling album 'Haglél' ("Hailstorm") in 2011, the Westfjords-inhabiting singer-songwriter hasn't played nearly enough shows in Iceland—and that's a great big bummer. That's why we're extra excited that he's coming to town to make amends. Yup, he's promised to show up at **Gamla Bíó**, armed with his box guitar, stomp-ready foot and, most likely, his classic flannel shirt/beard combo. In his song "The Pathetic Anthem," Mugison sings, "Every performer is a preacher." And he's right, at least when if by "every performer" he means himself and by "preacher" he means "person who always gives an amazing live show." Don't miss the rare chance to see this bluesy, growly and soulful performer take the pulpit. We know we won't. **RTC**

Photo by Hvalreki

**English Bar**  
22:00 Troubadour Biggi 🎸

**Frikirkjan**  
20:00 Guðrún Gunnars 🎹

**Harpa**  
20:00 Svanur Wind Orchestra 🎹

21:00 Múlinn Jazz Club: Björn  
Thoroddsen 🎷 ⭐

**Húrra**  
20:00 Pétur Ben & Snorri  
Helgason 🎸 ⚡ ⭐

**Kaffibarinn**  
22:00 DJ Ívar Pétur ⚡ ⭐

**Kex Hostel**  
22:00 Pola Rise 🎧

**Prikið**  
22:00 Hlýnun Jarðar DJ Set ⚡ ⭐ ⭐ ⭐

### Thursday November 26

**American Bar**  
22:00 Troubadour Hreimur 🎸

**Bar Ananas**  
22:00 DJ Styrmir Dansson 🎧

**Café Rosenberg**  
21:00 Ragnheiður Gröndal 🎸

**Dillon**  
22:00 Davið & Eyþór 🎸

**English Bar**  
22:00 Troubadours Eiki & Steinni 🎸

**Harpa**  
09:30 Iceland Symphony: Open  
Rehearsal 🎹 ⭐

19:30 Daniel & Debussey 🎹

**Hlemmur Square**  
21:00 Laser Life ⚡ ⭐ ⭐ ⭐ ⭐

**Húrra**  
20:00 Kiryama Family 🎸 /  
Vaginaboy 🎸 🎧 / Pola Rise ⚡ ⭐

**Kaffibarinn**  
22:00 DJ Davið & Hjalti 🎧

**Prikið**  
22:00 DJ Benni B-Ruff 🎧 🎧

**Stofan**  
21:00 Sólveig Matthildur Kristjáns-  
dóttir & Nicolas Kunysz ⚡ 🎷 ⭐

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### Friday November 27

- Bar 11**  
22:30 Shady 🍷
- Bar Ananas**  
22:00 DJ Atli Kanill ⚡
- Boston**  
22:00 DJ Styrmir Dansson ⚡
- Café Rosenberg**  
22:00 Dikta 🎧🎸
- Dillon**  
22:00 DJ Andrea ⚡🎧
- English Bar**  
21:00 Troubadour Aleander 🎸 / Eiki & Steinni 🎸
- Gaukurinn**  
22:00 We Made God 🎧🎸
- Háskólabíó**  
20:00 Fjallabæður 🎧🎸
- Húrra**  
22:00 DJ KGB Soundsystem ⚡★★★★
- Kaffibarinn**  
22:00 DJ Gísli Galdur ⚡★★★★
- National Gallery of Iceland**  
12:10 Concert With The Icelandic Flute Ensemble 🎷★
- Prikið**  
22:00 TY (Geimfarar) vs. King Kocoon ⚡
- Salurinn**  
22:00 Friðrik Ómar 🎸
- Stofan**  
21:00 Nolo DJ Set ⚡

### Saturday November 28

- Bar 11**  
22:30 Gímaldin 🍷
- Bar Ananas**  
22:00 DJ Dragstöppuskeifa ⚡★
- Boston**  
22:00 DJ Kári ⚡
- Café Rosenberg**  
22:00 Heltar Skelter Beatles Tribute Band 🎸🎸
- Dillon**  
22:00 DJ Andrea ⚡🎧
- English Bar**  
21:00 Troubadours Biggi & Ingunn 🎸 / Arnar 🎸
- Gamla Bíó**  
21:00 Stuðmenn 🎧🎷★★★★
- Grafarvogskirkja**  
20:00 'Ilmur af jólam' Concert With Hera Björk 🎷
- Hallgrímskirkja**  
12:00 Veni redemptor gentium – O Come, Redeemer Of The Earth 🎷
- Harpa**  
13:00 IMMERSION 🎷
- Húrra**  
21:00 Kött Grá Þjé 🍷 / Forgotten Lores 🍷 / DJ Gísli Galdur & Benni B-Ruff ⚡★★★★
- Kaffibarinn**  
22:00 DJ Maggi Lego ⚡
- Mengi**  
21:00 Jóhann Gunnarsson Album Release Concert 🎧🎸
- Prikið**  
22:00 Young Nazareth vs. Egill Spegill ⚡
- Stofan**  
21:00 DJ Logi Leó ⚡★★★

### Sunday November 29

- American Bar**  
22:00 Troubadour Siggí Þorbergs 🎸
- Aurora Reykjavík**  
16:00 Margrét Arnardóttir 🎷
- English Bar**  
22:00 Troubadours Biggi & Ingunn 🎸
- Hressó**  
21:00 Jazz Jam Session 🎸
- Kaffibarinn**  
22:00 Krystal Carma DJ Set ⚡🍷★

### Monday November 30

- Café Rosenberg**  
21:00 Mandolin 🎸
- English Bar**  
22:00 Troubadours Ingi Valur & Tryggvi 🎸
- Húrra**  
21:00 Monday Night Jazz 🎷

### Tuesday December 1

- Café Rosenberg**  
21:00 Halli Reynis 🎸
- English Bar**  
22:00 Troubadours Arnar & Ingunn 🎸
- Gaukurinn**  
21:00 Karaoke Night



**2**  
December

**SIN FANG BANGS TIN DRUM, IT'S #WOW!!!**  
The Tin Drum: Sin Fang

#### Harpa

Austurbakki 2 (C4) | 🕒 20:00 | Admission: 3,500 ISK

Everybody loves everything **Sindri Már Sigfússon** does. **Seabear, Gangly, Sin Fang**, etc.—if Sindri's involved, everyone's gonna love it. Unusually enough, the Icelandic answer to RZA's popularity is not the result of nefarious nepotism or shady back-alley deals—it's because he continues to make some consistently amazing music (he also has an extensive collection of eclectic fake beards, which always helps). And guess what: Sindri's main project, Sin Fang, is playing the next edition of the amazing **Tin Drum** concert series at Harpa. What good news! Word on the street is that the band will be joined by several guest instrumentalists, performing a mix of old favourites and new stuff. You should go get a ticket, because you know this will be good. **HSM**

Photo by Hvalreki



**Ghostigital+Ping Pong Bat=Art**  
'Musings of Two Towers'

#### Listamenn Gallerí

Skúlagata 32 (E7) | Runs until December 7 | Admission: Free!

For years, visual artists-slash-musicians **Einar Örn** and **Curver Thoroddsen** have operated the ghastly **Ghostigital**, Iceland's finest experimental aggro-electro duet. However, their collaboration has never extended into the field of visual art, even though they both make that kind of stuff all the time. Until now...

Yes, Curver and Einar Örn went and set up a collaborative visual art exhibit together, their first ever! And good news: the show's very much in the spirit of their musical projects, using mixed media to create a dialogue between two monoliths, two towers. The results bring to mind revered ancient figures—however, these ones are portrayed in modern ways, the artists employing audio and video to complement their playful blend of colours. **AJdR**

- Kaffibarinn**  
22:00 DJ De la Rosa ⚡★
- KEX Hostel**  
21:00 KexJazz 🎸

#### Wednesday December 2

- Café Rosenberg**  
21:00 Kristín Stefánsdóttir 🎸
- English Bar**  
22:00 Troubadours Hjálmar & Dagur 🎸
- Harpa**  
20:00 The Tin Drum: Sin Fang 🍷★★★★  
21:00 Múlinn Jazz Club: Tómas R. Trio 🎷★

- Kaffibarinn**  
22:00 DJ Atli Kanill ⚡

#### Thursday December 3

- Bar Ananas**  
22:00 DJ Styrmir Dansson ⚡
- Café Rosenberg**  
21:00 Gunnar Sturla & Basl 🎸
- Háteigskirkja**  
20:30 Páll Óskar & Monika 🎸
- Húrra**  
20:00 Night of the 808's #2 ⚡★
- Salurinn**  
20:30 Jólin jólin: Anna Mjöll & Svanhildur 🎷

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## Album Reviews

Re-visit!

# MONO LISA

Daveeth



'Mono Lisa'

[daveeth.bandcamp.com](http://daveeth.bandcamp.com)

A soundtrack to the video game you wish existed

Akureyri native Davíð Hólm Júlíusson, has released several EPs as Daveeth since 2004. The new album is a genre-defyingly eclectic collection of sounds and sequences, reflecting the five years and vastly different places throughout Iceland and China across which it was recorded.

As each song races in and out from frenetic, snare-heavy thumping to 16-bit silliness, much of the album is

not dance-friendly, with a few notable exceptions. This rapid pace provides a kind of narrative that is better simply sat-and-listened-to, almost like a soundtrack. It is at points both sophisticated in its instrumental complexity and endearing in its more amateurish drum machinations. It sounds like a soundtrack to a video game I want to play.

Overall 'Mono Lisa' is an appropriately vibrant and quirky debut

LP coming from a musician who "likes to use electronic devices to make toast but also music." If nothing else, it will certainly keep you playing it. Whether you've ever wondered what a symphony of tiny robots would sound like or you need a new record to put on when rescuing princesses, this is worth at least three listens. Whatever it lacks in cohesiveness, it pays back with a digital sword—and interest.

ADHD

'5'

[facebook.com/AdHd.is](https://facebook.com/AdHd.is)

Late-night jazz that surprises and entertains



The jazz quartet ADHD has a stellar track record for quality and consistency. Their latest release, '5', is no different, and like their other recordings, is conveniently labeled numerically for easy reference! The song structures are tight, consisting of almost minimal phrases and ideas, as opposed to extended solos and

improvisations. Some songs even end where one might expect a return to a chorus. No one player outshines another in ADHD, which is impressive as the musicians are all staples of the Icelandic music scene in their own rights.

The tenor sax in "Sveðjan" quietly starts the album and the atmosphere remains moody but calm for its duration.

The percussive backbone of the album is drummer Magnús Tryggvason Eliassen, who gives tracks like "Free Angelo" a loose tango pulse and "Jörg Theinelt" a silky, almost unnoticeable irregular five meter. The track "Flugzeug" gets a little grittier, but even then, the intensity only grows to a tolerable point before dissipating.

Coming up with new material might be effortless for these guys. After all, they've made five albums in a relatively short span of time, along with many solo ventures. On '5', there's enough ambience to settle you in for the evening, perhaps cosying up to a late-night cocktail. But there's also enough creative activity that it never lulls you to sleep—you're always looking forward to the next idea that's just around the corner. **👉 - NATHAN HALL**

Rythmatik

'Epilepsy EP'

[rythmatik.bandcamp.com](http://rythmatik.bandcamp.com)

Well-constructed indie-rock-indie



Let's be straight from the start on this one: it's not all indie-rock, quite often it's the other way around; "Brick Thief", the final track on this grower of an EP, provides more crunch than you'd anticipate from the Big Country-ish opener "What We Get". That first song showcases the band's propensity for the smooth guitar

lead line over a mix of jangly riffs and more grungy guitar sounds, with tales of urban living and kitchen-sink moments ready to tell the story.

There's a tinge of regretful energy to "Death Of The Party", which in the hands of another band could easily head down a pop-punk cul-de-sac but thankfully there's a little more to Rythmatik than

that. Whilst that noodly lead can sound a little dislocated from the rest of the song on occasion, there are enough ideas there to speak to a bright future.

The unison intro to "Sleepyhead" is further evidence that this is a band that understands the possibilities of dynamic interplay over a neo-dance beat. "Alabaster" sports harmonic moments and guitar arrangement that are delicately put together to leave the vocal prominent before the epic chorus kicks in, and the aforementioned "Brick Thief" brings it all together with a much more Muse-y sensibility. Plenty more to come, I reckon, from these chaps.

**👉 - JOE SHOOMAN**



# STRAUMUR

## The Definitive Statement From STRAUMUR Regarding The Recent Iceland Airwaves Festival

**Straumur**

⬇ Straumur radio show airs Mondays on X977 at 23:00

👉 [www.straum.is](http://www.straum.is)

**Words**  
Davíð Roach Gunnarsson & Óli Dóri

**Photo**  
Anna Domnick

With that hectic Iceland Airwaves week still simmering in our hearts, we feel obligated to bring you a list of the top acts we saw at the festival. Here they are, in no particular order.

**LA Priest**

This one-man funk assembly line rocked our guts out at his show at Gamla Bíó on Airwaves Thursday. Dressed in white silk pyjamas and sporting a matching guitar, he produced fractured beats, rubbery bass and sensual guitar licks that got us dancing like it was 1983, and we were at a party at Rick James's house.

**Ho99o9**

The hardest and most punk rock thing we saw this Airwaves was hip-hop duo Ho99o9. Sporting creepy facemasks, rapping over horror-flick beats, the two-some emitted more energy than a nuclear power plant—there was a riot going on at that Nasa stage.

**Weaves**

This Canadian future-pop band played a solid set Friday night at Gaukurinn to a full house of revellers. Their dirty guitar riffs mixed perfectly with tunefulness melodies from vocalist Jasmyn Burke.

**Ariel Pink**

Ariel Pink is a dedicated weirdo in the best possible sense, as was evident throughout his set at Silfurberg. He rambled all over the stage like a hip hobo while his awesome band perfectly performed his left-field, psychedelic pop.

**GKR**

Rapper Gaukur, GKR, owned Airwaves's first night. GKR has slowly been building a buzz with his sincere lyrics and kickass beats in the months preceding the festival, and his performance at Húrra felt like a triumphant victory lap. During his song "Morgunmatur" ("Breakfast") he even threw small packages of cereals to the pumped-up crowd.

**Good Moon Deer**

The visually weirdest set at Airwaves came in the form of local one-man band Good Moon Deer. His music can be classified as progressive electronica, somewhere right in the middle between hip hop and techno. For his Airwaves set at Harpa, he brought a ten-person dance troupe, utilizing stuff like a milk pitcher, a giant flag, and a traffic cone in the very out-there modern dance show he staged.

**Mourn**

Spanish teenage punkers Mourn (they're all aged 18 and under) rocked the house at Iðnó on Saturday night. They looked and sounded fearless, busting out one beautifully written punk anthem after the other.

**Andy Shauf**

At Kaldalón, early Saturday night, Canadian folk singer Andy Shauf, backed by

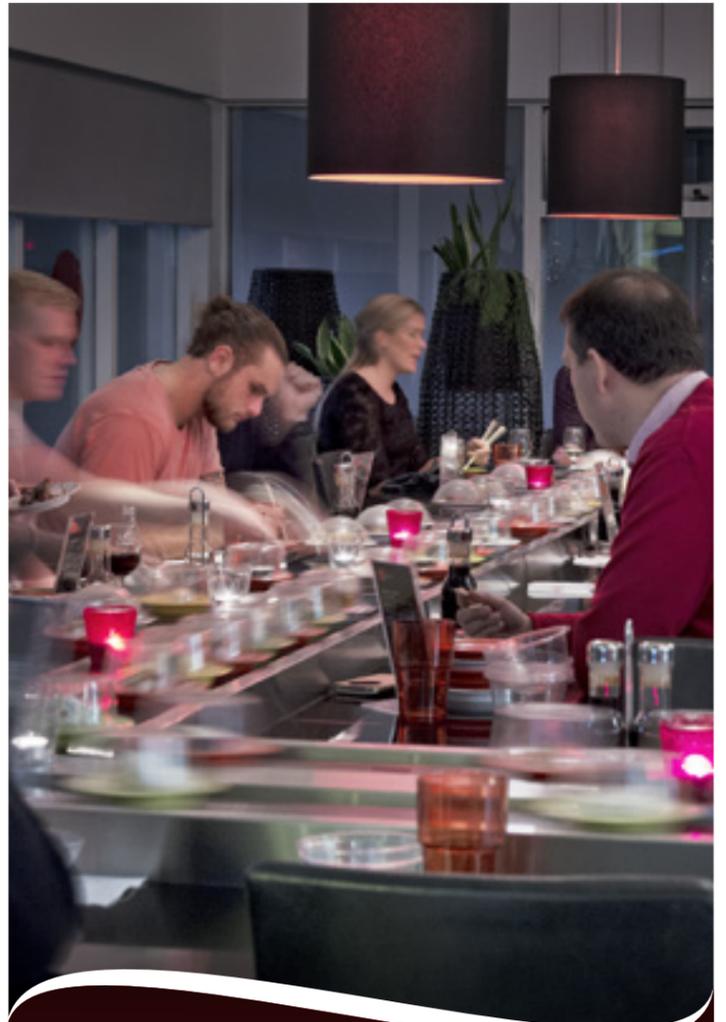
a band of skilled musicians, presented what could be called a perfect combination of Elliott Smith and Kurt Vile. The show's highlight, "Jenny Come Back To Me," made for a real goosebump moment.

**Hot Chip**

The nerdy British electro poppers played their forth show in Iceland, this time closing the festival that brought them here in the first place. And they have yet to disappoint. The Hot Chip machine was firing on all cylinders at the Vodafone Hall that Sunday night, the crowd jumping along in unison, exuding pure, uninterrupted joy.



Óli Dóri and Davíð Roach document the local music scene and help people discover new music at [www.straum.is](http://www.straum.is). It is associated with the radio show Straumur on X977, which airs every Monday evening at 23:00.



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[osushi.is](http://osushi.is)



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# Swimming Through Seasons:

## Jófríður Ákadóttir has been quietly working on a poetic new project

Words John Rogers

Photo Timotheé Lambrecq

Hidden deep amongst all the extravagant blowouts, grand orchestral performances, strobe-lit dance parties, face-meltingly blood-splattered metal shows and twitching, apoplectic broken-beat DJ sets of Airwaves, one small, humble, quiet show came close to topping them all.

The preternatural Jófríður Ákadóttir, well-known for her work with Samaris, GANGLY and Pascal Pinon, twice showcased her new, in-development solo project. At the second show, in front of a room of cross-legged festivalgoers on the floor of Hotel Alda's cavernous lobby, Jófríður's performance immediately silenced the burble of conversation into a stunned, pin-drop hush. Her delicate, minimal guitar notes and quietly impassioned singing style felt like having poetic secrets whispered into your ear. Augmented by some wonderful, sensitive drumming by virtuoso percussionist Magnús Trygvason Eliassen and some subtle synths and effects from a small ensemble that included her father, composer Áki Ásgeirsson, the songs blurred together in the best possible way, hinting at a considered, coherent, formi-

dable new body of work on the horizon.

I catch up with Jófríður the next day to talk it over, finding her eating soup at Bryggjan Brugghús after a Saturday afternoon off-venue performance with her moody electronic-pop trio GANGLY. She's in good form, chatting and joking with a group of friends, in the heart of the Airwaves mood. Having seen her play these songs with three completely different bands (including notable collaborators such as Mr. Silla and Úlfur Hansson), and under a few different names including "JFDR" and simply "Jófríður," I ask if all her recent performances are representations of the same project.

"Yeah, they are," she confirms. "I'm still working on the name. It's been JFDR, and it's been Jófríður... it's actually quite hard to name yourself! Your parents give you your name, and then

suddenly you have to rename yourself again! But hopefully I'll find it soon."

### Strange loops

As the set at Hotel Alda progressed, lyrical themes emerged, including change, loss, personal growth, repetition, and sweeping musings on the nature of... everything, really; like the purposeful marking out of a philosophy on life via a song cycle.

"They are very personal songs for me," Jófríður explains. "I know it's a cliché, but I put a lot of work into the lyrics. The lyrics are poetry—I look at it that way. I normally hate it when someone says things like that, that their work is more like composition than songwriting, and their lyrics are more like poetry, but whatever—it fits, here. I've always been able to express

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myself well with words, lyrics, poetry.”

The songs were written across the course of the last year, and contain a contemplative, intimate feeling that came from the solitary writing as the seasons changed. “I can time these songs across the seasons, like a diary,” says JÓFRÍÐUR. “But it also has that circularity of the seasons—it starts where it ends, and ends where it begins. There’s no conclusion, because I start with a conclusion, and loops back to it. So it’s about both the circle of the seasons, and the other circle, of life. That’s the big concept I’m working on with this—the circling of everything. You’ll hear when the record comes that the lyrics have a story—I get inspiration from the weather, and where I am in the circle of the seasons. I’ll talk about something that happened in the past, when it was summery, but put it in the context of coldness, and winter, and feeling cold inside. It’s been a year since I started writing it... it’s like completing a circle.”

### The most JÓFRÍÐUR

As remarkable as the songs themselves is the different ways JÓFRÍÐUR has presented them live, based on the rolling cast of her performance ensemble at any given time. “I had Maggi [Magnús Trygvason Eliassen] play the drums with me at Airwaves,” she says. “Before this project, I’ve never played with a live drummer before. I wanted to play with very creative, experienced drummers. I recorded some stuff with Greg Fox from Liturgy, the metal band—he does insane drone drums. I also recorded with Shahzad Ismaily—he’s just an insane drummer. And then Maggi is very high level—he’s incredible. I asked him to just jam on top of the loops, and told him a little about the structure, but we never got a really good rehearsal—so I’m putting a lot of trust in my players. And I give that trust freely, because I love them and I want their contribution. Maggi tears things apart and lifts things to another level. Then I have my friend Bergur who holds things together—he’s the glue. And then I’m the drive.”

But despite the freedom given to her collaborators, JÓFRÍÐUR is firmly

in the aesthetic driving seat, and as a result, this music is perhaps the “most JÓFRÍÐUR” of her collected output so far—there’s a tangible sense of quiet intelligence, perceptiveness and subtle sensitivity flowing through her new music. “I do enjoy being ‘in charge’ with this project,” she says. “I have so much open space for randomness. I’ve played once or twice a month since I started doing this, because I guess people heard about it and are excited to hear it. And I can play alone—or I can ask literally anyone to join me for a show.”

Better yet, these different interpretations of the songs will eventually be set down in the studio. “I want to make alternative version of the music—I don’t want to just do it the traditional way,” JÓFRÍÐUR explains. “And I’ll do that as I start releasing stuff. But it’s quite early to be talking about it—I have a new Pascal Pinon album on the way, and Samaris, and this GANGLY project. I hope that the solo work will gradually take over. But people are so concerned with getting this big quick breakthrough and getting this massive moment in ‘the now.’ But I want to do this project for many years to come, and so I will have to build it very slowly and steadily.”

This is also the first JÓFRÍÐUR project to be written solely in English, a decision she has very much enjoyed. “English is a beautiful language,” she smiles. “Icelandic is beautiful as well of course, but the vocabulary in English is crazy. I can pull, stretch, expand, say things in so many different, specific ways... I can really make a sentiment that could be quite bland come to life. For me that’s a wonderful platform to experiment. I just want to be honest in the lyrics. But also over-specific—I try to say real things, but also to make people find their own stories inside the lyrics. I try to make them memorable.”

And memorable they are. As we say our goodbyes and head back out into the city-wide party of another wonderful Airwaves festival, I hope it won’t be many more seasons before this music makes its way to our record collections, and perhaps makes the winter feel just that little bit warmer.

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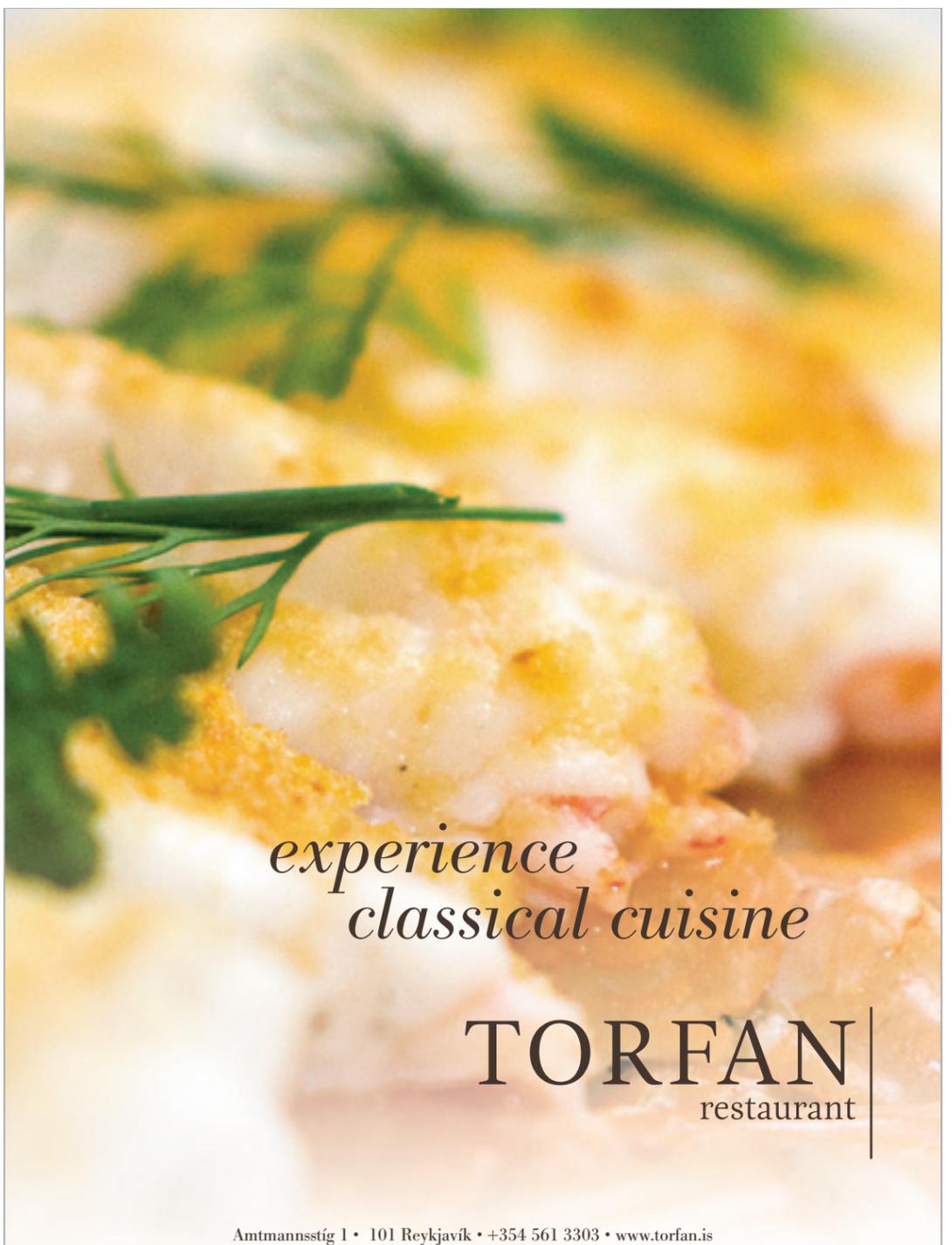
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**21  
October**

**Rocket Power**  
'Yearning for Space'

**Reykjavík Art Museum – Ásmundarsafn**  
Sigtún | Until February 7 | Admission: 1,400 ISK

This exhibition features works by sculptors **Ásmundur Sveinsson**, **Gerður Helgadóttir**, **Jón Gunnar Árnason**, and **Sigurjón Ólafsson**, and posits modernist art as a reflection of technological and scientific explorations during the Space Race of the 1950s and 60s. By placing these works under a historical scope, the exhibition probes the relationships between science fiction and art, as well as the various roles conceptions of the future play in shaping conceptions of space. This exhibit is not to miss if you're a citizen of the technological, artistic, or astronomical worlds—especially not to miss if you're a citizen of all three. **RTC**

**Nov 13 - Dec 3**

How to use the listings: Venues are listed alphabetically by day. For complete listings and detailed information on venues visit listings.grapevine.is. Send your listings to: [listings@grapevine.is](mailto:listings@grapevine.is)

**Opening**

**Anarkía**  
'Kyn(ja)verur frá Kolbermoo' by **Jóhanna V. Þórhallsdóttir**

In her second solo exhibit 'Kyn(ja)verur frá Kolbermoo' ("Sexual Beings from Kolbermoo"), Jóhanna V. Þórhallsdóttir shows paintings completed while in Germany of models that change colours like chameleons in the rainforest.

**Opens November 14**  
**Runs until December 6**

'Sykur og brauð' by **Aðalstein Eyþórsson**  
In 'Sykur og brauð' ("Sugar and bread"), Aðalstein Eyþórsson displays new paintings that touch on the abstractions and interactions of carbohydrates and fibers, exploring what it means to be "sweet."

**Opens November 14**  
**Runs until December 6**

**Borgarleikhúsið**  
**Icelandic Dance Company: 'And The Sky Turned To Crystals'** ★

The Icelandic Dance Company will be showing the conclusion of Sigga Soffía's Fireworks trilogy, 'And The Sky Turned To Crystals'. Sigga uses choreography and

light to ask questions on the essence of beauty, the way people experience it, and why people are so enthralled by it.

**Opens November 15, December 2 & December 5 at 20:00**

'Coordinated Movements' ★

This performance features numerous young dancers from the city's dance schools, as well as performers from the Icelandic Dance Company.

**Opens November 14 at 14:00**

**Ekkisens**  
'EPISODES +-' by **Síta Valrún** ★

Emerging artist Síta Valrún shows a series of video works concerning love affairs and self-sacrifice. The shots were taken between 2013 and 2015 in places such as Sweden and Mexico. Síta draws inspiration from poetry and other experiences

**Opens November 13**  
**Runs until November 19**

'A Year of Existential Doubt - MAN' by **Steinunn Gunnlaugsdóttir** ★★

In this solo exhibition, Steinunn Gunnlaugsdóttir deals with haunting doubts about whether or not to live. The exhibition explores the psyche's reaction to existential doubt, ultimately forcing the viewers to ask "Should one take her/his own life?" There is a special opening party on November 28 at 17:00.

**Opens November 28**  
**Runs until December 3**

**Gallerí Tukt (Hitt Húsið)**  
'Unglist's Art Marathon - Making A Leap For It' ★★★★★

The Unglist Art Marathon starts on November 14, and the materials can

be picked up at Hitt Húsið starting at 15:00. There will be an exhibition of the material produced for the art marathon on November 17, and the awards ceremony will take place November 21 at 15:00.

**Opens November 14**  
**Runs until November 21**

**Gaukurinn**  
'Drag-Cabaret' ★

This drag-tastic evening features numerous performers, including Gogo Starr and Páll Óskar, music, stand-up, glitter, and cabaret.

**Opens November 20 at 21:00**

**Comedy Estonia** ★

In collaboration with the Goldengang Comedy group, Comedy Estonia invites Karl-Alari Varma (EST), Louis Zezeran (AUS) & Marcus O'Loaire (IRE) to perform stand-up comedy.

**Opens November 25 & 26 at 19:00**

**Harbinger**  
'Promesse du bonheur' by **Arnar Ásgeirsson & H. K. Rannversson** ★

This show is part of an ongoing dialogue between Arnar and H. K., that started with the exhibition 'Disappointing Sculpture' at Kunstschlagler in 2013. At Harbinger they contemplate art's promise of happiness through images and texts, and with the help of cocktails and Thai food.

**Opens November 13**  
**Runs until December 13**

**Living Art Museum (Nýló)**  
'Heimurinn tilheyrir öllum, ekki fáum útvöldum' ★

A group of MA students from the Iceland Academy of the Arts are collectively hosting an exhibit at Nýló. Its name translates as "The World Belongs To Everyone, Not Just A Select Few." There is a special opening party on November 28 at 15:00.

**Opens November 28**  
**Runs until December 13**

**Loft Hostel**  
'Once Upon A Human'

This project focuses on the human experience being similar to fiction and literature; this event centres around the human experience. What is another person's life story? Are they on a hero's journey? Have they ever slain a dragon?

**Opens November 19 at 17:00**

**Núllió**  
'prik/ strik/' by **Kristín Rúnarsdóttir** ★

For this exhibition, Kristín played with the space available to create a playful display of lines, sticks, and stripes. She plays with dimensional perception, proportions, and the culture around signs and signifiers.

**Opens November 13**  
**Runs until December 6**

**Rekjavík City Library**  
'Stories without words' by **Sunna Sigurðardóttir**

Some of Sunna's best comic works and illustrations are on exhibit, including illustrations to an award-winning novel by Guðrún Minervudóttir. There is a special opening party on November 13 at 16:00.

**Opens November 13**  
**Runs until January 3**

'BALKAN SLIPPERS on the way to Iceland'

Women in Balkan countries grow up learning to make their own slippers, and each pair tells a story. This exhibition has slippers produced by unemployed migrant women who use their skills to bond with the new community and culture, in an effort to make new cultural connections between

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Reykjavík

November 13 - December 3

Keep it in your pocket

## Three Weeks

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

### Every Monday

**Open mic stand up comedy in English**  
Every Monday, a group of comedians called the GoldenGang get together and perform a free comedy set in English for expats and locals alike. Admission is always free.  
**Gaukurinn at 20:30**

### November 14

**Fuzz Fest**  
The annual stoner, doom, sludge, and old-school rock concert of the year is here yet again! Appearing are **Black Desert Sun, ONI, Churchhouse Creepers, Electric Space Orchestra, O'Bannion, and Ashton Cut**. Don't be shy, it'll be a ball! And entry is free, too!  
**Gaukurinn at 21:00**

### November 18

**CeaseTone / Wendy Rule**  
Folky, dreamy, indie, lively—these are all words you can use to describe the Icelandic **CeaseTone**, who are joined by **Wendy Rule**, an Australian songstress who weaves music, mythology and ritual together into a magical dark ambient show.  
**Gaukurinn at 21:00**

### November 25

**Pétur Ben & Snorri Helgason**  
These two singer-songwriters may be a generation apart, and come from different musical backgrounds (rock and americana, respectively), but they are both known for putting on intimate heart-warming shows. Seeing them two together on the same night sounds like a recipe for greatness. Admission is 2,000 ISK.  
**Húrra at 20:00**

### November 26

**"I don't miss the future"**  
The **Nýló choir** and **Íslenski hljóðljóðakórinn** ("The Icelandic sound-poetry-choir") join forces to premiere a performance featuring works by three disparate authors. This includes **FET** by visual artist **Haraldur Jónsson**, who frequently deals with perception, time and space; a piece by poet **Lommi** filled with intonation, meaning and meaninglessness, and text fragments inspired by **Jóhannes Kjarval's** works; and **Edik-önd** ("vinegar-duck"), a physical and aural sculpture by composer **Hörður Bragason**. Admission is 1,000 ISK.  
**Kex Hostel at 20:00**

Until 31  
December

Art Exhibit  
**Art On The Fringe**



**'Marginalia' at Kjarvalsstaðir**

Flókagata 24 (H8) | 10:00-17:00 | 1,400 ISK

This exhibit turns our heads towards the oft-overlooked edges of pages, specifically to the marginalia surrounding Iceland's most revered artist, twentieth-century Icelandic painter **Jóhannes Sveinsson Kjarval** (or: Kjarval) and his works. The chaos, variety, and sheer number of the marginal works on display illustrate the restless and creative mind behind the method. Through exploring the doodles and sketches scrawled in his notebooks and other personal affects, we gain unique access to the discarding and reshaping of images and text over time. Don't miss the chance to peek into this porthole of Kjarval's artistic process. **RTC**

12-16  
November

Cinema  
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**Treasure of Polish Cinema Festival**

Bíó Paradís, Hverfisgata 54 (E5) | Free!

The **Treasure of Polish Cinema** is a three-day festival that aims to highlight the best of Polish cinema. They're screening fifteen films at the affair, everything from WWII dramas ('**Rosa**') to cult comedy classics ('**Teddy Bear**'). And as if that weren't enough, they're also hosting a workshop on cinematography by renowned filmmaker **Julian Antonisz** for those of you who want to get a little deeper into things. No Polish skills? No worries! The films are all subtitled in English, so the festival is accessible to everybody (who speaks either Polish or English)! Admission is free to both the films and the workshop, but seating is limited. You should go. **AJdR**



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# MAP

## Places We Like

### Eating

#### 1 The Cocoo's Nest

Grandagarður 23

Nestled in a refurbished fishing hut in then flourishing area of Grandi, The Cocoo's Nest is a cosy 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 or an afternoon 'aperitivo' after work. If you're in that part of town, head over for a warm-up.

#### 2 Fish

Skólavörðustígur 23

Whether it's the catch of the day or a chicken pesto sandwich you're after, Fish is a safe bet.

#### 3 O Sushi

Pósthússtræti 13

Also called "The Train", O Sushi's most intriguing feature is a conveyor belt that runs around the entire restaurant delivering a buffet of authentic Sushi straight to your table. It's the perfect place to try new dishes on appearance alone and see if they strike your fancy.

#### 4 Frederiksen Ale House

Hafnarstræti 5

With a relaxed atmosphere, you can enjoy your favorite brew any time of the day (unless you hate nightly musical accompaniment). A hearty ale calls for a hearty meal, which Frederiksen delivers with their steakhouse-like menu of burgers, steaks, and fillets. Be sure to bring an appetite to this ale house and a friend to enjoy it with you.

#### 5 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.

### Drinking

#### 6 Kaffi Kigali

Ingólfsstræti 8

This quaint little coffee house, tucked away just off of main shopping street Laugavegur, offers a variety of Rwandan coffee drinks with beans straight from the farmer at very affordable rates, including the must-try Afrikano drink. They also sell a selection of deliciously roasted beans straight from East Africa from as little as 999 ISK.

### Useful Numbers

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BSR: **561 0000**

### Tax-Free Refund

**Iceland Refund**, Aðalstræti 2, tel: 564 6400

### 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



#### 7 Mengi

Óðinsgata 2

Mengi ("Set") was born as an experimental place to host intimate shows where the artist gets to perform in front of small crowds. Hosting anything from art performances, lectures and workshops to music gigs, Mengi snugly seats 50 people. Admission is generally 2,000 ISK.

**The Icelandic Travel Market**, Bankastræti 2, tel: 522 4979

**Trip**, Laugavegur 54, tel: 433 8747

### Pharmacies

**Lyf og heilsa**, Egilsgata 3, tel: 563 1020

**Lyfja**, Laugavegur 16, tel: 552 4045 and Lág-  
múla 5, tel: 533 2300

### 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 Loftleiðir, tel: 562 4200

#### 8 Stofan

Vesturgata 3

Voted the best place to read a book in the Grapevine Best of Reykjavik awards (2012, 2013 and 2015), this old-timey coffee house is something straight out of a Carl Larsson painting. A perfect place to spend the day sitting on their antique furniture and sipping delicious drinks, both alcoholic and otherwise.

### Public Transport

The only public transport available in Reykjavik is the bus. Most buses run every 20-30 minutes (the wait may be longer on weekends) and the price per fare is 350 ISK for adults and children. Multiple day passes are available for purchase at select locations. 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.

#### 9 Bravó

Laugavegur 22

Bravó is your regular run-of-the-mill bar that serves decent drinks and doesn't try to be anything that it's not. The bar plays good music at a comfortable volume that allows for conversation, and provides good seating options even during late nights, when most bars have removed their tables to make room for a dancefloor.

**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.

**Swimming pools:** Weekdays 06:30-22:00 and weekends 09:00-17:00, although each pool varies plus or minus a few hours.

**Banks** in the centre are open Mon-Fri 09:00-16:00.

### Post Offices

Post offices are located around the city. The downtown post office is at Pósthússtræti 3-5, open Mon-Fri 09:00-18:00. Stamps are also sold at bookstores, gas stations, tourist shops and some grocery stores.



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## New In Town



### 13 Kaffi Vinyl

Hverfisgata 76

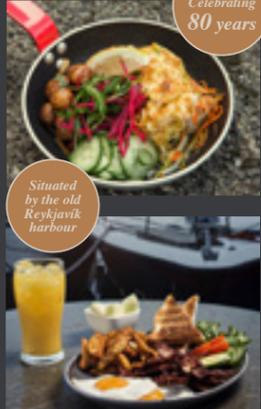
Kaffi Vinyl is extremely new in town—so new, in fact, that if you move fast, you can claim to have discovered it and be one of those annoying old regular-types. While it doesn't quite emit that fancy Superheiß-Schnellclub Party Hötspöt vibe, it most definitely seems like a great place to enjoy lunch or an afternoon hangout. The large windows make for excellent people-watching, and the spacious retro décor makes for a really chill atmosphere—there's even a box of LPs and a record player available for patrons to play around with. Bring some friends, enjoy a nice beer (only 800 ISK!) and have some fun.

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Austurstræti 7 | D3
- B5**  
Bankastræti 5 | E4
- Bar 11**  
Hverfisgata 18 | E5
- Bar Ananas**  
Klappastígur 28 | E5
- Bío Paradís**  
Hverfisgata 54 | E5
- Bjarni Fel**  
Austurstræti 20 | E4
- Bravó**  
Laugavegur 22 | E5
- Boston**  
Laugavegur 28b | E5
- Bunk**  
Laugavegur 28 | E5
- Café Rósenberg**  
Klappastígur 25 | E5
- Coccoo's Nest**  
Grandagarður 23 | B2
- Den Danske Kro**  
Ingólfsstræti 3 | E4
- Dillon**  
Laugavegur 30 | E5
- Dubliner**  
Naustin 1-3 | D3
- Dúfnhólar 10**  
Hafnarstræti 18 | D3
- English Pub**  
Austurstræti 12 | D3
- Frederiksen Ale House**  
Hafnarstræti 5 | D3
- Gaukurinn**  
Tryggvagata 22 | D3
- Hressó**  
Austurstræti 20 | D3
- Húrra**  
Naustin | D3
- Kex Hostel**  
Skúlagata 28 | E7
- Kaffibarinn**  
Bergstaðastræti 1 | E4
- Kaldi Bar**  
Laugavegur 20b | E5
- Kiki Queer Bar**  
Laugavegur 22 | E5
- Lavabarin**  
Lækjargata 6 | E4
- Loft Hostel**  
Bankastræti 7 | E4
- Paloma**  
Naustin | D3
- Prikið**  
Bankastræti 12 | E4
- Reykjavík Roasters**  
Kárástígur 1 | F5
- Stofan Café**  
Vesturgata 3 | D3
- Ölsmiðjan**  
Lækjargata 10 | E3
- Ölstofan**  
Vegamótastígur 4 | E5

## Museums & Galleries

- ART67**  
Laugavegur 67 | F7  
Mon-Fri 12-18 / Sat 12-16
- Ásgrímur Jónsson Museum**  
Bergstaðastræti 74 | G4  
Mon-Fri through Sep 1
- Better Weather Window Gallery**  
Laugavegur 41 | E6  
www.windandweather.is
- The Einar Jónsson Museum**  
Eiríksgata | G5  
Tue-Sun 14-17  
www.skulptur.is
- Ekkisens**  
Bergstaðastræti 25b | F4
- Gallerí List**  
Skipholt 50A | H10  
M-F 11-18, Sat 11-16  
http://www.gallerilist.is/
- Hafnarborg**  
Strandgata 34, Hafnarfjörður  
www.hafnarborg.is
- Hannesarholt**  
Grundarstígur 10 | F4  
www.hannesarholt.is
- Hitt Húsið**  
Gallerí Tukt  
Pósthússtræti 3-5 | D4  
www.hitthusid.is
- Hverfigallerí**  
Hverfisgata 4 | D4  
www.hverfigalleri.is
- i8 Gallery**  
Tryggvagata 16 | D3  
Tue-Fri 11-17 / Sat 13-17 and by appointment. www.i8.is
- The Icelandic Phalological Museum**  
Laugavegur 116 | F8  
www.phallus.is
- Kirsberjartréð**  
Vesturgata 4 | D3  
www.kirs.is
- Mengi**  
Óðinsgata 2 | F5  
www.mengi.net
- Mokka Kaffi**  
Skólavörðustígur 3A | E5  
www.mokka.is
- The National Gallery of Iceland**  
Frikirkjuvegur 7 | F3  
Tue-Sun 11-17  
www.listasafn.is
- The National Museum**  
Suðurgata 41 | G2  
Open daily 10-17  
www.natmus.is
- The Nordic House**  
Sturlugata 5 | H2  
Tue-Sun 12-17  
www.nordice.is
- Reykjavík Art Gallery**  
Skúlagata 30 | E7  
Tue-Sun 14-18
- Reykjavík Art Museum - Hafnarhús**  
Tryggvagata 17 | D3  
Open 10-17  
Thursday 10-20
- Kjarvalsstaðir**  
Flókagata 24 | H8  
Open 10-17
- Ásmundarsafn**  
Sigtún  
Open 10-17  
www listasafnreykjavikur.is
- Reykjavík City Library**  
Tryggvagata 15 | D3  
www.borgarbokasafn.is
- Reykjavík City Museum - Árbæjarsafn**  
Kistuhylur 4  
Daily tours at 13
- The Settlement Exhibition**  
Aðalstræti 17 | D3  
Open daily 9-20
- Reykjavík Maritime Museum**  
Grandagarður 8 | B2  
Open daily 10-17
- Reykjavík Museum of Photography**  
Tryggvagata 15 | D3  
Mon-Thur 12-19 / Fri 12-18 / Sat-Sun 13-17
- Víðey Island**  
Ferry from Skarfabakki Harbour, Sat-Sun only  
www.videy.com
- Saga Museum**  
Grandagarður 2 | B2  
www.sagamuseum.is
- Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum**  
Laugamestangi 70  
www.iso.is
- SÍM**  
Hafnarstræti 16 | D3  
Mon-Fri 10-16  
www.sim.is
- Sólón Bistro**  
Bankastræti 7a | E4  
Mon-Thu 11-23:30  
Fri-Sat 11-01  
Sun 11-23
- Spark Design Space**  
Klappastígur 33 | E5  
M-Fri 12-18, Sat 12-16  
www.sparkdesign-space.com
- Tveir Hrafnar**  
Baldursgata 12 | G4  
Thu-Fri 12-17, Sat 13-16  
www.tveirhrafnar.is
- Wind & Weather Gallery**  
Hverfisgata 37 | E5  
www.windandweather.is

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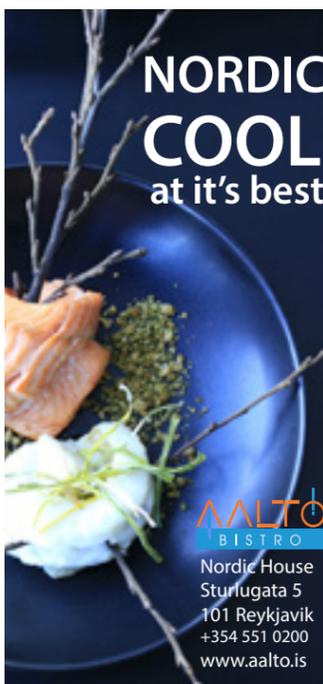
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G

## Shopping

### 10 Handknitting Association

Skólavörðustígur 19

The Hand-knitting Association of Iceland's official store, Handprjónasambandið, sells wool products of uncompromising quality. The store features pullover sweaters, cardigans and other wool accessories.

### Public Phones

There aren't many public payphones in the city centre. The tourist information centre at Aðalstræti 2, City Hall, Kolaportíð, entrance at Landsbankinn and in Lækjargata. Prepaid international phone cards are recommended for int'l callers.

### Internet Access

Most cafés offer free wireless internet access. Computers with internet connections are available to use at: Ráðhúskaffi City Hall, Tjarnargata 11 Ground Zero, Frakkastígur 8, near Laugavegur 45, The Reykjavík City Library, Tryggvagata 15

### 11 Gangleri Outfitters

Hverfisgata 82

The power duo Vaidas & Óskar started out as party buddies until they discovered their joint passion toward outdoor living. This passion grew to become Gangleri Outfitters, the outdoor equipment and rental shop in the city centre, which opened its doors with a bang on June 17. They rent out and sell everything that an unequipped traveller might need in Iceland.

The National and University Library, Arngrímsgata 3

Tourist Information Centre, Aðalstræti 2  
Icelandic Travel Market, Bankastræti 2  
Reykjavík Backpackers, Laugavegur 28

### Swimming Pools

There are several swimming pools in Reykjavík. The one in 101 Reykjavík, Sundhöll Reykjavíkur, is an indoor one, located at Barónsstígur. It features a nice sunbathing area and some outdoor hot tubs. Opening hours: Mon-Thu from 06:30-22:00, Fri from 06:30-20:00, Sat from 08:00-16:00 and Sun from 10:00-18:00.

### 12 Geysir

Skólavörðustígur 16

This tourist shop gathers memorabilia, souvenirs, clothing and gift items from all over Iceland at a convenient location. Great for loading up at the last minute, as their stock is diverse and high-quality.

### Public Toilets

Public toilets in the centre can be found inside the green-poster covered towers located, for example, at Hlemmur, Ingólfsstorg, by Hallgrímskirkja, by Reykjavík Art Museum, Lækjargata and by Eymundsson on Skólavörðustígur. Toilets can also be found inside the Reykjavík City Hall and the Reykjavík Library.



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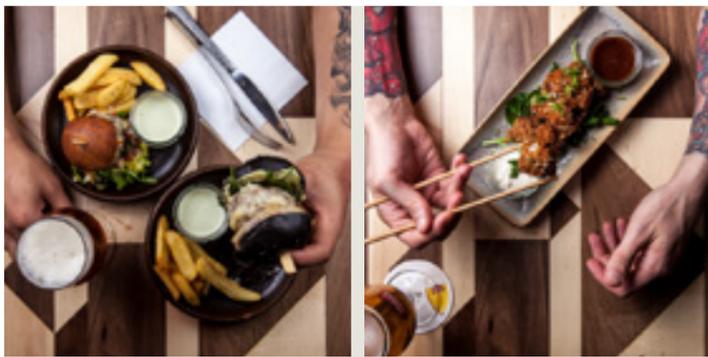


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# BEST OF REYKJAVÍK



Every year around the beginning of July, we make a BEST OF REYKJAVÍK ISSUE celebrating some of what makes Reykjavík-life worthwhile, posting some good entries into a hopefully never-ending discussion. The following are some nice tips we pulled from BEST OF REYKJAVÍK 2015 which you can read in full at [www.grapevine.is](http://www.grapevine.is).



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[publichouse.is](http://publichouse.is)

## Dining and Grubbing

Best Bakery  
*Sandholt*



Laugavegur 36

We went over all the arguments we've heard against Sandholt: It's too touristy, the lines are too long, the prices are too high, gossip about the management, all of it. But at the end of the day no one in Reykjavík can touch Sandholt. They've used the same oven since it opened in 1920 and it's run by a fourth-generation baker, so the pedigree is there. The sourdough is the best and pastries and confectionaries are miles above the rest. They even have great ice cream and reasonable catering options. Try the amazing danishes with the real fruity fillings, the strawberry tart, the proper eclairs, they're the real deal. It may be swamped by tourists but you simply won't find better.

## Activities and Funtimes

Best Graveyard To Hang Out In  
*Fossvogskirkjugarður*



Garðastræti 6

This year's winner of the best graveyard to hang out in is Fossvogskirkjugarður—a wonderful, hidden spot nestled at the back of Öskjuhlíð. Whilst we also love the history and layout of previous winner Hólavallagarður, Fossvogskirkjugarður has a wilder and less cultivated atmosphere, and less people around. "It's a graveyard that's full of life," one panellist said. "The trees and wild plants grow right between the graves, so it's like you're in a forest as well as a graveyard. There are lots of paths to explore, and little secret places. Sometimes you really don't see many other people, so you can feel pleasantly alone there, except for all the bunny rabbits running around your feet."

## Shopping and Commerce

Best Second Hand Shop  
*Hertex*



Garðastræti 6

Okay, we gotta start by clarifying something: the difference between a vintage shop and a secondhand store. One is not better than the other by nature, but they are very different in terms of price, quality and overall store selection. For a long time, this category has been handed out to a vintage shop (good quality, prices that reflect this quality, and a limited curated selection). Now it's time to give it back. At Hertex, the Salvation Army's shop on Garðastræti, you get the best real secondhand experience in town. "You have to dig a bit to strike gold, and they have great stuff and it's actual secondhand prices," enthused one panellist. "One time, I found an actual Dior jacket, and it cost nothing!" That's a really lucky strike, but it's that kind of you-never-know place. The store is clean, quaint and run by a couple of sweet, friendly grandmothers who keep the place ship-shape. We love it.

## A Guide That Fucks You Up

A list of every Happy Hour in 101 Reykjavík

### American Bar

Friday and Saturday from 16:00 to 19:00.  
Beer 650 ISK, Wine 750 ISK.

### Austur

Thursday to Saturday from 20:00 to 00:00.  
Beer 800 ISK, Wine 800 ISK.

### B5

Every day from 17:00 to 20:00.  
Beer 500 ISK, Cocktails 1,100 ISK, Wine 600 ISK.

### Bar 7

Every day from 16:00 to 21:00.  
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.

### Bíó Paradís

Every day from 17:00 to 20:00.  
Beer 500 ISK, Wine 500 ISK.

### Bjarni Fel

Monday to Friday from 21:00 to 23:00.  
2-for-1 Beer 1,090 ISK, single with mixer 1,500 ISK.

### Boston

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

### Bravó

Every day from 17:00 to 21:00.  
Beer 500 ISK, Wine 750 ISK.

### Brooklyn Bistro & Bar

Every day from 15:00 to 18:00.  
Beer 500 ISK, Wine 700 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 600 ISK, Wine 600 ISK

### Dúfnólar 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.

### Forréttabarninn

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

### Gaukurinn

Sun-Thu from 19:00 to 22:00. Fri-Sat from 21:00 to 22:00. Beer 500 ISK, Wine 700 ISK, Shots 500 ISK.

### Glaumbar

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.



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### 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.

### Íða 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.

### 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

Every day from 20:00 to 22:00. 2 beers and fries 2,000 ISK.

### Rio Sportbar

Every day from 12:00 to 20:00.  
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.

### Slippbarinn

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

### Sólón 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 18:00. Fri-Sat from 22:30 to 23:30.  
Beer 600 ISK, Wine 700 ISK.

### Uno

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

### Uppsalar

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

### Vínsmakkarinn

Monday to Sunday from 17:00 to 20:00.  
Beer 600 ISK, Wine 700 ISK.

### Ölstofan

Every day from 16:00 to 20:00.  
Beer 490 ISK, Wine 890 ISK, gin & tonic 990 ISK.

# ART

## OPENINGS & ONGOINGS

The Reykjavík Grapevine  15  
Issue 17 – 2015

Slovenia and Iceland. There is a special opening party on November 14 at 15:00.

**Opens November 14**

**Runs until November 29**

**Reykjavík City Hall**

**'Unglist Fashion Show' ★**

This annual fashion show features works by Tækniskólinn students. Dressmaking and tailor students show their craft, and hair students style the models.

**November 15 at 20:00**

**Tjarnarbió**

**'Black' & 'No Title' by Mette Edvardson**

In this Reykjavík Dance Festival performance, Mette plays with negative space, making things appear. She becomes the mediator between the stage and the audience. She engages in dialogue about language and the limits it places on reality. Metta asks, through dance, the bigger questions in life.

**November 21 at 19:30**

**'Kate' by Lost Watch**

When 2,500 British troops invaded and occupied Reykjavík in 1940, women began to look favorably in their direction, thus sparking moral outrage. 'Kate' tells the story of an Icelandic family during the war, their interactions with their wayward daughter and a helpful lodger, ultimately exploring the relationship and history between Britain and Iceland. The show will also feature live music.

**November 26 & 27 and December 3, 4, 5 & 6 at 20:30**

**'Nazanin' by Marta Nardal**

Nazanin fled Iran after the 2009 Presidential election. Now a political refugee in Iceland, she will recount her story in the form of a 60 minute theatrical piece.

**November 18 at 20:30**

**'Not About Everything' by Daniel Lineham**

As part of the Reykjavík Dance Festival, Daniel Lineham puts on a performance in which he spins crazy circles and draws attention to modern issues.

**November 20 at 19:30**

**'Rebel Rebel - A Retrospective' by Snæbjörn Brynjarsson & Ragnheiður Sigurðardóttir**

A writer at heart, Snæbjörn expresses the words he cannot write through dance as part of the Reykjavík Dance Festival.

**November 20 at 21:30.**

**'This conversation is missing a point' by Berglind Rafns & Unnur Elísabet ★**

This new Icelandic dance piece by Berglind Rafns and Unnur Elísabet is a comical take on how people can be misunderstood. The whole show is in gibberish.

**November 17 at 20:30**

**'The Valley' by Inga & Rósa ★**

Part of the Reykjavík Dance Festival, 'The Valley' is a multi-medium comedy/horror dance performance that explores the concept of ambiguity and its effect on the experience of the audience. It features a sensory journey where not all is what it seems; monstrous, robotic, insect-like and lifeless bodies appear on stage, and it is not always clear whether they are real or just a shadow of what was.

**November 22 & 29 at 20:30**

### Ongoing

**Arion Banki**

**Georg Guðni Exhibition ★**

Selected works (1985-2009) from Georg Guðni's will be shown, some of which have never been shown in Iceland before.

**Runs until December 11**

**ART67**

**Artist of the month: Brynja Árnadóttir**

Brynja has been drawing all of her life, and this exhibit shows her pencil art. She focuses on drawing women in their many varied forms and roles, dreaming, flirting, and dancing the dance of life.

**Runs until November 30**

**Árbær Culture House**

**'Cocktail' by Unnur Þóra Skúldóttir ★**  
Unnur Þóra spent her childhood drawing, and recently starting painting with oils and creating mosaics, which are exhibited at Árbær Culture House.

**Runs until January 29**

**Árbær Open Air Museum**

**'Between the lines - How stay-at-home women earned a living 1900-1970' ★**

This exhibition looks at how women were able to generate revenue with odd jobs in the 20<sup>th</sup> century when many of them stayed at home.

**Runs until January 31**

**ASÍ Art Gallery**

**'Vanishing Point' by Olga Bergmann ★**

The vanishing point is a point in an image that signifies the horizon, a focal point to create the illusion of a third dimension. Olga Bergmann plays with the vanishing points in this exhibition, and also deals with themes of the environment and the earth as Gaia, a living organism.

**Runs until November 22**

**Better Weather Window Gallery**

**'Five Stars / Review' by Guðrún Heiður Ísaksdóttir ★★★★★**

Using nothing but cardboard boxes and text, Guðrún Heiður Ísaksdóttir has created a unique installation at Better Weather, a combination of poetry and three-dimensional art.

**Runs until November 29**

**The Einar Jónsson Museum**

The museum contains close to 300 artworks including a beautiful garden with 26 bronze casts of the artist's sculptures.

**On permanent view**

**Ekkisens**

**'Occupation II' by various artists ★**

'Occupation II' is a pop-up gallery of works by various artists, curated by Ekkisens Art Space. This second edition takes place in a two story, 100-year-old residential property at Bergstaðastræti 25.

**Runs until Evicted!**

**Galleri Gróttta**

**'Farvegir vatns' by Ingileif, Áslaug & Sigrún Thorlacius ★★**

In 'Farvegir vatns' ("waterways"), Ingileif, Áslaug and Sigrún Thorlacius explore the use, aesthetics and power of water, each in their own unique way.

**Runs until December 4**

**Galleri Skilti**

**'Al Dente' by Tuomas A. Laitinen**

This multimedia exhibition combines light, sound, and video, and is inspired by the artist's time in China; in particular, by his findings in "hutong" (narrow paths or

valleys) in Beijing. The exhibit explores the constant overlapping of new and old in China, and the distorted and often absurd messages on signs outside food vendors in the area thanks to Google Translate.

**Runs until December 15**

**Gallery Tukt**

**'Thank you too' by Kristín Dóra Ólafsdóttir ★★★★★**

Kristín shows a number of pieces that are split into three sections: acrylic paintings, word art and oil paintings. The exhibit is part of the Unglist young art festival.

**Runs until November 14**

**Gerðuberg Cultural Centre**

**'A Visit to the Monsters' ★**

A child-friendly exhibit that shows the daily lives of Little Monster and Big Monster. See how they live, where they sleep, and what they do to pass the time.

**Runs until April 24**

**'The wishes of Icelandic children' by Ásta Kristjánsdóttir**

A series of photographs illustrate the desires of children who suffered through abuse. Ásta made the photographs based on texts provided by the UN.

**Runs until January 10**

**'Úr Ýmsum Áttum' by Erna Johannesdóttir**

'Úr ýmsum áttum' ("from various directions") is an exhibit of oil paintings. This is Erna's first solo exhibit.

**Runs until January 10**

**Hafnarborg**

**'Conversing with Existence' by Eiríkur Smith**

The final in a series of exhibitions of Smith's works, 'Conversing with Existence' shows watercolour and oil paintings from 1983 to 2008 in which the human figure is in the foreground, while landscapes and human creations are moved to the margins.

**Runs until January 17**

**Hlemmur Square**

**'Focus on Iceland' by Vincenzo Mazza**

Hlemmur Square is hosting a two-week exhibition of photography by Vincenzo Mazza, an Italian prize-winning photographer who recently moved to Iceland. He invites viewers to take a photographic journey around Iceland, and to experience its majesty.

**Runs until November 15**

**Hornið**

**'Take Two' by Jóhann Vilhjálmsson**

Part artist, part musician, and part chef, Jóhann is a true jack-of-all-trades. His mediums are pastels and ink, and he gravitates towards bold, bright colours. His subjects range from people, to landscapes, scenes and more, but all have a surrealist quality in common.

**On permanent view**

**Hverfisgallerí**

**'Varp' by Sigurður Ámi Sigurðsson ★**

Sigurður is showing a selection of his works at Hverfisgallerí.

**Runs until November 14**

**i8 Gallery**

**Arna Óttarsdóttir Exhibit ★★**

Arna's textile exhibit is centred around one idea that she rejected when it was in its infancy, called "Stelputeppi" ("Women's Blanket"). All the works reflect on the experimental process in which she tries to take her prime materials, Icelandic wool and Swedish cotton, in bold new directions.

**Runs until January 9**

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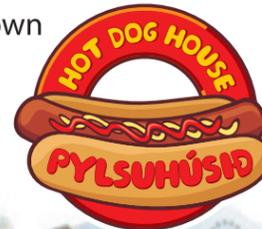
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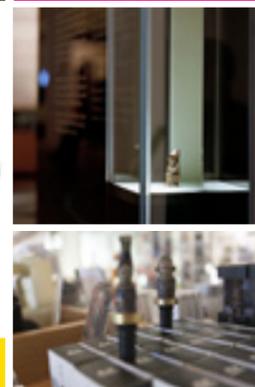
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MINK Viking Portrait

More information in the Museums & Galleries section.

**Reykjavik City Museum**

# ART

## ONGOING



**Through The Lens**  
'A Journalist and Her Camera'

### National Museum of Iceland

Suðurgata 41 (G2) | Until November 31 | Admission: 1,500 ISK

This photography exhibit showcases the work of the indefatigable **Vilborg Harðardóttir** (1935–2002). Known for her work as a photographer for the newspaper **Þjóðviljinn**, her role in Iceland's **Rauðsokkur** ("Red Stockings") feminist movement, and her time as an MP, Vilborg played a key role in examining the social and political roles of women in the 60s and beyond. Her photos capture mundane and marvelous moments alike, ultimately presenting them as both intimate and troubling. Come and see the world through Vilborg's eyes—as well as the ways she wanted to change it. **RTC**

**Iðnó**  
**'Argintætur í myndlist'** by Guðrún Sigríður  
Guðrún Sigríður is exhibiting her art at Iðnó as part of the Argintætur exhibition series. Her mixed-medium art draws from her theatre background, and centres around themes of identity and memory.

**Runs until November 22**  
**Kringlan City Library**  
**'Dear Guðrún'**  
To celebrate Guðrún Helgadóttir's 80th birthday, the city library will host an exhibit of her books, complete with illustrations and art inspired by them.

**Runs until November 30**  
**Kópavogur Art Museum**  
**Gerðasafn**  
**'Skúlpútur/Skúlpútur'** by Habby Osk & Baldur Geir ★★★★★  
'Skúlpútur/Skúlpútur' is a series of solo exhibitions that challenges the use and the role of sculpture as a medium in Icelandic art. The first two solo exhibitions are of Habby Osk's and Baldur Geir's works. There is a special artist talk with Habby on November 22 at 15:00.

**Runs until January 3**  
**Listamenn Gallerí**  
**'Musings of Two Towers' - Einar Örn and Curver Thoroddsen** ★★★★★  
Einar Örn and Curver Thoroddsen of Ghostigital exhibit together for the first time. In these works, the towers muse to each other in different languages and tell stories in their own way. The works encompass multiple media and take a variety of shapes.

**Runs until November 25**

**Living Art Museum**  
**'Art / Work'** by Emil Magnússon Borhammar ★  
On a daily basis, Emil finds himself reflecting on his position in society's hierarchies, and the world in which he finds himself. He then transforms these reflections into his artwork, using a variety of materials, mostly text and film.

**Runs until November 15**  
**Mokka-Kaffi**  
**'Bland í poka'** by Höskuldur Harri Gylfason  
In his exhibit 'Bland í poka' ("Mixed Bag"), artist Höskuldur Harri Gylfason shows his work.

**Runs until November 27**  
**Museum of Design and Applied Art**  
**'Keepers'**  
This exhibit focuses on the collections in the Museum of Design and Applied Art, displaying a few key pieces, and explores how and why the museum curates the works that it does. The title refers both to the objects themselves, the ones worth keeping, as well as the people who preserved them, kept them, and eventually gave them to the museum for safekeeping.

**Runs until June 10**  
**The National Gallery**  
**'Art in a Changing World'** by Nina Sæmundsson  
Though born into 19th-century farming society, Nina Sæmundsson was the first Icelandic woman to work as a professional sculptor. Through hardships and international travels, Nina developed a classical style that persisted late into

her career. In her works, she combines the magnificent and the intimate, mainly through the use of both the upright human and her specialised style of bust.

**Runs until January 17**  
**'Jacqueline with a Yellow Ribbon'** by Pablo Picasso

Picasso's widow, Jacqueline Roque Picasso, has given her portrait as a gift to the President of Iceland. This portrait is considered to be one of Picasso's most unusual, and is highly sought after worldwide.

**Runs until January 4**  
**'Poetcast'** by Nína Tryggvadóttir  
An influential Icelandic artist of her generation, Nína Tryggvadóttir is credited with bringing the aesthetics and ideologies of abstract expressionism from mainland Europe and the States to the then colonial settlement of Iceland. This retrospective exhibition will show works from her 1938–1967 creative period.

**Runs until December 31**  
**Vasulka Chamber** ★  
Stena and Woody Vasulka are some of the pioneers of multimedia and video art, and have a show at the National Gallery. They began experimenting with electronic sound, stroboscopic light, and video in the late 60s, and haven't stopped since. The chamber's purpose is not only to present art from the genre, but to encourage preserving and mediating such works.

**On permanent view**  
**The National Museum of Iceland**  
**'A Journalist and her camera. The photography of Vilborg Harðardóttir'** ★  
Vilborg was a tireless advocate of women's rights, both in the political arena as a member of Iceland's parliament, as well as within Iceland's Red Stockings movement. The exhibit features photographs from her years as a journalist at the newspaper Þjóðviljinn, 1963–1974.

**Runs until December 31**  
**'A Woman's Place'** ★  
This exhibition takes a look into the lives of women from 1915 to 2015 and questions the role women have had and currently have in Icelandic society.

**Runs until December 31**  
**Bible Exhibit**  
This is an exhibit celebrating the 200 year anniversary of the Icelandic Bible company (Biblíufélagið). On display are many antique Bibles owned by the National Museum and the company itself.

**Runs until December 31**  
**'Bundled Up In Blue'**  
This exhibition is centred around new archeological findings from bones believed to belong to a woman from the settlement era, discovered in 1938 in East Iceland. New research provides answers as to the age of the woman in question, where she came from, together with indications of what she may have looked like and how she would have dressed.

**Runs until December 31**  
**'I - Portraits'** by Valdimar Thorlacius  
In this exhibit, Valdimar Thorlacius presents portraits of Icelandic loners, hermits and recluses and their living spaces. Aiming to provide a glimpse into the life of those who live in seclusion, Valdimar shows subjects in both rural and urban Iceland.

**Runs until December 31**  
**'The Making Of A Nation'**  
This exhibition is intended to provide insight into the history of the Icelandic nation from Settlement to the present day.

**On permanent view**  
**'Nesstofa - House and History'**  
Nesstofa is one of the oldest stone buildings in Iceland, and this exhibition discusses the construction and repair history of the historical structure. Because it was once a pharmacy, there are many showings of Icelandic herbs used not only for medicine but also for nutrition and health.

**Runs until December 31**  
**'What Is So Interesting About it?'** ★★★★★  
In celebration of the 100th anniversary of women gaining the right to vote in Iceland, this exhibit presents examples of the work and struggles women have faced since gaining that suffrage. This show celebrates women who have achieved in fields that were previously dominated by men, such as politics, business, arts, and sports.

**Runs until December 31**  
**Nordic House**  
**'Ice In Motion'** by Red Snow ★  
'Ice in Motion' is an exhibit by Red Snow, a group of Nordic artists and scientists, that promotes dialogue and awareness of the effect climate change has on the

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environment, specifically glaciers and the arctic icefields.

**Runs until November 22**  
**'Travelling Sun' by Christine Istad & Lisa Pacini**

'Travelling Sun'—an installation featuring a large glowing globe—has been travelling from Norway to Iceland, a westward movement mirroring the sun's journey. It finishes its journey at the Nordic House, where it will be on display.

**Runs until November 16**  
**Ófeigur Gallery**

**'Sjómóar' by Guðlaugur Bjarnason**  
 Guðlaugur Bjarnason has his first exhibit of paintings in Iceland in a long time! 'Sjómóar' features paintings of landscapes, seas and heaths, weaved together skilfully and subtly, to create a highly stylised vision of Iceland.

**Runs until December 2**  
**Reykjavík Art Museum - Ásmundarsafn**

**'Yearning for Space' ★★**  
 'Yearning for Space' presents dreams of the future from the eyes of the 50s and 60s, during the age of space exploration. It addresses the dialogue between visions of the future and spatial and formal perception, and the genre blend between science fiction and modernist art.

**Runs until February 7**  
**Reykjavík Art Museum - Hafnarhús**

**The Making of Erró ★**  
 This exhibition explores Erró's early days as an artist, showing his experiments with self-expression, and his move from impressionist art to collages.

**Runs until October 9, 2016**  
**'Looking In - Sculptures and Models' by Katrín Sigurðardóttir ★**

Katrín Sigurðardóttir is one of Iceland's most successful artists. For the remainder of 2015, a range of sculptures and maquettes made between 2004-2014 are on display at Hafnarhúsið, showing Katrín's creative process from conception through to large-scale finished installation.

**Runs until December 31**  
**'Process & Pretense' by Magnús Sigurðarson ★★**

Best known for his pop-culture-referencing photographic series and video art, Magnús Sigurðarson addresses in this exhibit the universal human yearning for the sublime.

**Runs until December 6**  
**'We Are Not Afraid' by Úlfur Karlson ★**

Úlfur Karlson's first major exhibit features his paintings and installations which combine fantasy and realism to create a powerful, compelling narrative that shapes a world.

**Runs until December 31**  
**Reykjavík Art Museum - Kjarvalsstaðir**

**'Marginalia—texts, sketches, and doodles in Kjarval's art'**  
 This exhibit dives into Jóhannes S. Kjarval's personal world, presenting drawings, letters and writings collected over the artist's life. By showing everything from sketches on envelopes to doodles on paper napkins, this exhibit hopes to allow the viewer to enter the intimate and eccentric world of Kjarval.

**Runs until November 29**  
**'Women's Time - Here and Now Thirty Years Later' ★★**

An exhibition of art by Icelandic women to commemorate the centennial anniversary of women's suffrage. The artists collaborated 30 years ago in an exhibition called 'Here and Now' to increase the visibility of women's art and how come together again to demonstrate their creative processes.

**Runs until November 29**  
**Reykjavík City Library: Spöngin**  
**'RUMSK Textile and glass works' by Ólöf Einarsdóttir & Sigrún Einarsdóttir**

This exhibit features textile and glass works inspired by Icelandic landscapes and the pressures of internal and external forces.

**Runs until January 9**  
**Reykjavík City Museum**  
**Reykjavík 871 +/- 2 ★**

Archaeological findings from ruins of one of the first houses in Iceland and other excavations in the city centre, open daily 09:00-20:00.

**On permanent view**  
**'Settlement Sagas - Accounts from manuscripts'**

This special exhibition is held in collaboration with the Árni Magnússon Institute for Icelandic Studies. At the centre of this special exhibition are rarely seen

manuscripts that tell the history of the settlement of Reykjavík.

**On permanent view**  
**Reykjavík Maritime Museum**  
**The Coast Guard Vessel Óðinn ★★**

This vessel sailed through all three Cod Wars and has also served as a rescue ship to more than 200 ships.

**On permanent view**  
**'From Poverty to Abundance'**

Photos documenting Icelandic fishermen at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

**On permanent view**  
**The History of Sailing**

Iceland's maritime history that showcases the growth of the Reykjavík Harbour.

**On permanent view**  
**'If I had been...' by Nina Zurier**

Nina Zurier has collected photographs from the Reykjavík Museum of Photography archives to reconstruct old memories, and construct new ones.

**Runs until January 17**  
**'Seawomen - the fishing women of Iceland, past and present'**

This exhibition, in celebration of the centennial anniversary of women's suffrage in Iceland, explores Icelandic women at sea. It is based on research conducted by the anthropologist Dr. Margaret E. Willson, who discovered that Icelandic women have been working at sea since the mid-900s. The exhibit presents not only historical material but also interviews with Icelandic women who work in the fishing industry today.

**On permanent view**  
**The Reykjavík Museum of Photography**

**'Gunnar Rúnar Ólafsson - a retrospective' ★**

The late photographer Gunnar Rúnar Ólafsson (1917-65) is honoured by The Reykjavík Museum of Photography with a selection of his works. The collection contains many great photos that show for example how Reykjavík developed from a small village to a city in just few decades. Gunnar Rúnar took many photos of his wife Amy Bjarnadóttir (1925-2012) and their children who would often accompany him on his journeys.

**Runs until January 10**  
**'Höfnin / The Harbour' by Julie Fuster ★**

In her first exhibit, Julie Fuster calls on five poems, five photographs, and five short stories to depict a one-year journey through memories, seasons, and the Icelandic landscape.

**Runs until December 1**  
**Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum**  
**Female Idols**

To mark the centennial of women in Iceland winning the right to vote, Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum has created an exhibition of classical portrait sculptures of women produced by Sigurjón.

**Runs until May 31**  
**SÍM**  
**'Síendurtekin lög' by Didda H. Leaman**

This exhibition features watercolours by Didda H. Leaman, an artist who has studied in Iceland, Finland and the UK. Her art features fluid movements and organic shapes, reminiscent of water overflowing a dam.

**Runs until November 24**  
**Spark Design Space**  
**Rán Flygenring Exhibit**

Rán Flygenring exhibits over 150 works drawn in the summer of 2015, documenting her nomadic travels through Iceland, highlighting quirks in Icelandic culture. Additionally, she will show some of her three dimensional pieces.

**Runs until December 1**  
**Tveir Hrafnar Gallery**  
**Húbert Nói Exhibit ★**

Húbert Nói has an exhibition of his private collection in Tveir Hrafnar.

**Runs until November 21**  
**Wind And Weather Gallery**  
**'Analysis' by Myrra Leifsdóttir**

The Wind & Weather Gallery exhibits a mixed media exhibit by Myrra Leifsdóttir that employs drawings and combines special lighting to create a site specific installation.

**Runs until December 29**

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# Maybe A Little Too Much Of A Good Thing



**Kafli 2: Og himininn kristallast**

Iceland Dance Company

Borgarleikhús

2,900 ISK

**Words** Anna Manning

**Photo** Jónatan Grétarsson

Walking into a packed Borgarleikhús to see the premiere of Sigga Soffía's new work 'Kafli 2: og himininn kristallast' ("Chapter 2: And The Sky Crystallizes"), I was surrounded by the excited whispers of little girls, middle-aged couples, and cool twentysomethings. Interviewing the choreographer, Sigga Soffía, before the show, I had some idea of what to expect, but I was eager to see how the dancers would transform the excitement and energy of fireworks into movement.

The show is the second part of a piece called 'Stjörnuþrim og himinninn kristallast'. When asked to describe "stjörnuþrim," Sigga Soffía explained that it comes from a poem by revered poet Davíð Stefánsson (1895-1964). The term is a composite of the words for star and the perilous white froth of a wave that sinks ships out at sea. The first part, the "stjörnuþrim," was the Vodafone fireworks display at Culture Night this past August, in collaboration with the search and rescue team HSSR. For this second part, she collaborated with Iceland Dance Company (ID), aiming to produce a similar effect through dance.

## Setting the stage

In the style of classic musicals, the opening scene was an overture of sorts. The curtains opened to an empty set with suspended cloud of bubbles and fog cascading off the lip of the stage, all to soft music, creating a dream-like ambience. Without dancers, the scene remained visually interesting via lights shining into the bub-

bly cloud, giving the impression of being in heaven. The opening was beautiful, but the heavy reliance on props and effects continued throughout the show, often distracting from the dancers.

Sigga Soffía explained how set designer Helgi Már Kristinnsson created the bubbly cloud sculpture as a backdrop for lighting, much like Sigga uses smoke to build landscapes to light up in her fireworks displays. At one point during the performance the sculpture was released and the bubbles spilled down onto the stage. "And just like the smoke in the wind, we cannot control where the sculpture lands on the stage. So we also have this element of excitement, will the dancers be affected, will the sculpture be in front of them, or work with them," she said.

## First-class choreography

The phrases of movement were excellent, smoothly alternating between breathy and athletic. You could really see the dancers reaching beyond their personal space with every step. "In my mind there

is a close connection between fireworks and the classical dancer," Sigga said, explaining her choice of using classical ballet vocabulary. From where I was sitting, any real ballet technique was well hidden beneath contemporary styles and influences. However, the precision and flowing quality of classical dance were definitely present.

Undoubtedly, the two main highlights of the performance were the solos by Hjördis Lilja Örnólfsdóttir and Halla Þórðardóttir. Each dancer was assigned one kind of firework as inspiration. Throughout the performance, Hjördis was dressed in a fluffy, white, layered costume that made her look more like a cake-topper than an explosion. Then, just before her solo, concealed LED lights lit up the costume and transformed her into an elegant and graceful wisp. She did not execute any spectacular jumps or poses, but rather spun around the stage in gentle, concentric circles. The effect was truly beautiful.

Halla's solo, by contrast, had a much different dynamic. Sigga described Hal-

la's "character" to me as "Falling Leaves, which is like a slow cloud of glitter." In a costume of a unitard covered in small mirror-like flags, her powerful solo was performed weaving in and out of beams of lights like a disco ball. But, if you strip away the costume and the set you would still have Halla seamlessly moving through luxurious extensions and magnificent jumps.

## Don't tell me, show me

Most new contemporary works I have seen have had some form of dialogue, with the dancers either uttering obscure poetic phrases to complement the music, or acting out a scripted scene between dance pieces. 'Kafli 2' took this one step further with a narrator. For me, this was a poor choice. It explained too much and did not leave enough to the imagination. Rather than letting the audience draw connections between the similarities of dancers and fireworks, the narration bluntly stated what should have been left to the choreography to illustrate.

Dance is by nature more obscure than other art forms. If a painter is moved by a sunset he can draw a picture, an actor can talk about it, but the challenge of choreography is to describe the sunset through movement.

"It's so beautiful, but tragic to be a firework. They are shot up into the sky, spring out and bloom before decaying swiftly into nothingness. They give themselves to their audience. The same can be said of a dancer that dedicates their life to tuning their body into a perfect instrument. They train, they flourish, but always tire before

their time," Sigga Soffía explains when asked about the motivation behind the piece.

What she explained in these five sentences, the narration drew out over entire sections of the piece. The description of a dancer's fleeting career carried out so long that it came across as jaded or apathetic: "I do not enjoy it anymore. I crave the attention and pain. I crave your eyes on me." The narrator then detailing the chemical make-up of the fireworks was akin to a US senator reciting the phone book during a filibuster.

This is not to say that narration would not be a welcome addition to many works where the choreographer fails to get the point across. I imagine announcing during the opening act of 'La Sylphide' that "It's all about a magical scarf and a prince who leaves his fiancée for a ghost," would clear up a few valid confusions later on and all in all make it a more enjoyable show. But, Sigga Soffía did such a great job with the choreography that the narration was unnecessary. The movement had grand displays followed by weariness showing the fireworks'—and dancers'—awe-inspiring, yet limited, lifespan.

Ultimately, I give it three out of five stars. The narration was unnecessary and the set was too heavily relied on. This is not to say the costumes or props were in anyway poor quality—any performance that credits a "pyrotechnician" is bound to be impressive—but that it became more of a distraction than an aid. The strength of the piece was definitely the choreography, and it should have been allowed to stand on its own.

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## Soup Tuesday: Icelandic Hotdog Soup – THE ULTIMATE HANGOVER CURE

Words York Underwood

Photo York Underwood

I love Icelandic hot dogs. I love their snap, their strange brown mustard, and their absurd addictive quality. I wanted to make a soup that not only incorporated hot dogs, but became almost a garnish to them—or vice-versa. The Icelandic version of a Bloody Mary—actually, this soup is good with a couple shots of vodka tossed in.

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You may not know this, but Icelandic ketchup is made with apples. You heard me correctly. I wanted to write an article just on the ketchup they use over at Bæjarins Beztu Pylsur, Iceland's most famous hot dog stand, but I was told that their ketchup guy doesn't talk to the press. Somewhere in Reykjavík, there is a reclusive ketchup genius, and I will discover his secret recipe. One day.

For now, I've made a tomato soup that incorporates apples. The soup complements the condiments. It is a philosophical enigma: is it a hot dog with soup? A soup with a hotdog? Or hot dog soup? I think it's hot dog soup. It's something both restorative and magical, yet incomplete without all the components.

Enjoy.

## SOUP SOUP SOUP SOUP SOUP



### Pylsusúpa: Icelandic Hot Dog Soup

Preparation time: 20 minutes

Cooking time: 50 minutes

This is traditional Icelandic Meat Soup, made with lamb and vegetables—a life-saver when food was scarce and energy was needed to battle the elements. Conventionally made with potatoes, rutabagas and carrots, kjötsúpa can also contain leeks, onions, and dried herbs. And whatever else you feel like putting in there. Remember: there's no Soup Police (although there maybe should be).

Here is our quick and simple twist on this classic—swapping the dry herbs for some fresh ones and adding fresh leek and cabbage in place of oatmeal or rice, the traditional thickening agents.

#### Ingredients:

- 15 Fresh Tomatoes
- 4 Medium Yellow Onion
- 1 Kgs Carrots
- 1 Kgs Celery
- 6 Cans whole tomatoes
- 500 ml of 18% Cream
- 3 Cloves Garlic
- 2 Handfuls fresh Basil
- 2 Large Granny Smith Apples
- 3 Tablespoons Butter, and enough Vegetable Bouillon to handle three litres of water.
- Weiners, Buns, Icelandic Ketchup, Sinnep, Remoulade and Cronions for garnish.

#### Directions:

1. Melt three tablespoons of butter on medium heat in the pot. Roughly chop the onions and add them to the pot to soften them up (we are going to blend this later, so don't worry too much about the chopping).



2. Dice the carrots and celery and add to the pot.



3. Cook for about 10 minutes, until the vegetables begin to soften, but still have form.



4. Slice up the apples and add them to the pot.



5. Tear up the handfuls of basil and peel three cloves of garlic and add them to the pot.



6. Dice up the fresh tomatoes and open the canned tomatoes and add everything to the pot.



7. Add about 2 litres of water, the vegetable bouillon and boil the pot for about 30 minutes. Blend with a hand blender until smooth or transfer into a blender and back into the pot to simmer. Add the cream. Season well with salt and pepper. Get ready to rock out with this hang-over-killing soup.



8. Serve into a nice bowl and sprinkle a good layer of cronions. Criss cross 4 lines of ketchup with 4 lines of sinnep and blob some remoulade around (artistically). Sprinkle a little more cronions on, for aroma and crunch.



Remember to share this recipe with your friends and loved ones. Also, send us your recipes: York@grapevine.is. Let's get through this winter together. One Soup Tuesday at a time.

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#### Minke whale

Date purée, wakame and teriaky

#### Arctic charr

"Torched" arctic charr with parsnip purée, fennel, dill mayo

#### Lobster

Lobster cigar with chorizo, dates, chili jam

#### Reindeer

Reindeer slider with blue cheese, portobello, steamed bun

#### Free range icelandic lamb

Lamb with coriander, pickled red cabbage, fennel, butternut squash purée, chimichurri

#### And to end on a high note ...

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#### Our kitchen is open

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FOR YOUR MIND BODY AND SOUL



## Retro Confusion

### Íslenski Barinn

Ingólfsstræti 1a, 101 Reykjavik

**What we think:** A promising menu that sporadically delivers.

**Flavour:** Old Icelandic food redressed for today's sensibilities.

**Ambiance:** Early 00s fashion referencing the 50s, lost in the 10s.

**Service:** Attentive and friendly

**Meal for 2:** 10,000 – 12,000 ISK



Íslenski Barinn was established shortly that famous economic collapse of 2008, the founders citing it—along with the subsequent wave of protests—as inspiration. At its initial location, the restaurant overlooked Austurvöllur, the sleepy square by Alþingi where Icelanders gathered to voice their outrage in unison. It came with a manifesto: it would be a place for locals, one that took classic Icelandic traditions forward, in a hopeful way—fitting for a restaurant born out of Iceland's mini-revolution.

The restaurant has since changed hands, and moved to its present Ingólfsstræti location. With new owners, at a new location, it's unsurprising that Íslenski Barinn's ambiance changed as well—and this is regretful, as it was previously a large part of its appeal. While Íslenski Barinn's new iteration certainly offers hints of thoughtful detail, they rarely come together, making for a slightly confused atmosphere. However, friendly service and a full house went some way towards ameliorating

this.

The menu is short and concise: there are small bites, some hot dogs, a burger selection, bar food, and seasonal specials. The menu itself could use a do-over, as the fine print makes it hard to read in the candlelight.

Keeping with the spirit of the place we ordered a beer, and the "Puffed Cod Skin" (1,100 ISK), marine chicharrón if you will. Crispy, crunchy, with barely a trace of oil, this is a take on an Icelandic ingredient that I appreciate and want to see more of: it was resourceful, uncontrived, and well executed—tasty enough that we completely ignored the chilli mayo that accompanied it while nibbling on our skins throughout the evening.

Our meal was off to a good start. Disappointingly, our next dish, the Grafinn Lundi (thyme-cured arctic puffin, 1,690 ISK), failed to meet our expectations, suffering from both the "tiny jar treatment" (less prevalent than at the old location, but no less frustrating) and the aioli that accompanied it. I wonder what Freud would have to say about grown people feeding from baby jars—a trend that's ready to see the inside of an urn. The puffin itself was all right, but the portions were minuscule and the mayo overpowered the thyme to the point that it might as well have been absent.

Seriously—give the mayo a rest. This is a tip for all the restaurants that carry it as a default dip: nuh-uh. Not unless you're hand-whisking your own luscious, creamy mayo.

For the main course, I had the grilled halibut (2,950 ISK), and my burger-loving hubby went straight for the reindeer burger (3,210 ISK). The halibut was beautifully presented, with barley, carrots and arugula. The fish was well cooked, the barley nutty, and

the sweetness of the carrots was cut by the bitter rocket.

There was nothing to fault with this dish, but it didn't particularly excite me either. The burger man enjoyed his burger, although we agreed that such intentional gourmandising of a burger, even a reindeer one, is unnecessary. The brioche buns are furthermore simply too sweet—and considering that the dish came with sweet potato fries and red onion chutney, it felt like a minor miracle that the burger's flavour wasn't smothered by all that sugar. That said, it was still an enjoyable burger, although nothing about it seemed to justify the hefty price tag.

Kudos to the attentive and friendly service staff. Thanks to them, our meal was well paced and enjoyable. We ended the night on a sweet note with the Ástarpungar (a classic Icelandic pastry made of fried dough) served with ice cream and caraway biscuits (1,300 ISK). The 'pungar were delicious, seemingly made of rye and fried to order. Certainly a pleasant note to end the meal on.

Throughout the night, Icelandic reggae band Hjálmar hummed in the background, the restaurant CD player stuck in repeat mode (or so it felt), which nicely sums up the vibe Íslenski Barinn is currently going for.

Leaving the restaurant after a pleasant night, we were fairly satisfied, albeit a little disappointed that its promising menu failed to live up to our expectations. With a tweak here and there, and more dishes like that fried cod skin on offer, Íslenski Barinn could really push the envelope and deliver a far more memorable dining experience. Here's hoping they do.

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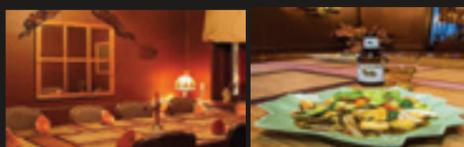


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#### Gló

Laugavegur 20b, 101 Reykjavík

**What We Think:**  
Healthy...yet delicious!?!

**Flavour:**  
Vegetarian/Vegan, North-African, raw food.

**Ambiance:**  
Upper middle class cantina

**Service:**  
Accommodating, polite.

**Price for 2 (no drinks):**  
4-6,000 ISK (fair)



While not the first of its kind in Reykjavík, the appearance of Bergsson Mathús clearly signalled the arrival of something different—a shift in Icelanders’ food culture. Essentially a breakfast and lunch spot, which also serves terrific brunch during weekends, Bergsson places great emphasis on local ingredients, slow cooking, slow eating, fair prices... Basically, they want to offer a food experience for people who appreciate food.

Bergsson is located next to the Parliament building, close to the pond, at a location where one might not expect to

find a quality restaurant. However, the basement location is surprisingly bright and spacious, with large windows facing the Parliament garden’s walls. My companion and I took our lunch there on a fairly busy Monday, with roughly half the seats taken.

The lunch menu consists of a meat dish of the day, catch of the day, and soup of the day, along with the ever present vegetable lasagne and vegan salad. Fresh, locally baked bread is served with every dish, and make no mistake: it is very delicious and very filling. So beware, it is very easy to lose oneself at Bergsson, feasting on delicious bread and homemade hummus.

For lunch, my companion chose the vegetable lasagne and salad (1,990 ISK), while I went for the soup and catch of the day: a sweet potato soup with ginger and lemon (1,390 ISK) and pan-fried ling with a lovely paste of sun-dried tomatoes and olives (2,290 ISK). The lasagne was well presented, covered in sun-dried tomato paste. The main ingredient was spinach, and the pasta sheets themselves were perfectly cooked. The paste could have done with a bit more seasoning, or maybe just a touch of fresh herbs and lemon, which would have breathed life into the dish. The salad was plentiful and original, with pineapple slices and fresh mint, shaved carrots and a bounty of perfectly cooked beetroot. Well above average.

The sweet potato soup was of a nice

consistency, colourful and vibrant. I would have preferred a touch more seasoning, and the ginger could have been a bit more prominent in the dish. Regardless, the soup was very nice. The ling was perfectly cooked, crispy on the outside and white and flaky at the centre. The lovely tomato paste that accompanied the fish was a treat—however, the fish was in fact so fresh that no sauce was needed. The ling was accompanied by “byggotto” (barley risotto). While Bergsson’s take on byggotto was tasty and well prepared, the side is starting to feel a bit overused in the Icelandic culinary scene, especially as a side with seafood. However, the catch of the day was overall great, and well worth the price.

Although Bergsson serve up some very nice tea and coffee, along with pastries and cakes that looked tempting as hell, we managed to resist dessert this time around.

Bergsson is a place for sitting and enjoying, a place where time and space are not of the greatest concern.

And, oh yeah, here’s a protip for you: For those who can swing by after work, there is a great 2-for-1 deal on takeaway meals, so nothing ever goes to waste. Brilliant!

 BJÖRN TEITSSON  
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NOV

13 . DJ Óli Dóri    14 . DJ KGB    15 . Maggasín

— 20:00  
free entry

16 . Monday night jazz 21:00  
free entry

17 . DJ Sunna Ben

18 . Always Sunny in Philadelphia quiz 21:00  
free entry

DJ Doodlepops    19 . DJ Ísar Logi

20 . DJ Óli Dóri    21 . Closed for private party

22 . Myndbandakerfi Fjölbýlishúsa —

Binge watch night 19:00  
free entry

23 . Monday

night jazz 21:00  
free entry    24 . Every Time I die<sup>(US)</sup>, Celestine

& Mercy Buckets 20:00  
3.000ISK

25 . Pétur Ben & Snorri Helgason 20:00  
2.000ISK

26 . Kiryama Family, Vaginaboys

& PolaRise<sup>(PO)</sup> 20:00  
1.500ISK

27 . DJ KGB    28 . Kött Grá Pjé & Forgotten

Lores 21:00  
2.000 ISK    DJ Gísli —

Galdur & Benni B-Ruff

29

30 . Monday night jazz 21:00  
free entry

1 . Hefnenda

—bíó: Cult Movie Night 21:00  
free entry

2 . Hí á Húrra:

Stand-up comedy 20:00  
tickets TBA

3 . Night of the 808's #2 20:00  
tickets TBA

4 . Open Mic

Night 21:00  
free entry    5 . Monday night jazz 21:00  
free entry

11 . Singapore Sling 21:00  
tickets TBA

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