



The REYKJAVÍK GRAPEVINE



Issue 8 × 2013

June 21- July 4

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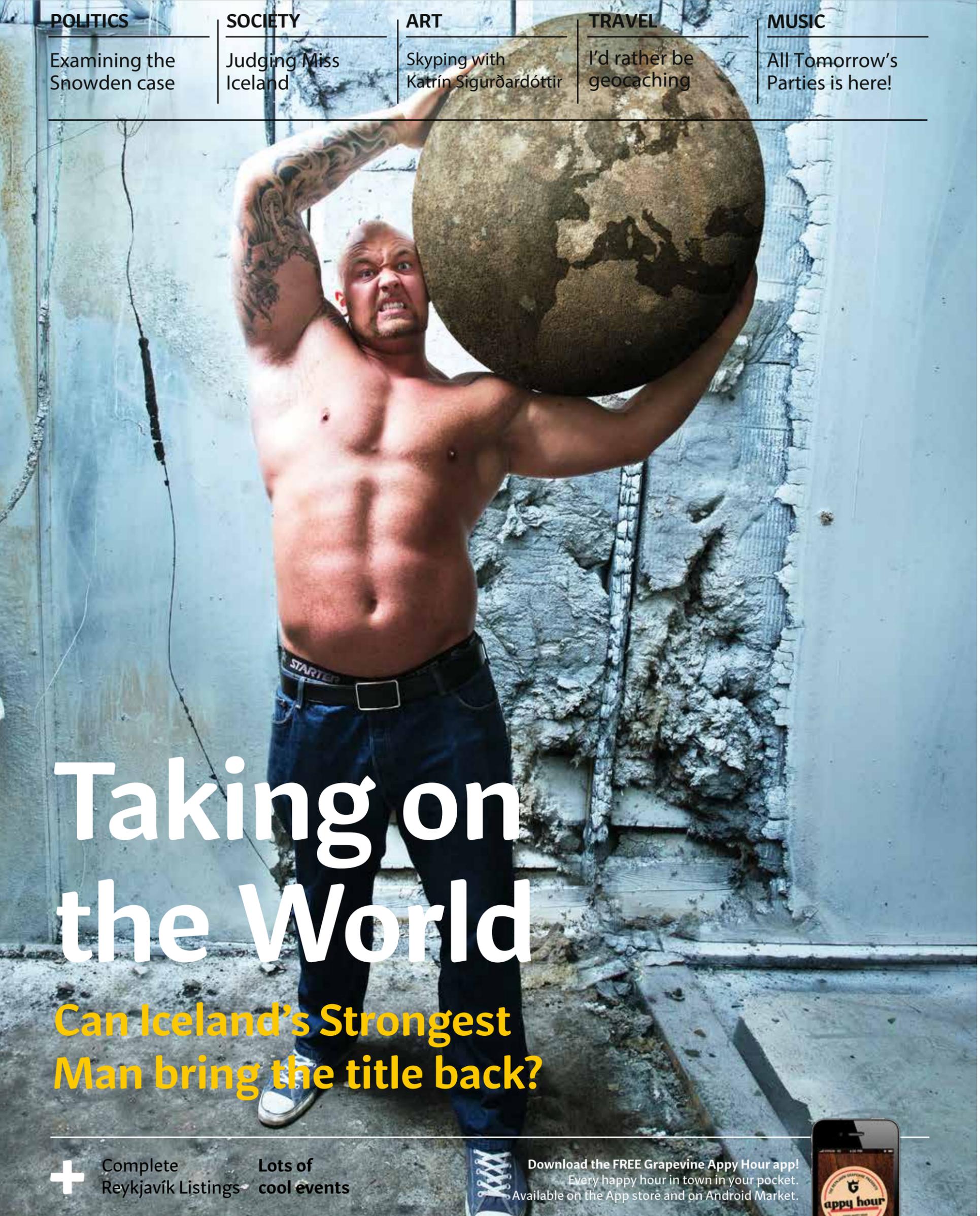
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TRACK MIXTAPE OF THE ISSUE



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This issue we are giving you a massive playlist with songs from the artists playing at ATP Iceland. The playlist includes:

- Nick Cave And The Bad Seeds - Jubilee Street
- Thee Oh Sees - Minotaur
- Apparat Organ Quartet - Konami
- Mugison - Jesus Is A Good Name To Moan
- The Fall - Two Librans
- HAM - Einskis Son
- Snorri Helgason - River
- Puzzle Muteson - Water Rising
- The Notwist - Pick up the phone
- Æla - Fuglinn í fjörinni
- Kimono - Kente
- Deerhoof - Breakup Songs
- Ghostigital - Don't Push Me feat. Sensational & Nick Zinner
- amiina - Perth
- SQURL - Pink Dust
- Dead Skeletons - Dead Mantra
- Hjaltalín - Lucifer/He Felt Like a Woman
- Valgeir Sigurðsson - The Crumbling
- Thurston Moore - Frozen Gtr múm - Toothwheels

Now sit back, relax and give it a listen—it's more than an hour long, after all. Then turn to page 38 to read more about the festival that takes place at Ásbrú on June 28-29.



Editorial | Anna Andersen

Iceland Might Not Have Elves, But It Does Have Giants

Anna's 27th Editorial

Iceland might not have elves, but it does have giants. You're looking at proof of that in this photo.

The giant standing beside me is Hafþór Júlíus Björnsson, Iceland's Strongest Man for the last three years and the world's third strongest man last year. I know it's hard to believe, but we are indeed part of the same species. As far as I know, I'm not an elf. I'm a 26-year-old human that stands 1.62 metres tall and weighs something shy of 50 kilograms. And he is, well, huge.

The author of this issue's feature article, "Hanging With Giants," walked into the Grapevine offices three months ago, absolutely star-struck. On his way to work that first morning, he had spotted none other than "Thor" Björnsson getting into his car.

I had no idea who he was raving about when he came in, but in the three months that we had John Wilkins with us at Grapevine, he filled us in on almost everything there is to know about this 24-year-old who hopes to become the World's Strongest Man at the end of the summer.

With predecessors like Jón Páll Sigmarsson and Magnús Ver Magnússon, who between them have secured more titles than any other competing country to this day, Hafþór has some big shoes to fill. But with their guidance and a whole lot of hard work, Hafþór could very well return the title of World's Strongest Man to Iceland for the first time in a decade.

Turn to page 24 to read the story.

FUN TRIVIA QUESTION

Taken from the educational trivia game *Instant Iceland*

Q: What does it mean if an Icelandic road has an F in front of the road number?

- A** Mountain road, suitable only for 4x4s.
- B** Unfinished road that may not lead to anywhere.
- C** Beware of roaming sheep.

Turn to page 30 for the answer!

The strongest men and the most beautiful women...that's what they say. Turn to page 6 to read more about the return of the Miss Iceland beauty pageant.



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www.grapevine.is
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 Published by Fróken ehf.
www.froken.is
 Member of the Icelandic Travel Industry Association
www.saf.is
 Printed by Landsprent ehf. in 25,000 copies.

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

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



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Located on the groundfloor of the highest tower of Reykjavík, and on the groundfloor of the historic Hotel Kea in Akureyri, the Hamburger Factory has been packed with burger-craving customers since it's opening in april 2010. Among the regulars is Iceland's best known fisherman, Eric Clapton.

Attention: Our hamburger buns are not round. They are square. Does it taste better? You tell us.

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HOW TO GET THERE

SOME TIPS ON HOW TO GET TO US WHILE LOOKING COOL AND LOCAL

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“Íslenska Hamborgarafabrikan, takk”
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“Sælar! Hvað er að fréttu”
(Hello! What's up)

“Ég er þokkalega svangur, get ég fengið hamborgara”

(I'm quite hungry, can I get a hamburger)

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2010

Sour grapes & stuff

MOST AWESOME LETTER

Love your publication! (I'm currently reading it on my patio at my home in Minneapolis, Minnesota in preparation for my third trip to Iceland on June 14.) However, I would love it even more if I could listen to it. Is there a Grapevine podcast? If so, where can I find it? If not, can you make one? There's a severe shortage of Icelandic podcasts available, at least in English and on iTunes.

Keep up the góða vinnu! (I hope that means "good work"...)

Thanks,
Justin Nickila

PS: If you have any other Icelandic podcast recommendations, I'd love to hear them.

**Greetings Justin,
Man, we tried so hard to launch a podcast, but for some reason kept failing at it. We even bought a microphone and everything. To no avail!**

But it's not too late. Maybe we can do something this year. It is, after all, our tenth birthday this year. We should be celebrating somehow.

Can't think of any Icelandic podcasts at the moment - if someone remembers something, we'll be sure to let you know.

Love,
The Grapevine

Dear Grapevine,
We recently returned home to North Carolina after an enchanting nine day visit to Iceland, during which we gazed at the waterfalls of the Snæfellsnes Peninsula, biked through Reykjavik to the Elliðaárdalur, and even sampled the fine local horse sushi and hákarl. The Perfect Trip!

Well, almost. We just realized that we failed to bring home a pair of cozy knee-high socks made from beautiful Icelandic wool. Doh!

Then we heard about the MOST AWESOME LETTER contest in The Grapevine, and we realized that our trip could still be saved. In conclusion, here's a haiku:

Cozy SheepWool Socks,
Full of Icelandic Magic.
Won't you send us some?
Yours,
Dave and Jenna Staples

**Dear Dave and Jenna
It's too warm for sheepswool socks
Summer has arrived!**

dear sirs, i am writing to you from athens in greece because i want you to know about steve, a man from iceland who is living about 2 years a homeless life in pagrati, a part of the city of athens. at the moment he is injured on his left foot, but there is nobody who can help him adaquately. steve says he is from reykjavik and that he feels some-

times homesick. please help him! i will also contact the consul, mr. lyberopoulos. please contact me by mail or by phone greece-2107013800. thank you very much, paschalis aita.

Thank you for your concern Paschalis, we wish more people were like you. So we appeal to our readers;

if anyone knows Steve (or perhaps Stefán?) in Greece, you really should check on him!

Love and peace,
The Grapevine

Congratulations, Reykjavik Grapevine! Happy Birthday to the only newspaper I am proud to be able to call a friend :-D Please keep being as brutally informative, incisive and investigative as I have known you, please stay as good at making hard-hitting journalistic exposes as entertaining as you do, and please enjoy your second decade as much as I

and the world have enjoyed your first. I know ten years is a bit early to be hitting the hard stuff, but the next round is on me.

Rísaknúss frá vinur þín, Singaround-iceland Daniel :ö)

Thank you Daniel, we're blushing! It's really too bad you missed our

party. We would have loved to see you do some karaoke. Readers, Daniel cycled around Iceland and sang for room and board. Pretty sweet, right?

**Knúúúúúúúú,
The Grapevine**

Good morning,
We are a group of 12, who will be in Iceland between 5-7 July. I have been told to contact you for some advice. I am interested in finding out some information about where to go, bars and clubs we can visit and reserve. Please can you help.

Regards,
Francis Harris
Rushden, UK

Hey Francis,

You may want to check out our Bar Guide in Issue #7. It has descrip-

tions/reviews of 60 bars in 101 Reykjavík. You can find it on our website. Let us know if we can be of more help!

Sincerely,
The Grapevine

YOUR PRIZE FOR THAT MOST AWESOME LETTER OF YOURS IS: TWO FREE MEALS AT THE ICELANDIC HAMBURGER FACTORY

Dear reader. We love you very much, especially those of you that write us letters all the time. In fact we love you so much that we keep trying to reward you somehow for writing us those letters. They entertain us, and they keep us informed of what our readers think. That is a pretty great deal. Now. Whoever wrote this issue's MOST AWESOME LETTER gets a prize. And it's a pretty great one. Yes, not one but TWO delicious hamburger-style meals at the wondrous ICELANDIC HAMBURGER FACTORY, which is an Icelandic themed restaurant that specializes in huuuuuge and mouth-watering burgers to Pt every occasion (we recommend the lamburger, unless you are a vegetarian. Lamb is not a vegetable). And if you for some reason didn't write this issue's MOST AWESOME LETTER don't panic. Their tasty burgers aren't that expensive, and you can always try for a MOST AWESOME letter later. Just write us at letters@grapevine.is



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Iceland | Beauty

Beauty Never Goes Out Of Style

Beauty Pageants on the other hand...

by Parker Yamasaki



After taking a hiatus in 2012 for the first time in 30 years, Miss Iceland is back! And it seems that the annual event has been dearly missed. A record number of entries flood in daily, with the latest tally at more than 1,000 entrants. Everybody's signing up, from the girl next door to the office secretary to Sigríður Ingadóttir, MP of the Social Democratic Alliance. Wait a minute, Sigríður? The contest may be back up and running as usual, but something's different. This time around, there's a whole army of contestants ready with some judgments of their own.

When the contest was called off in 2012, many thought that it was the end of Miss Iceland. "We didn't have the competition last year," Sigríður says, "so my hope was that they were done." But apparently that was never the plan. "It takes a lot of time and hard work to put these competitions together," pageant coordinator Íris Jónsdóttir says, and she would know as Iceland's representative in last year's Miss World contest. Now she has joined forces with Rafn Rafnsson to put on this year's Miss Iceland. "There just wasn't time to do it last year," she explains. "The plan was never to call it off for good."

The people's pageant

So in early June of this year, they announced that the pageant had been revived, and with some vigour. In a public statement, the new pageant director Rafn Rafnsson said that last year's gap gives them an opportunity to start fresh this year with something more modern and diverse, moving away from the Icelandic stereotype contestant—"blonde hair, blue-eyes, 1.73 metre tall"—that has dominated previous pageants. He made it clear that the criteria have been drastically widened. There are no size requirements or age limits. The application was opened to all. Word spread like wildfire.

In light of Rafn's announcement, renowned activist Hildur Lilliendahl felt obligated to take him up on his words. "My immediate reaction was to write a comment saying that nothing was stopping me from competing," Hildur says. She posted the application on Facebook and announced her participation. "When I woke up the next morning MP Sigríður Ingibjörg Ingadóttir had signed up."

"When I saw the application posted on Facebook," Sigríður Ingadóttir notes, "I thought, well I'll sign up as a fun way to join the protest. Sometimes you have

to use humour to get people to listen," she says, "it's a battle to get a message through to people." The idea caught on, by noon the next day hundreds of women—all shapes, all ages—hit the "submit" button on their own applications.

The show must go on

There is, however, a softer-spoken emphasis on the end of Rafn's open invitation: to apply. That's about as generous as the pageant is willing to get, for now. As much as we'd like to see Sigríður on stage come September, the official rules of the competition haven't undergone the drastic change that the protest activity has hoped for. "The rules are the same as always," Íris says. "You have to be

“
The typical
beauty pageant
epitomizes the
type of woman
patriarchy created
”

between eighteen and twenty-four, unmarried, and have no children. The rules are the same ones that apply to the Miss World competition as we eventually send the girls there. I still look at every applicant, but I choose them to compete based on the same rules as always."

It's not only with a snarky grin and spiteful fingers that women around Ice-

land are signing up to participate though. "Sure there is controversy, but there is a lot of positive interest and attention to the competition now as well," Íris says. Besides, any press is good press, right?

As a former Miss World contestant, Íris stands by her career in beauty pageants. "People can say what they want about it, but they'll never really know until they compete," she says. Last August Íris went to Ordos, China to compete at Miss World 2012. She says she is very grateful for the experience that the pageant brought her. "I got to compete with 120 other girls, many of whom I'm still in contact with," she says. "I got to travel and do things that I otherwise might not have gotten to do."

She is confident that the protest will not stunt the popularity of the competition. Iceland has a successful history of beauty pageant contestants, with one Miss International, three Miss Worlds, and five Miss Universe semi-finalists. "The competition will always be here—it has been going on since 1950 and will continue to go on," she says.

History need not repeat itself

But is history the same as justification? One of the arguments against the continuation of beauty pageants is that they are an outdated practice, based on an outdated and patriarchal vision of women. "I saw in the news that this man, Rafn Rafnsson, was going to resurrect the competition [in 2013], and immediately thought 'Gee, how old-fashioned,'" Sigríður says.

Others argue that just writing the competition off as "old fashioned" is still too generous. In an interview with *bleikt.is*, Þórdís Elva Þorvaldsdóttir makes clear that calling the competition "an anachronism" indicates that there was a time in history where competitions of

this nature were acceptable. Þórdís disagrees. In her opinion, the way a person looks has never been a special cause for awards.

Complaints about the pageant don't just lie at the surface, so to speak. There are deeper, societal issues that pageants nurture, according to Hildur. "The typical beauty pageant epitomizes the type of woman patriarchy created," she says. "Patriarchy teaches (and/or forces) women to be pretty and loving and kind and well-behaved and composed and down-right repressed and that's exactly how we keep women out of positions of power, out of the workplace and out of the potential revolution that destroys this moronic system."

Exit stage right

On its glossy wooden surface, the stage may look the same as ever come September 14. The competition is no longer just about looks, as Rafn says. It's about personality, charm, and also, stunningly good looks.

Whether or not the majority of applicants are in pursuit or protest, the overwhelming number of applicants has undoubtedly drawn attention to the pageant and to the concept of beauty pageants in general. As of June 15, the number of applicants was reported by RÚV at 1,100, and the list continues to grow.

But the message behind this surge of activity is not lost. "It's clear from all of the protest activity that there's been a change in values—I just hope that young women are becoming more sceptical about allowing people to measure them the way beauty pageants do" Sigríður says. "We know that today, in 2013, people do not find these sorts of things acceptable."

Earning Her Title



Anna Björnsdóttir takes her title as Iceland's 1974 "Miss Congeniality" very seriously. She is always engaged with her Southern California neighbourhood of Santa Monica. Neighbours know her for her friendly street side conversation, her soft spot for the neighbourhood strays, and that one time that she outed America's second most wanted man (second only to Osama Bin Laden) to the FBI and collected a 2 million dollar reward.

Anna got her second 'fifteen minutes of fame' when the FBI revealed her as the informant behind a 16-year long search for James 'Whitey' Bulgar. One day while relaxing by the television in her Reykjavík home, Anna recognised a woman on the screen. It was her southern California neighbour, "Carol Gasko," aka Catherine Grieg, aka Whitey Bulgar's long-time girlfriend and conspirator. She and Gasko/Grieg had bonded over a stray neighbourhood cat in their sunny California community. She reported the connection to authorities and concluded their sixteen-year long search.

Bulgar had gained notoriety as the former mob boss of Boston-based Winter Hill Gang. At the time of his arrest he was running from accusations of narcotics distribution, money laundering, and at least nineteen counts of murder. Not to mention, he was the inspiration behind Jack Nicholson's character in the 2006 film 'The Departed.' Bulgar and Grieg were arrested on June 23, 2011, with 30 firearms and about \$822,000 in cash hidden in the walls of their apartment. Well done, Miss Congeniality, well done. Sandra Bullock would be proud.

They said what?

by Ingibjörg Rósa Björnsdóttir



"I will miss Sámur more than I will miss Ólafur. Ólafur can come and visit me but Sámur can't visit me and then return to here."
— First Lady Dorrit Moussaieff on RÚV TV news, June 16, 2013

As it is a breach of Icelandic law for couples to have separate legal residences, many questions arose when it was discovered that Dorrit had moved her legal residence to London. When asked, Dorrit said it had to do with taking greater responsibility in running her family's jewellery business. Her parents, she said, were getting old and if she was going to take over the business, British law required that she have legal residence there (apparently not as bad as breaking Icelandic law?).

While the reporter moved on to interview the president, Dorrit interrupted twice, once to ask him what he meant by agreeing that it would be "eðlilegt" ("normal") for her to have residency in Iceland and another time to correct him when he said Dorrit's mother was almost 85 years old, when apparently she's merely 84(!). President Ólafur showed what a pro he is, not so much as blinking an eye as his wife swiftly moved from his right side to the left, then stepped behind him and shouting "Sámur, NO!" before running out of the frame. Ólafur just kept his cool and finished the interview calmly. Sámur is the couple's dog, which Dorrit then stated she'd miss more than her husband, as animals can't travel back and forth from Iceland for health cautionary regulations. If this was a ploy, it worked! Who cares now where Dorrit lives or lives not? We want to know who's getting Sámur.



"The EU took part in trying to coerce Icelanders into taking on a massive financial burden, against the law. Then the union, for the first time in its history, got involved in a court case against Iceland. Now, the EU needs to show that it's a Union based on law and equality, not the power, size and interest of the big players."

— Prime Minister Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson, National Day speech in Reykjavík, June 17, 2013

On Iceland's National Day, the newly elected prime minister talked about independence, the Icelandic language, Icelandic heritage AND Icesave. Yup, Iceland—best in the world! Sigmundur has obviously not forgotten about the Icesave dispute and his first June 17 speech was inspired by Iceland's long history of fighting for the right to make its own decisions and protect its interests above anything. Not that he was gloating, but he's clearly pretty happy about the EFTA ruling, and has some serious issues with the EU.



"What an unbelievably cheap comment. If this is your marketing method, I'm not sure I'll ever buy Gunnars mayonnaise ever again, even though I've really liked it until now."

— Hanne Þórhildur Gunnarsdóttir, professor of political science at the University of Iceland interviewed by DV, June 6, 2013

Gunnars is a long established family-owned business that produces mayonnaise and various kinds of mayo-based sauces. When a woman called Helen Gunnarsdóttir commented on a news story on DV.is, declaring that former Prime Minister Davíð Oddsson had hit rock bottom with mud smearing, Hanne stepped in to stand up for his pal. Only, he mistook Helen for a member of the Gunnars clan and got so upset by her comment that he was obviously ready to sacrifice the pleasures of yummie mayonnaise to show his support for the former PM/Central Bank manager turned editor of *Morgunblaðið*.

Helen's comment was in response to a news story about the contents of the section Reykjavíkurbref, "Reykjavík letter" in *Morgunblaðið*, where former Prime Minister Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir was said to have bid good morning to only one staff member at her ministry. Dozens of readers commented on the story as well as Helen, who quickly tried to calm the professor down and correct the misunderstanding by clarifying in another comment: "I have no relations to the mayonnaise company!" Hopefully she managed to save the mayo business 'cause we all love Gunnars mayonnaise.

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Iceland | FAQ

So What's This Airport Dispute I Keep Hearing About?

by Kári Tulinius

Like many long-running political disputes in Iceland, it's the fault of the British. During World War II, the UK occupied Iceland and built an airport on the then-outskirts of Reykjavík. When Keflavík Airport became the main international airport of Iceland, the one in Reykjavík lived on as the hub for domestic flights. But for almost two decades now, the City of Reykjavík has been working to relocate it, as it is no longer on the outskirts of town. In fact, it is now abutting downtown.

Hur hur hur, you said abutting.

And a fine word it is. For a long time the city government has been working to increase the population density of Reykjavík. The old policy of building new neighbourhoods whenever housing was needed has meant that the city is more sprawled than a ski jumper who did not fasten his boots properly.

And how does removing the airport solve the population density problem?

It does not solve it, but it helps quite a bit. The city reckons that around 7,000 apartments could be built on the land now occupied by the airport. As it is centrally located, a lot of already available service centres will be in reach of the new neighbourhood, and as it would be quite densely populated, transit would be cheaper than in the sprawling outer boroughs.

Well then, that all sounds fairly reasonable, so I guess the airport's leaving.

According to the City of Reykjavík, yes, but a lot of people are against it, especially those who live in the countryside of Iceland. As Reykjavík is the capital, out-of-towners find it necessary to visit from time to time. For them it is quite handy to have a downtown airport to fly into because most government offices are a stone's throw away from the airport.

Speaking of stones, it brings to mind, well, things that fall down on the ground.

One of the mostly unspoken subtexts of the debate is the pants-wet-

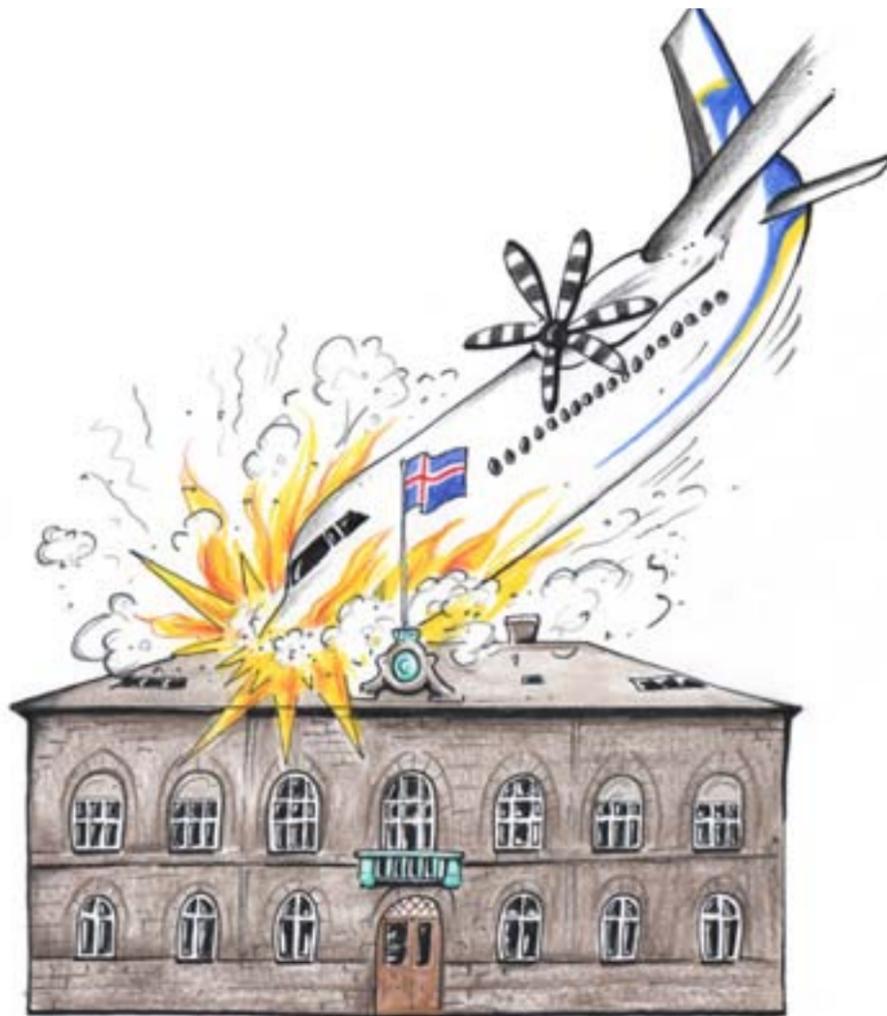


Illustration: Inga María Brynjarsdóttir

ting fear that grips people who are walking around in downtown Reykjavík, and glance up to find themselves staring a Fokker 50 in the nose, which is a passenger plane and not the latest mixtape in the rap feud between The Game and 50 Cent. The planes fly overhead of course, but the illusion of being about to be squished by 41,000 pounds of metal is persistent on whichever part of your lizard brain that thinks it is a good idea to discharge all excess pee when very frightened.

Presumably it's to make you lighter on your feet and leave a slippery patch for your pursuer to slip on.

It is clear you have given this a lot of thought. I said this subtext was mostly unspoken of because the political discussion show Silfur Egils used to preface any segments about the airport relocation by showing an animation of a Fokker plane crashing into the Icelandic parliament building. Thankfully

no planes have crashed in inhabited areas, though in 1988 a medium sized transport plane crashed fifty metres south of Reykjavík's most traffic-heavy road, killing the three people on the plane.

Yikes! How did they react to that? Move the road somewhere else?

Yes, eventually they moved the road about fifty metres southward. If that seems a bit crazy, the reason

they did it was largely to give the National Hospital more space as said high-traffic road went straight through its grounds. As you may gather, city planning as a concept was a late arrival on these shores. The closeness of the hospital to the airport is, however, part of what makes any schemes to relocate it especially touchy for out-of-towners, as it is the only facility in Iceland capable of performing many of the more complicated medical procedures.

So where is the City thinking of moving the airport?

The main candidate is a place on the eastern edge of the city called Hólmsheiði, the sort of lovely, evocative place that makes one want to build a prison, as the Icelandic state has just started doing. Since this development might require the municipal authorities to change its plans, other airport location ideas are being discussed. Of those ideas, the most popular is to use Keflavík Airport as the municipal airport for Reykjavík.

That would not make the people who want to be able to make a quick trip to Reykjavík happy.

There have been suggestions to accommodate them, most excitingly a 2007 proposal to build a mag-lev train that goes from Keflavík to where the municipal airport is now, though sadly that option has not been discussed much lately. That is a shame because whooshing around on a mag-lev train is the second coolest transport option, after the jetpack. For now though it seems more likely the airport stays where it is, until a plane crashes into the parliament building.

NEWS IN BRIEF

by Parker Yamasaki



Iceland, home to the world's most beautiful women and strongest men, which probably explains why nearly **1,200 women have entered this year's Miss Iceland beauty pageant**, including Sigríður Ingibjörg Ingadóttir, MP of the Social Democratic Alliance. It must be something in the water.

It's probably that same something that's keeping 79.1% of Iceland's over-55 population in the workforce, making Iceland **the most active over-55 workforce amongst OECD nations**. Surely they must just enjoy what they do. It can't be all about economic stimulation, right?

In any case, the Prime Minister's got that under control with plans to **reduce fishing fees** and therefore boost Iceland's economy, right? Wrong, says Jón Steinnsson, a professor of economics at Columbia University who has critiqued the Progressive Party's tactic, arguing that it would be more beneficial to focus on the macro-elements, even raising fishing fees so that Iceland could lower its taxes. **The IMF concurs**, and has discouraged Iceland from doing what the Social Democratic Alliance MP has called an "incomprehensible pampering" of the fishing industry.



Regardless, two whaling ships, Hvalur 8 and Hvalur 9, took to the high seas on the evening of June 17 in **pursuit of the endangered fin whale**. Hvalur 8 came in with the kill the following morning, prompting the Animal Welfare Institute to call Iceland out for its determinations "to act as a rogue whaling nation, no matter the cost to its tourism and seafood industries."

Despite the bloodshed, Iceland was named **the most peaceful country in the world** by the Institute for Economics and Peace's Global Peace Index for the sixth consecutive year. Besides, even if there are costs to tourism, the travel industry is ready and willing to make up for them with **entry fees on popular natural wonders**. Though the de-

Continues over



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The Case For Sustainable Whaling



Hannes H. Gissurarson is professor of political science at the University of Iceland.

World food prices have soared in recent years, not least after the financial crisis of 2007–8. The poor are expectedly hit hardest. But a large source of cheap, healthy food is available and hardly utilised: the whale stocks in the seven seas.

Iceland is one of few countries to allow some whaling. The two stocks harvested in Icelandic waters are the minke whale, one of the smaller whale species, and the fin whale, the world's second-largest mammal. These stocks are in good shape: according to Icelandic marine biologists, there about 40,000 minke whales and 20,000 fin whales in Icelandic waters. Harvesting a few hundred whales of each stock per year is thus fully sustainable.

The European Union—to which Iceland recently applied for membership—is however adamantly against whaling. The motive is political. Along with the African elephant and a few other big animals, the whale is part of the “charismatic megafauna” embraced by environmentalists, a powerful political constituency in Europe. The whale no longer has the image of the deadly Moby Dick in Melville's novel. Now it is supposed to be the smiling, cheerful Keiko of ‘Free Willy.’ The scientific argument for a

ban on whaling is weaker, however. If many stocks, not only the minke and fin whales in Icelandic waters, are abundant, why are they not harvested?

Part of the answer is history: terrible overexploitation of whale stocks in the early 20th century. The International Whaling Commission, IWC, which was established in 1946, was proving ineffective in protecting whale stocks and the majestic blue whale, the world's largest animal, was almost driven to extinction. In 1973, a respected Canadian mathematician, Colin W. Clark, published a piece in ‘Science’ arguing that, with a high discount rate, and a slow-growing species like the blue whale, it might not be profitable to hunt it to extinction. Taking their cue from Clark, environmentalists targeted the IWC, succeeding in 1982 to impose a moratorium on whaling, effective in 1986.

Iceland voted against the moratorium and used a special exemption to continue limited whaling for scientific purposes in 1986–9. In the summer of 1986, the environmentalist organisation Sea Shepherd responded by sinking two whaling boats in the Reykjavík harbour and attacking a whale processing plant. Iceland left the

IWC in 1992 to protest the disregard it showed for scientific findings. The IWC had not allowed whalers to resume harvesting stocks found to be abundant. It seemed indeed to be turning itself into the International Non-Whaling Commission. The chair of IWC's scientific committee, Dr. Philip Hammond, resigned from his position in 1993 for the same reason as Iceland left the IWC.

In 2002, however, Iceland re-joined the IWC, with a reservation that if the scientific evidence favoured sustainable whaling, it would be resumed in Icelandic waters. When the minke and fin whale stocks were found to be abundant, whaling was resumed in 2006, despite loud complaints by the EU. Icelandic whalers are now regaining markets lost during the moratorium, while whale watching at sea is also popular with tourists in Iceland.

Moreover, in 2007, three distinguished economists, Quentin Grafton, Tom Kompas and Ray Hilborn, published a piece in ‘Science’ rejecting Clark's 1973 argument against whaling. Grafton and his co-authors pointed out that if a particular stock of an animal were owned by someone then they would have a vested interest in maintaining a strong stock because harvesting costs usually are low when the stock is abundant, with the cost rising as the population is reduced.

The Icelanders have developed an efficient system in their fishery, making it profitable unlike most fisheries elsewhere. This is a system of individual,

transferable quotas, which can best be described as private use rights in fish stocks. This system could easily be extended to whales in the Icelandic waters and for that matter elsewhere. This would essentially mean that whales would be privatised, taken into stewardship. Those holding the quotas would behave like owners: they would have a vested interest in maintaining strong whale stocks.

Whaling may not only be sustainable in many stocks, but it may also be necessary. Icelandic marine biologists estimate that whales in the Icelandic waters consume annually about six million tonnes of many kinds of seafood, mostly squid and crustaceans, but also two million tonnes of fish, such as cod, herring and capelin. By comparison, Icelanders harvest slightly more than one million tonnes of fish annually.

Seemingly, whales significantly reduce the total fish harvest in the Icelandic waters. Even if this were not true, as some environmentalists argue, this would only mean that the whale succeeds in finding and processing nutrients which man, with present technology, cannot utilise. In other words, the whale can then be looked upon as a highly efficient search engine for, and processor of, seafood.

Thus, in a world of food scarcity, especially amongst the poor, the fierce opposition of the European Union to sustainable whaling may not only be scientifically misguided, and economically unsound, but also immoral.

Continued

tails are still being hammered out, Minister of Industry and Commerce Ragnheiður Elín Árnadóttir says she hopes to have the fees implemented by this time next summer, which is probably why the tourists are in such a rush around the Ring Road. On June 12, the police stopped 14 vehicles in Hvolsvöllur for speeding, with most of culprits being foreign tourists.



That's not all the Icelandic police force has had to deal with though. On June 10 they were called out to Svinadal to deal with **two polar bears that had made their way over from Greenland**. As it turns out, the alleged polar bears were actually just a couple of especially plump Icelandic sheep. Nothing to sing about.

That is, unless you're a member of Sigur Rós, who have plenty to sing about with the **release of their newest album, 'Kveikur'**. The album was released **June 17, on Iceland's National Day**, giving Icelanders yet another reason to flood the streets in celebration! Flags were flying, balloons were bouncing and whistles were blowing.

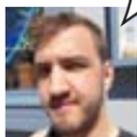


Speaking of whistle blowing, **Edward Snowden**, a former CIA employee, came forward earlier in the month with information regarding vast surveillance of American citizens by the CIA and NSA. **Snowden has expressed a desire to seek political asylum in Iceland**, but first he has to get here, as asylum seekers must be located in Iceland when they apply. Wikileaks spokesperson Kristinn Hrafnsson has been communicating with Snowden and is trying to get him to Iceland from his current location in Hong Kong.

And Snowden is not the only one trying to get Iceland's attention. This month, **the EU has been pushing Iceland to make a decision** about whether or not it will join. But Iceland isn't ready to make any rash decisions. “It's just part of the democratic process,” reported Iceland's Foreign Minister, Gunnar Bragi Sveinsson, defending Iceland's continued discussion and assessment without any talk of deadlines.

Welfare Society, You're Doing It Wrong

Why the new public insurance bill needs to be recalled



Tómas Gabriel Benjamin is a furious intern at The Grapevine.

As far as outrage goes, having to pay seventeen thousand, five hundred and thirty eight ISK for a few packs of test strips and insulin pens ranks pretty high on my list. As a type one diabetic, I am unable to produce insulin, a hormone essential to the body's metabolic process. I have to monitor my glucose levels with single use test strips, and regularly inject myself with insulin, without which I am likely to go into a coma or have a violent seizure.

Under a newly passed law meant to save the State money and make the health-care system more egalitarian, everyone now pays a greater proportion for his or her prescriptions until their cost of care reaches 69,415 ISK per year, at which point

the State takes over payments.

It sounds good in theory, so what's the problem? Noticeably missing from the new law governing public insurance is the clause that made medication free for most chronically ill. Specifically, the old law stated that it was illegal to take payment for repeat prescriptions vital to patients' continued survival.

This means that suddenly that same goody bag of drugs essential to my basic survival went from approximately 25,000 ISK to 50,000 ISK per year. And because under no circumstances will my diabetic costs reach the pay ceiling of the new bill, the new law ensures that my costs of living will double.

To add insult to injury, any equipment essential to my care that needs to be replaced is no longer covered. If I lose my glucose monitor when it's out of warranty, that's 8,000 ISK out of pocket, regardless of whether I've reached the cap or not.

Thankfully I am able to pay for my prescription, as my mother taught me to have a rainy day fund for bat-shit crazy government decisions. However, not everyone is in that same position. For families struggling to make ends meet, this may be the straw that breaks the camel's back. And in a so-called welfare state, why should those who get dealt an unfortunate hand in life be further penalized financially?

With the high upfront cost, some of the chronically ill are put into the impossible position of having to decide how much they are willing to pay for proper medical care. When patients can't afford the right treatment, the state runs the risk of exponentially increasing its costs through more hospital admissions. And can you really

ask a diabetic to dilute their level of care when it is signing them up for a long list of harmful side effects including nerve damage, blindness and impotence?

Would you ask someone with schizophrenia to only take his medication every other day? An epileptic to forgo treatment and instead avoid stressful situations and flashing lights? An asthmatic person to stop using an inhaler and refrain from physical activity? No, because that would be senseless and barbaric.

As I see it, there are two solutions available to new Minister of Health Kristján Þór Júlíusson. One, he recalls the bill in its entirety, or two, he reinserts the clause ensuring that the chronically ill get their care for free while those who do benefit from the new bill are not left hanging.

Ultimately this is a question of whether or not we want to care properly for our illnesses. And this is a question the new minister of health will have to answer.

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UNICEF's Sigríður Víðis Jónsdóttir on Syria

by Tómas Gabríel Benjamin

Having just finished a conference call with the executive directors of UNICEF, Sigríður Víðis Jónsdóttir is relieved to hear good news from Syria – a weekly report shows that emergency supplies for women and children have reached bombarded Aleppo and Homs in Syria. After two years of brutal civil war, the infrastructure of the country has crumbled and access to basic services has been crippled. Sigríður is the communication director of UNICEF Iceland, and is responsible for raising awareness of the emergency relief efforts in Syria.



Photo: Nanna Dís



Photo: UNICEF

Sigríður, who has a background in journalism and a master's degree in, governance and international development from University of East Anglia, first travelled to Syria in 2009 during a time of peace. At the time, she was working on her book 'Ríkisfang: Ekkert' ("Citizenship: None"), about Iraqi refugees who were granted asylum in Akranes, Iceland. The easiest way into Iraq was the land route through Syria, and Sigríður had heard a lot of good things about Syria. "I got myself a room in the old parts of Damascus, by the centuries' old city walls," she says.

The war in Iraq was then in full swing and Syria was accepting refugees with open arms. They too rented rooms in Damascus or lived with relatives. Most of them were waiting to go back home, others were building a new one in Syria.

When she returned to Iceland, Sigríður recommended visiting this beautiful paradise to all of her friends. "It seemed inevitable that it would experience the same boom in tourism that Iceland has seen," she says, "the culture was accessible and profound, and the people very generous. I have lived in

other places for longer periods of time without being so deeply moved."

Trading the handshake for the fist

The Arab Spring swept through Syria in 2011 where a series of protests erupted into a full-blown civil war. Many were forced to rely on their neighbouring countries' hospitality, with an estimated 1.5 million Syrians now living as refugees in Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq and Turkey, according to the UN Refugee Agency.

Sigríður says certain societal changes had been on Syrians' minds when she was there, changes that might upset the status quo. "It is only natural that people come forward to work towards a fairer society, but what surprised me was that the protesters were met with extreme measures when what they were after was a dialogue."

The cost of the conflict has been great, both in human lives and ancient treasures. "I travelled to Aleppo in the North and saw the historic old market and the citadel," Sigríður says of her former visit. "They were on the UNESCO

World Heritage list, but have now been seriously damaged by the war. It is incredibly depressing." In fact, all six of Syria's heritage sites have been damaged or destroyed, including the crusader castle 'Krak des Chevaliers.'

Moving forward

Syria is constantly on Sigríður's mind, and she feels ill hearing about explosions or fighting in areas she knows intimately. "The solution," Sigríður says, "is for all political leaders that can influence the situation to commit to do so."

Until then, she finds some solace in the stalwart aid work of UNICEF and other charities. "Help is steadily reaching more Syrians," she says. "Although the efforts of a single person can only go so far, I believe each person has a moral duty to help others in need. And people can do just that by donating money to charities involved, or spreading the word on social media sites; every little bit helps." Icelanders have also been responsive to UNICEF's emergency appeal for Syria, Sigríður says. "They seem to understand that their contributions count. Each month 22,000 Icelanders also do-

nate to UNICEF, and a fixed part of that sum goes to our emergency work."

Recently a couple of noteworthy Icelanders have stepped forward criticizing foreign aid work. Progressive Party MP, Vigdís Hauksdóttir publically stated that "a broke man can't pay for others," and Executive Director of Fjölskylduhjálpin (Family Aid Iceland), Ásgerður Jóna Flosadóttir insisted we first solve our domestic problems before helping others.

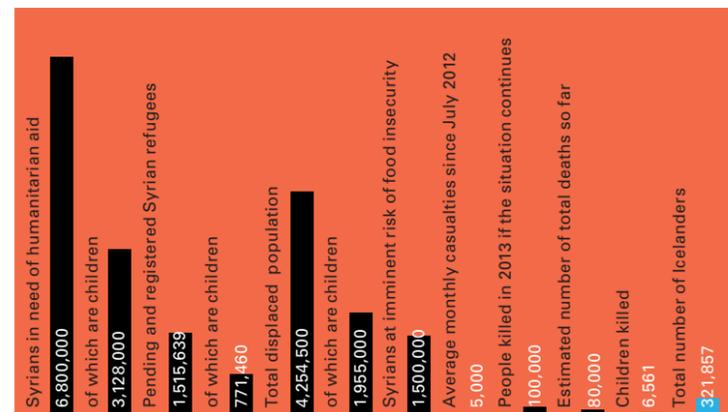
"Why not tackle domestic and foreign aid simultaneously?" Sigríður replies. "UNICEF, for example has done a lot of work for children in Iceland, at the same time as saving children's lives abroad. For just 6,000 ISK we can provide 107 sachets of therapeutic food for malnourished children, 167 vaccinations, or 80 notebooks and pencils for children in need. That's a lot."

It goes without saying that it would

be difficult to do as much good for that amount of money in Iceland.

In emergency situations like Syria, Sigríður says children are always the most vulnerable. "We have mobile medical teams that perform life-saving operations, but children need more than just food and medication," Sigríður says. Schools get destroyed or shut down because of fighting, but once they reopen it is vital that children start going back. "Not only does it give them an education, but also a routine and something to look forward to."

Syria has been transformed from what Sigríður remembers, but she says she still wants to revisit it. "The war is terrible, but what people forget," she says, "is that life still goes on. People still wake up, go about their day and fall asleep. One day this conflict will come to an end."



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		17:00*	17:00	17:00	17:00	17:00*				
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A Future Citizen Of Iceland?

Examining the Snowden case

by Sam Knight

Just three years after WikiLeaks first published classified information with help from volunteers in Reykjavík, another massive national security scandal in the U.S. has managed to weave Iceland into its narrative. After leaking top-secret documents to the Guardian detailing clandestine American intelligence activities and cyber warfare, a 29-year-old former intelligence contractor named Edward Snowden wants refuge in Iceland.



Stills from video

While it could put Iceland on a collision course with the world's sole superpower—American officials have launched a criminal investigation into Snowden, who is currently hiding out in Hong Kong—two prominent opposition MPs told the Grapevine that Iceland should welcome the whistleblower. Calling Iceland a country “that puts a strong emphasis on personal freedom and the internet,” former minister of foreign affairs and current Social Democrat MP Össur Skarphéðinsson said that “Iceland could very well justify granting him asylum on political grounds.” And former minister of the interior and current Left-Green MP Ögmundur Jónasson said that Snowden “is doing us all a favour by telling us about espionage allegedly conducted by U.S. authorities.”

“This is no private matter for the Americans since it has to do with gathering information about individuals and groups on the internet,” Ögmundur added. “We Icelanders should follow this very carefully and be open to the idea of giving Edward Snowden asylum here if he so wishes, even offer him assistance.”

Snowden first brought up the issue of a permanent sanctuary in Iceland when he outed himself in a June 9 interview with Guardian journalist Ewan MacAskill who, alongside colleague Glenn Greenwald, had used the former contractor's leaks as the primary source for explosive reporting.

“My predisposition is to seek asylum in a country with shared values,” Snowden said. “The nation that most encompasses this is Iceland. They stood up for people over internet freedom.”

Although he didn't explicitly mention it, Snowden was referring to Iceland's post collapse experimentation with 21st century transparency. Icelanders welcomed WikiLeaks in late 2009 after the

Kaupþing-RÚV gag order scandal—a move that set the stage for Reykjavík to play a massive role in Cablegate and the subsequent fallout. Alþingi's unanimous approval of the Icelandic Modern Media Initiative (IMMI) in 2010—a resolution calling on Iceland to modernize protection for journalists and freedom of information laws—similarly garnered international attention.

A fanciful desire?

But Snowden himself mentioned that his desire might be fanciful. Even the International Modern Media Institute—the non-profit organization that essentially started out as a lobby for IMMI, the parliamentary resolution—noted that other nations could offer Snowden stronger protection due to “the security implications of asylum.”

In a statement issued after Snowden went public, IMMI Executive Director Smári McCarthy and Birgitta Jónsdóttir, IMMI chairman and Pirate Party MP—both former WikiLeaks volunteers who have been contacted by American officials for their work—noted that “Iceland may not be the best location, depending on various questions regarding the legal framework.” Iceland and the United States have an extradition treaty, and Iceland, according to reports based on WikiLeaks disclosures, was party to the CIA's extraordinary rendition programme under the Bush administration between 2001 and 2007—an era dominated by the incumbent ruling parties.

Snowden himself remarked, in a June 17 Q&A with Guardian journalists and readers, that he believed staying in Hong Kong, for the time being, offered him more security than a direct trip to Iceland.

“I had to travel with no advance book-

ing to a country with the cultural and legal framework to allow me to work without being immediately detained,” he explained. “Hong Kong provided that. Iceland could be pushed harder, quicker, before the public could have a chance to make their feelings known, and I would not put that past the current U.S. administration.”

Ready to assist

Despite potential pitfalls, IMMI noted in its June 9 statement that it planned to reach out to Snowden and Minister of the Interior Hanna Birna Kristjánsdóttir. And in an email, Smári said that IMMI has, in fact, reached out to Snowden through their contacts who are in touch with him. “The message was simply that we stood ready to assist,” he said.

Investigative journalist and WikiLeaks spokesperson Kristinn Hrafnsson said in a Fréttablaðið column that a representative for Snowden approached him on June 12, requesting his help liaising with the Icelandic government. Smári added that IMMI has also contacted the Icelandic government “explaining the steps that we have taken and that we would attempt to be involved.”

Jóhannes Tómasson, a spokesperson from the Ministry of the Interior, said that Kristinn Hrafnsson requested a meeting on his case and this request was granted the same day. “A representative of the Ministry of the Interior met him and went over with him the legislative arrangements regarding asylum seekers and the rules that are in force,” he said. “The legislation is general and applies equally to everyone,” he said. “In order to apply for asylum in Iceland, the individual in question must be present in Iceland and make the application in his or her own name.”

Whether or not the Snowden case would impact Iceland's foreign relations, the domestic climate might not be terribly favourable. In May, when Ögmundur Jónasson was still minister of the interior, Iceland deported 29 ethnic Serbs to Croatia on the grounds that ethnic minorities are protected under Croatian law, even though reality might not comport with the law.

Is it possible?

Iceland has also not yet become the sort of digital age safe haven that Snowden described.

“Whistleblower protection is woefully unlegislated,” Smári said. “Most of the progress to date has been in the form of research and development of laws, not in the actual proposal and adoption of laws.” The majority of journalistic protections that have been codified into law as a result of the 2010 parliamentary resolution, he wrote, somewhat concern “information and telecommunications acts” and “a new media law, which protects sources and places transparency requirements on media outlets.”

But, he noted, if Iceland bestows citizenship upon Snowden, it would be illegal, under article 66 of the Icelandic constitution, to extradite him.

“Whether the same applies to those who have been granted asylum is a slightly complicated question,” he said. “Generally speaking, those granted asylum are not automatically citizens, nor do they have the rights of citizens.”

Nor would Snowden have to be in Iceland to become a citizen by act of Parliament. Össur pointed out that Alþingi granted citizenship to Bobby Fischer last decade. The chess legend, who had become increasingly infamous for anti-Semitic rants—not a crime under U.S. law—and allegedly evading taxes and breaking the travel embargo against Yugoslavia in 1992—both crimes under U.S. law—was granted Icelandic citizenship in 2005, while under detention in Japan.

“I acknowledge that it might be politically difficult for the government to be a prime mover of such a proposal,” Össur said. “However, if my memory serves me, some of the new ministers in our government were among the sponsors of a whistleblowers' bill, among them our beloved minister of foreign affairs. So instead of confronting the government with the issue, it might be an idea to solicit their tacit approval for a Private Members Bill on yielding political asylum to Snowden.”

A bigger issue

At the heart of the matter lies not just an academic conversation about individuals' privacy. In the U.S., for example, federal officials played a role in cracking down on the Occupy Movement. Anti-war activists and anarchists have been investigated for political beliefs in counter-terrorist probes. Journalists—from WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange to Fox News' James Rosen—have been investigated by the Obama administration's Justice

Department for allegedly conspiring to leak classified information—something that “senior administration officials” and friendly journalists do all the time in D.C.

Iceland, too, has not been left unmolested by the long arm of American spookdom. In 2011, for example, the FBI turned up unannounced to interview a WikiLeaks associate. Ögmundur, however, ordered the Icelandic police to refrain from cooperating.

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‘Edward Snowden is doing us all a favour by telling us about espionage allegedly conducted by US authorities,’ Ögmundur said.

”

The involvement of NSA intelligence gathering is unclear in these cases. But considering how the Obama administration stands accused of trampling on free speech and privacy, dubiously, in the name of national security, the global import of the former contractor's allegations is unquestionable. Icelandic law, too, might have been subverted, with Snowden providing mounting evidence of global data mining, espionage, and cyber warfare.

“Edward Snowden is doing us all a favour by telling us about espionage allegedly conducted by U.S. authorities,” Ögmundur said.

“The Icelandic government, being charged with safeguarding Icelandic sovereignty, should take a stand on this issue,” Smári added. “I have no doubt they will.”

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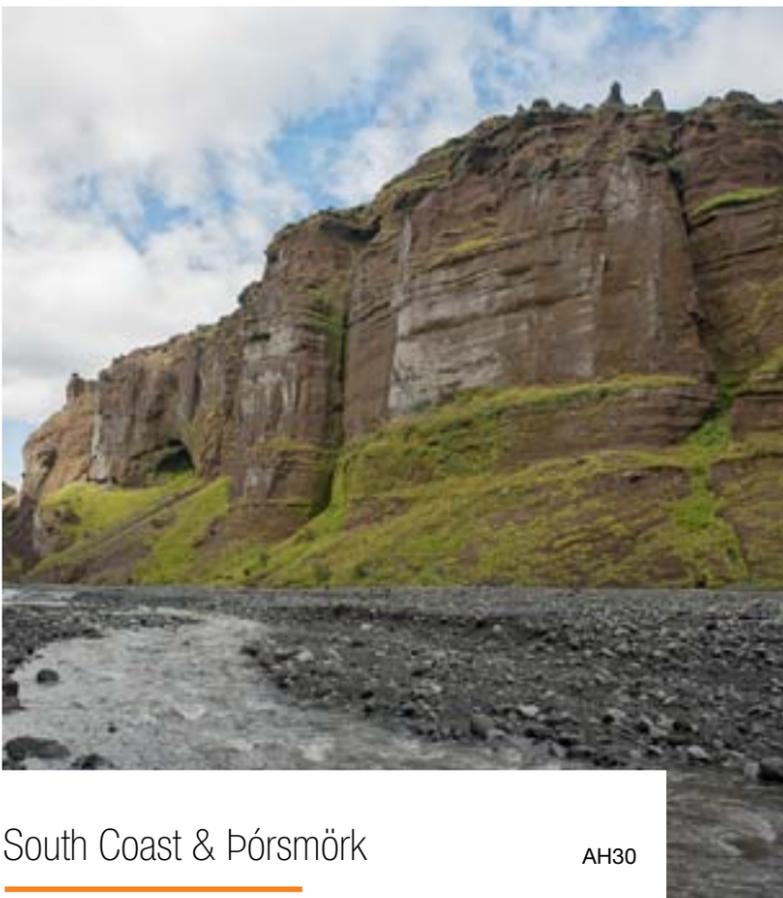
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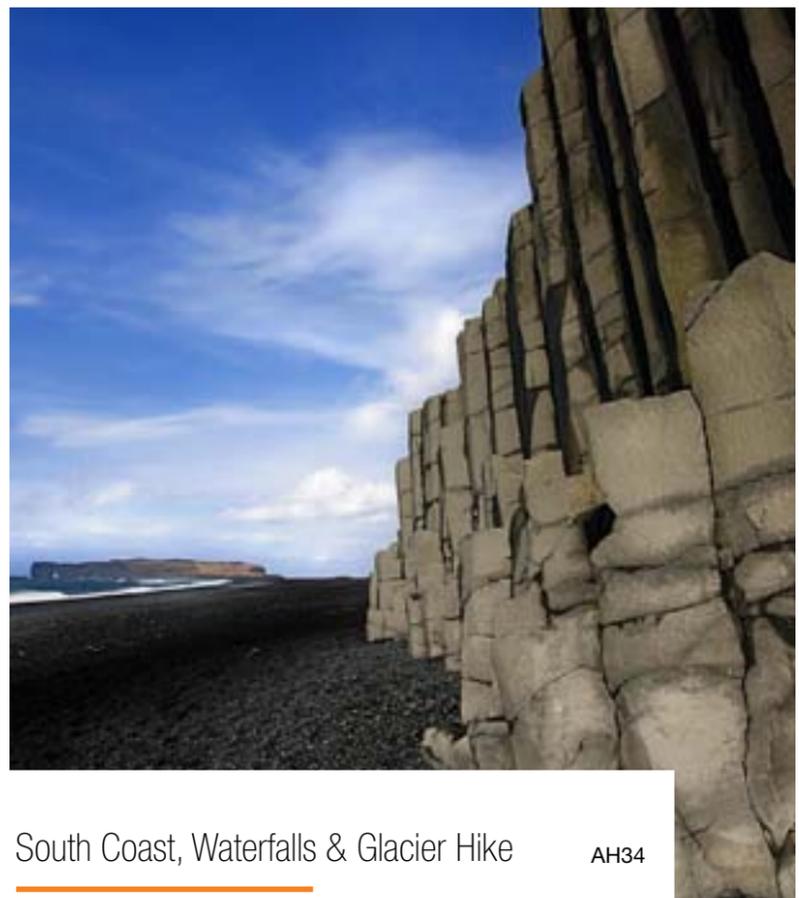
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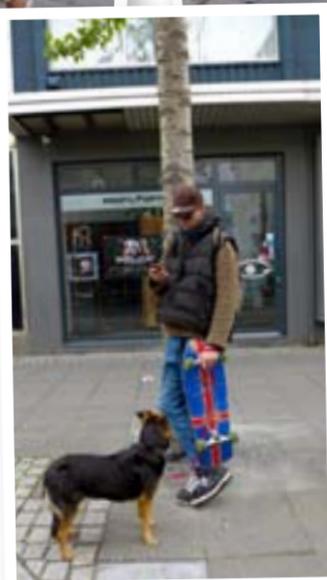
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Photos by Shea Sweeney & Nanna Dís



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Behind Björk's Mutual Core

Director Andrew Thomas Huang interviewed

by Nic Cavell



Stills from video

Past holographic women buzzing in electric mauves and garish greens, past Chinese artists scribbling grey scale not-quite-likenesses of tourists, and just beneath golden arches and beaming advertisements for shamrock shakes, the crowd's arms stretch nervously before them, iPhones testing the light-polluted air like the knobbed feelers of hypersensitive snails. It is 11:55 pm, and a street artist is at work in Times Square. Beneath him lies a blackened canvas gessoed with spray paint.

Fumes hiss off the paper into nostrils, and some cover their mouths. At 23:56, the artist produces a joint knife and bends it to the canvas like a military instrument. Streaks of red, blue and orange light begin to poke through the black world. At 23:57, 80 monitors towering above the artist begin another refrain entirely.

In the video for "Mutual Core," Björk appears vertiginously costumed, sunk amidst grappling sediment. From the sand come rocks; from the rocks, tongues whose layers lap at each other but struggle to connect. Skeins of moss and hair wind between the bodies, stretching. A growing profusion of expressive colour seems to make the attempt at union only more desperate.

At 23:58, the street artist's palette is bursting from charcoal to white-hot orange, deep purple, black and blue. A cityscape emerges in the spaces whittled by the joint knife. Rocks splash into sands active like wood chippers in the video above, and the crowd's attention flits between the monitors' frenzy of graphics and the artist's own hand braying layers of the painted blindfold.

With a large ruler he wipes the bottom of the paper white as teeth. At 23:59, he reaches for another can of paint just as above him Björk's "unspun capsule" of energy explodes. The compressed bodies volcanically erupt; at 00:00, lava flows like sloe gin down their pied tectonics in a world absent of lyrical sound once more.

In the credits, beside Björk's name, "ANDREW THOMAS HUANG" glows.

Throes of creation

Out in the wilderness beyond Reykjavík lies a lot of sand. Buckets of it—whole truckloads, even, in the mining areas. Driving through the countryside with a production assistant at shotgun, Director Andrew Thomas Huang imagined himself sifting his hands in thrall through the beautiful, plum-black mixture. They would stop the car while he did this, collecting sand samples of all sorts. But even as he

did so, Huang felt the artist in him rankling, polarizing—felt certain that of all the sands in Iceland, only seashell-collared sands would match the aesthetic he was carefully rigging for Björk's video.

So the car departed to bottle more samples decomposed from the milky stuff that shields crustaceans from predators in the sea. In separate trips, they cribbed still more from the landscape: moss, green sprigs, and some baked yellow on the sun-heated rock. After that, they took the rocks themselves.

Huang's native soil is in the American Southwest, where from a young age his creative imagination was filtered through a prism of red mesas, expansive blue skies and earthy, yellow crust. While this bright palette doesn't define Huang—his breakout video during film school, "Doll Face," features a robot whose ashen gears attenuate and fray in pursuit of puerile shades of lipstick—it has nevertheless provided the basis for his recent successes including "Solipsist," a ten-minute short that sketches a world of synaptic distance between individuals—a world in which Björk, the artist, wanted to exist.

To open that dimension for Björk—to create a new space in the aesthetic of "Solipsist"—Huang had to attack his first impulses and suss out the complexity of "Mutual Core" and Björk's own sensual presence. As he explains it, this is precisely the rhythm that pounds out in the execution of any music film.

"Maybe you hear a song and suddenly there's a visual cliché in your head—'Oh, I picture her hair blowing in the wind and she's riding on the back of a pick-up truck.' And then you come back to yourself with, 'No, no, don't do that. Or yeah, do that, but what ways are there to make it more specific?'"

Acknowledging that this was a "volcanic song," he followed his dissatisfaction from the flat, science diagram-like tectonic plates in his early sketches to something more active—to various lively drawings and Photoshop collages that grew less and less "stupid" with each draft. For materials, he chose sand, but not the black sand.

"It's funny because growing up in Los Angeles, I always fantasized about the other side of the Atlantic—about Scotland and the Highlands and that whole part of the world. But when I came to Iceland—away from Los Angeles, where those colours come so naturally—I had this need to fabricate them," he says.

"I was trying to fight against the typical colour that surrounds you there."

Toxic, bitter glue

Sagafilm studio's headquarters at Laugavegur 176 are set in precisely the kind of geometric building whose sanded white surfaces and Barbasol-blue windows occupy the concept of "Scandinavian" in the American imagination. It was into

low budget, Huang got to work.

As Huang's collared storyboards had it, not only Björk but a bevy of huge rocks sculpted in foam—imitating those plucked from Iceland's landscape—would course in the sand as if upon waves.

"We wanted the rocks to kind of move around in the sand. I wanted them to feel like whales—like a herd of whales rising in and out of the sand," he says. "But sand is formidable to deal with. It's heavy, and once you take something out of it, you can't really shove it back in."

Compounded with the sand's great weight were new errors. Huang had brief battles with the art directors over how the rocks should look—"everyone in Iceland seems to have a very clear idea in their head what lava and lava rock look like"—and how the lava should be concocted.

“ Huang had brief battles with the art directors over how the rocks should look—“everyone in Iceland seems to have a very clear idea in their head what lava and lava rock look like”—and how the lava should be concocted.

this building that Huang directed ton after ton of his precious seashell-collared sand for the video shoot with Björk.

At the time, there were about four feature film productions shooting in Iceland. Accordingly, most of the film community was booked. With just enough film and art direction staff to operate on a

In Huang's conception, "lava" could easily be sourced from dye and cake batter. Perhaps, in fact, simple food colouring was all that was needed. He was surprised, then, to hear his team probe him about the chemistry he planned for his mixture.

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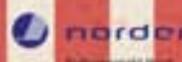
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Continues from previous page

Speaking to Icelanders about volcanic matters, he “wound up sounding entirely nonspecific.” So he listened to the people who’d sprouted beside volcanic soil, even as their need for a “specific consistency” seemed needlessly obdurate at first.

While the lava caucus haggled in Sagafilm’s backroom, Huang deployed widely divergent skills to shore up the puppetry rigging in the front. The first step was creating a platform in which to bury Björk. The next steps were to marshal a system of ropes and lines to orbit and enliven the foam rocks on set. Even if the rocks couldn’t be made to dance like whales until post-production, Huang knew some of his smoky vision had to be coaxed out of the bottle without computer help.

In reality, Huang is at least as gifted a puppeteer as he is a producer and animator. Growing up in Los Angeles, an early hatred for sports and the sun blossomed into opportunities like he had at age nine, when he learned puppetry from Jim Henson’s crew in a now-defunct after-school initiative.

“Not only did they teach us how to do puppetry, but how to actually work with these really toxic materials. How to make puppets out of special foam, how to use toxic, bitter glue to make patterns, how to make a sphere out of foam by cutting orange peel slices and pasting them together,” he says. “It was basically an introduction to making sculpture—but making sculpture that had to move in a certain way.” Watching the Star Wars films around the same age, he would “freakishly study” the objects they used for X-wing fighter planes and the Death Star. He wanted to know how George Lucas’s team did what they did and how he could replicate it.

Experience with puppetry moulded his early artistic development and guided his application to film school. And it continues to crystallize in his oeuvre—including the world created to house the production “Solipsist.”

“
While the lava caucus haggled in Sagafilm’s backroom, Huang deployed widely divergent skills to shore up the puppetry rigging in the front. The first step was creating a platform in which to bury Björk.”

“Solipsist.”

In the first scene of “Solipsist,” clipped fragments of hair, fabric, and painted, sequined paper sprout serpent-like from the shoulders between two dancers seated back-to-back. As their backs writhe and lunge together—attempting singular motion—blue feelers like a sea anemone’s and pink pouches glide into what are now wreaths around each dancer’s neck. Feathers spread beneath their hair to reach the space around their ears, and soon finger-like creatures spread in Technicolor like gummy worms to encase both dancers in a precursor to the tectonic “mutual core.”

In the second scene, the union is imagined on a more abstract level. Puppets ingeniously devised operate in a space underwater, yet immaterial. Beautiful and weird, creatures red, yellow and blue like fishing lures chirrup a chorus of R2-D2-esque beeps and shock to connect to one another—in Huang’s word, “synaptically.” Even as the dancers’ bodies remain entwined in the earliest deposited layer of the film, “violent” and “kinetic” battle is being waged at one still deeper.

“I think “Solipsist” is focused on this idea of spatial division between two coordinates—that between one person and another, the void is elastic and ever-expanding,” Huang says.

“What does it mean when two people are touching? Where is the skin? How are both skins touching each other? Your nerve endings are a series of chains of cells, and between all those cells is a series of chains of more cells, and between each of those cells is a necessary gap. Information and electricity pass through that gap—a gap that “Solipsist” explores.”

The symbolism intensifies with further scenes in “Solipsist,” but it is the middle, “synaptic” section Huang remains “most proud of.” With abstract, highly technical puppetry he succeeds in evoking the crackling violence belying even basic human interaction. And it is this scene that he knew he wanted to bring back to Björk—this scene that gave him the “impetus” to evolve the fishing lure creatures into rock puppets in the music video.

Back in the studio, Huang and his art directors have decided on the chemistry for their lava mixture. For the right splatter patterns, they tilt a specific consistency of pancake batter in with ketchup and “some other little bits.” More than the science diagram-like depictions of tectonic plates, “Mutual Core’s” universe is growing into something “violent, bigger, grander” than even the world Huang quickened in “Solipsist.”

A human touch

When Björk saw “Solipsist,” Huang thought, she responded to its minimalism—the fact that it takes place in a “black void.” She responded, he thought, to the “elasticity” of the distance between two coordinates, and to the invisible “polarities” which alternately coax them toward union and finally repulse them.

She responded above all, he thought, to the idea of violent and kinetic motion he’d put forth in scenes like that with the underwater creatures.

So when he began directing her in the smoky red scene that splices into the action’s final cataclysm, he told her to dish it to him violently. In what he considered a “ferocious” and “volatile” part of the song, he wanted her to give way to her “anger.”

With the red light glaring and fake smoke spewing on the set, Björk, did her best to channel the anger Huang wanted. But after a few takes failed to stick, she gave up and broached with him what she thought was the song’s deeper emotion.

“She said, ‘I think performing this as if I were



angry is a bit too simplistic. This song is about eruption, and eruption is actually something that makes me happy.”

For Björk, volcanic phenomena have a “positive” significance—so, too with “Mutual Core.” Huang immediately saw her point. In ‘Biophilia,’ an album celebrating destructive phenomena and the invisible polarities that attend them, Björk was in fact operating at a “genius” double-remove—not in thrall of mere destruction but open to a broader picture: one in which even tectonic-scorched earth fuels the planet’s never-ending cycles.

The movement of tectonic plates—“as fast as your fingernail grows,” in Björk’s lyrics—can occupy centre stage in a drama that captures time on the correct scale. After Huang’s discussion with Björk on the slight directorial axis of “anger” in her video, they both opened up more. Björk became more “playful” during and between takes. She enlivened the part of “Mutual Core” that Huang calls “romantic and sensual.” And even if he continued to pull his hair out during the protracted struggles of managing a set, Huang felt more at ease with himself now that he understood her vision. He took the puppeteer’s reins and commanded his smoky vision to marshal before him.

Björk remained nothing if not “hardy.” She sat for seriously dense costume and make-up application that worked her eyes black, her hair blue and her skin golden-scaled. She stood half-submerged in Huang’s precious sand for hours at a time. She even consented to froth the mix of ketchup and pancake batter in her mouth and spit it so Huang could finesse the take into a later animation.

In the “making-of” video for the production, she smiles without fail.

“This is just my projection, but I don’t think Björk wants to be treated delicately,” Huang says. “She’s a fine artist and performer herself, so she’s pretty hardy. Her husband is pretty hardy. They’re like tough, working artists. It wasn’t a problem for her to get on her hands and knees to do what we needed her to do.”

This fact benefitted Huang, working as he was on a limited budget with few crew members and even fewer hours to dedicate to filming. After rehearsing the production so many times in his head—and so many times across storyboards bleeding with expression—Björk completed the circuit with still more energy in her performance.

But if their connection on set was electric, the feeling for Huang after time ran out was that of a hand unclasp.

“It was such an ambitious shoot and such an ambitious shot list that at some point, you knew it was time to just let go,” he recalls.



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NINE YEARS AGO

Hooray! We turned ten this year. For a humble street rag like Grapevine, turning ten is a pretty big deal—we barely expected to make it to ten issues (and, indeed, all of our contemporaries Reykjavík's street rag market have long since bid farewell... miss u, Undirtónar!).

To celebrate our decade of existence,

we thought we'd get a little introspective and reprint some choice articles from the past that are for some reason significant, accompanied by commentary and even updates. Call it a "blast from the past" or "a look into the dark cauldron of time" if you want to—we call it fun. Thus, for ten issues, expect a page dedi-

cated to a year of Grapevine's existence, starting one issue ago, with a look back into magical 2003.

This issue is a look at 2004, our second year of existence when Valur Gunnarsson was editor. The articles below are printed as they were printed then, typos and everything.



"Just One Big Misunderstanding" by Paul Fontaine (then Nikolov) is probably one of the most important articles in the early history of the Grapevine. Published in the first issue of 2004, it marked the first of many of Paul's contributions to Grapevine. For the next issue, we put an immigrant in traditional Icelandic dress on the cover, which caused a something of a storm. Here is an abridged version of his piece:

Not Really A Misunderstanding

By Paul Nikolov

"On May 5th, I attended a public debate regarding a new set of immigration laws passed by Alþingi on May 1st. The meeting was sponsored and publicised by Heimspörp, a group of Icelanders working to end racism. The keynote speakers were Sigurður Hólm Gunnarsson from Ungir Jafnaðarmenn and Jón Hákon Halldórsson from Ungir sjálfstæðismenn.

Crowded into a small room in the basement of Kaffi Kúltúr, Mr. Halldórsson was surrounded by Icelanders and a few foreigners who all share one thing in common - none of them are happy about these new laws. Sitting beside him, I noticed his hands shaking as he held his written statement, reading the party line which has stirred up so much outrage and bewilderment.

I certainly have to give the guy credit for facing a room full of angry Icelandic liberals. Even if there were

only fourteen of them.

A regular tightening of immigration laws is nothing new, and when various new restrictions were added in 2002 (including the compulsory attendance of at least 150 hours of Icelandic classes - to be paid for by the immigrants at a total cost 100.000 krónur; about a whole months' wages for many), resistance was limited to foreigners and a few sympathetic Icelanders. However, whether due to growing sympathy among Icelanders or the fact that these new laws affect Icelanders themselves, resistance is growing rapidly. The new laws regarding immigration bear many inconsistencies. To name a few:

1) While it is perfectly legal for an Icelandic couple to apply for a bank loan to buy a house or apartment when they're as young as 18 years of age, foreign

couples, or couples of one Icelander and one foreigner, must wait until they are 24.

2) For the police to search the home of an Icelander, they must make a strong case for suspicion of a crime to get a search warrant from a judge. Yet for the police to search the home of a foreigner, a member of the police force need only suspect that the foreigner has broken an immigration law, and needs no such search warrant.

3) Most bizarre of all, the parents of a foreigner may not immigrate to Iceland until they are at least 66 years of age.

Mr. Halldórsson was received politely as he read his statement, explaining that this set of laws was being wildly protested based on a "misunderstanding" of what the law actually was. There was no misunder-

standing, however, among this group of people in attendance as to what this new law had to say. As Mr. Gunnarsson noted: "We contend that these laws are flat-out racist."

They send a message to all foreigners immigrating to this country that we consider them to be dishonest, and not worthy of our friendship or our respect." And then the meeting began to get really hot."

Read the full article in Grapevine issue 1, 2004.

Paul later went on to become the first non-Icelandic born serving member of Parliament. As for the immigration laws, the notorious "age 24" law was later repealed, but that is not to say that all is well with attitudes towards immigrants here.

Iceland Goes to War

By Kristinn Hrafnsson

"Are you going to call the documentary 'The Secret Army'?" One of the guys said jokingly as he and the other Icelanders switched from pistols to machine guns at the shooting range in the Afghan desert just outside Kabul. "That's a thought," I replied as my partner in the project, Friðrik Guðmundsson, continued to film the men in fatigues with the Icelandic flag on the shoulder load their weapons and gush bullets at the targets.

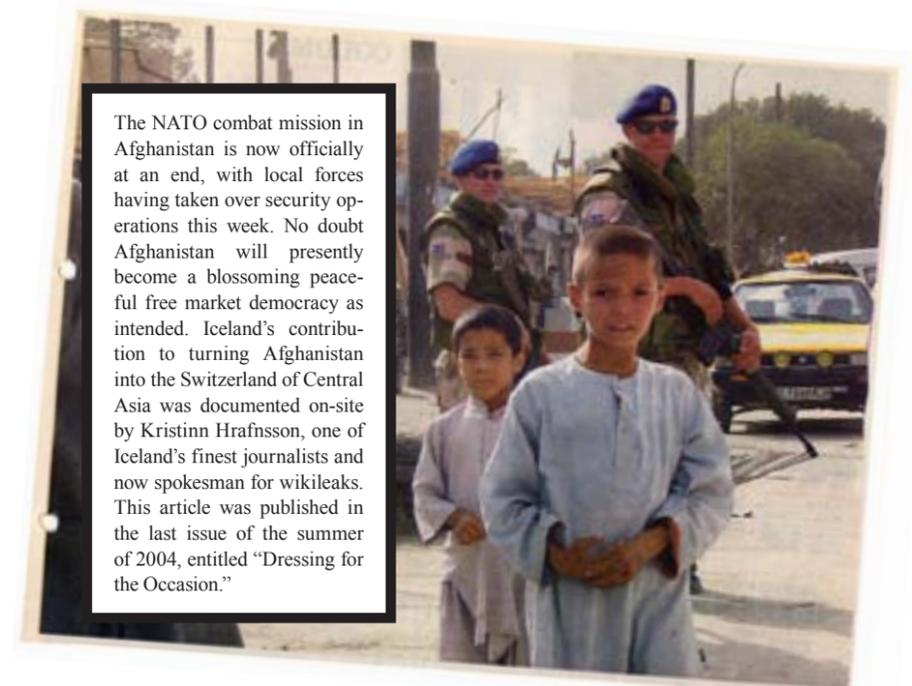
The explosive sounds echoed in the hills above. Below us a young herdsman passed by with his goats. Neither he nor the goats seemed disturbed by the shots being fired. They've heard it before. The herdsman probably vaguely remembers the Soviet invasion a quarter of a century ago, the civil war that followed, the terrible Taliban era and then the American invasion. All that time Kabul and the neighbourhood was a battlefield and to add to the horrible situation, a drought has plagued this country for the last four to five years...

Outside the HQ soldiers in different types of uniforms walk past and I have become accus-tomed to trying to make out the flags on the shoulders to see where they are from. I have no sense of rank markings and the Icelanders tell me they are fairly relaxed when it comes to respecting rank. "We sometimes forget that everything has to go through the right chain of command," Major Ævarsson tells me, "We do not have the same background of military culture as other countries."

"I tried in vain to get my men to call me Óli, but they insisted on sticking to 'Sir,' Major Ólafsson, a 27 year old Political Science student at the University of Iceland, tells me. He is in charge of 130 people at Garrison KAIA. "They are soldiers and explained to me that it is not right for our relationship to become too relaxed. In their eyes I might be the person to demand that they confront enemy fire to take that hill. So I let them call me 'Sir,' Ólafsson adds.

A few days later we fly with a Turkish Major on a patrolling flight over Kabul. The doors are open and on each side the heavy guns are manned. We fly over a city that has been shelled so of-ten and for so long, one wonders why anything is left. Not much is. Mostly small houses or huts built out of mud bricks. The Palace has been shot to pieces and is barely standing. Commander Halli looks over the city. "We are doing a much appreciated job here, but it will take a long time until we see considerable improvements in Afghanistan. But we Icelanders have a lot to offer, not least the Icelandic mentality to just go and do the job"...

The stillness of the night is broken by the alarm sound ordering everybody to get out of bed, put on their protective gear and head to the bunker, arms in hand. A rocket has been fired at KAIA. The men call it a bunker party - it's the fourth this summer. Nobody has been injured and only one of the rockets has actually exploded within the airport area. "The terror-ists are badly equipped so they have a problem aiming these rockets," Commander Halli says



The NATO combat mission in Afghanistan is now officially at an end, with local forces having taken over security operations this week. No doubt Afghanistan will presently become a blossoming peaceful free market democracy as intended. Iceland's contribution to turning Afghanistan into the Switzerland of Central Asia was documented on-site by Kristinn Hrafnsson, one of Iceland's finest journalists and now spokesman for wikileaks. This article was published in the last issue of the summer of 2004, entitled "Dressing for the Occasion."

and adds that the danger should neither be over nor under-estimated. "But I have to say that I feel pretty safe here at KAIA - at least safer than I would feel in downtown Reykjavik late on a Saturday night."

Read the full article in Grapevine Issue 8, 2004.

The Icelandic invasion of Afghanistan ground to a halt after the Battle of Chicken Street, when our soldiers went carpet shopping in downtown Kabul and a bomb went off. Fortunately, no one was

killed, but the Icelandic contingent was relieved of command of the airfield and later withdrawn. The author of this article, Kristinn Hrafnsson is now the spokesperson for Wikileaks and is currently working on getting the whistleblower Edward Snowden to Iceland.



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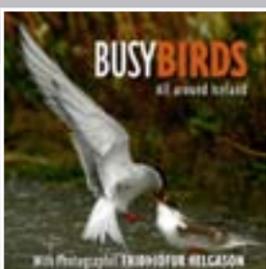
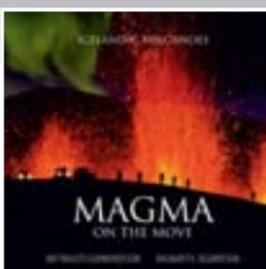


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Hanging With Giants

Iceland's Hafþór gears up to win the World's Strongest Man title

by John Wilkins

Adjusting the squat rack to cater to his 2.06m height, Iceland's Hafþór Júlíus Björnsson begins his Friday afternoon workout. The 240kg he adds to the 20kg bar seems to put more stress on the weight rack than it does on his 175kg frame. As he adds 25kg plates to each side of the stressed, bending steel bar, he nearly tips over the now 310kg squat platform. Despite being crowned Iceland's Strongest Man for the last three year years in addition to placing third at the 2012 World's Strongest Man contest at just 24-years-old, Hafþór isn't even the most decorated strength athlete in the room.

Magnús Ver Magnússon ends a phone call and walks over to watch Thor's last set. Perhaps not surprisingly, the four-time champion of the World's Strongest Man contest doesn't seem impressed. Between him and fellow strongman icon, the late Jón Páll Sigmarsson, Iceland has taken home more world titles than has any one country. Being one of (if not) the smallest countries competing, the fact that Iceland has managed to win more world titles than any other nation is even more astonishing. If you add that to the impressive 13 finishes in the top three at the World's Strongest Man and Jón Páll's induction into the strongman Hall of Fame (as one of only three members), this tiny nation in the North Atlantic has become something of a Mecca for strength athletics.

A strong work ethic

It's hard to pinpoint just what makes a nation of only 300,000 so successful, but Hafþór, or "Thor" as he is known internationally, seems to ascribe to Norwegian strongman icon and Hall-of-Famer Svend Karlsen's catchphrase, "Viking power!" attributing his incredible abilities at least partly to his infamous ancestors. Magnús Ver has a different hypothesis that seems at least somewhat conclusive. "It comes from our background, which is that we're used to working," Magnús explains. "Even as a young kid, I was working on farms during the summers when I wasn't in school. I don't know how it is now, maybe not so much, but young kids still do go out and work." In addition to developing strength, this working background also plays into the development of Icelanders' work ethic, which is exactly what is required in this sport.

Hafþór's workouts aren't your average 24 Hour Fitness, after-work aerobics classes or weight trainings. After roughly an hour of pushing himself to dig deep in some of the common powerlifting exercises like the dead lift and the squat, the now covered-in-sweat and out of breath Icelandic giant begins the second half of his workout. Ducking his head to fit through the doorway, Thor makes his way upstairs to an area of the gym dedicated to training for the various strongman events. These events test aspects of an athlete's strength beyond your standard gym exercises, including things like the Atlas Stones or the Truck Pull, which add enormously to the entertainment value of these strongman shows. It is far easier for a layperson to understand what it means to be able to squat a car, for example, than to be able to squat a 400kg bar.

Unlike many of his competitors who train for these events once a week, Thor trains for at least two of the different events at each one of his workouts. As a routine that Hafþór maintains for five or six days a week, it is easy to see how the working background Magnús Ver described would come in handy.

Hafþór isn't alone in all of this, however. Arriving to the gym shortly after Thor is his long time friend and training partner, Stefán Sólvi Pétursson. Upon his arrival, Stefán drops his bag in the corner and walks over to the stereo to turn on some Icelandic metal to get the juices flowing. After some warm-up exercises and stretching, he pulls on his knee braces and loads the bar with enough 25kg plates to make his own 160kg bodyweight seem light. The rack needs almost no adjustment from when Thor was using it, how-

ever, as Stefán is almost equal in height to Thor at 1.95m. And with the daily routines these two Icelandic behemoths maintain, a good training partner is a must.

"It's not a life many people would choose," Hafþór explains as he runs through his schedule. As both a working and a family man, Hafþór has to juggle his strength training with his daily 9-4 shift at Arion Bank where he works as a security guard and spending time with his four-year-old daughter. In the background of all of this, Thor also somehow keeps up with his 8,000-10,000 calorie per day diet, which consists largely of a variety of meats, potatoes and other vegetables.

In case all of this isn't enough, his schedule is about to become even busier. Starting this June, Hafþór will be competing in strongman shows and events two to three times

"It's not a life many people would choose."

a month all over Europe. Despite his enormous size, Thor finds it more economical to squeeze himself into a single airline seat instead of purchasing a second one, which is a problem that not many people have. In some ways, though, competing and traveling this often is a welcomed change of pace. "I like to travel and meet new people, as well as hang out with the other guys in the competition. Seeing new places is something I really enjoy," Thor says. And while winning these contests remains his top priority, Thor maintains friendships with many of his fellow competitors.

Passing the torch

Although the friendly strongman culture and tightly knit community hasn't changed much over the years, the sport, Magnús admits, has. "Today, you have better trained athletes because they are better prepared," Magnús explains. "Everybody has their own equipment to train with, so weights have gone up in a lot of the events like Super Yoke or Farmers' Walks because everybody trains for them." This access and ability to train for the events, Magnús says, is what is making the difference in the sport today. "I didn't used to do that; Jón Páll didn't used to do that. We just trained in the gym and were told to do contests. I never trained for the Atlas Stones, for example—I just showed up and did them."

In response to the evolution of the sport, Magnús Ver opened his own gym in 2008, which gives Icelanders like Hafþór and Stefán a place to train for the various strongman events. The name of the gym, Jakaból, which translates roughly to "giants' nest," confirms it—while Iceland may not





Photo: Baldur Kristján

actually have elves, it certainly has giants. "I had the idea to open a gym like this for a long time—a hardcore training facility, like a club basically. A couple of years ago I finally made it happen," Magnús says. Opening Jakaból is just one of the many ways Magnús has worked to improve the sport here in Iceland. Organising and hosting strongman and powerlifting contests at his gym as well as refereeing various strongman events also keep Magnús very involved in the sport.

"To represent Iceland is something special and what I consider a privilege."

"I've already passed the torch to a couple of these guys," Magnús says, gesturing to Hafþór and Stefán. In addition, Magnús occasionally steps in to give advice to them and to some of the younger guys. "I give them tips when they need them and help out with their form, tell them when they're doing something wrong or if there's a way they can do it better," Magnús says. Maybe he's just being modest, but whatever he's doing certainly seems to be helping. Until recently, however, Iceland was without a chance at another world title for almost 15 years.

Before Stefán tore his left pectoral muscle in 2011, he represented Iceland's first real possibility to win a world title since the '90s, finishing fourth at the 2010 World's Strongest Man contest. He continues to rehabilitate, train, and improve every day, but he doesn't want to push it. Taking off his weight belt and turning down the metal in the background after finishing his leg set, he elaborates on his current status. "I feel good," Stefán says, "but I'm not competing yet. I'm going to work on some things and continue to get better and stronger, and come back with a huge splash." And as his health and physical condition improve, so do Iceland's chances at another world title.

After placing sixth in 2011, Hafþór's spot on the podium at the World's Strongest Man in 2012 alongside two Lithuanians was the closest any Icelander has come to winning since Magnús competed. For a competitor from just about any other country, a third place finish would be a monumental accomplishment as well as an exciting finish. Hafþór Björnsson, however, was only left hungry for more. The title, Hafþór says, remains his ultimate goal.

It won't be easy

Despite having won two out of six individual events at the World's Strongest Man last year and placing second in a third event, Hafþór still has a lot of room for improvement. "I think with me, I just need to improve my overall strength, my deadlift, and my overhead presses. I'm not bad in one event in particular; I just need to improve in everything. I really just need more time," Hafþór says. It goes without saying that winning a world title does not come easily, but with the exhausting workout schedule he maintains and his dedication to getting better, Hafþór is on the right track and remains optimistic. "There are pretty good guys competing, but if I stay injury free throughout the rest of the year and continue to improve, I believe I can win," Thor says.

As something of an expert when it comes to judging contests, however, Magnús Ver offered a slightly different analysis. "I said last year that he'll win this year, but I'm kind of thinking maybe I'll give him another year," Magnús laughed

as an Hafþór jokingly yelled, "What!?" from the other room as he was mid leg-press. "If things keep going like they have been going, for sure next year. He'll have a hell of a battle this year," Magnús says.

Lithuanians Žydrunas Savickas and Vytautas Lalas barely beat out Hafþór last year, and American Brian Shaw was a close fourth. With the point totals at these strongman contests being separated by such thin margins, a single rep or just a few seconds in any one event could mean the title. Being the size he is, however, Hafþór dwarfs many of his fellow competitors and even makes four-time champion Magnús Ver look small. In most of the events, Hafþór's monstrous stature serves as a significant advantage, facilitating his improvement in the sport and hence strengthening his chances of winning.

Magnús was also quick to note how far Hafþór has come in such a short time. "When he first started out, he sucked at the overhead press," he says. "Now he's good at it. That's the trick, work on your weaknesses—make your weaknesses your strengths." As the odds begin to stack up in Hafþór's favour, the question of Hafþór bringing the world title back to Iceland shifts from a matter of "if" to a matter of "when." Whether or not it's this year or next, there is no doubt that Iceland finally has a chance to reclaim its spot at the top of the World's Strongest Man podium.

After such a considerable drought, Hafþór's feelings about finally bringing the title back to Iceland are simple. "I can see that I can win the competition, and I want to put Iceland back up to the top of the sport. We are the best and I want to remind the world of that," he said. With Iceland's résumé, it would be hard to argue that he's wrong.

Representing a nation with such a successful background in this sport, however, is no small task. "I feel a sense of pride representing the same small country that guys like Magnús Ver Magnússon and Jón Páll Sigmarsson have represented," Hafþór said. "We have won eight times. To represent Iceland is something special and what I consider a privilege." With this attitude, Hafþór brings a renewed hope to this tiny nation for yet another world title in strongman.

"Ekkert Mál Fyrir Jón Páll!"



Jón Páll is widely regarded one of the strongest men to ever grace the World's Strongest Man stage and remains an iconic figure in the sport.

Not only was he Iceland's first strongman champion, but Jón Páll has also been crowned the World's Strongest Man (WSM) four times ('84, '86, '88, '90) and has finished in the top three at WSM a total of seven times. In addition to that, Jón Páll was recently voted into the World's Strongest Man Hall of Fame, where he joins Norway's Svend Karlsen and Poland's Mariusz Pudzianowski.

Throughout his career, Jón Páll won countless titles in both strongman and Olympic weightlifting competitions and broke dozens of Icelandic and world weightlifting and strongman records. His monumental performance in the sport led Icelanders to coin the phrase, "Ekkert mál fyrir Jón Páll," which translates roughly to "It's no problem for Jón Páll." When faced with a daunting task, Icelanders simply remember "ekker mál fyrir Jón Páll" for inspiration.

Tragically, Jón Páll suffered a heart attack while deadlifting in his gym in 1993. He was loved immensely around the globe for his charisma and charm on and off the world weightlifting stage.

THE EVENTS

In the finals of the World's Strongest Man, a total of ten athletes compete in six different events, accumulating points depending on their performance. The athlete with the most points accumulated at the end of the six events takes home the title. Though these are ever changing, there are a number of staples that frequently appear on the international stage.

Truck Pull:

No surprise here, this event involves exactly what its title indicates. After an uphill start, the athletes use a rope to pull a 24.5 metric ton big rig over a 25-meter course. The fastest time wins.

2012 Winner: Terry Hollands (42.97 seconds)
Hafþór: Second place (44.71 seconds)

Giant Log Press:

Another largely self-explanatory title, this is a "last man standing" event, which features the athletes pressing logs of different weights (170kg, 185kg, 200kg, 210kg, and finally 220kg) over their heads.

2012 Winner: Žydrunas Savickas, who successfully overhead pressed the 220kg log.
Hafþór: Tied for fifth in this event, maxing out at 185kg.

Rock Lift:

With the giant rock selection to practice with in Iceland, it's no wonder this event is Hafþór's specialty. It involves picking up five natural rocks of varying weights (136-169kg) and placing them on different platforms a few meters away. Fastest time wins.

2012 Winner: Our own Hafþór Björnsson, successfully placing all five rocks in a time of just 25.52 seconds.

Deadlift:

This is one of the few basic powerlifting exercises directly represented in strongman contests. In the most recent World's Strongest Man competition, the athletes lifted the giant 360kg barbell as many times as they could in a short, 75-second time period. The person who does the most reps wins.

2012 Winner: Žydrunas Savickas (8 reps)
Hafþór: Seventh place (4 reps)

Power Stairs:

Another one of Hafþór's specialties, this event involves lifting a giant 225kg weight up a flight of five tall steps. The fastest time wins.

2012 Winner: Hafþór Björnsson (36.82 seconds)

Super Yoke:

An incredibly painful event to watch, the Super Yoke involves the athletes carrying a nearly 450kg steel weight on their shoulders over a 40m course, 20m up and 20m back. The fastest time wins.

2012 Winner: Brian Shaw (28.40 seconds)
Hafþór: Sixth place (33.55 seconds)

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When In Roam

Wandering with a purpose in downtown Reykjavík

by Parker Yamasaki



Photo: Alisa Kalyanova

Walking up Skólavörðustígur one notices that the path of travellers on the sidewalks is akin to that of a drunken college student wandering home after a long night at the bar. The wanderers swerve and sway with little regard to the large stroller approaching rapidly from behind, the jogger whose momentum is about to be torn in two, or the looming threat of a stubborn lamppost. But it's not booze to blame; it's beauty.

The area induces a 10-block-long state of head-in-the-clouds. The quintessentially "Reykjavík" sights of Skólavörðustígur are distracting, to put it lightly, and dangerous, to be real. Which is why we thought it would be a good idea to patrol for risk zones during a summer-long outdoor art exhibit titled "Under the Open Sky," in the interest of public safety, of course.

Head in the sky

The exhibit features works by 94 artists dispersed about the central district of Reykjavík. Front yards,

side yards, windowsills and empty walls have all become exhibit spaces from May 25 to August 25, or as long as the pieces can withstand the weather. Some are conspicuous, like a chained ring of broken-glass bodies by Laufey Jensdóttir marking the corner of Óðinsgata and Skólavörðustígur. Others are subtler, like a 10-square hopscotch on the sidewalk, Erla Þórarinsdóttir's way of encouraging a bouncing departure from Hallgrímskirkja. While traversing this stretch, one must be especially aware of the second-story and rooftop works, as they become high-risk zones for eyes-to-the-sky,

"The biggest threat in this region is not pedestrian collisions, but rather the deluded drifter"

feet-on-the-ground collisions.

Just off of the main drag, the self-guided tour leads guests into the charming neighbourhood of Óðinstorg. Óðinstorg itself is a work of art, being the oldest residential neighbourhood in Reykjavík. The buildings were all built in the early

20th century, and the streets are named after Nordic Gods.

The biggest threat in this region is not pedestrian collisions, but rather the deluded drifter. Streets in this neighbourhood kink and curve, they dead end and then start back up again ten meters to the right, they

run perpendicular and diagonal and parallel to each other all at once. Nothing about this neighbourhood is intuitive. The sense of directionlessness that Óðinstorg induces actually enhances the experience of the exhibit. Unlike museums, which push the viewer from one room to the next, there is a refreshing sense of freedom. Nothing is stale in the open air, and nothing is dull when you're there by choice.

Drifting with purpose

Back in the 1940s, a man named Guy Debord picked up on the benefits of this free movement, and through it he carved out and defined the theory of the *dérive*. *Dérive* translates literally to drift in English. It was a practice, a mode of navigating a city by not navigating it at all. Skip the Google Maps and the Já.is. What Debord realised with *dérive* is that no matter how familiar one is with a city, how engrained it is in them, there is always a new experience to be had. By allowing oneself to be guided by aesthetics, the most familiar places become new and original again.

Even though visitors are provided graphic street maps with numbered locations of each work, the spirit of *dérive* is present in the exhibit. Alongside the deliberate tour-taker, we have the involuntary viewer; the one who just happens to cross Jóna Thors' vibrant bloom of horizontal daisies stretching across the street on a walk home from work; the one who is stopped, midway to the bakery, to press his ear against a mounted wooden box by Ólöf Jóhannsdóttir that emits a stream of women's narratives in Icelandic. In this sense there is hardly any freedom of choice involved. You are exposed, whether or not you set out that morning craving an impromptu serving of Art.

So, aside from the occasional iPad-happy looker, the exhibit as a whole has the opposite effect than what was anticipated. It makes pedestrians of Reykjavík, locals and foreigners alike, more careful observers. Many make the daily stroll through Óðinstorg and may have never noticed that it contains the most vibrantly yellow tulip in all of Iceland, or the most gnome-infested stoop in, perhaps, the world. The artworks themselves blend well with their surroundings, but don't disappear into them. These subtle additions, while impressive in themselves, serve most importantly as a reminder to look right and left instead of just straight ahead. So slow your stroll, get a little lost, and take it all in.

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Chalk Talk

Operation Creed hits 101, visions in mind, chalk in hands

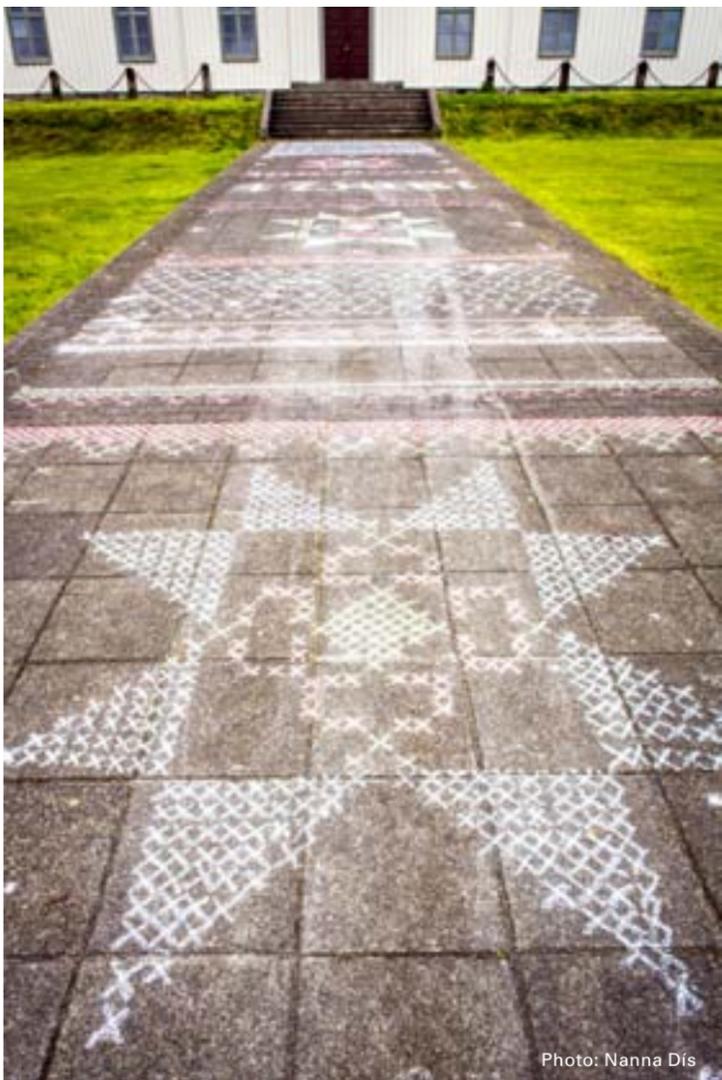


Photo: Nanna Dís

On June 14, I walk down a misty Austurstræti to get my daily skyr from 10-11. The sky is overcast, there is a couple smoking cigarettes on the front step that I squeeze by, a cat crosses the road. There's nothing to pull me out of my work-day daze. That is, until I round the corner to Pósthússtræti and something catches my attention: a full kitchen, a dining room table complete with stools and flowers, and a cake stand full of waffles and cream. The setup is right in the middle of the sidewalk, everything but the waffles drawn with chalk. Pleasantly surprised, I stop by for a bite and a chat with the creator of the street side kitchen.

Ólöf Stefánsdóttir is one third of the team behind a Hitt Húsið sponsored Creative Summer Group. Along with Ágústa Sveinsdóttir and Magnús Dagur Sævarsson, the trio is taking to the streets of Reykjavík this summer to brighten its grey concrete with colourful chalk and three-dimensional illusions.

The idea was inspired by a trip to India that Ágústa made three years ago. She was struck by a colourful nuance of the local culture in the form of flowers drawn in chalk that greet arriving and departing visitors to homes and businesses." It gave you something pleasant to look at, despite the state of the run-down surroundings," Ólöf relays to me that Friday, as she wipes the blue outline of a stove off of the side of the Landsbanki wall.

Their project, Operation Creed (a play on the Icelandic word 'kritt' which means 'chalk'), is one of nine Creative Summer Groups, sponsored by the cultural centre Hitt Húsið. As participants, the young artists are provided a regular salary for eight weeks of the summer to take a break from their day jobs and focus on creating art. "People say to us, that's stupid, or that's strange that you are getting paid to go out and draw with chalk on the streets" Ólöf says, "but it really adds something to the day. A couple stopped by today on their way to the airport and sat down for a waffle. It was such a nice good-bye meal! It just adds a little colour to the day that otherwise wouldn't exist."

While some are put off by the spontaneous creative use of public space, like the bank whose outer wall was transformed into a temporary kitchen, most receive the group pleasantly. "It's cool to see how everybody relates to our work" Ólöf says. "The tourists were most fun, they are really willing to sit down and participate. The Icelanders, they're a little shyer. They just take a picture and run off," she laughs.

And it doesn't end with waffles, which is just the first of a number of other chalk-based ideas. On June 17, for instance, they hit the front walkway of Menntaskólinn í Reykjavík with chalk embroidery. And in the weeks to come they want to start experimenting with 3-dimensional structures and projections, anything that will surprise the pedestrian and make them look twice. "We want to pick places that people visit regularly, on typically boring occasions, and make it a destination," Ólöf says. And that's really what this project, and all of the Summer Creative Groups, is about: injecting some colour (or some music, or some theatre) into the day of the unsuspecting passer-by.

✂ - Parker Yamasaki

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The Emotion Of Cold, Hard Science

Katrín Sigurðardóttir employs a different alphabet for her poetry

by Haukur S. Magnússon



Photos: Julia Staples

Artist Katrín Sigurðardóttir is in-between three cats, on a square, in Venice. All three cats stare at her intently. She beckons them over using the international language of kitty-beckoning. The Venetian cats continue looking at her, eternal feline mystery in their eyes, but make no motion to come closer. A church bell gongs a single gong, a flock of cackling seagulls takes flight, the cats stare on and we eventually continue conversing over the internet—me in the United States of America, and she in-between three cats, on a square, in Venice.

We are having a conversation about her art and her life and how these things came together to place her in Venice at that very moment. Katrín Sigurðardóttir's work exudes an aura of highly focused intelligence and years of study, and her published interviews usually reflect this—hers is a high art, one that can leave the amateur at a loss when it comes to engaging in discourse about it. Throughout our talk I often feel stunned and stupid, yet I am left with a sense of lingering satisfaction, like it's slowly making me smarter.

When I am not embarrassing myself by asking flighty questions involving concepts I barely understand, I instead embarrass myself by asking naïve questions that must have the artist squirming. Questions like: "are you nervous and stressed for the big show?" This might be appropriate for a little sister before her dance recital, but to a successful and enduring artist whose career has progressed from one peak after the other—an artist educated in respected art establishments, one who recently displayed her work at New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art (viewed by some 180,000 people!) and one who has been chosen by Iceland's art establishment to represent the nation—they must sound utterly daft.

But Katrín takes it in stride, her patience with a terminally pretentious

journalist perhaps reflecting the patience required by her creative process; her work is intricate, mapped, studied, thought-out, requiring vast amounts of historical and technical research and months upon months to execute.

And quite a few conversations to discuss.

"Two days and my entire life"

Six weeks ago, Katrín was with those cats, on that square, in Venice, engaging in conversation with The Grapevine over Skype (our mission to meet her at her Long Island City, NY, studio earlier this year failed because of traffic, although we did get some nice photos out of it). The idea was to discuss her art and her career and her exhibition at the 55th edition of the ultra prestigious Venice Biennale, which opened on Saturday, June 1. We start by discussing the installation process, then at its crux:

"We are not completely done," Katrín says, "but we are very close. Quantifying an installation like this can be difficult, especially when you are installing a work for the first time. You aren't done until you're done—you can be finished with everything save for some minor detail that takes maybe three seconds to execute, but one might have to wait for a month

to be ready for that three second moment of completion. It's the nature of the creative process..."

What has the preparation entailed?

The process of creating this piece has spanned more than eighteen months. The beginnings of its conception were in October of 2011, and the entirety of 2012 was dedicated to it. I spent the first year drawing, only drawing. Then some material tests were made, followed by some visits to the site in Venice to figure out this large shape that I am making. For the majority of the time leading up to the work's completion, I was drawing, on the computer and by hand. Having conceived the work that way, I commenced the fabrication of the actual surface those drawings denote. The 'proper' material production began in November of last year.

The undertaking of this project has been smooth, all things considered. Perhaps it is because it comes right on the heels of another large exhibit that I staged at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in 2010. I feel like I am well rehearsed. This time around I didn't have the problem that we artists sometimes struggle with, of having to wait a long time for the right idea of what to create—

the gestation period for a work of art can be quite drawn out.

It reminds me of something my colleague and sometimes technical consultant Hjörtur Hjartarson—a great painter who was my right hand man in staging this project—likes to say about the making of his paintings: 'Well, it took me two days, and my entire life.' I think that kind of describes the process of creation, in the sense that any work of art you make builds on your whole life. Every preceding moment in your artistic development and production is part of the process and its end result."

Arctic expedition

Do you suffer stress or performance anxiety, of pulling it all together in time for such a large and seemingly pivotal event?

Not really, to be honest, for some reason I don't. I expected I would, but that's not how I feel. To reference my last project at the Metropolitan Museum again, I staged two installations that in many ways I had much less time to prepare for, so when I began the process for this show I felt ready and levelled in a way. I felt in good practice.

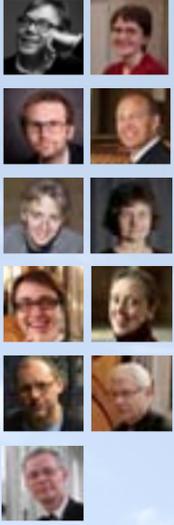
Long-term involvement in anything that demands such intense

thought processes and labour seems like it must be daunting. How is it to sink yourself into the creative process, into a single project, for a year and half? Does it change your mode of thinking in a way? At the start, you feel like you're going under, as if embarking on a yearlong stint on a submarine?

"Undertaking a project like this is in some ways like venturing on a big journey with an small group of people."

I was thinking more like a polar expedition [laughs]. Undertaking a project like this is in some ways like venturing on a big journey with a small group of people. Your friends and

Continues over



1. júní kl. 12 / June 1 at 12 noon
2. júní kl. 17 / June 2 at 5 pm
8. júní kl. 12 / June 8 at 12 noon
9. júní kl. 17 / June 9 at 5 pm
15. júní kl. 12 / June 15 at 12 noon
16. júní kl. 17 / June 16 at 5 pm
22. júní kl. 12 / June 22 at 12 noon
23. júní kl. 17 / June 23 at 5 pm
29. júní kl. 12 / June 29 at 12 noon
30. júní kl. 17 / June 30 at 5 pm
6. júlí kl. 12 / July 6 at 12 noon
7. júlí kl. 17 / July 7 at 5 pm
13. júlí kl. 12 / July 13 at 12 noon
14. júlí kl. 17 / July 14 at 5 pm
20. júlí kl. 12 / July 20 at 12 noon
21. júlí kl. 17 / July 21 at 5 pm
27. júlí kl. 12 / July 27 at 12 noon
28. júlí kl. 17 / July 28 at 5 pm
29. júlí kl. 20 / July 29 at 8 pm
3. ágúst kl. 12 / August 3 at 12 noon
4. ágúst kl. 17 / August 4 at 5 pm
7. ágúst kl. 12 / August 7 at 12 noon
10. ágúst kl. 12 / August 10 at 12 noon
11. ágúst kl. 17 / August 11 at 5 pm

- Hörður Áskelsson, Hallgrímskirkja
 Hörður Áskelsson, Hallgrímskirkja
 Guðný Einarsdóttir, Fella og Hólakirkja
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 Kristian Krogsøe, Denmark
 Stefan Kagl, Germany
 Stefan Kagl, Germany
 Matthias Giesen, Austria
 Matthias Giesen, Austria
 Inger-Lise Ulsrud, Norway
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 Christian Schmitt, Germany
 Sophie-Véronique Cauchefier-Choplin, France
 Sophie-Véronique Cauchefier-Choplin, France
 Peter Van de Velde, Belgium
 Peter Van de Velde, Belgium
 Bristol Bach Choir, Nigel Nash, organ UK
 Hans Fagius, Sweden
 Hans Fagius, Sweden
 Schola cantorum
 Björn Steinar Sólbergsson, Hallgrímskirkja
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Í samvinnu við Félag íslenskra organleikara

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20. júní / June 20th	Hilmar Örn Agnarsson, Grafarvogskirkja
27. júní / June 27th	Björg Þórhallsdóttir, sópran
4. júlí / July 4th	Lenka Mátéová, Kópavogskirkja
11. júlí / July 11th	Guðný Einarsdóttir, Fella- og Hólakirkja
18. júlí / July 18th	Kári Þormar, Dómkirkjan í Reykjavík
25. júlí / July 25th	Eyþór Franzson Wechner, Leipzig, Þýskalandi
1. ágúst / August 1st	Lára Bryndis Eggertsdóttir, Árósar, Danmörk
8. ágúst / August 8th	Fríðrik Stefánsson, Seltjarnarnes
	Eygló Rúnarsdóttir, mezzosópran
	Kári Allansson, Háteigs Kirkja
	Margrét Hannesdóttir, sópran
	Magnús Ragnarsson, Áskirkja
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Continues from previous page

family know you're going, but you're still very far away from everyone and everything—for the duration of the trip you are only really close to the people directly involved.

When you return, you are somehow changed because of what you experienced on the expedition. I think any big project is like this, especially one that spans such a long time and demands such energy to accomplish; it renders you a little bit different. At the end of the expedition, you come out a slightly different person than you went into it.

It's a journey creatively. You start with a certain premise, a question, a set destination. On your way to the answer, new questions arise that

you try to address in the piece. Ultimately, there is a point where you think, "well, I suppose I'm going to have to address this question in my next work." And that sets the course for the future.

Problem solving

We have a tendency to envision thinking as a sort of problem solving activity. When you picture a person deep in thought you usually imagine them facing some sort of conundrum or dilemma—pondering the answer to a difficult question. Does this transfer to your creative thought? When you sit down with your sketchbook, do you conceive of a problem to address?

For me, the creative process is a dialogue between me, the artist, and a given material—a given idea, space or situation. Rather than preconceiving a problem or a question, my process is often that of resolving, articulating or examining further some phenomena, idea or dimension that I am drawn to. Sometimes this means that I identify a question to set the parameters I am working within and then commence the 'answering of the question' or 'solving of the problem.' It's a simple structure for thinking that sometimes is useful to work within. This method of working usually leads to more questions, to be further explored, and this cyclical process repeats itself.

I can imagine that my work sometimes seems very technical. For me,

material and technique are not tools, they are part of the language itself. Say I am working with a certain material and gain a positive outcome. But I see that there is some aspect of the material that I could continue to perfect, some quality that I didn't know of when I started, something that is only revealed through the process of work. It's this same cyclical process.

In this way I pass through topics and materials. And then the passage usually brings me to new topics to explore, new materials. New questions.

The emotion and poetry of science

Based in this, it seems fair to say that you approach your work in a scientific or research based manner. If your work follows the model of scientific enquiry, and that you conduct your creative process discursively, as a scientist would, one must ask: is there a main, fundamental question or proposition that you are investigating?

When I give a quick introduction to my work, the 'Cliff's Notes,' I usually say that I deal with place and memory, and that place is often manifested through the language of architecture, through various forms of landscape visualisation and through cartography.

This means that I use a language that has a technical, a sort of anti-emotional alphabet, to describe something that is maybe the quite the opposite, that essentially was never meant to be described in such a language. It could be likened to the process of writing poetry using the Periodic Table of the Elements.

A contemporary predicament

In your own words, how would you describe what you're showing?

I'm showing a very large, bi-dimensional architectural element. In many ways, the whole of it deals with archaeology, with the memory of two buildings—one fictional, one pre-existing— and this memory is suggested and symbolised through the installation.

There are so many different ways of talking about this piece. Right now, I'm inclined to say that it's about different ways of accounting for architecture and this sort of double perception, where you have different strands of memory interweaving in the same place. I think a complex and sometimes conflicting spatial perception is something of a contemporary predicament, something we experience all the time, because even without ever setting foot on an archaeological site, we

are still always happening upon ruins or evidence of one structure within another, one time or place within another. This can be externally evident, but just as often it's just a type of mnemonic overlay that gets projected in our mind's vision.

This piece relates to previous works of mine that deal with the idea of the ruin, The Unbuilt series that I've worked on since 2004, and then this more recent series that's based on Langahlíð 11, Reykjavík, my childhood home.

Does showing at the Venice Biennale have a special significance for you? Is it something an artist strives for? And does this reflect in the work you present?

Of course it has a significance. This is the first and probably only time I am officially a representative of Iceland, and I am naturally very thankful for that, and very proud. It's not a goal you set out to attain, though—you don't make showing at the Biennale an objective to work towards. And there's no clear way to reach it... through time, you're perhaps found worthy... That's all.

If this project differs from others, it is simply because it marks the only time I will officially represent Iceland in such a forum. Of course, I always see myself as representing Iceland in a way, wherever I'm showing. It is the country where I was born and raised, a society which I am still part of; an artistic community that I continue to engage with.

Would you say that being officially decreed a Representative Of Iceland affects the context of the work presented? Being appointed by the administrative body of Icelandic arts, under the banner: "this is who we are now, this is who we'd like to speak for us..." That must entail some pressure...

I really don't think so. I've never seen it that I'm supposed to go about my work in a different way for this project than any other—and simply, I would never do that.

The context is slightly different, as I am in a different place in my development as an artist than I was one year ago or ten years ago; the floor plan is different, the budget is different, everything is different in the way that each new project is different from all the previous ones. But the mandate is my own, the work itself, not set by the commissioning body. And I believe I am commissioned exactly to do this: to make my work the way I always have, and not to illustrate some preconceived notion of what is Icelandic.

I don't believe that "national identity" constitutes an essential



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core in an artist, I think the national is a fiction or a script, one of many, that an artist can choose to take on, a role to be performed like in a play. But I am interested in writing my own script. And I honestly believe that those who commissioned me to go to Venice this year expected just that.

“If you work in advertising you define and consider your target audience, but as an artist, I am not in the business of manipulating experiences; I just want to make my work, as part of my own inquiry, not with a set outcome or effect.”

A problematic approach to art

Leaving aside the question of nationality, do you see your shows at popular forums like the Biennale or the Metropolitan as a chance to expand the reach of your dialogue, to present your ideas to a greater crowd?

That’s how I think of every show. I don’t discriminate an audience, whether they are one of ten who see a show or one of 100,000. Every viewer is equally important. In terms of the establishment, each venue offers specific opportunities, but I am primarily interested in the socio-political aspect of what these could be. I did two solo shows in 2010, one at The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York and then another at a gallery called The Suburban, which is basically a 20 square foot shed in a Chicago suburb. Its a nice coincident to get to do these two shows in the same year. Of course the context and reach of the two is different, but I was as serious about the work I presented at both venues.

The opposite would be a problematic approach to art, to somehow theme and conceptualize your

approach based on your audience. If you work in advertising you define and consider your target audience, but as an artist? As an artist, I am not in the business of manipulating experiences; I just want to make my work, as part of my own inquiry, not with a set outcome or effect. And people approach it and take from it what they want, but according to their own interests, experiences and perceptions. It is true that in each viewer there is the love for being manipulated, overpowered by a seductive experience. But I like to try to appeal to a different part of the viewer, where he or she is free. That’s of course a much harder job for the viewer, but hopefully it’s sometimes appreciated.

Your art is then something the viewer approaches on her own terms, it should be thought of as building blocks or seeds of thought rather than a planned, structured experience?

That to me is the creative process—it’s what distinguishes the creative process from showmanship.

When I make my art, the viewers’ reaction is not my premise or objective. It is always to continue my own enquiry, and to preserve my relationship with my work.

What happens once a project is complete is not something that I try to control. At that point, the relationship is between the work and viewer. Up until then, the work is mine and the relationship with the work is mine—after completion I let it go. I don’t want this to come off as if I don’t care about the viewer. I care about the viewer. I don’t want to harm the viewer, and I don’t set out to offend the viewer, but I also don’t set out to please the viewer. Again, I am not in the business of creating experiences. At this point the work is its own being.

And you have no intention as to what it ultimately leaves people with?

I think it would be pretentious to say that I can’t guess what people might take from the work. It’s not an entirely blind procedure. But I don’t try to control it.

Everyone has a different relationship with art and uses it in different ways and to different means. The question of purpose and intent is enduring and relevant. Art can serve so many different purposes, and the conversation about these possibilities continues. And our answers will continue to change, reflecting our world at each time in history, as it has until now.

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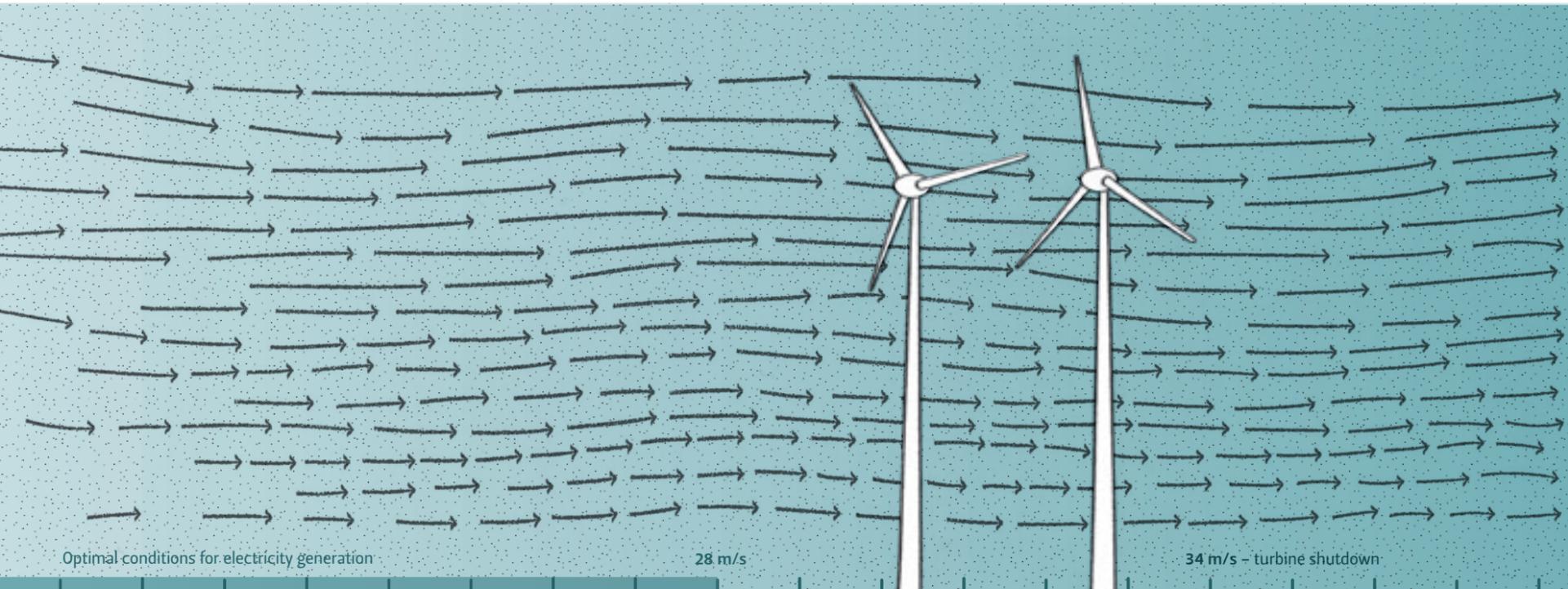
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Blood, Sweat, Tears And Ink

A busy three days of tattooing, rockabilly music and fandom

by Tómas Gabríel Benjamin



Photos: Shea Sweeney

I remember going to the Icelandic Tattoo Convention in 2010, my heart pounding from a mixture of excitement and fear. Coming back three years later, I could see my former emotions reflected in many of the attendees. Furthermore, I could see that the eighth edition of the annual festival, which attracted 1,900 people, had come a long way.

The Garden Of Creativity

Held under a tent in Bar 11's beer garden for the second year in a row, the arrangements are tailored to tattooing and observing—the people getting their skin decorated have comfortable seats and benches, and the eighteen international artists have lots of working space. The tattooing happens behind two long tables, and a wide aisle between them offers spectators a clear view of the action.

It's hardly summer yet, but the attendees at the Icelandic Tattoo Convention are showing as much skin as possible, showcasing the story told on their flesh. The majority of the people are in their twenties and thirties, though the crowd is pretty diverse. Lopapeysa-wearing hipsters stand next to jocks. Punk rebels with dyed hair stand next to short-haired rockers. And leather clad bikers stroll up and down the aisle. They've all come together in their star-eyed adoration of tattoos.

Festival organiser and owner of the Reykjavík Ink parlour Össur Hafþórsson says Iceland is an attractive destination for international artists. "We Icelanders may think it's mundane," he says, "but there's something exquisite that attracts tattoo artists." Amongst those artists is the super busy Jason June from Three Kings Tattoo in Brooklyn, who has attended the event every year since it was founded. Jason says these conventions are great for small countries like Iceland, as they "bring the upper echelon together

for everyone to see."

With a record number of tickets sold, Össur attributes the popularity of the festival to shifting attitudes towards tattoos. "Years ago you'd only see outlaws and gang members with tattoos, but today they are a lot more acceptable. The other day I heard of a guy who got a full sleeve tattoo, covering shoulder to wrist, and when his grandmother saw it she said: 'Wow, you look like one of the football stars!'"

Warped And Shitty Ideas

Össur and I end up by Dave Woodard's booth, and I join Dave for his cigarette break. Dave believes accessibility to designs has made tattoos more mainstream, but unfortunately this exposure often leads people to want designs similar to the ones celebrities have. "And they often have very shitty and unimaginative tattoos," he says, "like George Clooney's full sleeve tribal tattoo in 'From Dust to Dawn,' Brad Pitt's wrist piece in 'Ocean's Eleven,' or David Beckham's full sleeves in real life."

John Niederkorne of Tattoo Artist Magazine joins the conversation and tells me about a growing trend called getting a "warped tour bodysuit." It involves people tattooing their neck and hands, so as to look like they are fully covered in ink, when actually the rest of their birthday suit is in its original colours. We joke about people's reaction to discovering the truth about these posers as Dave gets pulled back to work.

John is impressed by how many people are lining up to get a tattoo at the convention, but he believes the Icelandic scene still has some growing up to do, showing me his magazine which showcases some of the most talented artists stateside.

Demons And Dicks

As a line starts growing by John's booth, I join Andy Perez from Three Kings Tattoo. Andy doesn't display much of his art, as he doesn't want to enable window shopping, opting instead to design tattoos with cus-

"Lopapeysa-wearing hipsters stand next to jocks. Punk rebels with dyed hair stand next to short-haired rockers."

tomers on the spot. He's been to all kinds of conventions, from small ones like the Icelandic one with fewer than twenty artists, to colossal ones where there are up to three hundred tattoo artists. "Those larger conventions are more about celebrating the lifestyle and show-

casing the art than about getting a tattoo," Andy says.

With the larger conventions you also get more of the weirdoes, such as one guy in Philadelphia who got Roman numerals tattooed on his penis. Andy tells me in intricate details how his artist friend got the job done, and in full view of the rest of the convention. Fortunately, we don't run into those kinds of exhibitionists at Bar 11. The tattoos I see being made find a home on people's arms and legs, with the occasional chest or back piece being done.

I see a friend of mine, Lárus, who tells me he's decided to get a small tattoo on the inside of his wrist. A few hours later, however, Lárus is on Andy's bench and I see a full demon mask coming to life on his shoulder. With Lárus's fascination with the Japanese 'Oni' demons, Andy must have encouraged Lárus to dream bigger.

Painful Pleasures

As I find myself drawn to the work of Sofia Estrella Olivieri, her assistant Nina strikes up a conversation with me. Nina is a healer and a health product grocer by trade, in her 30s, and is adorned with large and colourful tattoos. She tells me Sofia works really hard at these conventions. "Like the others, she'll show up early and work late," Nina says. "Many of the visiting artists will be tattooing from noon to midnight."

Sofia is finishing a seven-hour tattoo as we speak, and the man

she's working on looks like he's running on fumes. His new inside forearm tattoo is getting the final colour shading, bringing an impressive skull themed piece to life, one that fits the leitmotif decorating the rest of his body. Every time Sofia lifts the tattoo machine, he clenches his fist, arm shaking from exhaustion, and his sweaty face grimaces when the needle enters his skin again.

Next to him a young woman seems unsure of how to react as the base of her neck is being inked. Her brow furrows, but her mouth smiles, as if simultaneously on the verge of crying out and laughing. Whilst the clients show a rainbow of emotions, the artists stoically get on with it.

Come Saturday, the final day of the festival, the tent is close to bursting with people. The booths are busier than ever, and the tattoo machines are buzzing so loudly that it becomes all but impossible to hear your own voice. As the hour grows later, the tattooing slows down, people start trickling out of the tent and into the main bar for drinks and live music.

The following day the tent is gone and the beer garden is empty, cold and lifeless. A lot has changed for the convention in the last three years, and I look forward to seeing what the future holds for tattoos and the culture around them in Iceland.

Why'd You Get That Tattoo?

by Shea Sweeney



"Because I have restless leg syndrome."



"Because it's COOL!"



"Because I thought it was a beautiful portrait of her. I'm not obsessed with Amelia Earhart or anything..."

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Halldór And Friends: Reminiscence

I first visited Iceland thirty years ago in my capacity as a travel writer. Why I chose Iceland, of all places, was simple: no one I knew had ever gone there. Likewise, I'd recently been travelling in Scotland's Outer Hebrides, where I'd been subjected to the Free Kirk, a religion so dour that it makes ordinary Presbyterianism seem dangerously licentious, and I felt like I needed a change.

On my first night, I found myself in the now-defunct Reykjavík watering hole called Oðal. I was standing at the bar next to a man who was so well dressed that I took him to be either the Belgian ambassador or an extremely successful surgeon.

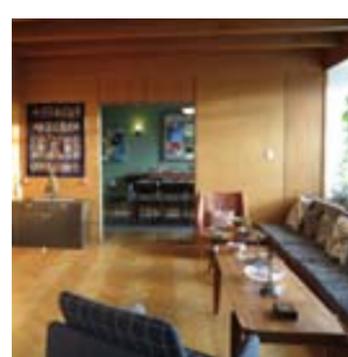


After a bit of preliminary chit-chat (What did I think of Iceland, etc.), he ordered a double brennivín for both of us, then said: "I'm a murderer..."

This is a real conversation stopper. What can you say in reply? "Well, I'm an American," I told him rather shakily.

"It's true," the man remarked. "I murdered my wife."

The calm way in which he said this made killing one's wife seem like a quite reasonable thing to do. He went on to tell me that he was on leave from prison, adding that no matter what you did in Iceland, whom you killed or beat up, you could leave your prison cell just so long as you reported your whereabouts to the police every four hours.



I decided I would have to balance the scales by meeting a non-murdering Icelander, so the next day I called up Halldór Laxness, and he invited me to visit him in Mosfellssveit that very afternoon. Only in Ice-

land, I thought, can you find a Nobel Prize winner's telephone number in the phone directory, ring him up, and then be invited for a visit, all in only a minute or two.

I took the Þingvellir bus to Mosfellssveit. After I arrived, I saw living evidence that Halldór had not murdered his wife, for that wife, Auður, greeted me at the door. Such things are a comfort to a traveller in a strange land for the first time.

"Halldór is upstairs reading Proust," Auður told me, and then made me some coffee.

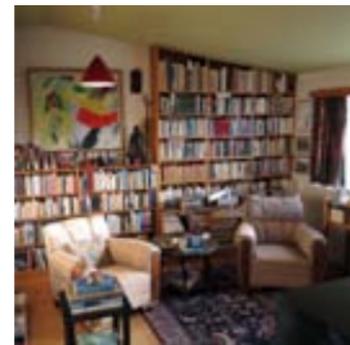
When Halldór finally came down, I asked him if he liked reading Proust.

"Nei!" he said. "Certainly not!"

"Then why are you doing it?"

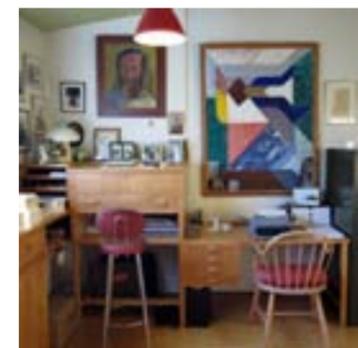
"Because my publisher requires it."

I was appalled. Here was this giant of world literature, a man who'd written twenty or thirty books, and



his publisher wanted him to read Proust, presumably to inject a dose of French civility to his staunchly

was the theme of my last evening in Iceland, when I attended a séance in Kópavogur sponsored by the Helgi Pjeturrs Society. An eminent Icelandic geologist, Helgi Pjeturrs was an avid believer in the spirit world; he also believed Icelandic was the language of the Afterlife, and that all Afterlifers were obliged to learn it. He died, or at least his physical part died, in 1949.



There were eight of us at the séance, all holding hands and looking expectantly at each other: who would grace us with their presence tonight? Then all the lights went out except for a globe of the world illuminated by a single light bulb. The medium went into a trance, and nothing happened for ten or fifteen minutes. At last the first presence arrived—Helgi Pjeturrs himself (he always comes first, I was later told). Helgi welcomed us to the séance as if he was welcoming us to his home.

There were several other presences who had some connection to

"I am not Agatha Christie!" he proclaimed. And then, as if to prove this point, he lit one of the large cigars that had become his trademark."

"Iceland sounds like a very tolerant country," I said.

"Oh yes. It even tolerates people like me."

"How did you happen to kill your wife?" I asked.

"Too much brennivín," he replied. "By the way, would you like another double brennivín?"

No, my treat, I said, and I bought us both bottles of ginger ale.

Icelandic oeuvre.

As it happened, my ears were less than perfectly attuned to Icelandic English: Halldór hadn't been reading Proust; he'd been reading the proofs for his forthcoming book.

Later I surveyed his library, which had translations of his works in a variety of languages, but there were far more translations in Dutch and Polish than there were in English. Remember: this was the early 1980s, several years before his works began appearing in England or America. In fact, my then editor, when I mentioned Halldór to him, said, "Hall door lacks who? Never heard of him."

"It's a pity you're not better known in America," I told Halldór.

"I am not Agatha Christie!" he proclaimed. And then, as if to prove this point, he lit one of the large cigars that had become his trademark. After he smoked half of the cigar, he put the other half in a pipe and smoked it, thus proving that a genuinely creative individual can smoke a good cigar right down to its final ash.

Proust didn't go away. For the remembrance of things past—or maybe I should say persons past—

the people in the room. One of them was an Italian who wanted to reassure his Icelandic friend that he was, as the medium declared, "all right." Yet how, I wondered, can you be "all right" when you're dead?

And then the medium was speaking in the low, deep voice of...Abraham Lincoln! Abe told us that he was all right, too. He was living in the Andromeda galaxy and learning Icelandic. He did not bear a grudge against John Wilkes Booth or anyone else. All he hoped for was world peace. Oh yes: Icelandic was a very difficult language...

"Wasn't that nice?" one of the séance-goers observed to me afterwards. "The medium brought forth a fellow countryman of yours just because you were here."

Yes, it was nice, I had to agree. Especially since the medium could have hauled out a considerably less desirable dead president than Abraham Lincoln. But it was also a typical example of Icelandic hospitality, wherein the guest is offered an unencumbered window on what might well be the most eccentric place in the world, no, the whole universe, including the Andromeda galaxy.

✂ - Lawrence Millman



The Return Of Iceland's Bell

Halldór Laxness's Iceland's Bell

Ask Icelanders about the bad old times under Danish rule and they will probably tell you about how the Danes periodically whipped Icelandic farmers if they dared trade with merchants from other countries or how they stole our bell to pay for their incessant warfare on the continent. These are terrifying examples to be sure, but they don't come from history books; they come from Halldór Laxness's novel, 'Iceland's Bell.' The bell itself is sent off to Denmark in the first chapter, never to be seen or heard from again. Small wonder that this is uppermost in people's minds, as everyone here is made to read the novel in around the ninth grade.

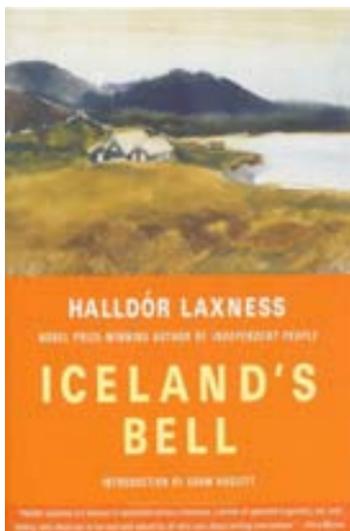
While Halldór felt compelled to add the disclaimer, "The author would like to note that this is not a work of historical fiction. The characters, style and events are entirely subservient to the needs of the work itself," the book is well researched. Halldór pored over annals from the period and virtually all characters have real-life counterparts. The language too, a curious mixture of Icelandic, Latin and Danish, feels authentic for the time.

At the turn of the 20th Century, independence was the main issue in Icelandic politics, and it was with this backdrop that Halldór started writing 'Iceland's Bell,' which came out in three parts, respectively in 1943, '44 and '46. The first part focuses on the farmer Jón Hreggviðsson, a proletarian hero, who also has elements of the picaresque. It is he who is given the task of cutting down the titular bell so that it can be transported to Denmark to pay the King's bills.

After coming home, he beats up his wife and children and we never learn if he in fact committed the murder he is accused of, as he is too drunk to remember himself. His increasingly improbable adventures, which include being drafted into the Danish army, witnessing the great fire in Copenhagen and trekking back and forth between Denmark and Iceland while continually running into the same people, are also reminiscent of Enlightenment novels such as Voltaire's 'Candide,' which Halldór himself translated into Icelandic at the time of writing 'Iceland's Bell.'

A symbolic return

The second part focuses on Snæfríður Íslandssól, the fairest woman in Iceland, who marries a drunkard because she can't have the man she wants most. The one she wants is Arne Arnæus, the hero of the third part who works directly for the king and has dedicated his life to collecting old manuscripts so that the nation may survive these dark times and eventually become free. The book prophesies that Iceland will in the future cast off the yoke while the rest of the world burns. It seems that Halldór was determined to construct a grand narrative of Icelandic history where it would eventually be propelled towards



freedom as long as its literature survived. In this, he was successful. When Iceland eventually held a referendum on its independence in 1944, more than 90% of the population voted in favour. And Iceland's Bell did become the preeminent novel of the new Republic. A stage version premiered at the opening of the Icelandic National Theatre in 1950, and the novel has been taught in schools ever since.

The bell itself, if it ever existed, has never been returned. However,

The book prophesies that Iceland will in the future cast off the yoke while the rest of the world burns.

the return of the saga manuscripts from Denmark in 1971 marked a symbolic return of Iceland's treasures and a considerable part of Iceland's population made its way to Reykjavík harbour to welcome them back. A similar triumphant return was made by Laxness himself in 1955, when he returned from Stockholm with Iceland's first and only Nobel Prize. In this sense, Iceland's bell had been returned, and its name was Halldór Laxness."

✍ - Valur Gunnarsson



The photos on the previous page are from a book called 'Writers' Homes' by Björn G. Björnsson. It's part of a series of books published by the Salka publishing house called Iceland's Cultural Heritage. Other books in that series include 'Large Turf Houses', '18th Century Stone Buildings' and 'Turf Churches.'



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Straum.is has been active since last summer, with writers Óli Dóri and Davíð Roach documenting the local music scene and helping people discover the best new music. It is associated with the radio show Straumur on X977, which airs every Monday evening at 23:00.



Parties Of Tomorrow And Yesterday

By Óli Dóri & Davíð Roach

Keflavík is the birthplace of the Icelandic rock-scene with bands like Hljómur sprouting up there in the late '60s. Unfortunately, the Keflavík Music Festival held June 5–9 was a disastrous event plagued by disorganisation that resulted in a lot of cancellations by big artists, domestic and international. Local Viking-metal band Skálmöld reported that they played for an empty tent with no lighting. Other bands reported at times that there was no security present, let alone staff to man the bars. A lot of the bands had apparently been promised advanced payment that did not arrive and were unable to reach the organisers who seemed to go into hiding mode as soon as shit hit the fan.

We recommend people give Keflavík another chance though, as we expect great things from the first Icelandic edition of the All Tomorrow's Parties festival on June 28–29. It is being held at the former US naval base and the main venue is an old airplane hangar and the other is "The Officer's Club," a beautiful old ballroom. Exceptional foreign bands such as Nick Cave, The Fall and The Oh Sees are coming over and the cream of the Icelandic crop will also be performing, including bands like múm, Ham, Apparat Organ Quartet and Dead Skeletons, which don't play live shows very often.

In other concert news we recently attended a couple of excellent ones. Sing Fan's release concert at Iðnó on June 12 was a prime example of why he is one of our most successful musical exports at the moment. Sindri and his minimal backing band recreated the beautiful and expertly produced songs of his 'Flowers' album with grace and clarity. After the encore he performed two numbers alone on the piano, proving that his songs are strong enough even without the outstanding arrangements.

We also saw one of Reykjavík's newest bands, Grísalappalísa, for the first time in Vitagarður outside of the Kex Hostel on the 16th. Their grooves leaned heavily on punk funk new wave mixed with motorik krautrock and their performance was tighter than a pair of wet skinny jeans. The two vocalists do not sing as much as perform spoken word poetry, full of abstract and hilariously absurd lyrics that seem quite indebted to the musician turned city councillor Einar Örn Benediksson (of Sugarcubes and Ghostigital fame). Their full-length album is dropping this month and we can't wait to get our hands on it.

And we can't close the column without talking about the new Sigur Rós album, 'Kveikur,' which came out on June 17, Iceland's National Day. We think it's better than their last one, 'Valtari,' which sounded a bit too much like a whale watching soundtrack for our taste. Gone is the meandering ambience, which has been replaced by sharp song writing and edge with a lot of rock out moments. The song "Rafstraumur" really has our hearts pumping.



Útidúr

Detour

2013

www.utidur.com

Útidúr are much improved on this carefree mini-LP

Útidúr were called the 'Beirut of Iceland' in their early days, and not without reason. There is more than a bit of Zach Condon in lead vocalist Gunnar Örn's deep-throated delivery and their debut was full of faintly Balkan-sounding indie-pop. On their new record, their approach is more playful and the influences more scattered.



Oyama

I Wanna

2013

www.facebook.com/oyamaband

Awakens dormant memory circuits, but leaves you expecting more

Big things are expected of neo-shogazers Oyama in 2013 and their debut EP, 'I Wanna,' is their first proper mission statement. It certainly wears its influences on its sleeve with unabashed pride, namely indie rock circa 1989–94. Think L*'s 'Spooky' or pre-'Loveless' My Bloody Valentine and

you get the idea. 'I Wanna' makes you feel something that is both reassuring and distinctly familiar. Those soft, gender-unspecific vocals, the chiming, open chord progressions, and chugging riffs containing that slightly atonal, off centre note. Only "Everything Some Of The Time," with its direct, poppy hooks, doesn't adhere to a particular time or style. It should bring middle-aged men who were weaned on such music to tears of nostalgic rapture.

And naturally it does... to a point. Songs like "Wasted (Dinosaur)" definitely rollick along in high gear, but in mastering sounds that have been around the block numerous times, it does feel at times a tad safe and happy within the boundaries Oyama have defined for itself. Which is okaaaaay, but not much is being stretched sonically here. It really shows on the final track, "The Garden," with its mid-song fuzzout/breakdown that, instead of pushing it 'til the wheels fall off, just seems to chug along sullenly. It also doesn't help that the lyrics seem to have been cobbled together as a mere afterthought. **✂ - Bob Cluness**



Valgeir Sigurðsson

Architecture Of Loss

2012

www.valgeir.net

Music that longs for something to hold onto

On 'Architecture of Loss,' Valgeir Sigurðsson pares down musical selections originally written for Stephen Petronio's ballet of the same name. The resulting album is a dark, brooding soundtrack somewhere between chamber music and ambient noise. Parts of the album envelop the listener in a wash of nearly sub-audible tones, bitter metallic percussive effects, and high, glitchy electronic rustlings. Other tracks are glacial and ghostly. 'Architecture Of Loss' is an album of tiny, careful movements between long periods of stillness, on the edge of existence.

One of the most successful tracks on the album is "Between Monuments." After floating on a subtly changing landscape featur-

ing violist Nadia Sirota, the piece finally erupts into a beat-driven conclusion. "World Without Ground" and "Reverse Erased" feature Nico Muhly and Nadia quite nicely, with shape-shifting textures and off-kilter rhythms. The ultra-close mic recordings make it seem like the players are in the room with me, trying not to breathe or the piece might crumble. Less successful tracks, however, feel like a jam session powered by winter sadness. After minutes of single-note playing in "The Crumbling," the piano gets to play two notes at the same time—how liberating.

Releasing an album that's just for listening and creating music for a ballet are two different things. A ballet's music is usually written to complement the dancers on stage. Without ballet, we wouldn't have Stravinsky's "Rite of Spring" or even Tchaikovsky's "Nutcracker" for that matter. But when you take away the dance, the music by itself has to hold up on its own. Some "Architecture" tracks seem like they're missing that extra visual piece of the puzzle that completes them. Others, like the final track, seem unnecessarily short.

Valgeir Sigurðsson's latest release opens with hardly a note and ends on a seemingly unfinished chord. But for a ballet and a very personal work called 'Architecture Of Loss,' these sounds are may be very appropriate bookends. They encapsulate an album that makes me aware of the transience of life, and all the little gestures, the tiny emotions, that never quite got expressed. **✂ - Nathan Hall**

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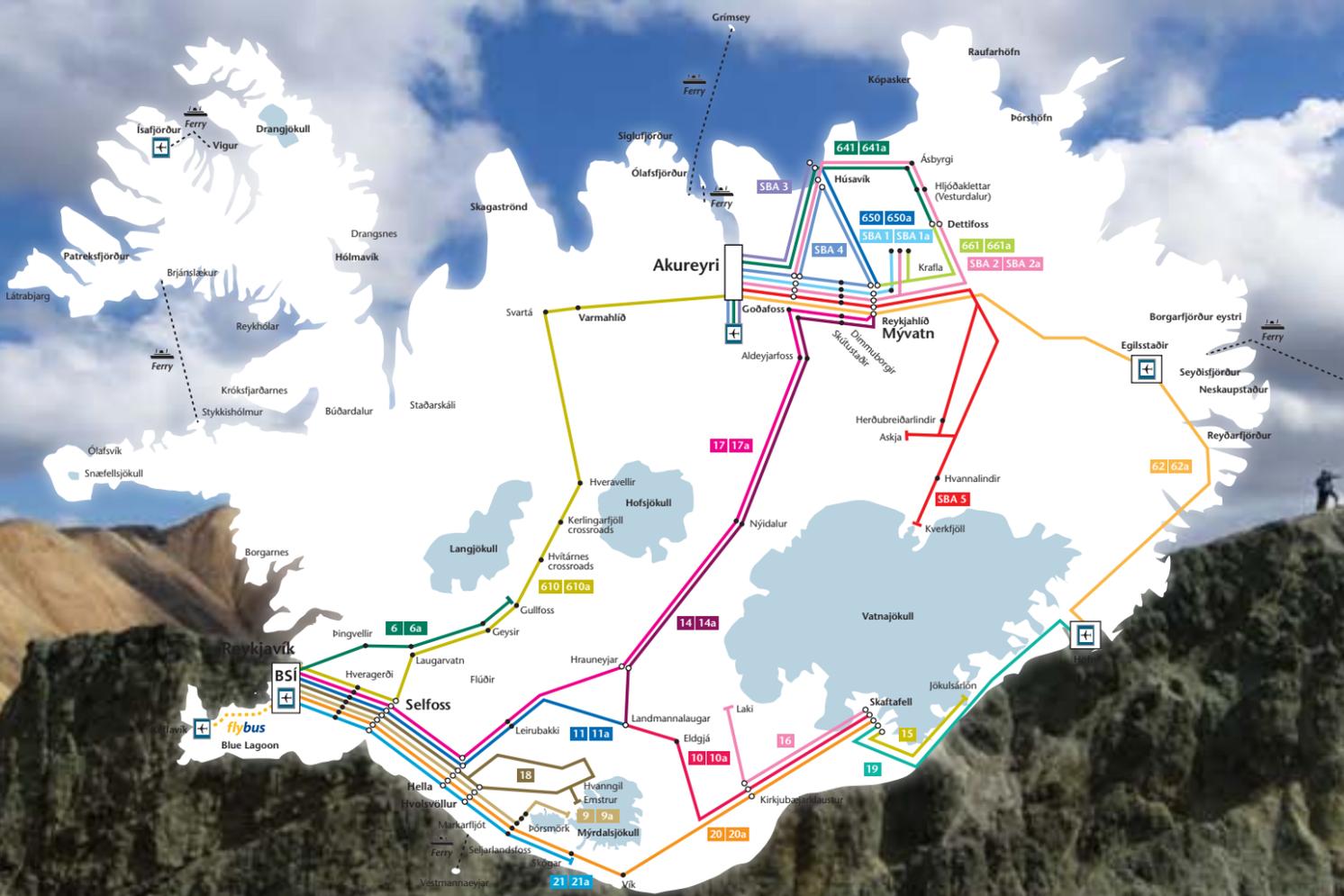
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Tomorrow's Party

ATP comes to Iceland

By Ragnar Jón Hrólfsson

The idea of Iceland as a music lover's utopia is a recent one to surface, mostly inspired by an impressive run of internationally successful artists and propagated by the ever-increasing profile of the Iceland Airwaves festival. Perhaps drawn to the nation's growing reputation, major international festivals like Sónar and, now, All Tomorrow's Parties are putting Iceland on their map, both staging iterations in 2013.



February's Sónar festivities at Harpa were apparently successful enough that tickets are already being sold for a 2014 edition, and if the upcoming All Tomorrow's Parties: Keflavík does well, the event is set to become a regular one. This is, of course, great news! We spoke to ATP founder Barry Hogan and Tómas Young, the festival's local promoter, to learn more.

Thank u based party

The first ATP was staged in England in 1999, as an alternative to the UK's more 'mainstream' music festivals. It quickly grew into a successful brand, spawning versions in the US and elsewhere, cultivating a reputation for having significant alt. artists curate the line-up. ATP Iceland will take place on June 28 and 29 in an abandoned NATO base right outside Keflavík, called Ásbrú. It features a slew of acclaimed international and local acts very much in the ATP aesthetic—these include The Fall, new Thurston Moore project Chelsea Light Moving, Nick Cave, Thee Oh Sees, múm, Mugison and Dead Skeletons—performing at two venues.

Festival founder Barry Hogan tells us that he's been working on the project pretty much since 1996, when an early incarnation of ATP took place as the Bowie Weekender. That first event

was curated by twee legends Belle and Sebastian and took place at Pontin's Holiday Camp in Camber Sands, Sussex, which has acted as venue for the festival ever since.

Just getting started

Barry tells us the festival's Icelandic expedition has been coming along well so far. "It's been good, we came here a few days ago to meet with Tómas and check on Ásbrú," Barry says. "The festival is a lot like the one we have in England, except of course that it's in Iceland, and the landscape makes it look like ATP has landed on the moon. It's all coming together at this point, we're at the crunch time when final schedules are made and everything is coming together."

The Tómas that Barry refers to is the aforementioned Tómas Young, an Icelandic entrepreneur who has worked for the Iceland Music Export and the Iceland Airwaves festival, and has been Roskilde Festival's long time Icelandic representative. As the main instigator behind ATP Iceland, he tells us that he came up with the idea two years ago in a think-tank session on the former NATO-base, which was planned by Keflavík airport's development company, Kadeco.

Think tank

"Several people, musicians and music industry people with connections to the area were gathered for the session, which had the aim of coming up with music related activities for Ásbrú," Tómas continues. The base, left behind by US Armed Forces in 2006, is rather large, with housing for more than 6,000 persons. The site, once the workplace and residency of thousands, was abandoned so quickly that it presented a problem for the municipality of Reykjanesbær, mostly in the form of a growing unemployment rate. But, as crisis is wont, it also presented opportunity, which the think tank session was meant to address.

There are no girls in tracksuits going 'oh no you can't go in this here area' or stuff like that. Everyone just comes to see the music and hang out.

"Many quirky ideas came up at the meeting, like founding an instrument museum, hosting choir-gatherings on site, creating studio-facilities for local and international bands that wanted to get away and record albums in peace, and so on," he says. "The group I sat with came up with the idea of doing a festival based on All Tomorrow's Parties, where guests could attend the event but also stay on-site, like at ATP. I can't remember if it was me or somebody else who brought up the name of ATP but that's where the idea came from."

Barry explains to us how the young Icelander approached them with the idea. "We had some affiliation with Icelandic music

before, and we were the first to bring Sigur Rós over to England when we booked them for one of our earlier events. So we have always had a healthy interest in Icelandic music. But it was Tómas who started it all, because he really wanted to do some kind of festival at the base. He contacted us and he was VERY persistent in his presentation. He finally got us to the point where we decided to come over here and have a look at everything, and we just thought: 'this is magical!' We were only in Iceland for about 24 hours on our first visit in August of 2012, but we realised we just had to do this."

The democratic party

Every international iteration of ATP shares a similarity, faithful to the original ATP idea, Barry says. "We kind of had the same formula as when we did New Zealand or Tokyo, but we try to slightly tailor every event to its particular region. But what I think is the great thing about this base is that it's a lot like Camber Sands has been moved to Iceland."

He further describes the original idea behind the festival and its sleep-away camp form: "It references those holiday camps everyone went to as a kid, places you wouldn't really want to go now, but likely attended if you were young in the '70s and maybe feel a sense of nostalgia for. The NATO base also adds something extra to this appeal."

The festival optionally provides accommodations for its visitors, and the artists are housed on-site as well. This is all a huge part of the ATP experience, as Barry tells us. "We have a very set way of doing things, and we always like to treat everyone like it's a democracy. We want our fans to feel important—for instance there is no VIP area at this festival. There are no girls in tracksuits going 'oh no you can't go in this here area' or stuff like that. Everyone just comes to see the music and hang out."

Carving a niche for the alternative

ATP has always had a great reputation for creating alternative events. The festival's name is a promise that the line-up comprises high quality up and comers along with scene legends. On top of this, Barry tells us ATP is trying to establish a special meaning in Iceland. "I always thought that the music that we were working with at the festival 14 years ago wasn't very popular, but I thought that eventually it would become what most people listen to. Actually, if you look at what was on then and what is on now, most of these original groups are the biggest bands going on nowadays," Barry says.

"But we also have something for everyone. For example, Nick Cave, I have seen him around 20 to 25 times over the last 25 years and the band he has right now is the best one he has ever played with—they are on fire. Thee Oh Sees are the best band happening now on the planet. Seriously if people don't come and see this shit, they are going to regret it—there are some great bands going on here, but these two are worth the entry fee alone. We also have great local bands playing, like kimono, múm and Ghostigital, who have played ATP before. There's something here for every type of music fan, even the casual listener is going to find some gems in there."

WELCOME TO OUR TRULY SPECIAL WORLD



The Roster Of Icelandic Bands

By Óli Dóri & Davíð Roach

Amiina

The former string team for Sigur Rós, Amiina have evolved tremendously over the past few years. With the kalimba, saw, Theremin and other weird instruments, their songs are both ethereal and playful.

Apparat Organ Quartet

A blend of Kraftwerk and classic rock & roll, Apparat are four dandily clad gentlemen standing behind organs and rocking their guts out. Their aesthetic is calculated to the extreme. They even have their own dance move and a triangular "A" hand signal that people make at their concerts.

Dead Skeletons

Led by artist Jón Sæmundsson, Dead Skeletons are an exercise in meditative trance-inducing long jams, heavy on drones and krautrock. They feature excellent guitar work from Singapore Sling's Henrik Björnsson and their lyrics borrow heavily from eastern mysticism.

Ghostigital

Ghostigital is collaboration between the Sugarcubes' Einar Örn and the multi-instrumentalist/producer Curver. The band is best described as a perfect mixture of noise and electronic music and is known for epic live performances.

HAM

One of the most important rock bands in Icelandic rock history, HAM commands a cult following in Iceland. Óttar Proppé, the singer of HAM, was recently elected as a member of Iceland's parliament.

Hjaltalín

Hjaltalín surprised everyone in Iceland when they released their third album 'Enter 4' late last year. Many local critics' favourite album in 2012, it sees them moving away from their origins as a chamber rock band and into a more electronic direction.

kimono

For the last 12 years, the math rock band Kimono have been an important fixture of the Reykjavík music scene. The influential band in Iceland is a must-see live act!

Mugison

With his homemade Mirstument, Mugison is going back to his roots in electronic music. On his last album, 'Haglél,' Mugison showed his softer side and sang only in Icelandic. It broke the record for the most sold album in Icelandic history.

múm

After a four-year hiatus, the experimental musical group múm return with their upcoming album 'Smilewound' due out September 17. Múm rarely play live in Iceland so it's a treat to see the electronic glitch band at their home base.

Snorri Helgason

This 28-year old singer-songwriter started his music career in the popular Icelandic power pop band Sprengjuhöllin, writing many of its biggest hits. Since disbanding in 2009, Snorri has been active as a solo musician and is currently working on his third album.

Valgeir Sigurðsson

If Iceland has a "super producer" that person is Valgeir Sigurðsson. His work with Björk brought him international acclaim and production duties for artists like Bonnie Prince Billie, CocoRosie and the Magic Numbers. His music is a beautifully rendered diverse pool of influences from neo-classical to folk with a lot of dense sonic details dancing around.

Æla

Excellent post-punk from Keflavík, Æla are well known in Iceland for their mesmerizing and explosive live performances. It has been a while since the band played live so nobody should miss the chance to see them.

Meet The Venue

A short history of Ásbrú

In the lava fields just outside of Keflavík, there's a place that appears at first glance to be yet another extension of the municipality of Reykjanesbær. With a few scattered apartment blocks and the occasional shed, it looks to be completely deserted, and has the ghostlike feel of a derelict factory town or a failed housing project.

That place is called Ásbrú and it is the remains of the old U.S. navy base in Iceland, which the Americans operated after a joint agreement defensive contract was signed in 1951. The story has earlier roots though, as Iceland has had a military presence in the country since the British invasion in 1940.

As Iceland became an increasingly important strategic location during World War II, the allied forces saw no other option but to seize the territory in what was actually a rather peaceful invasion. We surrendered immediately, but managed to maintain neutrality until the end of the war. The British only stayed for the one year and transferred their control of Iceland to the Americans who were more suited for the job since they had yet to enter the conflict.

Thus began Iceland's blossoming relationship with the Americans, which lasted long after the war ended. The men in uniform, who were 6,000 at peak operation, stayed here until September 2006 when the base was finally decommissioned after nearly 55 years of active duty. Their presence has had a huge influence on our society, bringing us into contact with rock and roll music, basketball and many other American habits. Many people still argue, probably correctly, that the base is responsible for the heavy Western influence that is still very much still present in Iceland today.

The Icelandic Defence Agency assumed control of the base in 2011 and it has since then been put to civilian use. The educational institution Keilir, for instance, is based in and around Ásbrú and rents the former military housing for relatively cheap. It's also been used for conferences and will now host its first music festival.

Program

Friday, June 28

Atlantic Studios

17:30	Æla
18:30	Apparat Organ Quartet
19:30	The Notwist
20:45	Múm
21:50	The Fall
23:10	Mugison
0:15	Thee Oh Sees
1:20	HAM
2:20	Ghostigital

Andrews theater

16:00	Film*
18:00	Snorri Helgason
19:00	Kimono
20:00	Film*
22:00	Film*
0:00	Film*

*Films curated by Jim Jarmusch

Officers Club

20:00-03:00	Dj's
-------------	------

Saturday, June 29

Atlantic Studios

17:30	Monotown
18:30	Sqür!
20:15	Nick Cave & The Bad Seeds
22:15	Hjaltalín
23:20	Deerhoof
0:40	Chelsea Light Moving
2:00	Dead Skeletons

Andrews theater

13:00	Film*
15:00	Film*
17:30	Puzzle Muteson(UK)
18:35	Valgeir Sigurðsson
19:35	Amiina
21:00	Film*
23:00	Film*

*Films curated by Tilda Swinton

Officers Club & other activities

11:00 -	5-A-Side football @ Football pitch. Bands vs. Fans.
13:00	
14:00 -	'Life on a Nato Base' tour
15:00	
17:00 -	Pop Quiz hosted by Dr. Gunni
18:00	@ Officers club
20:00 -	Dj's @ Officers club
03:00	

*Timings are subject to change



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Welcome To The Fall

All our writers were too scared to interview notoriously grouchy Fall leader Mark E. Smith. All but one, that is...

By Ragnar Jón Hrólfsson

Fall founder Mark E. Smith: a fiend, a frontman, straight up punk or a living legend? Whatever your answer, you can't deny that the man has led a long and exciting career through his pioneering rock band The Fall—sometimes celebrated as “the last rock band standing.” Decades have passed since The Fall's relentless assault on mainstream music staked the band a prominent place in rock history. With a sound that's written in stone and a revolving cast of members, Mark has kept The Fall going since 1976 by controlling the band like a captain through a storm. Some of the crew are bound to fall overboard, into oblivion, while others survive but, as Mark has put it: “If it's me and yer granny on bongos, it's the Fall.”

With a new album out and a world tour in progress, it's apparent that Mark has no plans of slowing down in the immediate future. And guess what? Mr Smith and his band are returning to Iceland, set to co-headline ATP Iceland next week, playing alongside another revered rock figure, Nick Cave. We mustered up the guts to call up Mark and ask him about the band's current state and whether he remembered anything from his prior Iceland visits.



Fuckin' hell!

What do you think of returning to the Iceland?

I'm looking forward to it, but I don't think I've ever been in the summer. Yeah I've been there a few times, but never in the summer.

Have you given any thought to the fact that you'll be playing in an abandoned military base?

Fuckin' hell! [spoken in a muddy Lancashire accent—no one quite handles profanity like the British]

You visited Iceland in 1981 and 1983, roughly thirty years ago—and then again in 2004. What were those visits like? Any particular memories—do you even remember them at all?

Yeah, I really enjoyed it; I made some good friends there who are either dead or relegated.

Anything particular that caught your attention?

Nah. I've always liked it. When we first went there, there weren't that many groups around, which was kind of weird. But we were still very selective of them [laughs].

The ascent of bark

What did you think of the Icelandic music scene during your first visit?

Well, we toured a bit with Purrkur Pillnikk, but not much other than that, and they turned into, what you call—Bark? You know what I'm talking about son? [Mark may be referencing that Purrkur singer Einar Örn went on perform in Kukl, and later the Sugarcubes, along with another singer who later struck out on her own as...Björk. Or he might not be referencing that at all].

Do you remember any other Icelandic acts from your first visit?

No. I mean, I got a few LPs that you can't pronounce, some folk music and some poetry as well, and I liked that.

Do you have an opinion on the current Icelandic scene?

Well, I don't know anything about it. Nothing recent at least. What's it like?

It's evolved a bit and has gotten quite big, actually. I hope you'll see it better when you come here.

Well, what kind of music is it? Like, do you have a lot of groups going?

Well, yes, quite a few of them.

Well alright then.

In your song “Iceland” you mention Icelandic singer/songwriter Megas... any particular reason?

Right, well, he was a big deal back when I was there, and I got some of his LPs. But I've never met him or anything. Is he still going?

Yes, he's still going strong.

Cool.

Society gets worse All the time

The Fall was a pretty groundbreaking band when you first came out. Can you tell me why you got started or what inspired you to become a musician?

I think it's the same as now really. I would hear any music that was around then and thought I'd make some different music, something that was primitive and mixed with intelligent words, really. That's what I'm trying to do, still.

So you're trying to achieve the same things you were trying to achieve then?

Well, if you look at it that way, then probably, yeah.

Where did you find your inspiration then?

To be honest, I don't really think about the past that much nowadays. It's always the next LP with me.

But is there something you find inspiring today?

Society gets worse all the time; somebody has got to say something. And if you ever get to thinking you aren't fed up with it all, then just turn on the TV and watch some music programmes. It riles me up. But the group I've got now is almost ten years younger than me.

Do you feel this brings you in contact with the current generation?

Yeah, I suppose it does.

But do you feel it is harder to be all “groundbreaking” now than back when you were younger?

Do I find it hard? No, not at all. What we do today is what the rest of them will do tomorrow, that's my motto.

Watch your back, Current fall line-up

Your band is famous for having played host to some 66 members since you founded it. However, your latest album, ‘Re-Mit,’ is the fourth you've recorded with the current line-up. Have you finally found the core members of the group?

Haha, they're getting nervous though, they've been here four years now. Yeah, I don't think so, I might axe them [laughing].

Some claim that the Fall would not be what it was without the constantly changing line-up. What are your thoughts on this?

I don't know. Sometimes you've just got to sack somebody. You never know. The current group, they're all married now—so that's a worry sign. I'll have to watch them from now on.

Many people consider music in general to be in a state of decline, what is your opinion on that?

What? Music in general? I think they might be right, who said that?

Ehm. I'm not referring to anyone specific, but it seems like a prevalent attitude. I was merely interested in what you have to say about it...

Well, you know, if I was 16 again I wouldn't really think [unintelligible]... But you can always say you're looking at the bastard through rose coloured glasses.

What I think is a big problem today is the recording studios. It's getting harder for me to record now, because these new studios make everything sound kind of plain. They level everything down, so you have to spend bloody hours and days trying to get it to sound like it should. You know what I mean?

Yeah. Do you think maybe these studios are meant to make music more accessible for radio and the casual listener?

Yeah, they're trying to phase it, with ProTools and all that. The studios are, in my opinion, mainly built for talentless people.

Idiots like bono

Many Icelanders get their music by illegally downloading it. What's your opinion on that?

There's nothing you can do about it, really. I've been really fucking mad about it, though. For instance, our last LP—not this one or the one before, but the one before that—the one on Domino Records (2010's ‘Your Future Our Clutter’). Well, some idiot left a copy of the LP in a bar and before we knew the thing had twelve thousand downloads. So that's twelve thousand sales. And then you get idiots like Bono or fucking Madonna saying [adopts an Irish accent] ‘Oh the music should be free to every person, it should be all free.’ But in the end I don't mind, we of course gained a lot of fans from it.

Any special plans for Iceland?

Not really, but we've got a day off which sounds good. I don't know. I guess we'll wander around, get phased from the nuclear base. I'm not staying in town like everybody else, that's for sure.

I've read some of your interviews in preparation for our talk. Often, you don't seem very fond of us journalists as a profession. Any specific reasons for that?

Well it just depends, Ragnar, it depends.

[On that note, Mark quickly ended the interview saying he has to go out and catch the afternoon. Before saying his final goodbyes, the good man gracefully invited me to “take him for a drink” if we should meet while he was in Iceland. I of course accepted, and as I put down the receiver I thought: “I now owe Mark E. Smith a beer.”]

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A Scavenger Hunt Via GPS

Exploring North Iceland's Skagafjörður

by Melanie Franz



Photos: Melanie Franz

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On Friday evening we set off toward Skagafjörður where we would spend the weekend exploring. It wouldn't be like anything we had done before; Bragi Jónsson, an Icelander who certainly knows his way around the island, would be taking us geocaching.

This modern form of a scavenger hunt via GPS is played in more than 200 countries. A German traveller introduced it to Bragi in 2009 and he has since looked for caches not only in Iceland but also in Denmark and Norway. "It takes me to places I have not been to before and will keep on doing so," he tells me.

Let the games begin

After spending the night at a cosy summerhouse we hit the road early the next morning equipped with a GPS. Bragi had downloaded the necessary information beforehand from the Geocaching homepage, which included a list of caches hidden in the area and accompanying hints and tips on how to find them.

The first coordinates lead us to what seems at first to be an unimpressive looking waterfall just off the main road along the fjord. Bragi had been here before. "We went up all the way to the waterfall, but then realised that we were on the wrong side of it," he says. "I have given up a couple of times on caches but always try to go again." This time around he knows the way and we follow him up the hill. The further we go, the more impressive the waterfall becomes and it turns out to be a hidden treasure in itself.

Bragi keeps a close eye on the GPS. "The GPS is accurate by about five to six metres," he says. When we reach the given coordinates it is time to search. We look in every hole and behind every stone. As it is our first time we are not really sure where and what to look for. "The more caches you find, the more you develop an eye for what could be a good hiding place," Bragi says.

After searching the ground back and forth for about fifteen minutes we are triumphant. It is a small black film container that had been hidden in a grass-covered hole. A typical cache is a small waterproof container containing a logbook where geocachers



sign their name and date. Some caches even contain a little toy or small note. Later on that day. The coordinates of each lead us to interesting places along the fjord: remote farms, waterfalls and rock formations. We keep the most challenging cache for last. It

"We went up all the way to the waterfall, but then realised that we were on the wrong side of it."

turns out to be a six-kilometre walk to the hilltop of a small peninsula that is connected to the main land by only a narrow stone trail.

After an exhausting one-hour walk over rough terrain we are treated to an incredible view over the fjord and mountain range and an easy-to-find cache. Caches have different difficulty levels and favourite hideouts seem to be as far up as possible. We are exhausted

when we finally get back to the car and call it a day.

Until next time...

The next morning we are greeted by bright sunshine, we head to Sauðárkrúkur where the map promises a number of treasures. On the way we take a small detour to discover a smartly placed film container that can only be found during low tide when it is not covered by water.

Once in Sauðárkrúkur we get to see the small town from very different angles. The first cache offers a beautiful view over the town and fjord while the next one takes us down to the harbour where dried fish heads are hanging from wooden rails. The smell of fish is quite overwhelming and without the lead of the cache we probably would never have gone there.

The next hints lead us to the town centre and to the cemetery. The latter turns out to be a mystery cache, providing a false set of coordinates with a puzzle. If you solve it you get the final cache location. We solve the riddle but then decide to abandon the search as it is already late afternoon and we still have to drive back to Reykjavík that evening.

Altogether we discovered six caches that day and abandoned three. One we couldn't find despite an extensive search and another one we were on the wrong side of a river. At least the next time we will know where to find them.

What Is Geocaching?



"Geocaching is a real-world, outdoor treasure hunting game using GPS-enabled devices. Participants navigate to a specific set of GPS coordinates and then attempt to find the geocache (container) hidden at that location," according to geocaching.com.

These caches are hidden and maintained by anybody in the geocaching community. You can join the community by signing up for free at www.geocaching.com.



The rules are simple: "If you take something from the geocache (or "cache"), leave something of equal or greater value. Write about your find in the cache logbook. Log your experience at www.geocaching.com."



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LEMURINN

Celebrating One Thousand Years Of Alþingi In 1930

by Vera Illugadóttir & Helgi Hrafn Guðmundsson

In the summer of 1930, 28-year-old Swedish photographer and scholar Berit Wallenberg travelled to Iceland where she spent a couple of weeks. She was a member of the Wallenberg dynasty, a prominent Swedish industrialist and banking family. The most famous Wallenberg is Raoul, who is believed to have saved tens of thousands of Jews during the Holocaust, but Berit became well known in her own right, particularly for her archaeological research and work in the field of photography.

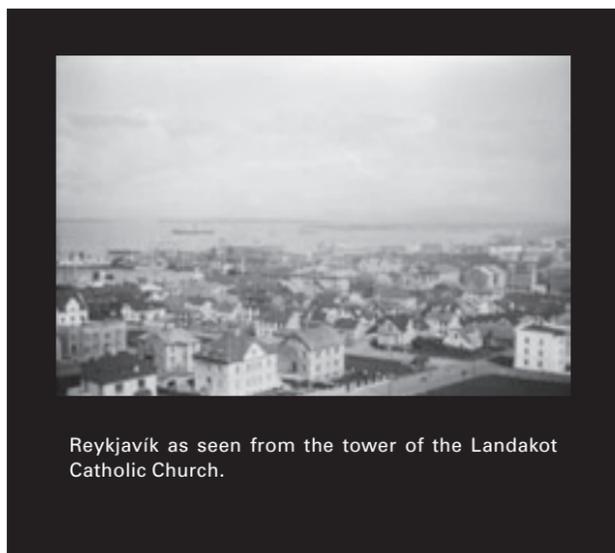
In a collection of 25,000 photos that she gifted to the Swedish National Heritage Board are the ones she took in Iceland on the remarkable occasion in June 1930 when Icelanders gathered at Þingvellir to commemorate the thousand-year anniversary of their national parliament Alþingi. Founded in 930 at Þingvellir ("the parliament plains"), Alþingi is considered the oldest extant parliamentary institution in the world. Although parliament no longer convenes there, Þingvellir remains a popular tourist destination located about 45 km east of Reykjavík.



Stylish visitors from the Faroe Islands



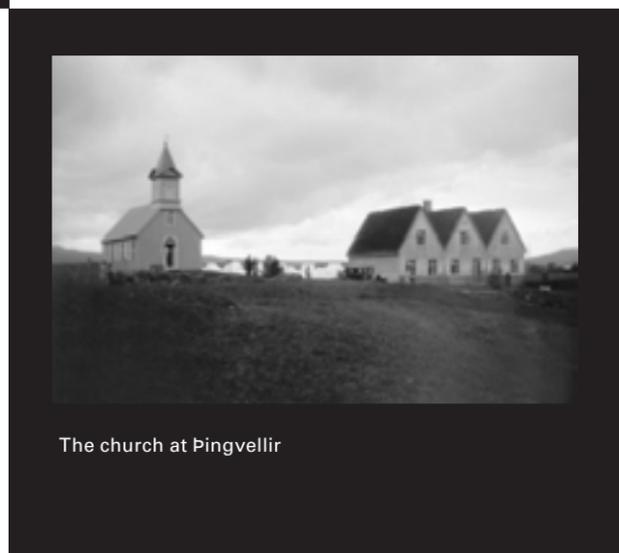
Guests watch a plane land on Þingvallavatn



Reykjavík as seen from the tower of the Landakot Catholic Church.



Young women wearing the national costume



The church at Þingvellir



Horse fighting was a popular sport in Iceland during the Saga age, but had completely disappeared by the seventeenth century. An enterprising Icelander decided to revive this tradition for the 1930 festival. It was controversial though and newspapers articles at the time decried it as cruel to the animals and "un-Christian."



Festival guests resting in a tent



Oddur "the strong" Sigurgeirsson was a local 'character' in the capital at the time. When his friends gave him this costume for the festival he liked it so much that he kept wearing it regularly on the streets of Reykjavík.

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Issue 8

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Page 6



"It's clear from all of the protest activity that there's been a change in values—I just hope that young women are becoming more sceptical about allowing people to measure them the way beauty pageants do"

Miss Iceland is back! Not everyone is thrilled...

Page 34



"With the larger conventions you also get more of the weirdoes, such as one guy in Philadelphia who got Roman numerals tattooed on his penis. Andy tells me in intricate details how his artist friend got the job done, and in full view of the rest of the convention."

Hanging out with ink enthusiasts at the 2013 Icelandic Tattoo Convention.

Page 36



"I called up Halldór Laxness, and he invited me to visit him in Mosfellssveit that very afternoon. Only in Iceland, I thought, can you find a Nobel Prize winner's telephone number in the phone directory, ring him up, and then be invited for a visit, all in only a minute or two."

Visiting Gljúfrasteinn when Halldór was there to answer the door.

Page 40



"Well, you know, if I was 16 again I wouldn't really think [unintelligible]... But you can always say you're looking at the bastard through rose coloured glasses."

We spoke to Mark E. Smith before his return to Iceland to play at the inaugural ATP Iceland festival.

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Issue 8 - 2013

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YOUR ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO LIFE, TRAVEL AND ENTERTAINMENT IN ICELAND



Rauðasandur Music Festival

Rauðasandur, Westfjords | 8,500 ISK | July 4 – July 7

Need a break from the bumping Reykjavík nightlife, but not quite willing to give up all the live music and the very sweaty people dancing? Then hop in your car, your friend's car, your parent's car, onto a pony, whatever you got, and head up to Rauðasandur Festival. This annual festival is held up in the Westfjords at Rauðasandur ("Red Sand") Beach, named so because of the warm hues of the sand under the midnight sun. **PY**



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MUSIC

CONCERTS & NIGHTLIFE

June 21 - July 4

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

Friday June 21

Bar 11
23:00 Últra Mega Technobandið
Stefán

Café Rosenberg
22:00 Ljótu Hálfvitarnir

Celtic Cross
22:00 Surprise Troubador

Den Danske Kro
20:30 Ingi Valur/Biggi

The Dubliner
21:00 Troubadour Danni

English Pub
22:00 Troubadours Gunni, Ingi Valur and Tryggvi

Faktory
23:00 DJ KGB/XXX Rottweiler

Gaukurinn
21:00 Momentum, Azoic and Morð

Harlem
22:00 DJ Óli Dóri

Harpa
20:30 Four Last Songs

Hressó
22:00 Kongó/DJ Ívar Amore

Kaffibarinn
22:00 Alfons X

Kaffi Zimsen
22:00 DJ Cyppe

Lebowski Bar
23:00 DJ AB

Prikið
22:00 Drome Clones

Volta
23:00 B2B feat. Kanilsnældur, Kerema & Lagaffe Tales

Saturday June 22

Bar 11
21:00 Botnleðja

Café Rosenberg
22:00 Ljótu Hálfvitarnir

Celtic Cross
22:00 Surprise Troubador

Den Danske Kro
21:00 Tryggvi & Ingi

The Dubliner
21:00 Troubadour Johnny C, Jazz Band

English Pub
22:00 Troubadour Night: Raggi, Dagur and Hjálmar

Faktory
14:00 RVK Soundsystem Presents: Rotom Sunsplash Reggae Party

Gamli Gaukurinn
22:00 Staff Member Hanna's Open Birthday Party

Harlem
22:00 Housekell

Hressó
22:00 Góðir Landsmenn/DJ Ívar Amore

Kaffibarinn
22:00 Lagaffe Tales

Kaffi Zimsen
22:00 Basic House Effect

Lebowski Bar
23:00 DJ Jesús

Prikið
22:00 Benni B-Ruff

Sunday June 23

Celtic Cross
22:00 Surprise Troubador

English Pub
22:00 Troubadour Danni

The Dubliner
21:00 Troubadour Andri

Faktory
21:30 Live Jazz

Harlem
22:00 Hair of the Dog

Harpa
20:00 Pearls of Icelandic Song

Kaffibarinn
22:00 Sævar Markús

Lebowski Bar
22:00 DJ Haraldur Einars

Prikið
22:00 Hangover Cinema: Trailer Park Boys

Monday June 24

Café Rosenberg
22:00 Valur Gunnarsson sings the songs of Leonard Cohen and recites highlights from the Canadian's life in honour of Quebec National Day

Den Danske Kro
16:00 Roskilde Opening Party

The Dubliner
21:00 Troubadour Eiríkur

English Pub
22:00 Troubadour Addi

Harlem
22:00 Musique Motif

Kaffibarinn
22:00 Dabi

Lebowski Bar
22:00 DJ AB

Prikið
22:00 Monday Youtube Party

**4
July**



Smooth Jazz Edda Borg Album Release Show

Café Rosenberg | 21:00

Edda Borg has a release show for her debut album 'No Words Needed,' which should appeal to smooth jazz enthusiasts. She has a mighty ensemble contributing to her album, including Samúel Jón Samúelsson of Big Band fame. Edda Borg created and ran a music school for twenty-four years, and has a lot of experience playing with other acclaimed musical acts, so expect to be schooled in the art of jazz. **TGB**



Free Weekly Subtitled Icelandic Films Icelandic Movie Days

Slátturhúsið Menningarhús, Egilsstaðir
Mondays all summer at 20:00

What do you think of when you think of Icelandic cinema? Perhaps some iconic images and famous titles come to mind, or perhaps you've yet to witness any silver screen treasures from the filmmakers of this beautiful country. Either way, it's worth paying a visit to Slátturhúsið for one of their Monday night Icelandic film screenings that will be happening from now until the end of August. Film is an excellent way to get the feel for a country, its philosophy and its people. Plus, all the films will be subtitled in English. **SS**

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Tuesday June 25

Café Rosenberg
22:00 Hjörtur & Gunni
The Dubliner
21:00 Troubadour Danni
English Pub
22:00 Troubadour Night: Danni
Harlem
22:00 Wonderism
Kaffibarinn
22:00 Pilsner
KEX Hostel
20:30 KEX Jazz
Lebowski Bar
22:00 DJ Jesús
Prikið
22:00 DJ Berndsen

Wednesday June 26

Bar 11
20:00 Foosball Tournament
Café Rosenberg
22:00 Bad Days
The Dubliner
21:00 Troubadour Gísli
English Pub
22:00 Troubadour Raggi
Harlem
21:00 Fish Fry
Kaffibarinn
22:00 HalliValli
KEX Hostel
20:00 Garden Concert
Lebowski Bar
22:00 DJ Jesús
Loft Hostel
20:00 Ilgresi and Danielle Ate the Sandwich

Thursday June 27

Bar 11
22:30 Macaya
Café Rosenberg
22:00 Gísli Helgason and The Visionaries
Celtic Cross
22:00 Surprise Troubadour
The Dubliner
21:00 Troubadour Pálmi
English Pub
22:00 Troubadour Night: Böddi and guest
Faktory
23:00 DJ Plan B
Harlem
22:00 DJ Hamlet
Kaffibarinn
22:00 Alfons X
Kaffi Zimsen
21:00 DJ Baldur
Lebowski Bar
22:00 House Band
Prikið
21:00 Gay Latino Night

Friday June 28

Ásbrú – Former NATO Base
14:00 All Tomorrow's Parties Iceland
Café Rosenberg
22:00 Magnús Einarsson & Nágrenni
Celtic Cross
22:00 Surprise Troubadour
Den Danske Kro
20:30 Tryggvi/Gunni
The Dubliner
21:00 Troubadours Johnny C, Pálmi and Eiki
English Pub
22:00 Troubadour Night: Biggi and Maggi, Dagur and Hjálmar
Gamli Gaukurinn
20:00 L.A Vation, World's Greatest Tribute To U2
Harlem
22:00 Terrordisco
Hressó
22:00 Dalton/DJ Solid
Kaffibarinn
22:00 Kári
Kaffi Zimsen
22:00 DJ Seth Sharp
Lebowski Bar
23:00 DJ Jesús
Volta
23:00 Hugarástand
Prikið
22:00 Gervisykur, Danni Deluxe

Saturday June 29

Café Rosenberg
22:00 Lebowski and Soffía Björg
Celtic Cross
22:00 Surprise Troubadour
Den Danske Kro
21:00 Ingi Valur/Biggi Olgeirs
The Dubliner
21:00 Troubadours Eiríkur, Ingvar and Pálmi
English Pub
22:00 Troubadour Night: Danni and Jón, Addi and guest
Harlem
22:00 DJ Katla
Harpa
20:00 Pearls of Icelandic Song
Hressó
22:00 Vígga & Sjonni Band/DJ Fúzi
Kaffibarinn
22:00 Simon FKNHNSM
Kaffi Zimsen
22:00 Basic House Effect
Lebowski Bar
23:00 DJ Anna Brá
Prikið
22:00 Árni Kocoon
Volta
23:00 DJ Margeir



22
June

Praise Jah Like You Should
Rototom Sunsplash Reggae Party

Faktory | 14:00 | Free!

What do Spain and Iceland have in common? The Rototom Sunsplash Festival! Well, actually Spain will be hosting this massive annual reggae festival, not Iceland, but Reykjavík's own Faktory will be having a party in the spirit of Rototom Sunsplash. This dance-filled night will feature performances from Hjálmar, Ojba Rasta, Amaba Dama, Panoramix, and DJ talent from RVK Soundsystem. **SS**



28
June

L.A.Vation U2 Tribute Band
You can't get Vertigo when you live at the top of the world

Gamli Gaukurinn | 22:00 | 3,900 ISK

It's A Beautiful Day! So Get On Your Boots and go outside Where The Streets Have...actually very Long Names. Granted, it is mighty bright around here these days, and if the City of Blinding Lights isn't quite What [You] Are Looking For, how about you pull a quick Disappearing Act into the Twilight sanctuary that is Gamli Gaukurinn. Go ahead, pull that darling in with you, because you know, Sometimes You Can't Make It On Your Own! Go ahead, buy her a drink while you're at it, it's only Friday, not Sunday Bloody Sunday. That is, unless you've got too much Pride, or you're eluded by her Mysterious Ways. **PY**



4-7
July

Stepping Into The Scene
Ólæti Music Festival

Ólafsfjörður | 6,000 ISK

Three facts: Iceland loves fish, and it loves music and it loves summer. So why not consolidate its three loves and throw a summer music festival in an old fish factory? Oh, it's been done? Oh, you've been to one? Well you have never been to THIS one! It's Ólæti's first year on the scene, though you wouldn't know it by the all-star line-up they have for you that includes Ojba Rasta, Samaris and Ljósva-ki. And no, it doesn't smell like fish anymore, we promise. Well, we hope anyways. To be honest no one really knows, so you should probably just go and find out for yourself. **PY**



Lebowski BAR

Laugavegi 20a, 101 RVK, 552 2300, lebowskibar.is

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MUSIC

CONCERTS & NIGHTLIFE



Are You Afraid Of The Dark? Dark Deeds Literary Walking Tour

Starts at Reykjavík City Library | Thursdays all summer at 17:00 | Free Admission

For a country with so few murders, Iceland sure does have a rather overwhelming obsession with crime novels. Perhaps it's just an intrigue with what one does not have—the grass is always greener on the other side, or in this case, the grass is more interesting on the other side. Björn Unnar Valsson, project manager for the Reykjavík City Library has a casual theory that it might have to do with an interest in secrets; “Reykjavík is, by almost any standard, a safe place but I think there’s an anxiety concerning secrets in a small society such as this,” he says, “and the literary genre which lends itself most readily to revelation, inquiry and the uprooting of secrecy by a higher authority (i.e. the law) is the crime novel.” Of course, if you want to develop a theory of your own, it’s best to go on Reykjavík City Library’s literary walking tour, Dark Deed. The tour will explore city sites with importance in relation to Icelandic crime stories as well as ghost stories and anything else related to Icelandic literature’s darker side. Some of the stops include the former sight of Dubliners, the setting of a chapter Arnaldur Indriðason’s, Operation Napoleon, and the Þingholt-neighborhood, the setting of a chapter in Viktor Arnar Ingólfsson’s, Body of Evidence. Along the way tour guides will also read aloud from some of Iceland’s most famous ghost stories. Reykjavík is a UNESCO City of Literature, and Dark Deeds is a creative celebration of a beloved element of Icelandic literary culture. **SS**

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Sunday June 30

Celtic Cross
22:00 Surprise Troubadour
The Dubliner
21:00 Troubadour Eiríkur
Faktory
21:30 Live Jazz
Gljúfrasteinn – Halldór Laxness
16:00 Björn Thoroddsen
Harlem
22:00 Hair of the Dog
Harpa
20:00 Pearls of Icelandic Song
Kaffibarinn
22:00 Unpop
Lebowski Bar
22:00 DJ Haraldur Einars
Prikið
22:00 Hangover Cinema: Black Rain

Monday July 1

The Dubliner
21:00 Troubadour Pálmi
English Pub
22:00 Troubadour Night: Gunni
Harpa
20:00 Pearls of Icelandic Song

Lebowski Bar
22:00 DJ Anna Brá
Prikið
22:00 Monday Youtube Party

Tuesday July 2

Café Rosenberg
20:00 Silja Rós & Band
The Dubliner
21:00 Troubadour Danni
English Pub
22:00 Troubadour Night: Danni
Harpa
20:00 Pearls of Icelandic Song
Prikið
22:00 Slow Dance with Sunna Ben

Wednesday July 3

Café Rosenberg
22:00 Síðasti bærinn í dalnum
Den Danske Kro
22:00 Hreimer and Band
The Dubliner
21:00 Troubadour Ellert
English Pub
22:00 Troubadour Night: Biggi and Maggi
Harpa
20:00 Pearls of Icelandic Song

Lebowski Bar
22:00 DJ Jesús
Prikið
22:00 Dungeon Massive

Thursday July 4

Café Rosenberg
21:00 Edda Borg Album Release Show
Celtic Cross
22:00 Surprise Troubadour
The Dubliner
21:00 Troubadour Pálmi
English Pub
22:00 Troubadour Night: Böddi, Addi and guest
Faktory
21:00 Mice Parade (US) with Nini Wilson, Kría, and Snorri Helgason
Harpa
20:00 Pearls of Icelandic Song
Lebowski Bar
22:00 House Band
Prikið
22:00 DJ Intro Beats
Rauðasandur
20:00 Rauðasandur Music Festival Begins

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ART

OPENINGS AND ONGOING



1st Ginga Iceland 2013 Capoeira Workshops and Graduation Ceremony

Crossfit Kraftur, Faktóry, and Iðnó | 7,000-15,000 ISK

Ginga Iceland is a four day festival of workshops, demonstrations, and a celebration of graduating capoeira students who have been training together in Iceland since January. Capoeira evolved out of a need to survive. Originally developed in the 1600s by African slaves in Brazil, "it became a strong weapon in the life and death struggle against the slaves' oppressors and they learned to camouflage the fight with singing and clapping as though it were simply entertainment. The fight was disguised behind the dance," says Bjarney Hinriksdóttir, of the small (but growing) group that practices capoeira in Reykjavík. This phenomenon—martial art that combines dance, fight, and ritual—is now practiced worldwide. "The uniqueness of Iceland's capoeira community is probably the fact that we are a young group and kind of the fire-starters of Capoeira in Iceland," Bjarney says. "We have the responsibility to introduce the art form to Iceland in a proper way." During the festival, people will have the chance to try capoeira for themselves and experience the surge of positive energy and focus that it evokes in those who love it, Bjarney explains. "Capoeira has opened my eyes to many things and taught me solidarity."

The graduation ceremony at Faktory on July 7 is not to be missed—free and open to the public, it will feature a capoeira demonstration and traditional Brazilian food. **SS**

June 21 - July 4

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

Opening

Kunstschlager

June 22

The Year of the Snake

Paintings by Sigurður Þ. Ámundason.

Runs until July 6

Hafnarborg

June 29

Eiríkur Smith

The fourth exhibition in an ongoing series spanning the wide artistic career of Eiríkur Smith. The exhibition focuses on works from 1968 to 1982.

Runs until August 25

Nordic House

July 4

Volcano Circus Festival

A real, traditional 6-tent circus set up in the heart of Reykjavík! Daily entertainment, live music, food, and drink all available.

Runs until July 14

Artima Gallerí

June 20

Spectators

An exhibition of three artists' new work: Stephen Morrison, Práundur Þórarinnsson and Rögnvaldur Skúli Árnason. Contemporary figurative art contemplating the human condition, the show presents gripping oil paintings by the three artists.

Runs until July 7

Ongoing

ASÍ Art Museum

Face To Face-Portraits

An examination of the varying approaches to portraiture. The exhibit displays an array of portraits, classical to contemporary, and confronts the usual and unusual aspects of each.

Runs until June 23

The Culture House

Medieval Manuscripts, Eddas, and Sagas

It includes principal medieval manuscripts, such as Codices Regii of the Poetic Edda, Prose Edda, law codices and Christian works, not forgetting the Icelandic Sagas.

On permanent view

Child of Hope - Youth and Jón Sigurðsson

Exploring the life of Icelandic national hero Jón Sigurðsson, made especially accessible to children, families and school groups.

On permanent view

Millennium - Phase One

A selection of pieces from the collection of the National Gallery displaying a variety of works by Icelandic artists in the last two centuries.

On permanent view

The Library Room

The old reading room of the National Library displays books of Icelandic cultural history dating from the 16th century to the present day. Works include the oldest published versions of the Sagas, Edda Poems and more.

On permanent view

Lightplay
Dramatic watercolours by Derek Karl of Iceland's ethereal light.

Runs until August 31

The Einar Jónsson Museum

The museum contains close to 300 art works including a beautiful tree-clad garden adorned with 26 bronze casts of the artist's works is located behind the museum.

On permanent view

Hafnarborg

Art=Text=Art

An exhibition of more than 80 drawings, prints, and artist's books by close to 50 artists. The exhibition provides broad insight into the many ways artists incorporate text into their work as a formal element or conceptual device. Here artists utilize text as an instrument of color, shape, or composition—or they explore the structure of the written word and its ability to communicate ideas and information.

Runs until June 23

i8 Gallery

Belief

Ólafur Elíasson's new exhibit, Tiltrú (Belief), is an exploration of natural phenomena and perception. His work often combines design, architecture, and science to create thought-provoking work and spaces. He never overlooks the relationship between the object being viewed and the viewer.

Runs until August 17

The Icelandic Phallogological Museum

The museum contains a collection of more than two hundred and fifteen penises and penile parts belonging to almost all the land and sea mammals that can be found in Iceland.

On permanent view

Knitting Iceland

Come and knit at Laugavegur 25, 3rd floor, every Thursday, 14:00 - 18:00.

On permanent view

Kling and Bang

Clive Murphy Exhibit

Kling & Bang Gallery hosts Clive Murphey, a New-York based artist who upcycles materials to produce works that examine societal ideologies and cultural systems. On May 18th the artist, in collaboration with curator Jessamyn Fiore, will create an improvised installation in the gallery space to kick off the month-long exhibit.

Runs until June 23

GERSEMAR / TREASURES

17.5. – 25.8. 2013

HUGLÆG LANDAKORT – MANNSHVÖRF / SUBJECTIVE MAPS – DISAPPEARANCES

17.5. – 30.6. 2013

MEMENTO MORI – SARA RIEL

5.7. – 25.8. 2013

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THE HOUSE AT EYRARBAKKI

The House at Eyraðakki



Árnessýsla folk museum is located in Húsið, the House, historical home of the Danish merchants built in 1765. Húsið is one of the oldest houses in Iceland and a beautiful monument of Eyraðakki's time as the biggest trading place on the south coast.

Today one can enjoy exhibitions about the story and culture of the region, famous piano, shawl made out of human hair and the kings pot, are among items. Húsið prides itself with warm and homelike atmosphere.



HÚSIÐ Á EYRARBAKKA
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SIGURÐUR ÁRNI SIGURÐSSON
TUMI MAGNÚSSON

ART

OPENINGS AND ONGOING



The Tail End Of The Icelandic Art Festival Art Exhibits All Over Town

101 Reykjavík | Until September 30

The Icelandic Art Festival has come to an end, but there are still eight interesting exhibits running that were connected to the festival.

Magnús Pálsson – The Sound of a Bugle in a Shoebox An overview of 33 years of Magnús's art (1980-2013). Displayed in Hafnarhús (Reykjavík Art Museum) until the September 1.

Interval – Huginn Þór Arason, Andrea Maack The essence of a museum in the distant future as a three dimensional experience. Displayed in Hafnarhús (Reykjavík Art Museum) until August 25.

Art=Text=Art A collection of drawings, prints and artist's books from close to 50 artists. The collection travels from New York showcasing the collection of Sally and Wynn Kramarsky, collectors of modern and contemporary drawings. Displayed in Hafnarborg until June 23.

Subjective Maps-Disappearances An exhibition showing the works of 40 artists from 15 small European countries. Displayed in Listasafn Íslands (the National Gallery of Iceland) until June 30.

Horse With No Name – Spessi A photo diary of Spessi's experience travelling with bikers through Kansas, Arkansas, Tennessee, Mississippi and Louisiana. Displayed in Ljósmyndasafn Reykjavíkur (the Reykjavík Museum of Photography) until September 15.

Face to Face Portrait gallery featuring paintings, drawings, sculptures, video and audio art. Displayed in Listasafn ASÍ (ASÍ Art Museum) until June 23.

Vagrancy? An exhibition giving insight into the lives of those who don't fit into society from the 1700s to 1900s. Displayed in Þjóðarbókhlaðan (national and university library of Iceland) until September 30.

Under The Open Sky A free outside exhibition with a hundred artists both domestic and international. The art is distributed through the eastern part of downtown Reykjavík, in the Skólavörðuholt and Þingholt neighbourhoods, and is displayed until August 25. **TGB**

ART ONGOING

- continued -

Latin Dance Studio, Faxafen 12 Guided Practica

Argentine tango, Sundays from 17:30-19:30. Register by phone 821 6929 or email tangoadventure@gmail.com, 500 ISK for students, 800 ISK for others. Six- week courses are also available.

On permanent view

Living Art Museum The 6th Volume

An exhibit created and compiled by Katrín Inga Jónsdóttir Hjördísardóttir Hirt. The 6th Volume presents works and writings chosen by Katrín in an attempt to define contemporary art via the Icelandic practices that have influenced her. Katrín personally sculpted several hundred "gratitude

sculptures," and offered them to artists, writers, and theorists in the field of visual arts in exchange for participation in her exhibit.

Runs until August 25

Mokka Kaffi

MOKKAFÓLK

This charming photography exhibit is a tribute to the loyal patrons that have become regulars at Mokka Kaffi over the years. It is a collection of portraits of the Reykjavík community for the Reykjavík community.

Runs until June 27

Museum of Design and Applied Art

Chance Encounters – Toward Modernity In Iceland Design

The exhibit focuses on the introduction of modernism in Icelandic domestic interiors from the 1930s to the 1980s. It will feature well-known designs that have emerged from the modernist movement of the 20th century and made their way to Iceland.

Runs until October 13

The National Gallery Subjective Maps- Disappearances

"Subjective Maps-Disappearances" exhibits the work of over 40 artists from 15 small European countries. It explores the great variety of the approaches to art produced by European nations with fewer than a million residents.

Runs until June 30

Treasures

Three separate exhibitions showing different periods from The National Gallery's personal collection. 19th and early 20th century paintings and drawings take up residence in room 2. Room 3 holds the minimalistic and modern landscapes from the different corners of the island. And in room 4, one will find the treasures of Iceland's contemporary art scene.

Runs until June 30

The National Museum

The Making of a Nation -

Heritage and History in Iceland
This exhibition is intended to provide insight into the history of the



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Happy Hour Guide

Places we like

Best of Reykjavík

Practical Info

Reykjavík Area

June 21 - July 4

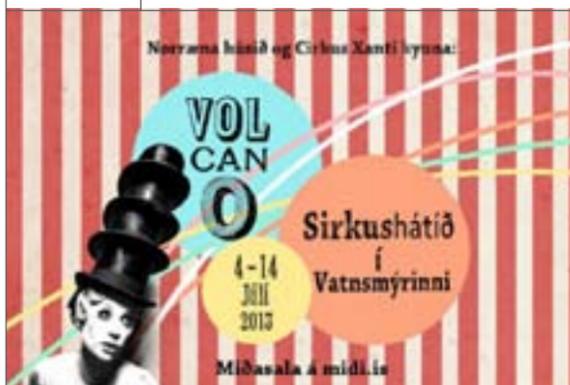
Keep it in your pocket

Two Weeks

The Grapevine picks the events, places and what to experience the next two weeks

4-14
JULY

Fun For The Whole Family
The Circus Is In Town



Volcano Circus Festival
Nordic House

Performers and circus enthusiasts from all parts of the globe are coming to Reykjavík for this explosive conglomeration of thrills and awe-inspiring acts. Inside the multiple tents you will find everything from fire eating to juggling to ethereal acrobatics, and even a temporary café so that you never have to leave the excitement (hopefully they won't be serving fire). After experiencing this festival of performances, workshops, seminars, and concerts, you too, will be running away to join a circus. **SS**

June 22 HEATING UP Forget about the cold and flu virus going around, come to Faktory on June 22 and catch some Good Vibes at the **Rototom Sunsplash Reggae Festival**.

June 26 GAME FACE We know you've always wanted a reason to try drinking a raw egg in the morning like Rocky. Well, tough guy, now's your chance. The **Captain Morgan Foosball Competition** is going down at Bar 11, and you'd better bring your A-game.

June 27 OLD SCHOOL One of the few remaining masters of the once prolific photography technique, David Lewis gives a free **lecture on Bromoil photography** at, you guessed it, the Reykjavík Museum of Photography.

June 28 BRIGHTEN UP Spontaneous creativity is the name of the game this summer with **Hitt Húsið's Creative Summer Groups**. Everybody's coming out to play on this Fabulous Friday, walk around 101 where art farts and theatre geeks litter the streets with copious amounts of pizzazz.

21
JUNE

Star Wars Madness
"Luke, I Am Your (Fill In The Blank)"



Svar Wars Film Quizzes
Bío Paradís

You could listen to your mum and go outside for some fresh air, or you could stay inside in the dark watching a marathon of Blaxploitation films all day for a chance to win free movie tickets and beer. Sun? Beer and free movie tickets? Sun? Beer and free movie tickets? Sun? Beer and free movie tickets? All summer long Bío Paradís is hosting a series of themed movie quizzes, two of which will be held in English. The first takes place June 27 and tests participants' Star Wars knowledge, you nerds. The final quiz on August 8 is also in English and focuses on Blaxploitation films, you hep cats. Prizes are given out for first, second, and third place teams, and for the best team name. Shut the blinds, pop the corn, time to start doing some "research." **PY**

17 - 27
JUNE - JULY

Tropical Iceland's Fiery Furnaces
This shit is bananas!



BANANAS
Skaftfell Centre for Visual Art, Seyðisfjörður

As locavores, swear off imported bananas in favour of local produce all over the world, who knew Icelanders could eat bananas without a huge carbon footprint? Despite its chilly reputation, Iceland is home to the largest banana plantation in Europe. If you find this fact surprising, you are not alone. The Danish artists group, A Kassen found East Iceland's bananas and aluminium particularly fascinating. As the Artists-in-Residence at Skaftfell Centre for Visual Art in Seyðisfjörður, the group will explore Iceland's ability to harness nature in the name of tropical fruits and industrial materials in an evolving exhibition. To quote Gwen Stefani, it's likely this shit is going to be bananas, B-A-N-A-N-A-S. **AB**



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B

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C

MAP

Places We Like

Food

1 Noodle Station

Skólavörðustígur 21a
While their menu is limited to three choices—chicken, beef, and vegetarian—there's just something about Noodle Station's noodles that keeps folks hooked. Noodle Station also provides an international atmosphere that's been missing from Reykjavík—this is very welcome.

2 Sushi Samba

Pinghóltsstræti 5
Sushi Samba fuses South American with Japanese with the help of Icelandic ingredients. To fully embrace the experience go omakase (chef's choice), or perhaps the six-course Icelandic feast. Whatever you choose, it'll be an experience found only in Reykjavík.

3 Roadhouse

Snorrabraut 56
Roadhouse serves authentic Cajun and Creole food – a.k.a good ol' Southern soul food. Roadhouse smokes its ribs on site, makes its own homemade French fries and otherwise serves customers in an authentic American diner style atmosphere. Don't miss the Empire State burger, which is piled high with a burger patty, onion rings, a grilled cheese and drizzled in barbeque sauce.

Hamborgarabúlla

4 Tómasar (Búllan)

Geirsgata 1 and Bankastræti 5
Considered by some to be the best "real" hamburger in Reykjavík, "Búllan" does serve some mysteriously delicious burgers, guaranteed to take the edge off any hangover.

5 Tapas Húsið

Ægisgarður 2
Tapas Húsið is a cosy place by the harbour which specialises in Spanish tapas. It offers anything from Bacalao Gratin to Goat Cheese and Beetroot with Cardamon and Pistachios. Their mission is to connect Icelandic food with Spanish cuisine, hereby creating an eclectic menu.

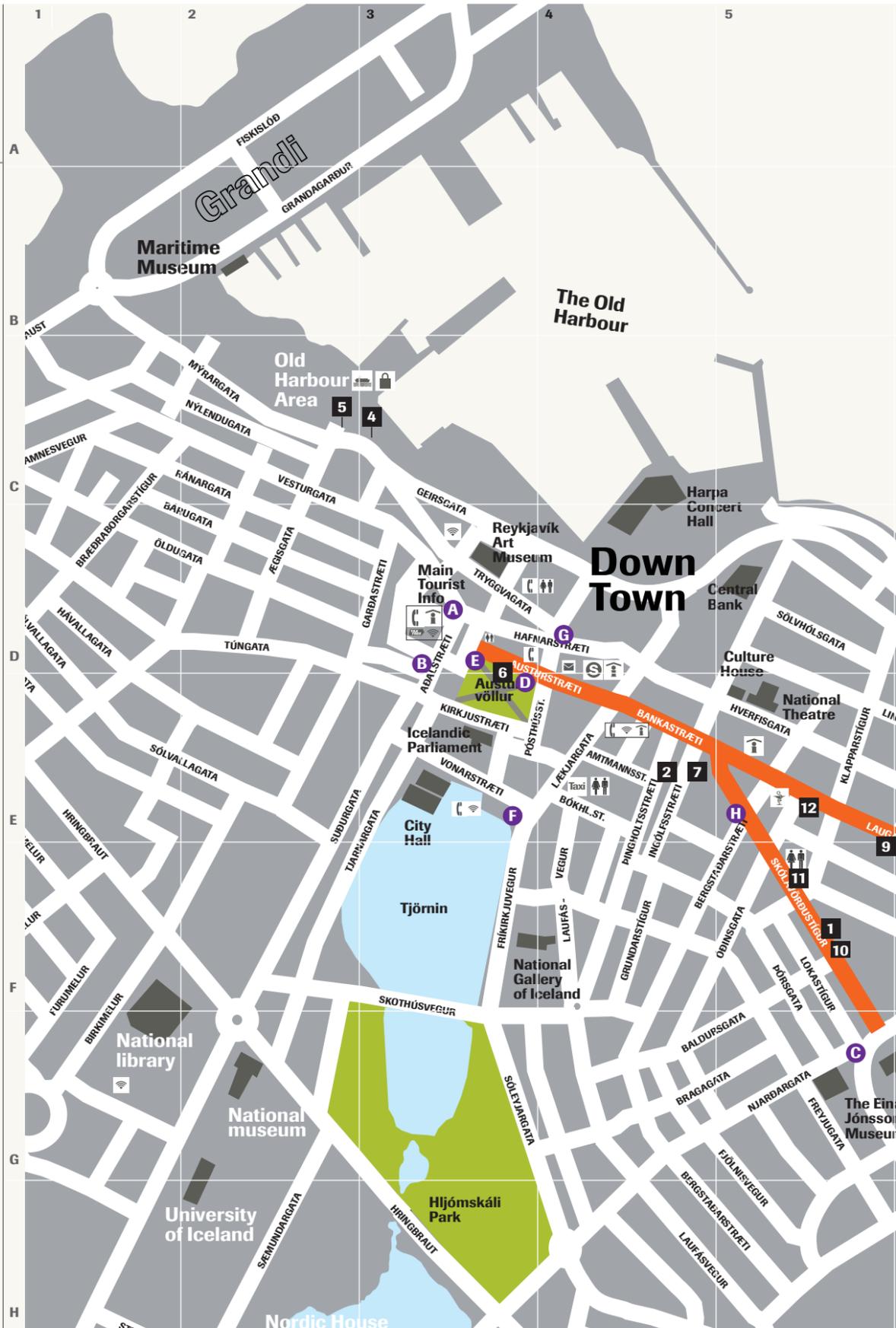
Drinking

6 Micro Bar

Austurstræti 6
One of Reykjavík's newer bars also boasts one of the city's largest selection of draught beers. It carries eight different kinds of beer on tap, as well as bottled beer from microbreweries in Iceland, Denmark, Belgium and Scotland. No doubt the biggest beer selection in town.

Useful numbers

- Emergency number: **112**
- Medical help: **1770**
- Dental emergency: **575 0505**
- Information: **118**
- Taxi: Hreyfill-Bæjarleiðir: **588 5522**
BSR: **561 0000**
- Tax Free Refund**
- Iceland Refund**, Aðalstræti 2, tel: 564 6400
- Tourist information**
- Arctic Adventures**, Laugavegur 11, tel: 562 7000
- City Centre**, Aðalstræti 2, tel: 590 1550
- Iceland Excursions – Grayline Iceland**, Hafnarstræti 20, tel: 540 1313



7 Den Danske Kro

Ingólfsstræti 3
This Danish-themed bar is located on Ingólfsstræti, just off Laugavegur. They serve up Danish favourites, such as open faced smørrebrød sandwiches, Tuborg beer and Akavit schnapps. Their 'Happy Hour', every day between 16–19, is a great source of fun. How to ask for a large beer in Danish: "Hej, jeg vil gerne ha' en stor øl, tak".

8 KEX Hostel

Skúlagata 28
An old biscuit factory turned into one of the hottest hostels in the world, KEX mixes industrial chic and secondhand charm successfully. Apart from the dorms and rooms, KEX also houses has a gym, library and a bar, that has quickly become a favourite hangout for locals and travelers alike.

9 Dillon

Laugavegur 30
Dillon is the resident home of tattooed rock and rollers, and whisky drinkers. With moderately priced drinks, the bar livens up after 22 on weekends. Sit down, share a pint with a friend, and wait for an impromptu dance floor to erupt to a Metallica tune. It's just the right place to go and show off that band t-shirt you got the other day.

- 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 Lágmúla 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 Loftleidir, tel: 562-4200

- Public transport**
- The only public transport available in Reykjavík is the bus. Most buses run every 20–30 minutes (the wait may be longer on weekends) and the price per fare is 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.
- 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.

LIVE MUSIC EVERY NIGHT

All the events and all the action on 5 Big HD Screens.
Icelandic beer on draft.

THE ENGLISH PUB

Save Water, Drink Beer

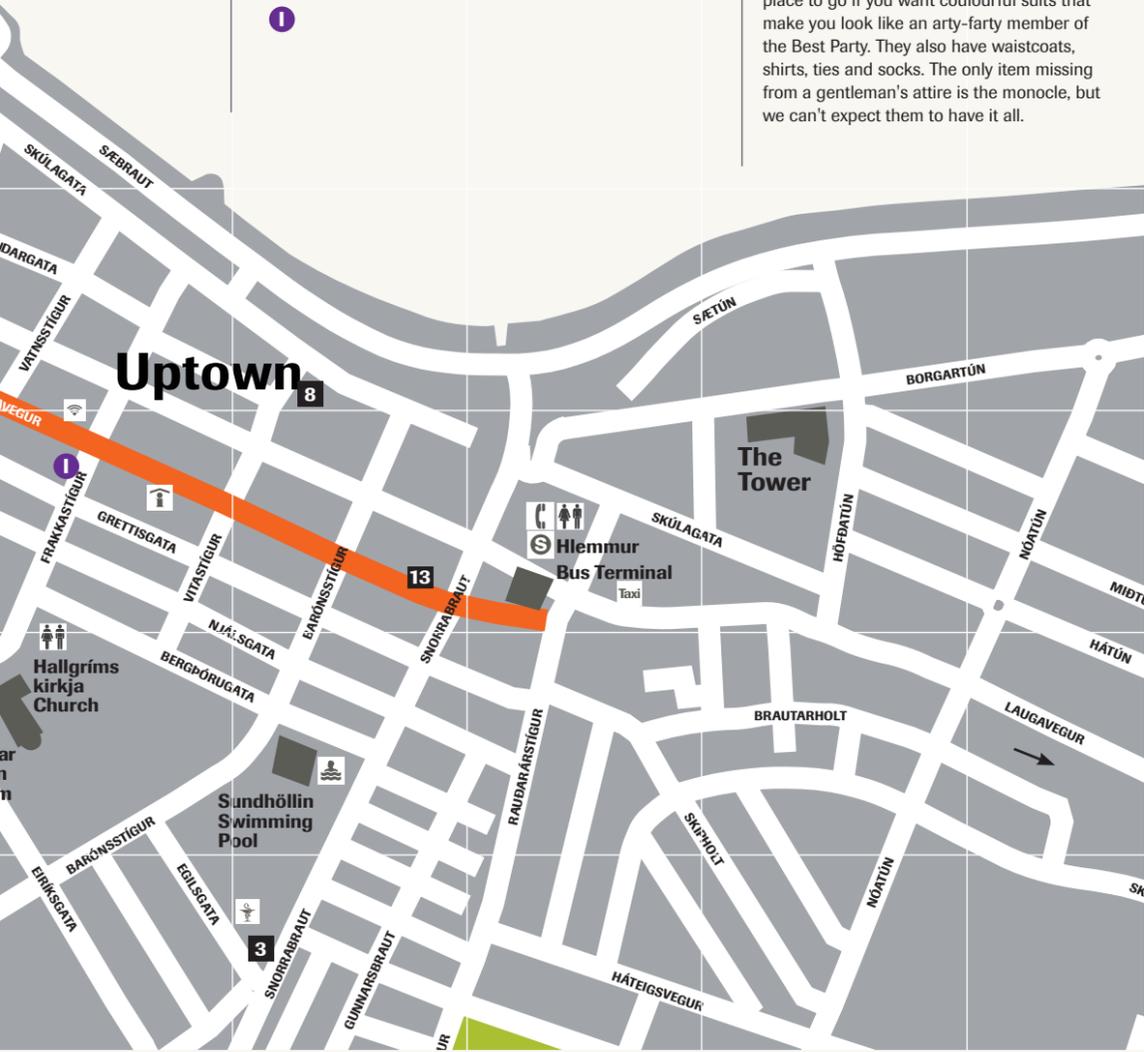
AUSTURSTRÆTI 12 • 101 REYKJAVÍK • ENSKIBARINN@ENSKIBARINN.IS

D



13 JÖR
Laugavegur 89

Located a stone's throw from Hlemmur, JÖR's impressive exterior is matched by elegant interiors. Showcasing Icelandic tailor Guðmundur Jörundsson's wares, it's the right place to go if you want colourful suits that make you look like an arty-farty member of the Best Party. They also have waistcoats, shirts, ties and socks. The only item missing from a gentleman's attire is the monocle, but we can't expect them to have it all.



Venue Finder
Music & Entertainment

- Amsterdam**
Hafnarstræti 5 | **D3**
- Austur**
Austurstræti 7 | **E3**
- B5**
Bankastræti 5 | **E4**
- Babalú**
Skólavörðustígur 22 | **F5**
- Bar 11**
Hverfisgötu 18 | **E5**
- Bjarni Fel**
Austurstræti 20 | **E4**
- Boston**
Laugavegur 28b | **F6**
- Café Paris**
Austurstræti 14 | **E4**
- Celtic Cross**
Hverfisgata 26 | **E5**
- Den Danske Kro**
Ingólfsstræti 3 | **E4**
- Dillon**
Laugavegur 30 | **F6**
- Dolly**
Hafnarstræti 4 | **D3**
- Dubliner**
Hafnarstræti 1-3 | **D3**
- Esja**
Austurstræti 16 | **E4**
- English Pub**
Austurstræti 12 | **E3**
- Faktory**
Smiðjustígur 6 | **E5**
- Gamli Gaukurinn**
Tryggvagata 22 | **D3**
- Gay 46**
Hverfisgata 46 | **E5**
- Hressó**
Austurstræti 20 | **E4**
- Mánabár**
Hverfisgata 20 | **E5**
- Kaffi Zimsen**
Hafnarstræti 18 | **D4**
- Kaffibarinn**
Bergstraðastræti 1 | **E5**
- Mánabár**
Hverfisgata 20 | **E5**
- Nýlenduvöruverzlun Hemma & Valda**
Laugavegur 21 | **E5**
- Næsti Bar**
Ingólfsstræti 1A | **E5**
- Ólsmiðjan**
Lækjargata 10 | **E4**
- Ólstofan**
Vegamótastígur | **E5**
- Prikið**
Bankastræti | **E4**
- Rósenberg**
Klappastígur 25 | **E5**
- Sólon**
Bankastræti 7A | **E4**
- Thorvaldsen**
Austurstræti 8 | **D3**
- Vegamót**
Vegamótastígur 4 | **E6**

Museums & Galleries

- ART67**
Laugavegur 67 | **F7**
Mon - Fri 12 - 18 / Sat 12 - 16
- ASÍ Art Museum**
Freygata 41 | **H6**
Tue-Sun 13-17
www.listsafnasi.is
- Árbæjarsafn**
Kistuhylur 4
- The Culture House**
Hverfisgata 15 | **E5**
Open daily 11-17
www.thjodmenning.is
- The Einar Jónsson Museum**
Eiríksgata | **G6**
Tue-Sun 14-17
www.skulptur.is
- Galleri Ágúst**
Baldursgata 12 | **G5**
Wed-Sat 12-17
www.galleriagust.is
- Galleri Fold**
Rauðarástígur 14-16 | **G8**
Mon-Fri 10-18 / Sat 11-16 / Sun 14-16
www.myndlist.is
- Kaolin**
Skólavörðustígur 22 | **E5**
www.kaolingallery.com
- Galleri Kling & Bang**
Hverfisgata 42 | **E6**
Thurs-Sun from 14-18
this.is/klingogbang/
- Ásgrímur Jónsson Museum**
Bergstaðastræti 74
Mon-Fri through Sept. 1
- Gerðuberg Cultural Centre**
Gerðuberg 3-5
Mon-Thu 11-17 / Wed 11-21 / Thu-Fri 11-17 / Sat-Sun 13-16
www.gerduberg.is
- Hitt Húsið**
Gallery Tukt
Pósthússtræti 3-5 | **E4**
www.hitthusid.is
- i8 Gallery**
Tryggvagata 16 | **D3**
Tue-Fri 11-17 / Sat 13-17 and by appointment
www.i8.is
- Living Art Museum**
Skúlagata 28 | **E7**
Wed, Fri-Sun 13-17 / Thu 13-22
www.nylo.is
- Hafnarborg**
Strandgata 34, Hafnarfjörður
www.hafnarborg.is
- Mokka Kaffi**
Skólavörðustígur 3A | **E5**
www.mokka.is
- The National Gallery of Iceland**
- Frikirkjuvegur 7** | **F4**
Tue-Sun 11-17
www.listsafn.is
- The National Museum**
Suðurgata 41 | **G2**
Open daily 10-17
natmus.is
- The Nordic House**
Sturlugata 5
Tue-Sun 12-17
www.nordice.is
- Restaurant Reykjavík**
Vesturgata 2 | **D3**
www.restaurantreykjavik.is
- Reykjavík 871+/-2**
Aðalstræti 17 | **E3**
Open daily 10-17
- Reykjavík Art Gallery**
Skúlagata 30 | **E7**
Tuesday through Sunday 14-18
- Reykjavík Art Museum composed of Hafnarhús**
Tryggvagata 17 | **D3**
Open 10-17
Thursday 10 - 20
- Kjarvalsstaðir**
Flókagata 24
Open 10 - 17
- Ásmundarsafn**
Sigtún
Open 10 - 17
More info on www.listsafnreykjavikur.is
- Reykjavík City Library**
Tryggvagata 15 | **D3**
Mon 10-21, Tue-Thu 10-19, Fri 11-19, Sat and Sun 13-17
www.sim.is/Index/Islen-ska/Artotek
- Reykjavík Maritime Museum**
Grandagarður 8 | **B2**
www.maritimemuseum.is
- Reykjavík Museum of Photography**
Tryggvagata 16 | **D3**
Weekdays 12-19 / Sat-Sun 13-17 - www.ljosmyndasafnreykjavikur.is
- Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum**
Laugarnestangi 70
www.lso.is
- SÍM**
Hafnarstræti 16 | **D4**
Mon-Fri 10-16
- Skörin**
Aðalstræti 10
- Spark Design Space**
Klappastígur 33 | **E5**
www.sparkdesignspace.com

Shopping

10 12 Tónar
Skólavörðustígur 15

Both a record label and a store, 12 Tónar stocks all the best new Icelandic music on CDs. Also, check out their Facebook page for information about in-store gigs.

11 Handprjónasambandið
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.

12 Mál og Menning
Laugavegur 18

Mál og Menning bookstore is a Reykjavík essential if there ever was one. It occupies three levels at Laugavegur, and sells stationary, children's games, foreign newspapers, Icelandic books, CDs, postcards and souvenirs. You'll find the always-buzzing café and the foreign book section on the top floor.

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

Public Toilets

Public toilets in the centre can be found inside the green poster covered towers located, for example, at Hlemmur, Ingólfsstortorg, 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.

T-SHIRTS
BUY 3
GET 1
FREE

HAFNARSTRÆTI 5 & SKÓLAVÖRÐUSTÍGUR 10

HORNIÐ
Restaurant - Pizzeria

Hornið opened in 1979 was the first restaurant of its kind in Iceland, a restaurant with a true Italian atmosphere. Hornið is known for good food made out of fresh raw materials, good pizzas baked in front of the guests, good coffee and comfortable service.

Lunch offers every day.
Open every day from 11:00 to 23:30
For reservations call 551-3340

C A F É I Ð N Ó

Idnó

Oldest theater in Reykjavík where you can sit down outside by the pond, after you have explored this old historical house and have a good meal or just a glass of wine

www.idno.is idno@xnet.is

ICELANDIC Fish, Lamb & Chicken in original PAKISTANI curries
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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 primary purpose of BEST OF REYKJAVÍK is celebration! It's about big-upping stuff, giving mad props to it and patting it on the shoulder. The following are some nice tips we pulled from BEST OF REYKJAVÍK 2012, which you can find in full at www.grapevine.is



BEST PIZZA: LA LUNA TRATTORIA-PIZZERIA



Family-run La Luna trattoria opened up for business on Rauðarárstígur last year and has been steadily winning fans since with its delicious wood fired pizzas that have folks gushing on the streets and on the net. "The pizzas at La Luna are the best on offer in Reykjavík these days, whether you're eating in or taking out. It's a shame they don't deliver," remarked one reader, while another noted: "Their toppings are always fresh and plentiful, they never skimp, and if you like cheese... OMG!" We gave it several tries and are happy to confirm the verdict: La Luna is the best thing going in Reykjavík pizza today, even though their pasta might be hit or miss.

Located at Rauðarárstígur 37



BEST PLACE TO READ A BOOK: STOFAN



There are a bunch of nice places to read a book, but many of them are weather-dependent and relying on the weather is risky at best. If it's sunny we agree that the botanical garden is a pretty nice, quiet place to read. You can find a spot there sheltered from the wind, but if it's cold and rainy, you probably don't want to be outside. That's why we decided to go with Stofan, a cosy café with comfortable couches. It feels super homey, like grandma's house homey, and it's typically pretty quiet.

Located at Aðalstræti 7



BEST PLACE TO SPEND A RAINY DAY: BÍÓ PARADÍS



It was a close race between the swimming pool/hot tub and Bíó Paradís, but after much back and forth we decided that the movie theatre is once again the place to be on a rainy day. Why? There are lots of movies. They have a huge area with tables and couches to hang out. They have games. They have beer. They have popcorn. And they don't just have movies. They tend to have a unique selection of films that you can't see at the chain theatres around town. We're also pretty happy that the art house theatre is still in business.

Located at Hverfisgata 54

A HUGE SELECTION OF ICELANDIC BEER

73

RESTAURANT

~ HOME OF THE EPIC ~



Awesome Icelandic fish, incredible steaks and Epic burgers along with a huge selection of Icelandic brew.



73 Restaurant | Laugavegur 73. | tel: 555 73 73 | www.73.is

A GUIDE THAT FUCKS YOU UP

A list of every Happy Hour in 101 Reykjavík

101 Hótel

Every day from 17:00 to 19:00. Beer for 450 ISK, wine for 645 ISK.

Austur

Every day from 20:00 to 00:00. Beer for 550 ISK and wine 550 ISK.

B5

Every day from 16:00 to 22:00. Beer 550 ISK, cider 700 ISK, wine 550 ISK.

Bjarni Fel

Every day from 17:00 to 19:00. 2 for 1 beer for 890 ISK.

Boston

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

Celtic Cross

Every day from 17:00 to 20:00. 2 for 1 on Gull and Polar for 900 ISK.

Den Danske Kro

Every day from 16:00 to 19:00. 2 for 1 beer 900 ISK and wine for 900 ISK.

Dillon

Every day from 16:00 to 20:00. Beer 850 ISK.

Dolly

Every day from 17:00 to 20:00. Beer 500 ISK and wine 500 ISK.

Dubliner

Every day from 16:00 to 20:00. 2 for 1 beer Tuborg for 1,000 ISK.

Faktory

Every day from 17:00 to 20:00. Gull beer for 500 ISK.

Glaumbar

Every day from 21:00 to closing. Large beer for 390 ISK.

Harlem

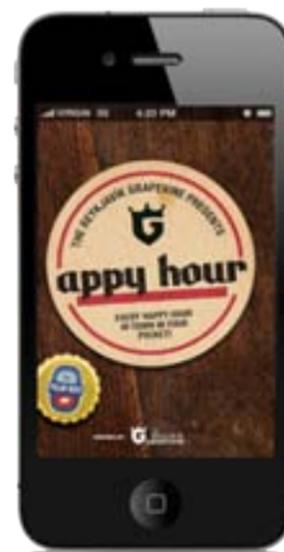
Every day from 17:00 to 22:00. Beer 550 ISK, wine 700 ISK.

Hilton Hotel Bar

Every day from 17:00 to 19:00. All drinks half price.

Hótel 1919

Every day from 16:00 to 19:00. 2 for 1 beer for 1000 ISK, white wine for 1190 ISK, Red



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Every happy hour in town in your pocket. Available in the App store and on the Android Market.

wine for 1290 ISK, Cocktail of the Day for 1919 ISK.

Hótel Holt Gallery Bar

Every day from 16:00 to 19:00. Beer for 600 ISK, Wine for 695 ISK, sparkling wine for 750 ISK, Cocktail of the Week for 950 ISK.

Hótel Natura

Every day from 16:00 to 18:00. Cocktail of the day for 1100 ISK.

Hótel Plaza Bar

Every day from 17:00 to 19:00. Beer 500 ISK.

Iða Zimsen

Coffee happy hour every morning from 9:00-11:00. Every night from 19:00 to 22:00. 2 for 1 on Gull and 445 ISK for a 330cl can of beer.

Kaffi Kompanið

Thursdays to Sunday from 16:00 to 18:00. 2 for 1 bottled beer, wine for 700 ISK.

Kaffi Zimsen

Every day from 17:00 to 21:00. Tap beer for 550 ISK.

Kaldibar

Every day from 17:00 to 20:00. 2 for 1 on beer and wine.

Kiki Queer Bar

Thursdays from 20:00 to 22:00. 50% off all beer and wine. Beer for 450 ISK, wine for 600 ISK.

Kolbrautin

Every day from 17:00 to 19:00. Beer for 550 ISK. Wine for 700 ISK. Various cocktails 1000 ISK. Champagne glass 1500 ISK.

Lebowski Bar

Every day from 16:00 to 19:00. 2 for 1 beer for 900 ISK and wine for 1000 ISK.

Loft Hostel Bar

Every day from 16:00 to 20:00. Beer for 500 ISK, wine for 700 ISK.

Micro Bar

Every day except Saturday from 16:00 to 19:00. Selected draft microbrew for 500 ISK, 2 for 1 on beer on Saturdays.

Miðgarður Bistro bar

Every day from 17:00 to 19:00. 50% off all drinks. Beer for 500 ISK, wine for 600 ISK.

Obladi Oblada

Every day from 12:00 to 20:00. Beer for 600 ISK.

Prikið

Weekdays from 16:00 to 20:00. 2 for 1 on Viking Lager for 750 ISK and Viking Classic for 850 ISK.

Roadhouse

Friday and Saturday 22:00 - 23:00. 2 for 1 Beer for 790 ISK, wine for 790 ISK.

Slippbarinn

Every day from 16:00 to 18:00. Beer for 500 ISK, wine for 500 ISK, selected cocktails for 1,000 ISK.

Stofan

Every day from 17:00 to 20:00. Beer for 500 ISK and wine for 600 ISK.

Tapashúsið

Every day from 16:00 to 18:00. 50% off all beer and wine.

Uno

Every day from 16:00 - 17:00. 50% off all drinks. Beer for 450 ISK, wine 600 ISK.

Uppsaliir - Bar & Café

Every day from 17:00 to 19:00. 2 for 1 on all drinks except cognac.

Pinghóltsbar

Every day from 17:00 to 19:00.

Viking beer for 500 ISK.

ART ONGOING

- continued -

Icelandic nation from the Settlement to the present day.

On permanent view

Sigfus Eymundsson Photography

A pioneer of Icelandic photography, an exhibit that taps into the cultural heritage of Iceland.

Runs until January 2014

Icelandic Silverwork

Various silver items that have been made in Iceland over the last 150 years. A Part-Time Silver Smith, a separate exhibition, will run simultaneously and display a silversmith's workshop from the turn of the century.

Runs until December 31

Galleri Ófeigur

The Reykjavík City Library

The collection centers around new Nordic literature, both fiction and nonfiction. The library lends out novels, academic publications, audio books and more.

On permanent view

Dark Deeds in Reykjavík

A weekly walking tour, every Thursday at 17:00. The tour guides visitors to literary sites plucked from crime novels and folk tales of "dark deeds and diabolical doings" in downtown Reykjavík.

Every Thursday until August

Reykjavík Art Museum - Ásmundarsafn

Tales From the Vault

A collection of Ásmundur Sveinsson's sculptures tied together by a common literary thread. The exhibit presents key works inspired by Icelandic folklore, myth, and poetry.

Runs until December 30

Reykjavík Art Museum - Kjarvalsstaðir

Icelandic Art 1900-1950: From Landscape to Abstract Art

An overview of Iceland art across five decades. The exhibit is comprised of four elements: Romantic and Radical 1900-1930, Landscape 1930-1950, The Human Scale 1930-1950 and New radicalism and the beginning of the abstract 1940-1950.

Runs Until September 22

Reykjavík Art Museum - Hafnarhús

Erró - Graphic Art, 1949-2009

For the first time the general public are able to view Erró's graphic art spanning half a century.

Runs until August 25

Interval

An olfactory exhibit by Huginn Þór Arason and Andrea Maack, the two have collaborated to create a perfume intended to embody the smell of the museum of the future.

Runs until September 1

All State

A sound installation in the elevator of Hafnarhús. Theresa Himmer's "All State" uses old elevator tracks to create a six-hour long mechanical soundtrack of the elevator experience.

Runs until September 1



June
23

Because Yule Is Too Far Away Yule Lads And Dimmuborgir Cave

22:00-23:00 | Mývatnsstofa

Do you know what sounds like a great idea? Entering a dark cave late at night with mythical tricksters whose mother likes to eat human children. If she's not hungry enough to eat full sized humans, however, you may be in for a treat as the 13 Yule Lads, the Icelandic Santa Claus, put on a show. They say they will welcome visitors for a chat, to sing and tell stories to them. So bring good shoes, because you will need to actually find the cave (but there are signs, so don't worry). In case you are unfortunate enough not to be younger than 18, you will have to pay a 1,000 ISK entry fee. **TGB**



Find all art listings
online
listings.grapevine.is

The Sound of a Bugle in a Shoebox

A retrospective of performance work by Magnús Pálsson, an avant-garde artist inspired by a love of and participation in Icelandic theatre. The exhibit develops over a week of live performances, including a premiered work by Pálsson himself.

Runs until September 30

Reykjavík City Museum

Reykjavík 871 +/- 2: The Settlement Exhibition

Archaeological findings from ruins of one of the first houses in Iceland and other excavations in the city centre, open daily 10:00-17:00, 1.100 ISK per adult, 650 ISK per person in groups (10+) and free for children 18 and under.

On permanent view

Reykjavík Maritime Museum

From Poverty to Abundance

Photos documenting Icelandic fishermen at the turn of the 20th century.

On permanent view

The History of Sailing

Iceland's maritime history and the growth of the Reykjavík Harbour.

On permanent view

The Coast Guard Vessel Óðinn

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

On permanent view

75th Anniversary of the Seaman's Day Council

An exhibit celebrating the 75th anniversary of Seaman's Day by telling the story of the Day from its first envisionment to current celebrations.

Runs until November 30

The Reykjavík Museum of Photography

Horse With No Name - Spessi

Spessi took portrait photographs of numerous bikers during his travels and exploration of the biker culture in the United States from 2011 to 2012.

Runs until September 15

Skotið

The photography of David W. Lewis, one of the last remaining masters of the once prolific Bromoil photographic process.

Runs until July 17

Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum

De Profundis

A collection of sculptures by Sigurjón Ólafsson and the paintings of his contemporaries. This group of artists are known today as "trailblazers of modernism" in Iceland. As the title points out, beneath the smooth surface of the works lies the turbulence and anguish of the Cold War tensions.

Runs until September 1

Experience Icelandic Art and Design

ROUTE
40

Kópavogur
Art Museum-
Gerðarsafn
Hamraborg 4, Kópavogur
Tel. +354 570 0440
Open 11-17
Closed on Mondays
www.gerdarsafn.is

Works by sculptor
Gerður Helgadóttir



Hönnunarsafn Íslands
Museum of Design
and Applied Art
Garðatorg 1, Garðabær
Tel. +354 512 1525
Open 12-17
Closed on Mondays
www.honnunarsafn.is

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Icelandic Design



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The Hafnarfjörður
Centre of Culture
and Fine Art
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Tel. +354 585 5790
Open 12-17
Thursdays 12-21
Closed on Tuesdays
www.hafnarborg.is

Existence Eiríkur Smith
Icelandic realist paintings

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OUTSIDE

REYKJAVÍK IN JUNE AND JULY



The Boat That Rocks

Various places, with docks, around Iceland
Through July

On your travels around the country this summer, watch out for Húni II, a 50-year-old oak ship. If it's docked anywhere close to where you have a pit stop, chances are you're in for a musical treat. A supergroup is sailing around Iceland in July, hopping on land here and there to play for locals and tourists, sixteen concerts in all. The ship's band crew consists of Mugison, Jónas Sigurðsson, Lára Rúnarsdóttir, Ómar Guðjónsson, Arnar Þór Gíslason and Guðni Finnsson and the tickets income goes straight to the ICE-SAR, Landsbjörg, so not only can you have blast but you can also support those guys and girls who will come and save your ass if you get lost somewhere. The ship's journey starts in Húsavík on July 3rd and then continues clockwise around Iceland.

The ship's itinerary is: July 3: Húsavík -- July 4: Borgarfjörður eystri -- July 5: Reyðarfjörður -- July 6: Höfn í Hornafirði -- July 7: Vestmannaeyjar -- July 9: Þorlákshöfn -- July 10: Keflavík -- July 11: Reykjavík -- July 12: Stykkishólmur -- July 13: Flatey -- July 14: Patreksfjörður -- July 15: Ísafjörður -- July 17: Hólmavík -- July 18: Sauðárkrúkur -- July 19: Siglufjörður -- July 20: Akureyri IRB

OUTSIDE REYKJAVÍK

North Iceland

Akureyri
Akureyri Art Museum
Aðalheiður S. Eysteinsdóttir - Fundamentals

June 22 - August 11
The culmination of an ongoing project since 2008, Fundamentals examines the importance of the Icelandic sheep and agriculture. The show will be shown simultaneously shown in seven different galleries.

Græni Hatturinn
Jónas Sig and Ritvélur
fram tíðarinnar

June 21, 22:00
Hreindís Ylva and band
June 27, 21:00

Robert the Roommate, Skúli mennski
June 28, 22:00
Gísli Helgason and Bítladrengirnir í blíðu og stríð
June 29, 22:00

Listagilið
Aðalheiður S. Eysteinsdóttir - Fundamentals

June 22 - August 11
The culmination of an ongoing project since 2008, Fundamentals examines the importance of the Icelandic sheep and agriculture. The show will be shown simultaneously shown in seven different galleries.

Flóran
Aðalheiður S. Eysteinsdóttir - Fundamentals

June 22 - August 11
The culmination of an ongoing project since 2008, Fundamentals examines the importance of the Icelandic sheep and agriculture. The show will be shown simultaneously shown in seven different galleries.

Lystigarður Akureyrar (Akureyri Botanical Garden)
ÁLFkonur (Women's Photography Club) - LYSTISEMDIR

June 28 - September 3
An eclectic group of photography enthusiasts, ÁLFkonur are in the habit of taking photos of everything that concerns them.

Populus Tremula
Aðalheiður S. Eysteinsdóttir - Fundamentals

June 22 - August 11
The culmination of an ongoing project since 2008, Fundamentals examines the importance of the Icelandic sheep and agriculture. The show will be shown simultaneously shown in seven different galleries.

Dalvík
Berg Culture House
Einar Emilsson Art installation

June 8 - 30
An overview of Einar's work as an artist, including everything from sketch books to fully fleshed out visual art.

Byggðasafnið Hvoll á Dalvík
The North In The North

June 2 - March 1 2014
An exhibit about Greenland and artifacts from there.

Húsavík
Gamli Baukur
"Lets Talk Local" Comedy Show
Every day at 15:30
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OUTSIDE

REYKJAVÍK IN JUNE

at 15:30. The show is presented in English and takes listeners on an entertaining and informative journey through Húsavík.

Mývatn

Mývatnsstofa
Visiting Dimmuborgir cave with the Yule Lads

June 23

The Yule Lads (aka. our 13 Santa Clauses) invite people over to their cave for a night of songs and performances. There will be signs to the cave, and an admission fee of 1,000 ISK, free entry for children.

East Iceland

Egilsstaðir

Slátrhúsið
Icelandic Movie Days

June 4 - August 28

All summer long Slátrhúsið holds free showings of must-see Icelandic movies, every night from Monday - Thursday beginning at 8 PM. Showing start the week of June 4, check the Facebook page for this week's titles! <https://www.facebook.com/meningarmidstofjotsdalsherads>.

South Iceland

Hveragerði

LÁ Art
The Landscape of Time - Ásgrímur Jónsson and Arngunnur Yr

June - September 15

The exhibition showcases two Icelandic artists from different eras, exploring how they saw the world differently.

Keflavík

Reykjanes Art Museum
"Við geigvænna mar"

June 1 - August 18

A collection of art of the harsh nature found around the Reykjanes peninsula.

Pabbi minn er róinn

All summer

A part of the museum's boat collection, featuring more than 20 boats and accessories.

Brúðir konu meyja

All summer

A collection of dolls wearing the traditional national costume, as well as other dolls.

Mosfellsbær

Gljúfrasteinn

June 23 16:00

Band Þoka play a live show with Agnes Björgvinsdóttir, Atli Már Björnsson and Reynir Hauksson 16:00

June 30 16:00

Guitarist Björn Thoroddsen puts on a live show

Seyðisfjörður

Skaftfell Centre for Visual Art
Bananas

June 17 - August 26

In this evolving exhibit, Danish artists group A Kassen explore the connection between Icelandic nature, bananas and aluminum, as the artists in residence at Skaftfell from June through July.

Westman Islands

Pompei of the North

Ongoing

Excavation project at the site of the 1973 volcanic eruption on the island of Heimaey.

West Iceland

Borgarnes

The Icelandic Settlement Centre
The Settlement Exhibition

On permanent display.

A thirty minute-long multi-media exhibit that provides insight into the settlement of Iceland, from the first man to step foot on the island, to the establishment of the world's first parliament, Þingvellir. Admission is 2,400 ISK.



Fifty Years, Ten Shows

Aðalheiður S. Eysteinsdóttir's grand Fundamentals show all over Akureyri

June 22 - August 11

Aðalheiður, a visual artist from up North, is turning 50 and wants to do what nobody else has done before in Iceland, if not the world; she's opening ten shows in seven galleries simultaneously. Can you even imagine the hangover from that opening night? The shows will be held in Listagilið, Ketilhúsið, Deiglan, Mjólkurbúðin, Populus Tremula, the Visual Arts Hall and Flóra. Jikes! 'Fundamentals' examines the importance of the Icelandic sheep and agriculture for Icelandic society. **TGB**



Summer Solstice In The Westfjords

Ragnar Kjartansson's new art show in Galtarviti

June 20 - August 7

The visual artist Ragnar puts on an exhibition inspired by his two week stay by Galtarviti lighthouse. Nestled atop a mountain overlooking the endless sea, Ragnar has lived like a hermit in isolation. Heck, we don't even know what he'll be presenting! To get to Galtarviti you'll need to drive a 4WD to Skálavík, and then catch a ferry, or walk three to four hours. There are guided tours, and you can bring a tent with you. Don't expect to be able to check your Facebook, though, as there is no mobile network coverage there. **TGB**

The Egils Saga Exhibition

On permanent display.

Located in the stone-walled basement of the Centre, this exhibit leads visitors through the colourful saga of Egill, one of Iceland's first settlers.

West Fjords

Stykkishólmur

Vatnasafnið / Library of Water
Water, Selected

Ongoing

'Water, Selected' is an ongoing exhibition with twenty four columns filled with glacier water from all over the country.

'To Place' is an audio exhibit offering insight into the Icelandic psyche, where you can listen to recordings of people talking about the weather.

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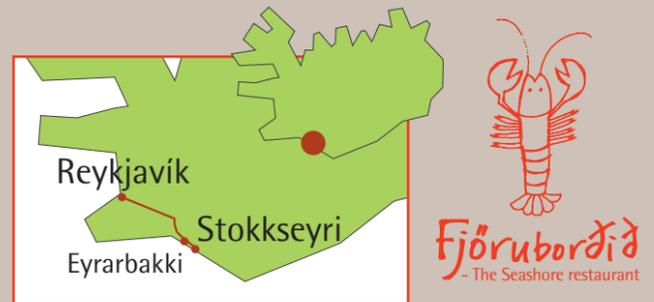
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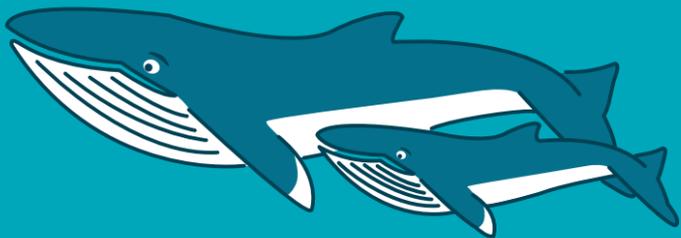


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What we think
Cheap food, cosy setting

Flavour:
Salty

Ambience:
A squeaky clean, dim-lit diner

Service:
Prompt and mostly invisible

Price for 2 (with drinks):
3,000-5,000 ISK



One of the first burger joints to really hit it off in Iceland, American Style was something of a legend in its early days when "American" still meant "state-of-the-art." People who grew up in the countryside recount how they would come to this exotic new fast-food place to treat themselves when they visited the capital. This was only ten, fifteen years ago, which shows how far Icelandic food culture has come in only a few years. But can American Style keep up with the times?

We strolled in on a Friday night and, despite our timing, found there were plenty of free tables. Orders were placed at the counter, where a large and colourful menu displayed dozens of tempting burgers as well as a few healthy options such as salads and chicken breast. The meals ranged from 1,200-1,900 ISK and most of them included fries. I chose the Kevin Bacon (allegedly their most popular burger), and my partner opted for the new Lobster Style burger that has been heavily advertised for the past few weeks.

The first thing I noticed as we got our soda from the dispenser was how spotlessly clean the place was. We had our pick of lemony-fresh and shining tables so we chose a cosy booth by the window. It was warmly lit and surprisingly romantic despite the rather drab view of the Customs building across the street. The walls were lined with portraits of people who were famous in the '90s (give or a take a decade) and the speakers washed us with a constant wave of classic rock mixed in with a few golden oldies. All in all, it was a great setting, neither too posh nor too greasy, and so gloriously clean!

Our order was called up and brought to our table within minutes. I immediately dug into my fries, dipping them into a completely

un-American (but very Icelandic) "cocktail" sauce, which something everybody should try at least once before they leave this country. The fries were nice fat pieces that actually looked as if they may have started life as real potatoes. The meat in my burger, however, was long dead from saline poisoning. It was thin and dry and so salty I had to wash it down with two extra glasses of water. Although it didn't help with the saltiness, bacon lovers won't complain as there were layers upon layers of crisp rashers.

I was sceptical about my partner's lobster burger, since the combination sounded too good to be true. How could langoustines improve a salty burger? The answer is that they don't. Served with a layer of greens marinated in vinaigrette, the langoustines were as lemony-fresh as the spotless tables—and completely at odds with the rest of the burger. Although I can't fathom why, my partner actually enjoyed his meal, so perhaps it's an acquired taste. If you like junk food and/or enjoy raising your blood pressure by a few notches, you'll find no place better suited to your needs.

 PATRICIA PORMAR
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As Far From Mexico As Iceland

Red Chili

Laugavegur 176, 105 Reykjavík
Sun–Thu: 11:00–22:00, Fri–Sat:
11:00–23:00

What we think

Nothing Mexican about this alleged Mexican place. No chilli either.

Flavour:

Sweet chilli sauce

Ambiance:

Family style, silly stuff upon the walls

Service:

Adequate

Price for 2 (no drinks):

8,000 ISK



As far as fast food in Iceland goes, there are few establishments that have a more attractive name than “Red Chili.” The family-style restaurant serves burgers and sandwiches while—according to their website—specialising in Mexican cuisine. Keep in mind that my companion and I had basically chosen our dishes before we went: we wanted to give the kitchen the minimum challenge of simply serving us their specialities. A safe bet. Or so we thought.

We came in just after lunch, as we imagined things would be slow enough for us to have a quiet talk while enjoying our meal. Indeed it was slow—we were the only guests in the restaurant. Our waiter appeared after we had lingered for

about three minutes in the lobby and proceeded to show us to seats next to a window overlooking the traffic of upper Laugavegur. The service was just what one might expect from a fast-food establishment, and our expectations for the waiter to explain the menu in detail were not high.

To start with, we had something very “fast-foody,” though not at all Mexican in any way. I went with the Buffalo wings with blue cheese dressing (1,090 ISK for 8 pieces) while my companion chose deep fried shrimp with sweet chilli sauce and, the very out of place, garlic-pepper dressing (1,390 ISK).

The Buffalo wings were obviously prepared some days before they appeared on my plate, not to mention that I actually got BBQ-wings, something very different from the otherwise hot-sauce-based Buffalo wings. The deep-fried shrimp were warm through, which is as much of a compliment as they are going get. They looked like they had been bought frozen, and were chewy and displeasing to taste. The garlic-pepper dressing made no sense whatsoever.

For our main course we chose the Fajitas Combo (4,990 ISK for two) made from fillet of beef, chicken breast, bell peppers and onions. The course was a self-serve kind of deal, as we were presented with some flour tortillas and basic condiments such as rice, grated cheese, sour cream, salsa and guacamole.

To put it mildly, this course was as far from Mexico as, well,

Iceland. The chicken and beef were served on a skillet, and had been soaked in sweet chilli sauce. Why this was is beyond my comprehension. The tortillas, salsa and guacamole—all very easy to make from scratch—were obviously the same stuff that you buy in the supermarket. This is appalling given that the establishment prides itself on Mexican cuisine. To make fresh guacamole is not time consuming either, and not even expensive in comparison to something bought from Casa Fiesta, which I am about 90% sure that the stuff on my plate was. The seasoning was off as well and, considering the name of the place—named after one of nature’s greatest wonders—there was not at any point, during the whole meal, any hint of fresh chilli (or flakes, or powder) present. Never. How is that even possible?

Needless to say, we weren’t really in the mood for dessert after this experience, even though we left most of our main courses untouched. A feeling of guilt soon followed, as I am a part-time meat-eater that from time to time relies on the excuse, “but it’s just so damn good!” That was not the case this time around. I feel bad that an animal, no, animals, had to give their life for a meal like this. It was disrespectful at best.

✍ PATRICIA PORMAR
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