



The REYKJAVÍK GRAPEVINE

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THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO LIFE, TRAVEL & ENTERTAINMENT IN ICELAND

Issue 11 – July 30 – August 13

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+ COMPLETE CITY LISTINGS – INSIDE!



THE MANY ROLES OF BJÖRK

WRITING LETTERS, SPEAKING UP, CHILLIN' WITH THE MOOMINS

IN THE ISSUE

DOGS

Do Icelanders hate them?

GAY MARRIAGE

Let freedom ring!

GEOTHERMAL ENERGY

A brief history of...

HAFFI HAFF

He's not afraid of anyone.

GREENLAND

You need to go there. We explain why

Björk Guðmundsdóttir has been very vocal as of late, actively opposing the ongoing privatisation and selling off of Iceland's natural resources. She also appears on three different albums this year, none of which are her own. Grapevine talked to her about all this, and more! Read our massive interview with her INSIDE. Page 18.

Haukur’s 29th Editorial
I Am Perplexed By Life

Hi!

Welcome to yet another issue of The Reykjavík Grapevine – Reykjavík’s tourist magazine for tourists!

(If you are not a tourist, you shouldn’t really be reading this. This is a tourist magazine, you know. Show some respect!).

Anyway. There are many confusing things out there. Things I do not understand. And I’m pretty smart. Like, what the hell is going on with Alþingi? Why does everyone there act like an immature amateur? Why do they seem so interested in fucking around, hair-splitting and goofing off about nothing? Are these people really the cream of our crop? The best we have to offer? Really?

(You might expect me to argue such weighty statements about Iceland’s parliament and MPs. But I don’t need to, any more than I would argue statements such as: ‘The sky is blue!’ ‘Baby animals are cute!’ ‘Pizza is awesome!’ ‘War is a crime!’ – these are all clear and evident truths, Descartes-style)

Also, why have we been privatising our natural resources? Who thought that was a good idea? Didn’t anyone see that Enron movie? WTF!

Speaking of movies, what’s up with that movie ‘Inception’? I mean, it was a great movie and all, but I would really enjoy knowing if our hero was in ‘limbo’ that whole time, as the ending insinuates. Did his ‘spinning top totem’ stop spinning at the end? Why

did they end the movie without showing it? That was really annoying!

And: Why is imported stuff (along with everything else) so goddamn expensive, even though the value of our currency is a lot better than it was when they raised the price of everything due to the króna collapsing?

Furthermore, why isn’t Iceland the most progressive state on Earth? IT WOULD BE SO EASY! We did good with gay marriage and stuff, but there’s so much more we could be doing. Like electric cars. Imagine the whole country driving around in electric cars, thus eliminating our need to import oil while at the same time setting an example for the rest of the world? There are many more progressive and cool ideas like that one around, and there are only about 300.000 of us, so acting on them really shouldn’t be that hard.

Feel like we are dumb not to be progressive.

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Comic | Nicelanders by Óttar M. Norðfjörð & Elo Vázquez



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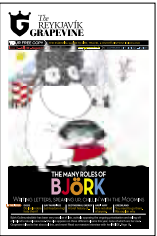
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TRACK OF THE ISSUE

Quadruplos

Tölvunýtt

quadruplos

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Just a pair of weird-tech wizards hanging out behind a bunch of controllers and equalizers, Tomio Newmilk and Mongoose make up the act known as Quadruplos who have been wreaking havoc on Reykjavík dancefloors for the last few months. Having just released a debut album chock full of buzzing and clicking and tweaked out twitchiness, they are letting us drop this freebie track on you excellent readers so you can turn your living room into a club!

Tölvunýtt is one Quadruplos’ absolutely top fire-in-the-disco hits that can turn any regular night out into a sweaty, flailing mess. Starting off all crazy and sci-fi like the sounds of a spaceship engine, shit suddenly hits the proverbial fan as a bowel crunching bass-line takes off like a madman and some broken telephone type noise squeaks around. Whatever these guys were taking when they made this track, we want some!

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Letters

I am no expert on the Icesave crisis, but as far as I can tell, Icelanders are suffering under the weight of unforeseen modalities of old contracts. Of course, much, if not all, of the world's injustice falls under this general description. It seems to me that the best general counter strategy for those who find themselves in this predicament is to present the opposing parties with an equally heavy unforeseen modality. Here is such a counter strategy for dealing with the Icesave crisis:

- 1) All Icelanders move to Geirfuglasker.
- 2) Iceland sells me, Steve, all of Iceland except Geirfuglasker for one kroner.
- 3) I secede from Iceland and call my new country "Steveland".
- 4) Iceland recognizes my independence.
- 5) Icelanders apply for citizenship in Steveland, which I generously grant.

This is Alexander , an under-30 Philadelphia Eco-Sustainability Entrepreneur and American Expat in Scandinavia (Norway) who seeks to broach an inspiration piece for the Reykjavik Grapevine's International Business Panel based on your classic ' interview format ' with the hope that such a feature would evoke the much needed entrepreneurial aspects of transformation our world direly and provocatively needs at this time at a local and inter-relational level - both - by the way of realistic and integral perspective as well as compelling action of an Universal Urgency .

I seek to communicate as a soulful and creative being to my entrepreneurial brethren and stewards and stewardesses of the preciousness of the natural world in your afflicted Iceland , and speak as one who challenges fixed preconceptions while attesting to the shared tragedy of our present world diaspora and challenges, with the earnestness of the Classical American Spirit of True Meaning, Liberties, Courage to do the Right Thing, and advance Pacifism through Right Trade Relations with the peoples of nations.

My voice of description will be both one of historical perspective, deeply autonomous, personal, and hopefully refreshing and invigorative in its classical spirit, offer a call to action at a universal and interpersonal scale, and a plea to transcendence in which i yearn to broadcast a zesty optimism to the Folk of Iceland as a kindred Spirit from the other side of the Atlantic .

As a Brave New American Expat, my hope is also to align the perspectives that Icelanders and Americans alike are just as human in the best and worst sense of All That Is in the nature of humanness, (yet) in light of the most atrocious follies of the financial crises et cetera , it is entirely upto us, Here and Now, to constructively build a focal point and bridge of perspectives at an Interpersonal level of transcendence whereby Icelanders, Americans, Scandinavians and European continentals could greet with a sense of enthusiasm an expression of ' Proving by Doing ' at both a local and pan-geographic level what it truly means to be a person of Goodwill, Enterprise, and Inspired Vision in this all-connected world that very much needs the highest encouragement to make an embarkment beyond the so-called "limits" we all now appear to face universally. My modest anecdotes of breakthroughs will

We're not gonna lie to you: we really love us some beers. Some folks would call it a problem, but beer never gave us any problems. In fact, over the years, it's solved most of 'em. A frosty glass of cold, frothy, bubblicious, golden-tinted beer has consistently failed to let us down. In the immortal words of the once-reputable Homer J. Simpson: "Mmm... Beer..."

Now, since we're real pleasant and giving folks here at the Grapevine, we thought we'd share some wonderful **POLAR BEER** with you, our readers. Not only that, you're also getting the gift of social life with it. So here's the deal: our most awesome letter of each issue (henceforth, or until the good people of **POLAR BEER** decide they don't want to play along anymore), we will be providing our MOST AWESOME LETTER scribble with twelve frothy POLAR BEERS, to be imbibed at a Reykjavik bar of their choice (so long as that bar is either Bakkus or Venue). If y'all's letter is the one, drop us a line to collect. **Give us your worst: letters@grapevine.is**



- 6) New Steveland passports are issued.
- 7) Icelanders emigrate to Steveland and I generously allow them to return to their former homes.
- 8) Icelanders renounce their Icelandic citizenship.
- 9) The last Icelandic emigrant to Steveland gives Gerifuglasker to Iceland's creditors as Iceland's sole remaining asset.
- 10) If it is thought desirable, Steveland can enter into negotiations to make a reasonable offer to buy Gerifunglasker from its new owners.

Hey Steve,

Wow, what a great idea this is! We have two problems with it, though. Firstly, how do we

know you'll honour items 4, 5 and 6 of the plan? Couldn't you just... forget to do that, leaving us all stranded on Geirfuglasker? That would suck! There's nothing there! Nothing!

Secondly, could we call it something other than Steveland? It seems like a pretty novel name for a country, but uh... it's not very pretty. Can we call it something else? Like Ponymland? Geysirland? Gullfossland? Björkland? Elfland? Magmaland? Promiscuoussexland? Bobbyscherland? Zombieland? Eyjafjallajökulland?

Anyway, your entrepreneurial spirit and FRESH IDEAS deserve some beer. This is why we are rewarding you some beer [via our MOST AWESOME LETTER feature]. Maybe it will make you remember us fondly when you are emperor of Steveland.

Re: Shit From An Old Notebook (mostly) by
Haukur S Magnússon
Good afternoon,

In regards to the editorial listed above, I agree with what you're saying but there is something I want to point out. Most people who go to Iceland usually plan for staying a short period of time and aren't always as skilled at friend making as they should be. For those who are in one or both of those groups, the best of being defined in what one can get with a few(or a lot of) krona is really helpful. I know when I go back I'll be using the guide quite often.

And with that I'm off,

James Jones
New Jersey, USA

Hi James,

You make an interesting point here. It's true, making friends ain't easy when you're visiting for a limited time. Maybe we should start some sort of service where we rent friends out to people for a reasonable sum of ISK? Would you be into that? Would anyone? Pretty sure this service is available in Japan. Perhaps it time for us Icelanders to start one of our own?

Perhaps.

Anyway, good to know you'll be using our BEST OF guide. We spent a lot of time compiling it, and it's cool to know folks are using it.

What is it?

A friend returned from Iceland with a gift: Li-frarpylsa Sodin
What kind of meat is it?
Thanks
B Johnson

Dear B,

Thank you for your letter. We'd rather not tell you what's in it. Trust us, eating it won't get you sick or anything (you didn't eat it yet, did you?), but you'll feel better not knowing.
Much better.

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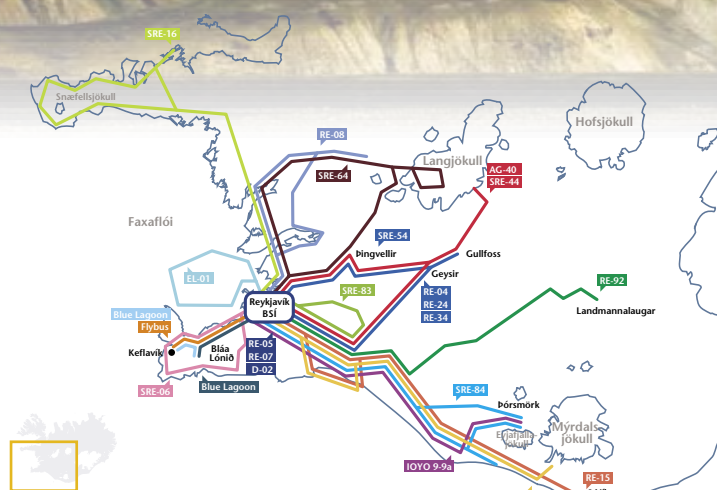
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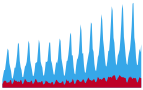
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Welcome To Reykjavík



The odds of you being in Reykjavík are not great. The greatest part of mankind is elsewhere. It is scientifically proven. When I was little, I would often ask myself why I had been born in Reykjavík. Is it a coincidence where one is born? Is it subject to some universal law? Did I exist in any form before I was born? Did I have anything to do with where I was born? Why did Eva Braun and Adolf Hitler not bear any children? Did they not try to? Can it be that no child wanted them as parents? I don't know, but I do not believe in coincidence. I do not believe that God plays dice, especially not when human lives are concerned. These thoughts inevitably lead one to consider Schrödinger's cat. He is probably one of the most famous cats in the world (maybe after Ninja Cat). Still no one knows what it was called? What was Schrödinger's cat called? Abracadabra? I don't remember. Let's call it Phoenix. That is a common name for cats. Phoenix was of the nature that it both existed and not. There-



fore, it always existed, and even if Schrödinger killed his cat in a rather tasteless manner, it is still alive at Schrödinger's house, while Schrödinger himself has been dead for a long time:

$$\Delta x \Delta p \geq \frac{h}{2}$$

Does this mean that I always existed, or that I never existed and do therefore not exist now? That can't be! It would mean that all our existence was unreal and only existed in our own imagination. If I do not exist, then neither do you. I have a hard time believing that. The facts speak for themselves. If I am not real, then how could I fly to Finland, send myself a post card with a picture of Tarja Halonen, the President of Finland, fly back home and welcome the mailman that brought me the card? I don't know. I am one of many Icelanders that believe in elves and trolls. I mainly believe in Moomin elves. It is more of a certainty than a belief. I have seen them and touched them. I know



they exist. I have been to Moominworld in Naantali, Finland. I have evidence; photographs, video recordings and witnesses. I had a good talk with Moomin Papa. He told me that life in Moominvalley was much better after Finland joined the EU. He encouraged us Icelanders to join the EU. He also said that the Moomins had always existed, long before Tove Jansson "invented" them. The Moomins are eternal, at least in books.

I hope these thoughts shed some light on the history of Reykjavík and its culture. I hope you enjoy your time in Reykjavík, that you go swimming a lot and tell all your friends how fun Reykjavík is, and how everyone is always happy there and that you will never forget our hotel, Suðurlandsbraut and the eternally young cat Phoenix

Jón Gnarr, Mayor of Reykjavík

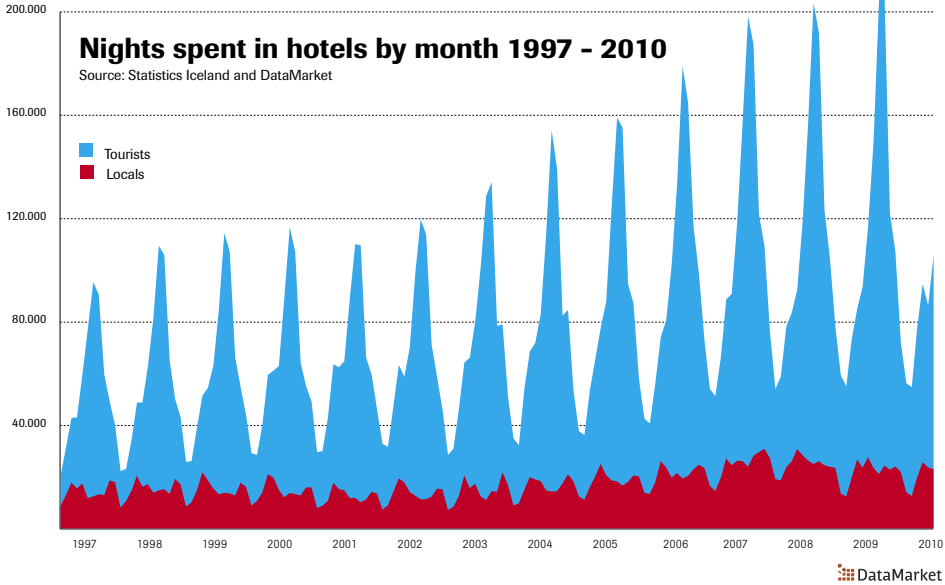
JÓN GNARR
HÖRÐUR SVEINSSON

Iceland | Statistics

Tourists, Where You At?

Alright, so this issue's graph is pretty alarming. What you are looking at here is the number of nights spent in hotels in Iceland from 1997 until 2010. The number of Icelandic guests has remained fairly consistent over the years, what with all the weddings and proms and torrid sexual trysts, but something kind of scary happened this year: that fucking volcano erupted, and so did the tourism industry. Fuck.

As you can see, visits from foreign guests were steadily increasing over the past decade particularly over the past three years when we were skyrocketing well above the 175.000 mark. But the amazing predictions the tourism industry was giving for this summer all came to a crashing halt when that little ash-farting mountain ripped a big one all over our dreams. Right now it looks like we'll be lucky if we even reach the 82.389 nights booked in hotels in 1997. Unless everybody has just gone out and discovered CouchSurfing. Or they are sleeping in Hlemmur. Where you at people?



Check out an interactive graph at www.datamarket.com (short link: www.url.is/3sx)

REBECCA LOUDER
PÁLL HILMARSSON

Opinion | Siggí Pönk

An Anarchist For Mayor?



Many years ago I was part of a group of anarchists who put together a list for upcoming parliamentary elections. The purpose of the "party" was to get the word and ideas of anarchism into the media and into our community. This was a mistake. Not that we gained power, the problem was that in this action, we played along in Iceland's 'four party democracy' and even more people misunderstood our politics. We came across like anarchists were just another power hungry party seeking seats within the hierarchy of the state.

The state, being the most far-reaching oppressive element in our community, is of course the main enemy of any anarchist. But the state and other oppressing systems are not always units in themselves. They form out of how we interact with each other. We destroy those systems not only with various forms of protest action, but by learning to behave in other ways. By playing along in the game of party politics we strengthened it instead of working on new ways towards real community.

In his book 'About Anarchism,' Nicholas Walter wrote that even though anarchists did not accept government in any form he would rather live under a government that allowed him to publish his book than under a dictator that would have him killed. I agree. But one of the reasons why I am an anarchist is that I find the idea of me having power over other people a very bad one. I can co-operate very well, but having me for mayor would be a disaster. However, since I am a nice fellow and love nature in its untamed form and believe in community and the ability of human beings to learn, I as mayor would be less of a disaster than a right wing wannabe dictator or a "sell-everything-now" capitalist.

Jón Gnarr is also a nice fellow. So are probably the other people who got elected alongside him. Jón is even an anarchist. But having a nice guy as mayor or Prime Minister is just a lucky strike. It is an accepted fact in party democracy that you never get what you vote for. Whoever you vote for, government wins. Meaning that whoever you vote for, we the public will still not be able to take part in decision making in our own community. Even worse... having a nice guy in power supports the image of hierarchy, which places the public at the bottom as voter/consumer, as being beneficial for the community.

Jón Gnarr and the Best Party have supposedly scared the career politicians into behaving in the future. That does not satisfy me, because they will be in power again. I don't want anyone making a career out of having power over my life. I do not only want the greedy bastards out of office, I want their seats eliminated so that no one can get voted into them. If I am to live in a democracy, I want it to be a real one, at least, with horizontal decision-making processes. It would be awfully boring, I know, but it would be real. I do not want to keep talking up to power. I want to learn and teach new ways of interacting within our community. Voting for the seemingly most harmless guy and then hoping for the best is not what we need; we need to work against hierarchy in all forms. 🍷

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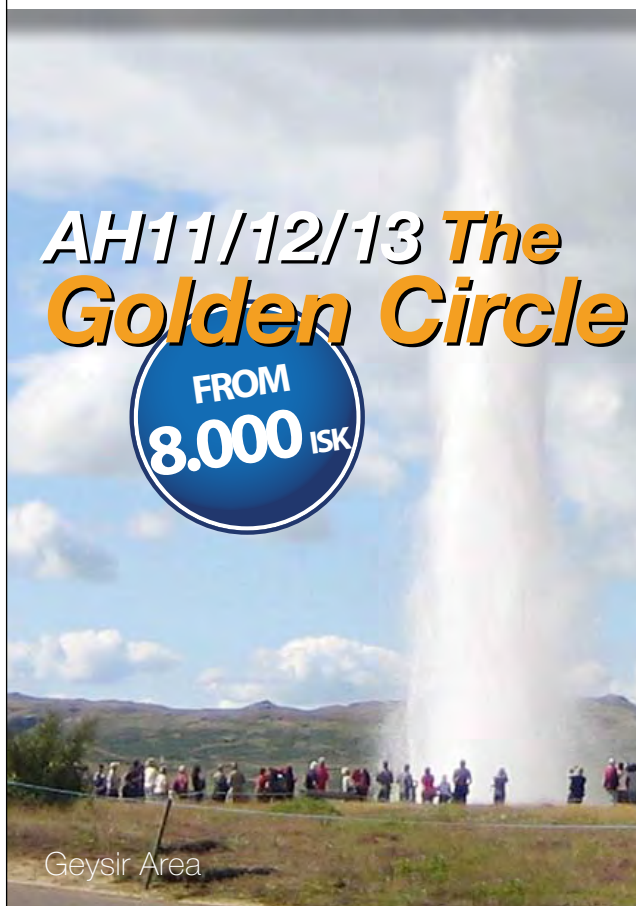
Iceland excursions

GRAY LINE ICELAND

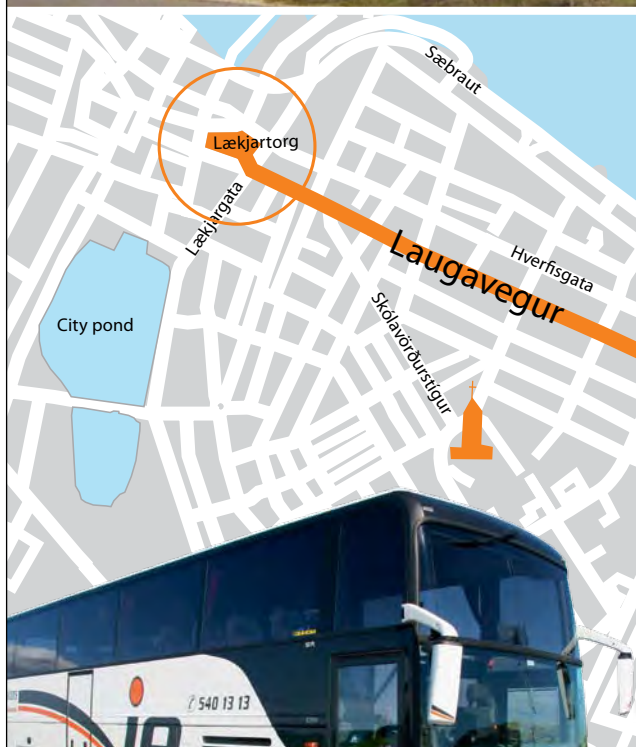


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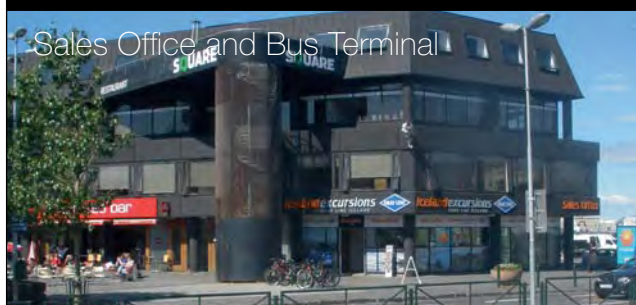
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Postcards From The Edge

Magma CEO Ross Beaty and Iceland CEO Björk = PENPALS

These past weeks have been busy here at Grapevine HQ. The commotion started when we printed a list of questions to Icelandic MPs from Björk and her team (which comprises Björk, architect and assistant to Eva Joly, Jón Þórisson, and writer Oddný Eir /Evarsdóttir) in our last issue, regarding the infamous Magma deal (you can find comprehensive info on that whole ordeal on our website—look for a fancy banner on the front page). This spurred Magma CEO Ross Beaty to contact Grapevine scribe Catharine Fulton (who has frequently interviewed him about the dealings) with a proposition for Björk, offering her to buy a 25% stake in HS Orka. We forwarded his offer on Grapevine.is. Björk then responded to it with an open letter to Ross, which we also published on our website. You may read these interactions below.

The fun didn't stop there. Ross then sent in a letter to the editor, where he attempted to answer all of the questions Björk and her team asked Icelandic MPs in their statement last week. You may read Ross's letter below, as well as Björk's response to that letter.

Obviously the Magma deal is stirring up some hefty feelings in Icelanders, which isn't surprising considering that the energy resources owned by HS Orka are the first Icelandic natural resource to be fully privatised and sold to outside parties. Many claim that the sale of HS Orka is a done deal, that Icelanders need to accept the fact that they've effectively privatised and sold a natural resource to an international corporation (on what many consider questionable terms). Others say that the transaction must be stopped at any cost, as it represents a dangerous paradigm shift at a vulnerable time for the nation (Björk and her team are in the latter camp, and they are hosting a petition on www.orkuaudlindir.is to draw attention to the matter). UPDATE: it seems they might have succeeded. The Icelandic government has announced that it will not approve the sale of HS Orka to Magma Energy until the matter has been thoroughly investigated. Read the latest story on our website).

Grapevine has been on the case for over a year now (again, click the banner on grapevine.is for a list of articles),

and while we claim no official "position" on this matter, we do encourage everyone to read and learn as much as possible about it, before making an informed and enlightened decision. The correspondence in this issue is as fine a place to start as any.

"A cheeky proposal"

"I have a cheeky proposal to Björk: if she is so worried about foreign investors buying HS Orka, why doesn't she, with all her millions invest in buying some of HS Orka? I offer her a 25% stake at no profit to Magma—she can buy the shares at exactly what it cost us. That is what I am offering the pension funds. Let her put her money where her mouth is, as I am personally doing."

Ross

"You totally miss my point"

dear ross

noticed your message for me

you offering me shares in hs orka shows that you totally miss my point

i feel this company should not be



privatized , it should be given back to the people .

therefore i am not interested in shares .

but if i would get the same deal as you , a 70% bulletloan from icelanders to buy usage of their own resources , i might reconsider , who wouldn't ? you didn't really put your money where your mouth is , did you ?

good bye

björk

P.s. I also saw in financial times when you asked me , personally , to pop over to your office and you would lower how long magma's usage of our resources is going to be . This only reveals how willing you are to cut deals outside law and order

HAUKUR S. MAGNÚSSON



Letter to the Editor: The Grapevine

I have seen a press release from Bjork published in The Grapevine recently and would like to respond. I fully respect Bjork's concerns and those of other Icelanders and I hope I can provide some information to help make this a more informed discussion. There is a lot of fear and distrust in Iceland today and I really regret how this is influencing people's attitudes to our involvement in HS Orka. I believe we are a good company to hold HS Orka and not one to be angry about. A lot of the discussion is based on misinformation, so I hope I can correct some of it here.

Who are Magma Energy's shareholders?

Magma is a public company traded on the Toronto Stock Exchange with over 2,000 shareholders. Our shareholder list changes every day but as of July 9, 2010 our largest shareholders were Ross Beaty / Sitka Foundation (45%), institutional investors (35% – any stockbroker can find a detailed list of these investors as it is publicly disclosed information), retail investors 15% and Altagas Income Trust (a large Canadian gas company) 5%. The Sitka Foundation is a registered private Canadian foundation whose vision is to be a catalyst in the preservation of the environment and the promotion of biodiversity (see, for example, www.beatymuseum.ubc.ca). As far as we know, Magma has no Icelandic shareholders. However, we have attempted for some time to bring Icelandic based investors into HS Orka as co-investors, and remain hopeful this can be achieved in the near future. We have also offered to the Iceland government to give it a first right of purchase if Magma ever decides to sell its stake – thereby ensuring the company can be held by the Icelandic state in future if this is politically desired.

How much is Magma investing in HS Orka?

Magma has, to date, paid ISK 6.9 billion in cash to the municipalities of Reykjanesbaer, Reykjavik, Harnarfjorðarbaer and Sandgerdisbaer to acquire 43% of

HS Orka, plus ISK 1.7 billion in cash as direct investment in HS Orka for capital projects for a proposed expansion (drilling, turbine, purchase, etc). Magma has agreed to pay ISK 10.6 billion in cash (or the equivalent in cash and stock) to Geysir Green Energy on July 31, 2010 to increase Magma's stake to 98.5%. In addition Magma owes ISK 8.8 billion to Reykjavik, Harnarfjorðarbaer and Sandgerdisbaer in the form of vendor bonds payable in six or seven years. Magma will also assume a bond issue by Reykjanesbaer to Geysir Green Energy with a value of ISK 6.3 billion. Magma plans to invest an additional ISK 66 billion by 2016 to expand HS Orka's production from 175 MW to 405 MW, from a combination of debt and equity sources. I believe that Magma was the largest foreign investor in Iceland in 2009 and we really believe we can help bring Iceland out of its current tough economic condition with additional investment in the near future. The current debate is not exactly encouraging other foreign investment.

Magma Sweden?

Magma Sweden is a company we established to hold our investment in HS Orka, since we were not allowed by current rules to hold our investment as we would have preferred in a direct subsidiary from Canada (there had to be an EU company). We have followed Iceland laws (and always will) in doing this, and it has been approved twice by Iceland's Committee on Foreign Investments. It is unfortunate that Magma has to use a Swedish subsidiary but that is how the laws work and we have to follow them. I do question why all the fuss is being made in Iceland about this. Would Iceland rather have a Bulgarian company or Polish company own this business instead of a reputable Canadian company? I guess this is really a fight against any foreign company owning HS Orka, but right now any European company can do so. I note that Iceland is trying to auction offshore oil and gas rights to foreign investors – is this so different than letting a foreign company hold its geothermal resources? I would finally point out that control of HS Orka is already held offshore – the facts are that Geysir Green Energy is today controlled by Islandsbanki's offshore creditors.

Magma profits?

Based on current and future expectations of cash flow from HS Orka net of its approximate \$180 million (ISK 22.5 billion) of existing bank debt, and after account for the substantial planned in-

vestments to expand capacity, Magma expects to recover no profits out of Iceland for many years to come as all profits will likely be re-invested. Eventually, Magma certainly hopes to recover its investment with a reasonable return to our shareholders, but we see this as a very long term investment that will require a lot more money to be invested before we are able to recover any of this in the form of dividends.

Jobs?

Upon completion of the current transaction, Magma will employ 130 Icelanders at HS Orka, five at its Icelandic subsidiary and many others in future expansion projects, plus support a great deal of indirect employment in the communities around HS Orka's operations. Our hoped-for expansion of HS Orka's capacity from 175 MW to 405 MW will employ hundreds of Icelanders directly, maybe even thousands. Our expectation is that 100% of jobs at HS Orka will be Icelanders.

Profit to Iceland?

Iceland profits from jobs, economic development, taxes and foreign exchange created by HS Orka today and for many years to come.

I am really disappointed about the negative reaction to Magma's investment. I think it is based on wrong information and wrong impressions about us. We at Magma are dedicated to building a great clean energy company with the core involvement of Iceland's great engineers and technicians, and to being a good corporate citizen in Iceland over the long term. We were proud supporters of Iceland's Winter Olympics team that participated in the 2010 Vancouver Olympics, and we hope to continue to support Iceland and Icelandic-Canadian relations for many years to come.

Geothermal power is a beautiful form of electricity with the lowest environmental impact of all types of electricity production. We have no agenda except to work as hard as we can to operate and, if we are allowed to, further develop Iceland's geothermal resources for the future benefit of Iceland, our shareholders and, quite frankly, the world.

Yours sincerely,

Ross Beaty
CEO

ROSS BEATY



dear ross beaty

i appreciate your answer

it is good for the icelandic nation to see this information in the open , before it makes up its mind on this . a lot of bad deals for this country's fortunes have happened in closed back rooms recently and , as you can imagine , after the bankcrash this is something that icelanders are especially sensitive about right now . let's leave this information in the hands of investigative journalists and bloggers and anyone else interested . i see in the news that árne sigfússon , the town mayor of reykjanesbær , has already used this opportunity to question the quality of the loans magma would overtake if this deal pulls through .

you are right , it could be said that in reykjanesbær's case you have come and helped them . the town is close to bankruptcy after what in short could be called overambitious heavy industrial plans (in the style of what brought this country down) so it might seem fair they sell their rights to their geothermal energy for 130 years . even though they have to lose their chance of income from that and lose their chances of energizing other businesses like greenhouses , data centers or whatever energy-needs the town will have the next century . and let's put aside for now that i feel the deal is exceptionally bad . that they sold themselves cheap . and now the contract with them is almost fully legalised ...

meanwhile you are trying to buy access to geothermal energy in hrúna-mannaafreitt and the mývatn area as well as rights to freshwater in öraefi . you are contacting landowners, municipal governments, engineering firms and more . you have also been pressuring landsvirkjun for the development rights to the bjarnarflagsvirkjun power plant which is one of the most potentially profitable enterprises in our country. you have also commissioned a report on the possibility of harnessing geothermal energy at reykjahlið and vogar, which does not meet the requirements

of the icelandic state regulations for development; you want to get the rights and therefore pressure landsvirkjun if they don't want to work with you. could it be that magma energy is not, like you seem to want to prove in your answer to me, helping icelanders in their recovery to build up hs orka, but rather you are trying get hold of anything you can get hold of and are knowingly abusing the weak positions of landsvirkjun , icelandic municipalities and individuals? and everything behind the nation's back ?

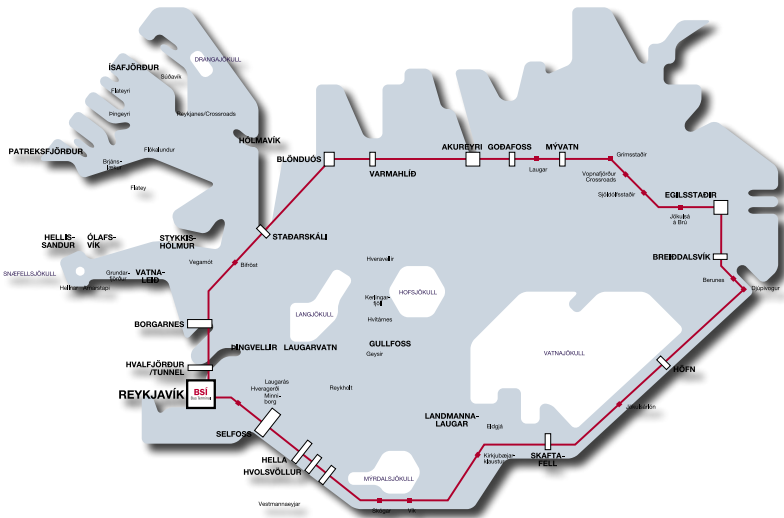
i agree with lára hanna , an icelandic investigational blogger , when she asks if it could be that your intention is to create a company that you could then sell to the highest bidder and make a lot of money ? do you intend to sell to the chinese who bought your mines ? is it a coincidence that you own mines in various countries in which the international monetary fund has been into ?

so please don't insult our intelligence by playing the great benefactor . we know very well that the value of all our natural resources will increase dramatically over the next few decades. and so do you – that's why you're here. you wish to expand and thereby destroy some of our beautiful nature, like krýsuvík and kerlingafjöll , some of the most beloved natural pearls in iceland .

you asked in your letter if we would rather work with bulgarians or the polish ? to be honest , i am not too bothered about nationalities . half of the people i have worked with in my life are honest , generous foreigners with good intentions . and after watching iceland's venture capitalists bring the country down , we have seen too much of our own countrymen working against their own nation to naively think that in keeping our precious geothermal energy plants in the hands of icelandic businessmen , we are going to keep them safe . but if you want to go by nationalities , i'd like to remind you that a fellow canadian , otto spork , came here and worked with people in snæfellsnes . he bought off them the rights to their glacial water for 99 years . he made it put into the contract that its content was a secret . i wonder why ? later , the canadian superior court judge ordered that otto spork's company , sextant capital management inc. be put into receivership. so to quote the canadian newspaper "globe and mail" : " mr. spork has invested illegally in firms with rights to icelandic glaciers for the purpose of selling bottled water.

>>CONTINUES ON PAGE 16

Full Circle Passport



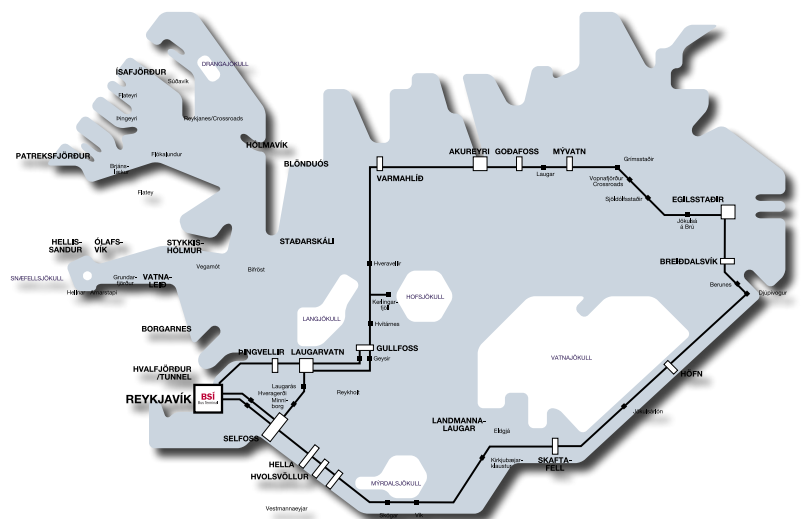
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The Icelandic economic miracle as epidemic of bubblethinking

The collapse of the Icelandic financial system in October of 2008 did not only squash any dreams Icelanders had of turning their tiny island into a 'global financial centre'—it swept the so-called 'Icelandic economic miracle' into the dustbin of history.

In the wake of the SIC report many culprits have been fingered for the collapse of the 'Icelandic economic miracle'. On one hand, one can point to a potent mix of global financial conditions (a glut of cheap money) and misguided governmental economic policies. The policies included badly timed tax cuts and expansionary industrial and investment policies. Those, along with an overvalued currency, attracted global hot money that then pushed up asset prices, encouraging consumers and businesses to take on ever more debt, as well as providing the 'Corporate Vikings' with the necessary leverage to undertake reckless foreign adventures.

On the other hand one can point to massive government failure: lack of financial regulation along with understaffed and under-funded regulatory institutions (with unclear mandates) created the conditions in which greed and short term thinking by oligarchs, corporate raiders and investment bankers lead to things like the Enron-esque accounting frauds and massive market manipulation carried out by Kaupthing and its top brass. It appears that public opinion has been gravitating to the latter explanation, seeing the 'economic miracle' as little more than a gigantic bank heist.

However, when commentators seek to sum up the economic miracle they most commonly resort to is the idea of a bubble.

BUBBLING UNDER

But what exactly is a financial bubble? And does the 'Icelandic economic miracle' qualify as one? It is remarkable that this question has never been explicitly addressed. For example, the SIC report refers to a bubble in Iceland on several occasions, but does not rigorously define this bubble or answer when it started.

Defining bubbles is notoriously tricky—leading many economists to reject their very existence. Usually bubbles are simply defined as a shared speculative hallucination—followed with a spectacular

crash. The American Federal Reserve, under Alan Greenspan, emphasised that it was in fact impossible to identify bubbles as they were inflating. In a 2002 speech Alan Greenspan argued that it's "very difficult to definitively identify a bubble until after the fact – that is, when its bursting confirmed its existence." According to Laurence H. Meyer, a governor at the Fed in the '90s, one could safely assume that a bubble had burst if stock prices came down by 40 percent or more.

FREE MARKET FUNDAMENTALISM

Others reject the idea of bubbles entirely. Among those are the free market fundamentalists, who believe in the strong version of the 'efficient market hypothesis'—the idea that financial markets always reflect all available information and that they are therefore a correct measure of underlying economic fundamentals—that financial markets correctly measure risk and uncertainty and always discover the correct price of all assets. According to this theory financial bubbles are simply impossible; they do not exist.

There even exists a large academic cottage industry that is dedicated to proving this idea, employing historians and economists who write articles proving that past financial bubbles are, in fact, not bubbles. That irrational exuberance was an inconsequential factor, if not completely absent in the Dutch Tulipomania of the 17th century or the English South Sea bubble of the 18th century, Wall Street of the late 1920s or the dot-com mania of the '90s.

PANTAGRUELIAN ASSET INFLATION

It is unlikely, though, that anyone will argue that the Icelandic economic miracle was not a bubble. In the span of a few years the Icelandic banking system grew to gargantuan proportions. By 2007, the banks had grown to an astounding 873% of the annual domestic product of Iceland, having more than doubled annually since the turn of the century. The growth was especially explosive after 2004, as the total assets grew sevenfold. During this time a similar inflation took place in the stock market as the ICEX index rose by 56% in 2003, 50% in 2004 and 67% in 2005. All in all, the stock market grew by 539% between January 2002 and July 2007, when it peaked.

Iceland also experienced a housing bubble. Real estate in Reykjavík rose by 72% between January of 2002 and when the market peaked in April of 2006. When the price of a square meter in Reykjavík

Magnús Sveinn Helgason is a historian. He most recently authored addendum five to the SIC report, and is currently working on a book on financial bubbles.

had reached 3.000 Euros, almost double the price in Berlin, bank analysts and real estate agents claimed that they were in no way unreasonable, pointing to the undeniable fact that real estate was more expensive in other cities. For example Luxembourg or Manhattan. Whether this was a reasonable comparison was conveniently left unanswered.

It seems safe to assume that in the fall of 2008, a bubble burst.

THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE BUBBLE

We are accustomed to think about bubbles as market phenomena, something that develops in asset markets and can best be seen in rising prices. As Robert Shiller has argued, however, bubbles are primarily social phenomena that manifest themselves not only in the market, but perhaps more importantly in the broader culture, in the attitudes and beliefs of people and the national discourse. Shiller has argued in this context that it might be best to think of bubbles as a psychological or cultural epidemic. Greed and speculative fever, and other expressions of the madness that inflate bubbles, is present, to some degree at least, in all societies. At some point however, the intensity of irrational expectations reaches a tipping point, infecting the entire society.

When we trace the Icelandic bubble it might therefore be instructive to map the spread of some of the 'extraordinary popular delusions'.

The most obvious example of this is the recurring belief that "this time it's different": All bubbles are founded on the conviction that somehow a 'new era' has dawned, an era in which everything is possible, the business cycle has been defeated and asset prices can only continue to rise to the sky.

THE ECONOMIC MIRACLE AS 'NEW ERA' PHILOSOPHY

In the case of Iceland, the 'new era' was believed to have been ushered in by the market reforms, privatisation and shredding of the last vestiges of depression era economic restrictions during the 1990s. After the turn of the century these developments provided a simple and ideologically appealing explanation for the explosive growth of the financial sector and the apparent economic boom.

This main prophet of this idea was Hannes Hólmsteinn Gissurarson, professor of Political Science at the University of Iceland. In countless articles and several books, Hannes Hólmsteinn argued that Iceland's full integration into global

"In late 2005 and early 2006, market analysts at several foreign financial institutions published reports that were quite critical of 'the Icelandic economic miracle' warning, among other things, that asset prices in Iceland were overvalued, the economy overleveraged, the banks overextended and that they posed a systemic risk to the economy."

markets, market liberalisation and privatisation, had unleashed such incredible energies that Iceland could easily, and in a relatively short time span, expect to become the "richest country in the world".

Hannes Hólmsteinn was by no means the sole prophet of 'new era thinking'. The President of Iceland, Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson, explained the growth of the financial system with Icelandic exceptionalism: Icelanders, by virtue of their genes, were simply better businessmen than their foreign colleagues. In December of 2004, Sigmundur Ernir Rúnarsson, currently an MP for the Social Democratic Alliance, wrote a scathing critique of Scandinavian commentators who had pointed out that there were signs of a bubble in the Icelandic financial markets. Sigmundur Ernir mocked the Scandinavians, dismissing their worries as nothing more than envy and misunderstanding.

What makes his article interesting is the way in which he ties together the free market fundamentalism of Hannes Hólmsteinn and the bombastic nationalism of Ólafur Ragnar. Sigmundur Ernir argued that the privatisation of the banks and the market reforms had released the inherent entrepreneurialism of Icelanders which had been unleashed when "the lid was taken off the boiling pot," ushering in an era of unprecedented and limitless growth in the financial sector. This mixing of free market triumphalism and nationalistic megalomania are in fact a common theme of financial bubbles.

Speculations such as this became more fanciful as we drew closer to the collapse. Hannes Hólmsteinn's prophecies of Iceland becoming the richest country in the world, and the dreams of Iceland as a centre of global finance are symptomatic of new era thinking—delusions of limitless economic growth without any thought to the where this growth was supposed to come from.

THE STAGES OF THE BUBBLE

We can therefore say with certainty that by 2008 Iceland had two of the key characteristics of a bubble: Seriously overval-

ued asset markets and a solid new era philosophy to justify the unrealistic valuations. By 2004 the pathogen, a potent 'new era' philosophy, had mutated into a particularly dangerous form of an arrogant, bombastic exceptionalism.

But when did the infection reach a tipping point? Although it is difficult to pinpoint this transition with certainty, it seems that by early 2006 Icelanders had made the transition.

In late 2005 and early 2006, market analysts at several foreign financial institutions published reports that were quite critical of 'the Icelandic economic miracle' warning, among other things, that asset prices in Iceland were overvalued, the economy overleveraged, the banks overextended and that they posed a systemic risk to the economy. Icelandic commentators and elected officials reacted with amazing ferocity, accusing the foreigners of having ulterior motives and of wanting to "talk down" the Icelandic banks. Others were more generous toward the critics, arguing that the mysteries of Icelandic business were such that the naysayers probably just didn't 'get it'. In this spirit, the banks launched a major PR-campaign to boost their image.

THE SILENCING OF SANITY

While there were critics and Cassandra who warned that the economic miracle was a mirage and that the bubble was about to burst—the vast majority of the chattering class, politicians and pundits, as well as the general public, went along with the spin that marginalised the voices of sanity.

This squashing of dissent is perhaps the most dangerous feature of bubble mentality. Not because it serves to re-energise speculators and thus protects overvalued asset markets, but because it creates an uncritical atmosphere where people wilfully ignore warning signs and critics keep silent out of fear of being ridiculed or branded enemies of the market. ❧

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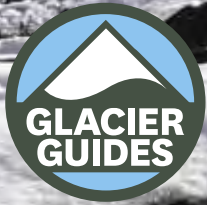
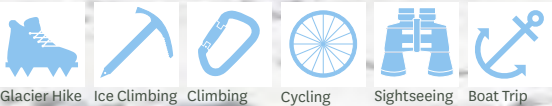
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Marc Vincenz also wrote a nice news analysis for this issue, that we had to cut at the last minute due to space constrictions (sorry, Marc). Look forward to reading it in the next Grapevine!

Geothermal Energy: Still Steaming



“Icelanders regard plentiful, cheap, guilt-free energy as part of their birthright.”

—Daniel Gross, Newsweek, April 2008

A geothermal challenge

At present, Iceland is pinning its hopes on its two major resources—fishing and renewable energy—to pull it out of the current economic crisis. Fish, of course, are a resource limited by quota and catch. Renewable energy on the other hand is essentially unlimited, and—in the light of greenhouse gas emissions—is considered the only sensible way into Earth’s green future.

Iceland’s energy supply consists of 75% hydropower and 25% geothermal, but despite the fact that hydropower is extremely efficient and easy to maintain, it uses vast tracts of pristine nature and is politically unpopular. For precisely this reason, geothermal is considered the most ecologically viable option for progressing Iceland’s economy. Yet given the current economic environment, all may not prove to be smooth sailing.

Alex Richter, Director of Íslandsbanki’s Sustainable Resources Team, expressed his concerns to the Scientific American last year, “[When the crash came] the sense in the seafood and energy industries is that [the financial services built around those two industries] basically all disappeared overnight. The Prime Minister said we are blessed with two resources that have helped the country for centuries ... in a sense, that’s a very naïve view. Iceland must overcome a huge foreign debt ... a collapsed currency that makes imports expensive as well as high inflation combined with high unemployment.”

And like everything at the moment, this is an uphill battle. But there are promising signs on the horizon.

The Geothermal Energy Association’s (GEA) recent Geothermal Industry Update shows a 20% increase in global geothermal power coming on-stream in the last five years. In 2008, Google.org, the search engine company’s charitable arm,

invested close to USD 11 million in geothermal research. And with the Obama administration now finally behind the industry, geothermal development in the U.S. increased by 26% over 2009. Investors worldwide are certainly on the lookout for cheap clean energy, and geothermal is a hot ticket.

So what precisely do Iceland’s geothermal resources represent? Well a lot, for that matter. Let’s start at the beginning.

A brief geothermal history

Harnessing geothermal heat is as ancient as the Earth’s first civilisations. California’s Paleo-Indians were using the steam and hot water of Mayacamas Mountains’ ‘The Geysers’ over 10,000 years ago. And here in Iceland, geothermal pools have been a part of Icelandic culture since the first wave of Norse immigrants. Hverabraud (hot spring bread) is still as popular today as it was centuries ago. It has been said that the poet Snorri Sturluson maintained a geothermal tub in his back garden, and one wonders if he spent time pondering the Sagas as he sat there, bubbling away, gazing at the stars.

The first prototype of a geothermal power plant was built in 1905 in Larderello, Tuscany, Italy, and went into full-scale production in 1911. Although partially destroyed during the Second World War, Larderello remained the world’s only geothermal power plant for nearly half a century until New Zealand built its own in Wairakei in 1958. Commercial geothermal power plants were developed in Mexico in 1959, the United States in 1960, in Japan on northern Honshu in 1966, and in the Soviet Union in eastern Siberia in 1967.

Although geothermal heating had been in use in Iceland in the early 1900s, Iceland’s first geothermal power plant went online in 1969 (Bjarnarflag [Námafjall], near Mývatn). Svartsengi, a combined heat and power plant famous for its spill off brine high in silica content (which is now Iceland’s premier tourist attraction, the Blue Lagoon), went on-stream in 1977. In the northeast, Krafla Power Plant started operations in 1978. Today, Iceland’s five major geothermal power stations (there are six operational and seven in total) all figure in the world’s top twenty in terms of power generating

capacity and represent around 5% of installed global capacity. The Hellisheiði Power Station, which began operations in 2006, is considered to be the second largest in the world, second only to Mexico’s Cerro Prieto Geothermal Power Station.

Iceland’s geothermal resources are closely tied to its location on the Mid-Atlantic Ridge. High-temperature zones—such as the Hengill geothermal area, an important source of energy for the Nesjavellir plant—are also high-pressure and -thermal, providing water at temperatures of 200°C and above, and are within the active volcanic rift that runs from northeast to southwest across Iceland. Due to their high mineral and gas content these cannot flow directly into the distribution system, but are used for heating fresh water and for electricity. Low temperature resources, yielding water temperatures below 149°C flank the active zone, and are used for space heating. Over 600 hot water springs in low-temperature fields and around 30 high-temperature zones have been identified.

The primary purpose of geothermal energy in Iceland is still for space heating. Geothermal space heating commenced in Iceland at the turn of the century with Stefán Jónsson, who used it for heating his farm. Others quickly followed suit, and by 1930, ten farmhouses had developed their own geothermal heating systems. The first major building to be heated was the Austurbæjarskóli, a primary school in 101 Reykjavik. Soon thereafter the national hospital, a swimming pool and 60 homes were serviced.

The oil crisis of the 1970s forced the Icelandic government to speed up the development and use of geothermal heat for housing. In 1970, around 50% of space heating came from oil, forty years later it represents less than 1%. Today, virtually the entire municipality of Reykjavik and around 90% of all buildings in Iceland are heated with geothermal water. Reykjavik Energy is considered to operate the world’s largest, most sophisticated district heating system.

Certainly Iceland’s resources—in particular its glaciers, rivers, and volcanism—have significantly helped raise the country from being one of Europe’s poorest nations to one with a high standard of living. “Geothermal heating saved Iceland billions,” says Stefán Pálsson,

historian at the Reykjavik Energy Museum. “It’s the only thing in Iceland today that’s really cheap. If not for geothermal energy, Iceland would not be a modern society today.” In actual fact, Íslandsbanki’s calculations indicate that moving from fossil fuels to geothermal heating saved the country the equivalent of more than USD 7.2 billion (1970 to May 2010).

Outside of space heating and electricity, geothermal resources are also used in number of direct applications including hot water for over 130 public swimming pools, snow melting on roads, for heating greenhouses, and various industrial applications: the diatomic plant at Mývatn, seaweed processing at Reykhólar, fish farms (predominately trout) who use geothermal water to heat fresh water, and using geothermal fluid for the production of commercial liquid carbon dioxide.

This is all optimum in terms of a self-sustained environment, but particularly now during the economic crisis, Iceland is deeply committed to generating foreign currency through its energy and resources. Stefán Pálsson points out: “Right now this can only be achieved by attracting more energy-intensive industry to set up in Iceland.”

The core of the matter

GEA ranks Iceland 7th in the world, 2nd in Europe for geothermal energy production, and 4th in the world for direct geothermal use. Today, the state-owned Landsvirkjun covers 76% of the country’s energy requirements (primarily hydropower) and is Iceland’s largest power company, they are followed by Orkuveita Reykjavíkur (Reykjavik Energy) at 13%, and HS Orka, Iceland’s only privately-owned energy company, provides 9% of the country’s energy requirements. Canada’s Magma Energy Corp’s recent acquisition of Geysir Green Energy raised its stake in HS Orka from 43.3% to 98.5%, causing much consternation and debate.

Assuming necessary financing is at hand, the International Geothermal Association (IGA) estimates Iceland’s geothermal energy capacity to increase from its present 575 MW to 800 by the year 2015. If all the presently planned industrial projects in Iceland were to come to fruition, the energy demand by 2016 would be close to 1,600 MW; yet as Íslandsbanki’s Sustainable Energy Team clearly states, “...it is estimated that they alone would require an investment of USD 3.1 billion with nearly two thirds of that needed in the next 4 years.”

Last year, Christopher Mims stated in the Scientific American: “Whereas many in Iceland... are optimistic that the country’s renewable power can help to rebuild its economy, there are significant obstacles. The further development of geothermal resources... is heavily dependent on outside investment, yet the most

important outside investment to date, new aluminium smelters, has become unpopular because of the concern about the environment, and economically unsound as long as the price of aluminium stays low.” Alex Richter notes: “Iceland’s current economic status means that it is very difficult for energy companies to raise the necessary equity for development from their owners, usually the state or municipalities.”

At present 75% of Iceland’s total electricity consumption goes to aluminium smelters and around 11% to the ferro-silicon industry. Aluminium sales have now grown to a level that is approximately equal to the fishing industry for export income; however the ‘market flux’ of both international fish and aluminium prices is a cause of major concern. Diversification into other industries is essential.

Presently there are numerous parties interested in starting up data centres, silicone chip manufacturing—there’s even a company interested in producing methanol from geothermal CO2 emissions—but little is beyond the development phase. “We are looking at quite a few years before these new projects come on-stream,” says Júlíus Jónsson, Managing Director of HS Orka.

It certainly appears that revenue, particular foreign currency, will be slow forthcoming, but you can be sure that won’t stop the Icelanders from giving it all their steam. ☞

MARC VINCENZ

A FEW GEOTHERMAL FACTS:

The entire world resource base of geothermal energy is considered to be greater than the resource bases of coal, oil, gas and uranium combined. Even though geothermal energy is technically a finite resource, the typical lifetime for geothermal activity is so long that it is considered a renewable resource.

Iceland:

- Ranked 7th in the world for geothermal energy production
- Ranked 2nd in Europe for geothermal energy production
- Ranked 4th in the world for direct geothermal use
- Presently represents around 5% of installed global geothermal capacity
- Hellisheiði Power Station is the 2nd largest geothermal power station in the world
- 5 of Iceland’s geothermal power stations are within the world’s top 20
- Around 2/3 of Icelandic primary energy comes from geothermal resources
- 25% of Iceland’s energy is generated by geothermal energy
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GOOD NEWS

We are generally inspired by Iceland and the stuff going on here. We wanted to bring y'all the good news happening in our fair country and why we love living here.

What Kind Of Tourist Are You?



The Classic Tourist (12-20 points)
You fall into the 'classic' category of Iceland's tourist friends. Here since long before Björk sang her first notes and Reykjavík was any kind of attraction (or even had a café), your kind has been cavorting in Iceland's hills, small towns and public pools longer than most. Often operating on a budget, you may often be found hitch-hiking your way around the country, climbing mountains, sleeping in emergency shelters or sneaking single-serve packets of butter into your pockets at breakfast buffets. You are most easily recognised by your brightly coloured all-weather apparel.



The Eurohippie (21-30 points)
A somewhat modernised version of the nature fetishist, the Eurohippie started rearing his dreadlocked head in Iceland sometime during the mid-nineties. The Kárahnjúkar Dam dispute / Sigur Rós free concert series of the late '00s account for a massive surge in their numbers lately, along with increased tofu-sales. If the numbers place you in this group (and magazine lifestyle quizzes never lie), chances are that you've studied liberal arts, experimented with various mind-altering substances and ideologies, and enjoy conspiracy theories and acting as a conscience for the rest of us. You are most often recognisable by a weird hairstyle, earth-tone clothing and some facial hair.



The Trendy Tourist (31-40 points)
Congratulations! You are the trendy tourist type traveller, and thus probably the latest addition to Iceland's foreigner fauna. And a true pioneer! You may have some ties to Iceland's music, fashion or arts scenes, and were most likely inspired to come here by someone you met in Berlin or New York. You count Björk among your icons, but you also enjoy several obscure things that are guaranteed to be all the rage shortly. Your feelings about Reykjavík (101 Reykjavík) will be mixed, although you will most likely enjoy the opportunities for social climbing and to be instantly notorious in the 300-person scene. You are easily recognised, as you look, talk, sound and smell like next month is already here.



The Dirty Weekender (40+ points)
God. Then there's you. You are likely a decent, hard working fellow lured to Iceland by Reykjavík's party-hard notoriety and some Tarantino fuelled misconceptions about the nature of Icelandic nightlife and its female participants. Most often seen in groups, you will be drunk by 7pm, walking down Laugavegur wearing a Viking helmet by 9pm, kinda let down by constant refusals by midnight and a patron of one of the city's remaining strip-clubs by 2am (at which point you will be too intoxicated to notice that the Icelandic females you're supposedly associating with all have thick Eastern-European accents). You can be recognised by an expensive watch and baseball-cap combo that nicely accent your leatherjacketed mid-life crisis.

- 1 Which of the following lyric-snippets do you most identify with?**
- A 'Tschíúúúú, wúúú, tsjúúúú, sæææææljóóóó'
 - B 'Coca-loc dancing like a maniac. Coca-loc dancing in the dance-room.'
 - C 'Emotional landscapes, they puzzle me – confuse.'
 - D I identify with mountains, not lyrics.
- 2 What is your favourite nature reserve?**
- A The Hornstrandir Nature Reserve.
 - B The Human Nature Reserve.
 - C Will there be girls there?
 - D I never reserve. I just show up and get a table.
- 3 Pick an event:**
- A Iceland Airwaves.
 - B Verslunarmannahelgi, whooi!
 - C The Hafnarfjörður Viking Festival.
 - D International Food and Fun.
- 4 Whilst travelling the Ring Road, you happen to hit one of those infamous jaywalking sheep. Your next step would be to...**
- A Drag the carcass into nature and perform a small ritual before respectfully burying it.
 - B B-B-Q!
 - C String it upside down in a small gallery.
 - D Hitchhikers don't hit sheep, and neither do mountain-bikers.

- 5 Which of the following entities would you prefer to blow up?**
- A The Kárahnjúkar Dam. And those Alcoa Bastards.
 - B The remaining copies of my pre-fame B-class porn movie.
 - C Fireworks!
 - D I would like to blow up a balloon and bounce it around somewhere in nature, preferably while naked.
- 6 Which of the following 'Icelandic icons' are you most familiar with?**
- A Björk Guðmundsdóttir, pop singer/composer.
 - B Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson, the president of Iceland.
 - C Hófi Karlisdóttir, Miss World 1985.
 - D Those retarded kids from the Sigur Rós videos.
- 7 Your stance on whaling?**
- A Whales are for watching. And petting.
 - B Reinstating whaling is typical for these capitalist bastards who are intent on spoiling Iceland's niche as an unspoiled haven, the last bastion of unspoiled nature in Europe, etc., etc.
 - C Do whales make for good sushi?
 - D Hehe... Free Willy! Hehehe.
- 8 You feel most at home:**
- A I do not subscribe to the capitalist-enforced/endorsed concept of 'home'.
 - B When surrounded by mirrors, girls and shiny metal poles.
 - C Amidst majestic mountains, glacial landscapes, rivers, trees, elves, etc.
 - D Jumping the queue at some trendmaster bar or club. People know me, you know.

- 9 Pick a drink:**
- A Organic Cruelty-Free Fair Trade Whey Chai Soy Latte.
 - B Beer!
 - C Pure, glacier-strained, Icelandic Wasser.
 - D My favourite drink hasn't been invented at the time of writing.
- 10 Your preferred daytrip out of Reykjavík:**
- A The Golden Circle.
 - B A spray-paint and explosive-laced trip to the Alcan aluminium factory in Hafnarfjörður. That'll show those nature-killing bastards.
 - C The Goldfinger Strip Club. That's in Kópavogur, right?
 - D Do I absolutely have to? I'd really rather not leave the 101 area.
- 11 Icelandic women are...**
- A Allowed to vote since 1915.
 - B The most beautiful in the world.
 - C The most beautiful sluts in the world.
 - D Elfin.
- 12 Finally, why are you here?**
- A To experience the unspoiled nature and landscapes that inspired the ethereal sounds of múm, Amiina and Sigur Rós. I might also try and stalk the latter's studio for a couple of weeks.
 - B To get laid. Don't tell anyone I said that.
 - C I've heard it's a place to be. I also have some real edgy art/ music/ fashion accessories/ writing/ etc. that would really benefit from less competition with my peers. There are only 300,000 of you, right?
 - D To bathe naked in natural hot springs. And steal some butter.

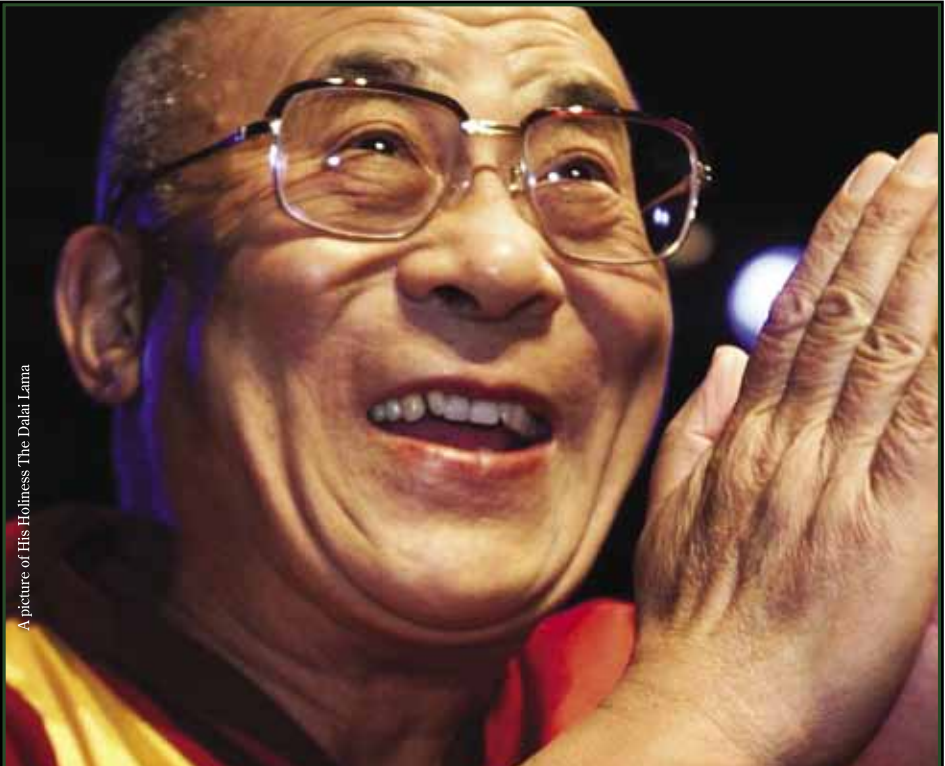
Key to calculating your score:											
1	A	2	B	4	C	3	D	1	7	A	1
2	A	1	B	2	C	4	D	3	8	A	2
3	A	3	B	4	C	1	D	2	9	A	2
4	A	2	B	4	C	3	D	1	10	A	1
5	A	2	B	3	C	4	D	1	11	A	1
6	A	3	B	1	C	4	D	2	12	A	2

Words by Haukur Magnússon
Illustrations by Bobby Breidholt
This article is a re-run. You can grab a copy of GV from 2007 and read it there, too. It's called: recycling.



Sprútnið

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A picture of His Holiness The Dalai Lama

IN MY OPINION
THE VERY BEST VEGETARIAN
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Benjamin Dove

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>>CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

there is ample evidence of “potential fraud, misappropriation of investors' money, misrepresentation, self-dealing and record manipulation “. mr. spork provided canaccord capital corp. with forged documents purportedly from the los angeles department of water among others indicating that they would buy water from the glacier companies. “. so do you think it is odd we are a little suspicious ?

and then there are the interactions between your silver-mining company pan american silver corporation and the people of peru . magma energy owns there one of the biggest and precious silver and gold mines in the world . according to their laws, your company should have paid the miners their share of the growth, but as you cleverly managed to make them sign a contract so that they're only temporary workers –they're signing because they're afraid there will be no better deal for them – they don't get their share. and when they joined unions, they were fired. and when the government tried to control the situation, they didn't succeed. and they didn't want to push you too hard, afraid then to seem against foreign investment. there are possibilities of fair trades with foreign investors. but you are not offering us this opportunity ...

magma is now offering more shares for sale, for 40 million dollars, to strengthen the company . could it be you are having money problems too, just like us? could it be that you reaching out to our pension funds and to myself for shares because you cannot afford this? and can you tell me why does magma pay double more per megawatt in nevada than here ?

now , in only 3 days , over 10.000 people have signed a petition where they insist that the sale of hs orka to magma energy is stopped . that is around 4% of the nation . and next week that might go up to 10% , even 20% . and these folks want the government to set up a national referendum where they themselves decide what happens to ownership and access to their energy sources .

your nationality is not the reason why people feel troubled about this sale . actually , if you asked me to describe how the icelandic people feel about their own rulers or the business men who cut the icesave deals for example , trust is not the first word that comes to mind . when you stood on that balcony on hotel borg and watched the nation hitting their pots and pans , we could perhaps debate forever if your



intentions then were to help these people or to abuse the situation . but you caught us at a historical time . we are not ready for you , whatever nationality . we threw our right government out , got a left one that didn't solve our problems either . we managed to write a 2800 page report on the business exchanges of both government and the banks and are now taking these people to court . but it is not only us who are redefining what is left and right , privatization and public ownership , business regulations and more . like i said : these are historical times . big crossroads for the whole world . only yesterday barack obama set a new law . he said "because of this law, the american people will never again be asked to foot the bill for wall street's mistakes . there will be no more taxpayer-funded bailouts. period. if a large financial institution should ever fail, this reform gives us the ability to wind it down without endangering the broader economy. and there will be new rules to make clear that no firm is somehow protected because it is 'too big to fail,' “

does this remind anyone of the icesave case ?

your deal with icelanders , is in my opinion , out of date . a 20th , even 19th century model . we tried being a colony for 600 years . we didn't like it . we have only been independent for 66 years . and even though a handful of icelanders seriously fucked up with the icesave case , we are not ready to become an energy colony . we want to pay our bills , but this is too harsh .

we have entered the 21st century . with globalization and the arrival of the internet we need to redefine interactions between people . how we do banking , sell music , privacy laws and the list goes on .

but for now ross

i feel we shouldn't complete this deal

first, the nation needs to decide how it wants its energy sources and the access to them dealt with . and if it chooses privatization , perhaps you could come back

that is if you offer a better deal .

✍ BJÖRK GUÐMUNDSDÓTTIR

Art | Festivals

fArt Is In The Air ...

artFart returns for its fifth year running

Reykjavík's one and only performance art festival, artFart, is happening again this summer! The auditory tours, dance, theatre, and visual experiments start up on August 5th, and the stink isn't set to clear until the 22nd.

Founded in order to give performance-based artists a platform to experiment with new work, artFart has become an established Reykjavik festival and new things are on the agenda this summer. Like a residency programme, where three artists are commissioned to create and work for the three-week period of the festival. Alexander Roberts, one of artFart's organisers, expresses his enthusiasm for the event, “The festival started in order for artists creating work to show it, and now the platform that was for artists to show is giving some artists the opportunity to create. It is certainly new and really exciting.”

Another fresh addition to this year's itinerary is the Reykjavík Public Space Programme, which ties in with the summer's theme of working within public spaces. The Public Space Programme is the only curated portion of the artFart festival, with the aim of exploring the action of participation in public works. “It's the first time that we're really working with the city, and not just being in it but trying to become an active part of it,” comments Sigurður Arent Jónsson, another member of artFart's four-person management team.

This year's festival should prove pretty entertaining, with over 28 shows, workshops, and talks as well as a large battery of international and local artists. Some of the big names include British performance artist Richard DeDomenici, Swedish dancer Anna Asplind, Icelandic dancer Inga Maren, and Icelandic theatre group Fróken Fix.

The shows and performances are scheduled to take place all over town, with hubs at Útgerðin and Norðrúppólin. Because a lot of the venues and locations for the residency showings are still being decided, artFart has set up a text-message alert system to send out the times and places of the events right to your mobile. Just send your digits to public-spaceprogramme@artfart.is.

Most of the performances, talks, and workshops are free and the few that do have a fee are for unsupported artists with the proceeds directly benefiting them. A lot of the shows are in English and brochures with the schedule can be picked up at most coffee shops downtown. Make sure to get your share of some artFart fun, with such a variety of performances there's something for everyone. 🍷



Full and updated programme available at www.artfart.is

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GRAND OLD AUNT BJÖRK

ON GROWING UP AND TAKING RESPONSIBILITY, ALONG WITH A STAND

Words Haukur S. Magnússon

Illustrations Lóa Hjálmtýsdóttir



ON THAT WHOLE MAGMA ENERGY/ HS ORKA THING

What, in your view, is the Magma deal all about?

It is a very important case for Iceland. An international corporation is trying to buy up the exclusive rights to our natural resources. We were warned almost immediately after the banking collapse that this would happen, for instance by Paul Hawken and Joseph Stiglitz. Naomi Klein also discusses this kind of situation thoroughly in 'The Shock Doctrine'. It is widely known that nations that find themselves in trouble get besieged by vultures that want to take advantage of their situation and make an easy profit. They start off being all nice and reasonable, gaining the locals' trust – "here to help" – and then...

You know all about Magma's history in Peru, right? It is swaddled with human rights violations and disrespect to local customs, unions, law and regulation. The list goes on... Some might say that Magma making rotten deals with Peru is irrelevant, that Iceland is no Peru. "We are not a third world country." But the deals we've made with them are just so bad; a large part of Magma's downpayment comes in the form of a bullet loan from HS Orka itself with 1.5% interest for seven years, with HS Orka shares as collateral. It's a joke.

Not only that, but Magma are also attempting to negotiate with several other energy companies around the country, as I explain in my letter [see page 8], and they're doing it behind our backs. It's rather evident that they want to take over pretty much everything if we let them. They won't stop at HS Orka.

This sale will likely determine how we deal with such matters in the future, for instance regarding water rights. We have to formulate a clear position as a nation—what we want—before we start selling off our resources to international corporations, at bargain rates, no less.

ON XENOPHOBIA AND CUTTING GOOD DEALS

Some people want to write off the opposition to Magma as xenophobia...

I think that's an absurd interpretation. If anyone's had luck working with foreigners, it's me. A majority of the people I've worked with throughout the years have been foreigners, people that have been extremely honest and good to work with. As I say in my article, the people that have treated

Icelanders the worst are, in fact, Icelanders.

I feel this talk of xenophobia is an attempt to sidetrack the discourse. The real question is whether it is a good idea to privatise and sell off our energy resources at this point. We as a nation are badly burnt after the collapse, and we are not in a good position to negotiate. We have to make a clear strategy that we agree on, to prioritise, so we are in a better position to negotiate with the outside world.

Getting past the collapse and all the bankruptcies and unemployment that follow will take us a few years, and once we've done that, our resources are really the only thing we have to guarantee a good future. And if we lose them now, we will become a third world nation.

Do you believe the people behind Magma are bad people? With evil intentions?

No. I mean, were the bankers bad people? They are just trying to cut a good deal, and now we are a good deal. There is a certain sociopathy behind it all... is that evil? Well... I don't know. I can't really answer that question. Let's just say that they are businessmen willing to cut a good deal at whatever cost. They care about their profit margin, and if we or our country stand in the way, then too bad for us.

You have drawn some pretty snarky, even downright ugly criticisms in Iceland for drawing attention to these matters. People are talking about your financial affairs, your taxes and the like ...

I answered some of those in an interview with RÚV [Icelandic State Radio] today, for the first time. I noticed my father defending me on some blog earlier and I thought that maybe it was time for me to answer for myself, to let him focus on something more interesting.

This is a banal discussion, and I do not like going into it, but some people seem to want me to justify myself.

I felt bad about maybe coming off like I was bragging, but I brought up on the radio that my share of all my Icelandic record sales have always gone to Smekkleysa. In this way, I can support Icelandic music. I feel this has had more value than taxes.

Do you regard these criticisms as an attempt to silence you?

I'm not sure. Most people don't really understand how the music business works; they don't understand 'publishing deals' or the difference between performance royalties and sync fees and merchandising. They understand

taxes, and if they hear "oh, she's not paying taxes in Iceland," they are easily sidetracked. Maybe my paying or not paying the tax revenue from my business in Iceland isn't the only way to measure my contribution.

ON TAKING THE FIGHT

In light of some of these reaction: How can you be bothered? What is it that makes you exert yourself like this?

It does take a toll, being in the spotlight and under scrutiny. This is definitely not my favourite thing, I can promise you that. But with all this media attention, it's been like this throughout the years, good and bad, I've gotten used to it and learned to accept both sides. You have to take the negative aspects along with the positive ones.

Speaking up on cases like these isn't really a choice for me; I do not have the option to remain silent or neutral. If I do not harness the media attention that's available to me and use it to raise awareness of what's going on, it is a crime, plain and simple. It would burden my conscience.

In that regard, I face a bit different situation than your average Stjáni or Gunna who might also feel strongly on issues like nature conservation. I know I have a greater chance than the average person of getting people to attend a press conference, of getting them to listen and pay attention—to try and prevent what I believe to be a catastrophic event. Not using that opportunity would mean disregarding deeply held beliefs of mine. My choice is thus: either I commit a crime, or I take this all the way. And I've made my decision.

I am a musician, and I get deeply involved in my work, but I still try and follow what's going on in the world. And some things are more important to me than others. For example, I followed Alþingi's Special Investigative Commission report case closely, but that isn't something I should get involved with. Like I said, I am trying to focus on writing songs and working on my music. However, issues of nature and nature conservation are something that get me going. I can't even work, I get so upset. When I see nature endangered, it offends my sense of justice, my very core.

I don't think I am alone in wanting to ensure that future generations of Icelanders get to enjoy the unspoiled nature that we have. The common Icelandic seems to be of the opinion that the privatisation of our natural resources needs to be investigated further, and thought about more. If it were only me and ten of my friends that felt

this way, I feel it wouldn't be justifiable for me to put this into the spotlight, but since there are so many of us I feel am acting more as a mouthpiece for these beliefs, the views and opinions of a large group of people.

And it's taken a lot of work, the press conference and the petition, not to mention the letter writing. I was supposed to be working on a lot of things over the past fortnight, but I put them all on hold. It has some of my musical collaborators puzzled [laughs], but I am a person that is always very focused on the context of things. I cannot isolate the protection of Iceland's nature from my role as an Icelandic musician. They are so closely linked.

How am I supposed to live with myself if I stand back and potentially allow the worst possible scenario to arise, without attempting to fight it? Iceland has given me so much, I feel as if Iceland's nature was bestowed upon me and all the rest of us as a gift, and I

"I can't even work, I get so upset. When I see nature endangered, it offends my sense of justice, my very core."

feel a great need to defend it. I simply cannot ignore that.

Just imagine, how can I face myself at age eighty if some nightmare situation has unfolded where we have eight more aluminium plants lining the countryside and our hitherto unspoiled nature reserves are all gone to ruin, knowing I could have done something but didn't even try.

ON PUBLIC SERVICE AND MAKING A CHOICE

You seem to feel a sense of duty...

When you've been in the spotlight for as long as I have, you realise that you are, for better or worse, a public servant. Then you have to make your choice of how much you want to be involved.

When I was in London, I could have been a 24/7 celebrity, going around parties and charities for a living. I could have stopped making music and thrown myself into tabloid life completely. Then there's the other side of that coin, which is saying no to everything. A lot of people choose that path. I have decided that there is a certain level that I can deal with it all on, and I try and do that in accordance with my ideology and inner self.

Some aspects of this 'public ser-

vice' do not excite me, like Hollywood premieres on Times Square or whatever. But some do. Like here, I have this platform, I can get people to listen when I speak, and I try to be of service. This involves being the centre of attention in the press, which is not my favourite, but it is all part of the balance.

Still, I don't want to play a martyr; being in the spotlight certainly benefits me and my career as a musician. I know a bunch of musicians that are at least as talented as I am, or more talented, and they don't have this platform.

Some choose to disregard this area completely, to not play along with the press. Some talented people choose to go on a deserted island and paint or draw or sing songs all their lives without anyone knowing. They do not communicate at large when they are creating. I am not saying this communication is a must; I am merely trying to explain the position I am in. I have chosen to communicate, but not to the maximum level. It's a large part of the reason why I chose to move away from England, I couldn't stand being a full-time celebrity. I can handle it maybe once or twice a year. I think that's a healthy share. Anything more is too much for me.

You seem to have a clear idea of your relationship with the media, and the public at large. Is this something you think about a lot?

Not really, but I am very experienced in the field. When I was playing with my first bands I was the youngest by far and did a lot of chasing and learning. Then I had a child at a young age, around the Sugarcubes period, and was just busy being all ecstatic about that instead of having to deal with the media. I didn't really confront the whole media issue until I started my solo career at age 27, at which point you could say I'd undergone ten years of schooling on the subject. Being in the backseat taught me a lot.

I think that media glorification isn't necessarily positive, but then you can also hide yourself away too much. That isn't necessarily a pro-life statement. Still, being all over the place in an extrovert fit can be pretty bad too. Emptying yourself completely, the other extreme. There needs to be a balance, and every artist needs to find their ideal one. Some can be 70% extrovert and 10% introvert. I am more of the type that's 60-70% introvert and 20% extrovert.

You were also lucky to be able to make that choice, instead of having to strive for attention like many

The REYKJAVÍK GRAPEVINE iNFO



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

YOUR ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO LIFE, TRAVEL AND
ENTERTAINMENT IN ICELAND

Issue 11 - 2010

www.grapevine.is

Electronica Under The Glacier

6 - 8
August August

Extreme Chill Festival 2010 – Undir Jökli

Hellissandur/Snæfellsnes, 2500 ISK



Alright, so the second weekend in August is fixing up to be pretty legendary. Why's that? Because Iceland's first electronic and experimental music festival is going to kick off its inaugural edition. Even cooler is the fact that it's being held out at Hellissandur, under the looming glow of the Snæfellsnes glacier (so if you were thinking of trying to venture into the centre of the Earth, that would be a good chance!) Nearly twenty artists are playing, including Xerxes from Norway and Moonlight So-

nata from France. Of course, the cream of Iceland's electronic crop will also be dropping beats, such as Stereo Hypnosis, Ruxpin, Yagya, Futuregrapher and tons more.

The concept is very cool and refreshing, a fine break from all the Sódóma multi-band bills that are being dropped. We are going to check it out, and we recommend you do the same. To prepare ourselves, we got in touch with Andri Már Arnlaugsson, DJ and one of the festival's promoters, to find out all the cool details.

Why is the festival held under the glacier?

Last year we held a release concert for Stereo Hypnosis there. Me, Snorri Ásmundsson (artist and former presidential candidate) and Reptilicus (Iceland's own industrial pioneers) played as well. We just thought that the place was amazing and we fell in love with it instantly. So it's going to be our second concert there, except we decided to go all in and do a festival instead.

What's different about the festival to, say, your average Verslunarmannahelgín party?

This is totally different. It is a festival that focuses solely on electronic music. Will you be offering anything other than music?

Snorri Ásmundsson is going to give a performance. Then on Sunday, we'll take a moment to say goodbye to all the participants where everyone will meet up for some pancakes and enjoy the countryside vibe.

This is a pretty eclectic gathering. Are you expecting a big crowd?

The place is going to be packed, so it'll be a lot of fun. Many people have bought wristbands already. In fact, it's probably going to be sold out.

For more info, check out their Facebook page: Extreme Chill Festival 2010 / Undir Jökli 6-8 August.

Póður Ingí Jónsson

KIMI RECORDS ON INNIPÚKINN



ME, THE SLUMBERING NAPOLEON *The Bloody Core Of It*



STAFRÆNN HÁKON *Sanitas*



Markús & The Diversion Sessions *Now I Know*



QUADRUPLÓS



MUSIC

CONCERTS & NIGHTLIFE IN JULY & AUGUST

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How to use the listings
Venues are listed alphabetically by day.
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30 FRI

Apótek
22:00 Bacardi breezer for 435 ISK. DJ Aki.
Bakkus
22:00 KGB.
Café Rosenberg
22:00 Ljótu Hálfvitarnir.
Celtic Cross
01:00 Live music.
Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music.
Dubliner
22:30 Live music.
English Pub
20:30 Live music.
Faktóry
24:00 Live DJ.
Grandagardur
20:30 Icelandic traditional songs, 2900 ISK.
Kaffibarinn
23:30 DJ Kári.
P
16:30-20:00 After work gathering, chill-out music, drinks at 500-600 ISK.
Sódóma
21:00 Innipúkinn Music Festival w/ Jan Mayen, Lay Low, Árstiðir, Útidúr, Orphic Ostra. Innipúkinn wristband for 2500 ISK.
Venue
21:00 Innipúkinn Music Festival.

31 SAT

Apótek
22:00 Bacardi breezer for 435 ISK. DJ Aki.
Bakkus
22:00 DJ Kári.
Café Rosenberg
22:00 Mogadon.
Celtic Cross
01:00 Live music.
Den Danske Kro
12:00 Live music.
Dubliner
22:30 Live music.
English Pub
20:30 Live music.
Faktóry
24:00 Live DJ.
Hallgrímskirkja
12:00 Steingrímur Thorhallsson, organist of Nes Kirkja. Tickets 1000 ISK.
Kaffibarinn
23:30 DJ Alfons X.
Sódóma
20:00 Innipúkinn Music Festival w/ Mr. Silla, Nóra, Pascal Pinon, Nolo, Evil Madness. Innipúkinn wristband for 2500 ISK

1 SUN

Apótek
22:00 Bacardi breezer for 435 ISK. DJ Aki.
Bakkus
22:00 DJ Benson is FANTASTIC.
Café Óliver
Summer Sunday banana split á la Óliver. 900 ISK & live music.
Den Danske Kro
12:00 Live music. Beer for 600 ISK after 19:00.
English Pub
22:00 Live music.
Faktóry
24:00 Live DJ.
Grandagardur
20:30 Icelandic folk music, national songs & hymns. Tickets 2900 ISK.
Hallgrímskirkja
17:00 Steingrímur Thorhallsson, organist of Nes Kirkja. Tickets 1500 ISK.
Kaffibarinn
23:30 Gísli Galdur.
P
22:00 Chill-out music.
Prikið
22:00 Hangover movie night.
Sódóma
20:30 Innipúkinn Music Festival w/ Raggi Bjarna, Retro Stefson, Berndsen, Diddi Fel, the Heavy Experience. Wristband for 2500 ISK.

2 MON

Café Óliver
Margarita Monday, 2 for 1 margaritas & live music.
Café Rosenberg
22:00 Live Music.
Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music.
Dubliner
22:30 Live music.
English Pub
22:00 Live music.
Kaffi Zimsen
22:00 DJ or live music.

3 TUE

Café Óliver
Beer/wine 600 ISK.
Café Rosenberg
22:00 Super Mama Djombo.
Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music.
Dubliner
22:30 Live music.
English Pub
22:00 Live music.
Nordic House
20:00 Elokuu Ensemble, chamber music from Finland.
Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum
20:30 Opera, arias and duos.

4 WED

Café Óliver
Kiwi Party & live music.
Café Rosenberg
22:00 Public Street.
Cathedral of Christ the King
12:00 Organ recital by Christian Fischer.

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music.
Dubliner
22:30 Live music.
English Pub
22:00 Live music.
Hallgrímskirkja
12:00 Schola Cantorum Reykjavicensis.
Kaffibarinn
22:00 DJ Óli Dóri.
Kaffi Zimsen
22:00 DJ or live music.

5 THU

Bakkus
22:00 DJ Einar Sonic.
Café Óliver
21:00 Ingó Weathergod. Beer for 600 ISK.
Café Rósenberg
22:00 Moses Hightower.
Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music.
Dubliner
22:30 Live music.
English Pub
22:00 Live music.
Faktóry
22:00 Two Tickets to Japan and At Dodge City. Doors open 21:00.
Hallgrímskirkja
12:00 Magnus Ragnarsson, organist and Thorunn Elin Petursdóttir soprano. Tickets 1000 ISK.
Kaffibarinn
22:00 Alfons X.
Kaffi Zimsen
22:00 DJ or live music.
P
Lounge music and cocktails.
Sódóma
21:00 Valdimar + guests.
Thorvaldsen
16:30 Salsa Night. 16:30 beginners, 21:30 everyone.

6 FRI

Bakkus
22:00 DJ Öfull.
Café Rósenberg
22:00 Silfurberg.
Celtic Cross
01:00 Live music.
Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music.
Dubliner
22:30 Live music.
English Pub
20:30 Live music.
Faktóry
22:00 Plastic Gods + guests. Tickets 1200 ISK.
24:00 DJ Hans Hans plays downstairs.
Kaffibarinn
23:30 Sexy Lazer.
P
After work gathering between 16:30-20:00, chill-out music
Venue
22:00 Metal Night - Angist + guests.

7 SAT

Apótek
22:00 DJ Fly from Sweden - plays with no shirt on.
Bakkus
22:00 DJ Unnur Andrea.



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Amsterdam Hafnarstræti 5 D2	Celtic Cross Hverfisgata 26 E4	Þorvaldsenstræti 2 E3
Apótek Austurstræti 16 E3	Dillon Laugavegur 30 F5	Nýlenduvörurverzlun Hemma & Valda Laugavegur 21 E4
Austur Austurstræti 7 E3	Dubliner Hafnarstræti 4 D3	Næsti Bar Ingólfstræti 1A E3
B5 Bankastræti 5 E3	English Pub Austurstræti 12 D2	Óliver Laugavegur 20A F5
Babalú Skólavörðustígur 22 G5	Glaumbar Tryggvagata 20 D2	Ölstofan Vegamótastígur E4
Bar 11 Laugavegur 11 E4	Highlander Lækjargata 10 E3	Prikið Bankastræti E3
Barbara Laugavegur 22 F6	Hressó Austurstræti 20 E3	Rósenberg Klappastígur 25 E4
Bjarni Fel Austurstræti 20 E3	Hverfisbarinn Hverfisgata 20 E4	Sódóma Reykjavík Tryggvagata 22 D3
Boston Laugavegur 28b F5	Jacobsen Austurstræti 9 E3	Sólón Bankastræti 7A E3
Café Cultura Hverfisgata 18 E4	Kaffi Zimsen Hafnarstræti 18 D3	Thorvaldsen Austurstræti 8 D2
Café Paris Austurstræti 14 E3	Kaffibarinn Bergstraðastræti 1 E4	Vegamót Vegamótastígur 4 E4
Balthazar Hafnarstræti 1-3 D2	Karamba Laugavegur 22 F4	Venue Tryggvagata 22 D3
	NASA	

Café Óliver
Tropical Girls Night, 3 for 1 pina coladas & sex on the beach. **DJ Brynjar Már.**

Café Rósenberg
22:00 **Silfurberg.**

Celtic Cross
01:00 Live music.

Den Danske Kro
12:00 Live music.

Dubliner
22:30 Live music.

English Pub
20:30 Live music.

Faktörý
22:00 **Telepathics** + guests. 24:00 **Retro Stefson** DJ set.

Hallgrímskirkja
12:00 **Kari Thormar**, organist of the RVK Cathedral, 1000 ISK.

Kaffibarinn
23:30 Maggi Lego.

P
22:00 **Mastermix & Daddy Disco**

Venue.
22:00 Club Night - International DJ's.

8 **SUN**

Café Óliver
Summer Sunday banana split á la Óliver 900 ISK & live music.

Den Danske Kro
12:00 Live music. Beer for 600 ISK after 19:00.

Dubliner
22:30 Live music.

English Pub
22:00 Live music.

Hallgrímskirkja
17:00 **Kari Thormar**, organist of the RVK Cathedral, 1500 ISK

Prikið
22:00 Hangover movie night, Free popcorn.

9 **MON**

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music.

Café Óliver
Margarita Monday 2 for 1 on margaritas & live music.

Dubliner
22:30 Live music.

English Pub
22:00 Live music.

Kaffi Zimsen
22:00 DJ or live music.

10 **TUE**

Café Óliver
Beer/wine 600 ISK.

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music.

Dubliner
22:30 Live music.

English Pub
22:00 Live music.

Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum
20:30 Sopranos.

11 **WED**

Café Óliver
Kiwi Party & live music.

Café Paris
21:00 Live music.

Café Rósenberg
22:00 Live Music.

Cathedral of Christ the King
12:00 Organ recital by **Fríðrik Stefáns-son** and **Eygló Rúnarsdóttir**.

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music.

Dubliner
22:30 Live music.

English Pub
22:00 Live music.

Faktörý
22:00 **3 Raddir & Beatur**. Tickets 1000 ISK.

Kaffibarinn
22:00 **HalliValli**

Kaffi Zimsen
22:00 DJ or live music.

Prikið
Large beer followed by a small beer for free, just 700 ISK.

12 **THU**

Bakkus
22:00 **Live DJ.**

Café Óliver
Ingó Weathergod. Beer for 600 ISK.

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music.

Dubliner
22:30 Live music.

English Pub
22:00 Live music.

Faktörý
22:00 **Klassart** release concert.

Kaffibarinn
22:00 **Benni B Ruff.**

Kaffi Zimsen
22:00 DJ or live music.

P
2-for-1 white wine and Grolsch beer.

Sódóma
21:00 **Nóra + Chili & the Whalekillers.**

Thorvaldsen
16:30 Salsa Night. 16:30 beginners, 21:30 everyone.

ONGOING

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Grandagarður 11 Admission: ISK 2900

Kaffi Reykjavík
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Vesturgata 2 Admission: ISK 2200.

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Djúpavík

A picture can open up a range of aesthetic and emotional possibilities, as well as allowing the viewer to experience the scene first-hand. Claus Sterneck believes that by adding sound to the still images enhances the sensual experience and gives the viewer an “all-encompassing level of perception”. Just after each photo was taken Claus recorded the background sounds of the scene to allow the viewer to delve into the moment the photo was captured. Sounds vary from birdsong, echoes to the soft sound of dripping water. The exhibition takes place at the old herring factory in Djúpavík and will run until the end of August. **AY**

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* Tuesdays *

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* Wednesdays *

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* Thursdays *

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* Fridays *

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* Saturdays *

Live music / Sing-along nights

* Sundays *

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haha
varí**

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OUTSIDE REYKJAVÍK

CONCERTS & EVENTS IN JULY & AUGUST

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MUSIC

30 FRI

Hjálmar
22:00 Græni Hatturinn, Akureyri
Kimi Records Summer Fun Tour
20:00 Krúsin, Ísafjörður
Acts include Nóló, Retro Stefson,
Reykjavík!, & Snorri Helgason.
Lunch Concert
12:00 Ketilhús Art center, Akureyri
Performance by pianist, Stephan Kaller.
Norwegian-Icelandic Friendship Day
10:00 Snorrastofa, Reykholt
Readings, lectures, & music by Icelandic
and Norwegian artists.

31 SAT

Hjálmar
22:00 Græni Hatturinn, Akureyri

1 SUN

Bravó
22:00 Græni Hatturinn, Akureyri
Hjálmar
22:00 Græni Hatturinn, Akureyri
Ljótu Hálfvitarnir
20:00 Félagsheim, Flúðir

2 MON

Bergmál
13:30 Berg, Dalvík
Opening Concert.
20:00 Raddir sumarsins.

3 TUE

Bergmál
20:00 Berg, Dalvík
Serial concerts with Krisján Karls & Co.

4 WED

Bergmál
15:00 Berg, Dalvík
Afternoon Forest Demons.
Summer Concert Series
Bláa Kirkjan, Seyðisfjörður
Performances by Sigrún Eðvaldsdóttir,
Anna Guðný Guðmundsdóttir, &
Guðrún Ingimarsdóttir.

5 THU

Bergmál
20:00 Berg, Dalvík
Gala Concert.
South River Band
22:00 Græni Hatturinn, Akureyri

6 FRI

Extreme Chill
20:00 Hellissandur, Snæfellsnes
Performances by Frank Muder, DJ
Andre, DJ Vector, Kidrama & more.
Chamber Music Festival
20:00 Kirkjubæjarklaustur
Ólafur Eliasson
16:00 Gljúfrasteinn Laxness Museum,

Mossfellsbæ
Performance of Bach. 1000 ISK.

7 SAT

Extreme Chill
20:00 Hellissandur, Snæfellsnes
Performances by Xerxes, Ruxpin,
Yagya, Biogen & more.
Chamber Music Festival
20:00 Kirkjubæjarklaustur
Pönk á Patró
15:00 Sjóræningjahúsið
Free children's performance by Amiina.
20:00 Performances by Amiina and 701.
For ages 15+, 1000 ISK.
Super Mama Djombo
22:00 Græni Hatturinn, Akureyri

8 SUN

Chamber Music Festival
15:00 Kirkjubæjarklaustur

11 WED

Summer Concert Series
Bláa Kirkjan, Seyðisfjörður
Performances by Þorgrímur Jónsson,
Scott Mclemore & Sunna Gunnlaugs
dóttir.

ART OPENINGS

Ketilhúsið, Akureyri
With Brush And Palette Knife
July 31 - August 15
Painting and waterpaint exhibit by
Guðmundur Ármann Sigurjónsson and
Kristinn G. Jóhannsson
Deiglan, Art center, Akureyri
July 31 - August 15+
Gréta Berg. Portraits.
Jónas Viðar Gallery, Art center, Akureyri
July 31 - August 22
Exhibition by Maja Wolna.
The Factory, Hjalteyri
July 31
15:00 Exhibition opening. Finnur Arnar,
Krisján Steingrims & Þorkell Atlason.
Verksmiðjan, Hjalteyri
Finnur Keli Kristján ?
July 31 - September 5
Collaborative exhibit by artists Finns
Arnar and Kristjáns Steingrims and the
composer Þorkels Atlasonar.

ART ONGOING

Akureyri Museum
Treasure
Runs until September 15
Twenty Photographers in Akureyri and
Surroundings 1858-1965 Eyjafjörður in
the early period.
Akureyri Art Museum
Rhyme
Runs until August 22
Works by Ásmundur Sveinsson.
**Árnesinga Folk Museum, Eyra-
bakki**
11:00 - 18:00 until September 15
Café Karólína, Akureyri
Tengja
Runs until August 6
Exhibit featuring photographs by Hrefna
Harðardóttir.
Dalir Og Hólar - Travel Drawings
Ólafsdalur, Gilsfjörður; Króks-
fjarðarnes; Nýp & Röðull,
Skarðsströnd

Gamli Baukur, Húsavík
Let's Talk Local
15:30 Comedy show about Reykjavík,
2200 ISK/1100 ISK for kids.
The Ghost Centre, Stokkseyri
Night at the Ghost Museum
An offer for two to spend a scary night at
the Ghost Centre. 3500 ISK.
Hafnarborg, Hafnarfjörður
Formal Discipline
Runs until August 22
Exhibition of works by Eiríkur Smith.
Herring Factory, Djúpvavík
Pictures - and their sounds
Runs until August 31.
Hótel Varmahlíð
Horses & Men
Runs until January 1, 2011
Photographic exhibition which looks into
the history of the horse, spanning 100
years .

The Husavik Whale Museum
Whale & Marine Exhibit
9:00 - 19:00 all July & August
Includes detailed info about whale
habitat, biology, ecology, strandings &
history in Iceland.
Icelandic Folk and Outsider Art
Museum, Akureyri
Art Feast 1
Runs until September 5
50 pieces by multiple artists.
The Icelandic Settlement Centre,
Borgarnes
The Egil Saga/ Settlement Exhibition
In these exhibitions The Settlement Cen-
tre tells the sagas of Iceland's settlement
and Egill Skallagrímsson, Iceland's most
famous viking and first poet .
Kunstraum Wohnraum, Akureyri
Anywhere
Runs until August 29
Exhibit by German artisits Frauke Hänke
and Claus Kienle.
The Kópavogur Art Museum
Summer exhibit.
Runs until August 22
Ljosafoss Power Station
Nature In Design
Runs until August 28
Exhibition of Icelandic designers who
find inspiration in nature.
Museum of Design and Applied Art,
Garðabær
Deep Sea to High Fashion
Runs until September 5
Exhibit featuring works which utilize
fish-skin leather.

Pompei of the North, Westman Islands
Excavation project at the site of the
1973 volcanic eruption on the island of
Heimaey.
**Reykjanes Art Museum, Reykjanes-
bær**
11:00 - 17:00 every weekday, 13:00 - 17:00
every weekend.
Safnahús Museum
**Aquarium & Museum of Natural His-
tory in Vestmannæyjar**
Mounted birds & fish, aquarium, and
rocks & mineral display.
Salt House, Stöðvarfjörður
Æring
Runs until July 29
Art festival featuring artists from Crymo
gallery as well as many other Icelandic
and foreign artists.
Skaftfell Centre for Visual Art
Runs until September 30
Exhibits by Birgir Andrésson, Tumi Mag-
nússon & Roman Signer.
Skógar Museum, Hvolsvöllur
9:00 - 18:00 all July & August

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Sat. 31. July Hjálmar
Sun. 1. Aug. Bravó
Thu. 5. Aug. South River Band
Sat. 7. Aug. Super Mama Djombo
Fri. 13. Aug. Skríðjökull

For further informations
on upcoming events and concerts go to:
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MAP

Places We Like

1 Basil & Lime

Klapparstíg 38

Despite what the name might suggest, Basil & Lime offers up well made, unpretentious Italian food at laudably moderate prices. Their tempting menu begs for repeat visits. Start by trying staple courses such as the Chicken Fusilli and the Langoustine Tagliatelli.

2 Havarí

Austurstræti 8

Even before it opened, Havarí was everybody's favourite new music and design store. Headed by Svavar Pétur and Berglind of Skakkamanage, the shop shills the musical goods of Kimi Records, Borgin Hljómplötur, gogoyoko and Skakkapopp as well as posters, art, design products and clothing. CF

3 Austurvöllur

By Pósthússtræti

Site of Iceland's House of Parliament, Austurvöllur is where the kitchenware revolution of January 2009 took place. Go there on sunny days to relax or check out the omnipresent protestors.

4 Hemmi og Valdi

Laugavegi 21

The "colonial store" Hemmi and Valdi is a cosy hangout that has advanced from being a toasty retreat, where one can score cheap beer and have a quiet chat, into being a chock-full concert venue and an all-night party place. And believe us, the atmosphere is brilliant. SKK

5 Tíu Dropar

Laugavegur 27

If you're sick of all the arty cafés, filled with Sigur Rós wannabes browsing Facebook on their Macs – go to Tíu Dropar. It's a back-to-basics Icelandic café that hasn't changed its interior since the sixties. Really proves the old adage "if it ain't broke, don't fix it." Plus, the coffee's great and so are the pancakes. SKK

6 Habibi

Hafnarstræti 18

This small restaurant offers up a concise menu of delicious Arabic cuisine, from shawarma to kebabs and falafels. The staff is really friendly and accommodating of requests to kick up the spiciness or tone it down if the customer so desires. Habibi seriously hits the spot after hours of partying (or any other time of day) so it's convenient that the place is allegedly open until 6 a.m. Friday and Saturday (although their advertised opening hours are sometimes not adhered to). CF



7 Babalú

Skólavörðstíg 22

Located on the second-floor of a quirky little building on Skólavörðustígur, Babalú is an inviting, quaint and cosy café serving up a selection of tea, coffee and hot chocolate along with delicious baked goods and light meals. Food and drink aside, Babalú boasts colourfully decorated and super-comfortable surroundings and a genuinely friendly and likeable staff. CF

8 Boston

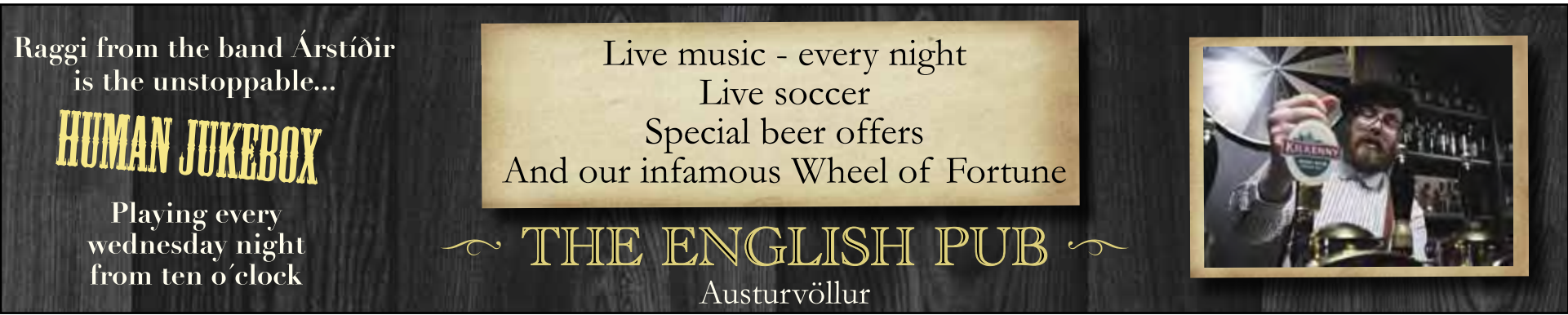
Laugavegur 28

Like an older sibling to the fabled (now deceased) Sirkús, Boston is a warm and mellow second-floor bar on Laugavegur that plays host to the arty party crowd. The baroque wall dressings and deep, rich coloured décor make this bar feel pretty swank, but the mood of the place can go from great to legendary within a heartbeat. CF

9 Fríða Frænka

Vesturgata 3

This small boutique is a jam-packed treasure chest overflowing with antique furniture and items to perk up your apartment. In every corner of the shop you'll find some unique items, including lamps, pillows, gorgeous 60s sofas, tables, and a selection of vintage jewellery.





10 Sódóma Reykjavík

Tryggvagötu 22

Sódóma on Tryggvagötu is quickly became a hit with party crowds and gig-goers alike. An extensive venue, filled with reasonably priced beverages and reasonably good looking people. Some of Iceland’s finest musical ventures regularly perform there, and their schedule looks promising too. Also, make sure to visit their men’s room for a glance at the “Pissoir of Absolution”. JB

11 Bakkus

Tryggvagata 22 – Naustarmegin

A new and welcome addition to Reykjavík’s bar scene, Bakkus serves up reasonably priced beer, a really impressive selection of international vodkas and an atmosphere unlike any other in town. An eclectic mix of patrons, regular live music and movie nights keep this place interesting and always inviting. Expect dancing on tables and to-the-death foosball battles. CF

12 OSUSHI

Lækjargata 2a

Great place to satisfy your craving for raw fish and vinegar rice. The selection on ‘the train’ is wide and varied and the atmosphere is relaxed. Also, the colour-coded plates make it easy to keep tabs on your budget while scarfing down your maki and nigiri. CF

13 Kornið

Lækjargata 4

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

14 Kolaportið

Tryggvagata 19

Reykjavík’s massive indoor flea market is a wonderful place to get lost for a few hours, rummaging through stall upon stall of potential treasures. There are heaps of used clothing, knitwear and other yard-sale type goods from decades of yore, and a large food section with fish, meats and baked goods. Check out the vintage post cards and prints at the table near the army surplus. CF

15 Pizza King

Hafnarstræti 18

To be honest, this isn’t the best pizza up for grabs, but it’s cheap, not pre-heated (like at SOME pizza places downtown), and the staff is rather cool. Their pizzas are always bulletproof, and they offer various offers on top of it that are definitely worth check out. SKK

16 Grænn Kostur

Skólavörðustíg 8b

Serving healthy organic vegan and vegetarian food for well over a decade, Grænn Kostur is the perfect downtown choice for enjoying light, wholesome and inexpensive meals. Try any of their courses of the day, or go for the ever-pleasing spinach lasagne.

17 Kraum

Aðalstræti 10

The Kraum Iceland Design store features the best from the latest trends in Icelandic design. Kraum sells unique, Icelandic takes on everyday items like stationary, wooden children’s toys, plastic zip-lockable handbags and raincoats, and woollen and other clothing and jewellery.

18 Kaffibarinn

Bergstaðastræti 1

Weekends are somewhat overrated at Kaffibarinn. Oh, of course they’re brilliant if you’re completely pissed, the DJ is fresh and the crowd is full-blooded. Still, the weekdays are even better. It doesn’t matter when you pop in, you’re always treated like a pal rather than a customer, and you should always expect get caught in some shenanigans, whether it’s a crazy Monday bender or a whacky Tuesday... well... bender. SKK



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Whale Watching schedule

Puffin season							
Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	
9:00	9:00	9:00	9:00	9:00	9:00		
13:00	13:00	13:00	10:00	10:00*	13:00	13:00	
			14:00	14:00*			
		17:00	17:00				

*10:00 and 14:00 departures from July 1st to August 10th

November 1st - March 31st		
Friday	Saturday	Sunday
13:00	13:00	13:00

Winter schedule

Call us on **555 3565**
or visit **www.elding.is**

elding.is

Other adventures at sea

Puffin Tours May 15th - August 15th

Sea Angling May 1st - August 31st

Ferry to Viðey Island all year round

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Elding supports the **Reykjavik Gay Pride**
Queer Cruise on
Friday August 6th



ART

GALLERIES & MUSEUMS IN JULY & AUGUST

COCKTAIL PLEASURES AND VISUAL STIMULATION

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

OPENINGS

ArtFart Festival

August 5, Útgerðin

22:00 99 Red Balloons

Performance by **Richard DeDominici** (UK).

August 6 -8, Útgerðin

20:00 Just Here! by **Snædís Lilja Ingadóttir**.

21:00 I'm a cop by **Smári Gunnarsson**.

August 9-10, Útgerðin

21:00 Hvernig var þinn dagur? **Fjöllistahópurinn KÁV** performs.

August 11-12, Útgerðin

21:00 Pure Pleasure Seekers **Bottlefed Ensemble** performs.

August 12, Icelandic Opera

12:30 True Love

Anna María Tómasdóttir performs.

August 12, Norðurpóllinn

19:00 Kvíksjá by **Kvíksjá**.

19:30 Mario Bros by **Dáns á rósum**.

20:30 - Blóðeik by **Sigurður Arent Jónsson**.

21:30 - Vakt by **AMMA**.

Hugmyndahúsið

Nýpurhryna & Water tools

August 8 - August 15

Architecture exhibit by **Sigrún Sumarliðadóttir** & **Giambattista Zaccariotto**

ONGOING

Árbæjarsafn / Reykjavík City Museum

Summer Program

June 1 to August 31

Outdoor heritage museum.

Art Gallery Fold

From The Bowels Of The Earth

Photography exhibition of the volcanic eruptions in Iceland this year, which brought photographers from all over the world. Ongoing all summer.

ASÍ Art Museum

The Expression of Colour

Runs until August 29

Exhibition featuring 20th Century Icelandic artists.

The Culture House

Medieval Manuscripts

Permanent Exhibition:

Icelanders

Runs until September.

Exhibit featuring a selection of photographs from the book "Icelanders" by **Unnur Jökulsdóttir** and **Sigurgeir Sigurjónsson**.

ICELAND :: FILM

Ongoing exhibition.

Traces the evolution of Icelandic filmmaking, exploring myths versus modernity.

The Nation and Nature

Thirty-minute film about the relationship between humans and nature. Film plays continuously during open hours.

Downtown Reykjavík

Reality Check, an outdoor exhibition curated by **Æsa Sigurjónsdóttir**.

The Library Room

Ongoing exhibition

National Archives of Iceland - 90 years in the museum building. Commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Culture

House.

The Living Art Museum

Old News

Project about information, media and recycled, reprinted news. Initiated in 2004 by Danish curator **Jacob Fabricius**, director of **Malmö Kunsthalle** in Sweden

The Dwarf Gallery

Ongoing exhibition.

An independent art gallery with ongoing exhibitions. It's located in an old basement. Do you really need to know any more than that?

The Einar Jónsson Museum

Permanent exhibition:

The work of sculptor **Einar Jónsson**.

Gallery Ágúst

Runs until October 10.

Exhibit by **Marta M. Jónsdóttir**.

Gljúfrasteinn Laxness Museum

Ongoing exhibition.

Gljúfrasteinn was the home and workplace of **Halldór Laxness** (winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1955).

Havari

Runs until August 31.

Exhibiting work from **The Icelandic Love Corporation**, **Sigga Björg**, **Hugleik Dagsón**, **Lindu Loeskow** and **Sara Riel**.

is

Elín Hansdóttir

Runs until August 21

lðnó

Cellophane

English comedy show, every Thursday and Sunday at 20:00. Shows from July 4 - July 22 are just 2900 ISK after that 3400 ISK.

Mokka

Draumsýnir

Runs until August 19.

Painting exhibition by **Tómas Malmberg**.

National Gallery of Iceland

Cindy Sherman - Untitled Film Stills

Runs until September 5.

American photographer **Sherman** plays with female film fantasies in self-portraits.

Edvard Munch

Runs until September 5.

Prints in the collection of the National Gallery.

Strides

Runs until December 31, 2012.

A selection of the Gallery's collection from the 20th and 21st century.

The National Museum

Permanent exhibitions:

The Making of a Nation

Heritage and History in Iceland is intended to provide insight into the history of the Icelandic nation from the Settlement to the present day.

Ása Wright - From Iceland to Trinidad

Collection of objects that belonged to the adventuress **Ása Guðmundsdóttir**.

Embroidery of Life

Embroidery by **Guðrún Guðmundsdóttir**, inspired by old manuscripts

The Nordic House

Bygdarlívið

Runs until August 21

Photo exhibition by photographer/writer **Randii Ward**.

Scissors for a Brush

Runs until August 15

Exhibition by papercut artist **Karen Bit Vejle**.

Land Of Experiments

Runs until September 30

Interactive exhibit based on scientific contraptions from **Tom Tits Experimentarium** in Sweden. Play!

Ráðhús Reykjavíkur

Dulín Himintungi

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ART

GALLERIES & MUSEUMS IN JULY & AUGUST

Kim Linnet exhibits her 360° panorama photos of Iceland.

Reykjavík 871 +/- 2
The Settlement Exhibition
Permanent exhibition:
Reykjavík Art Museum
Hafnarhús
Erró - Portrett - Dolls
Runs until August 29.
Collection of Erró's paintings and collages of pre-war era dolls.

Vanitas
Runs until August 29.
Still-life in contemporary Icelandic art. Curator's talk with Hafþór Yngvason on June 6 at 15:00.

In the Collection of Imperfection
Runs til August 29.
Pieces from city archives and other collections, gathered by Unnar Örn J. Auðarson. Explores the nature of museums and archiving.

Nudes - Gary Schneider
Runs until August 29.
South African born photographer presents 30 life-size portraits of nude men and women.

Reykjavík Art Museum
Kjarvalsstaðir
Photo & Graph family workshop
Runs until August 22.
An ongoing workshop on what's behind a photo.

Alternative Eye
Runs until 22 August.
Selected photographic works from the collection of Pétur Arason and Ragna Róbertsdóttir.

Kjarval - Key Works
Runs until August 29.

Retrospective on Iceland's most beloved painter.

Reykjavík Art Museum
Ásmundarsafn
Sleep Light
Runs until April 17, 2011.
Multimedia installation by Ráðhildur Ingadóttir.

Thoughts In Forms
Runs until April 17, 2011.
The workshop of sculptor Ásmundur Sveinsson, recreated.

"I choose blossoming women ..."
Runs until April 17, 2011
Woman as Symbol in the Art of Ásmundur Sveinsson.

Reykjavík Maritime Museum
The Coast Guard vessel Óðinn
Permanent exhibition
The Óðinn took part in all three Cod Wars and is open for exhibition.

Reykjavík Restaurant
Let's Talk Local
18:00 Comedy show about Reykjavík, 2200 ISK/1100 ISK for kids.

Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum
Who is who?
Ongoing
A Moment with Sigurjón Ólafsson
Ongoing

Reykjavík Museum of Photography
Thomsen & Thomsen
Runs until August 29
A photo exhibition by Pétur Thomsen Sr. & Pétur Thomsen Jr.

Spark, Klapparstigur 33
Eau De Parfum
Runs until July 31
An exhibit by Andrea Maack.

Art | Venue finder

<p>101 Gallery Hverfisgata 18A E3 Thu-Sat 14-17 and by appointment www.101hotel.is/101hotel/101gallery/</p> <p>Artótek Tryggvagata 15 D2 Mon 10-21, Tue-Thu 10-19, Fri 11-19, Sat and Sun 13-17 www.sim.is/Index/IsIenska/Artotek</p> <p>ASI Art Museum Freyugata 41 G4 Tue-Sun 13-17</p> <p>Árbæjarsafn Kistuhylur 4</p> <p>The Culture House Hverfisgata 15 E4 Open daily 11-17 www.thjodmenning.is</p> <p>Dwarf Gallery Grundarstigur 21 H6 Opening Hours: Fri and Sat 18-20 www.this.is/birta/dwarfgallery/dwarfgallery1.html</p> <p>The Einar Jónsson Eiríksgata G4 Tue-Sun 14-17 www.skulptur.is</p> <p>Gallery 100° Bæjarháls 1 www.or.is/Forsida/Gallery100/ Open weekdays from 08:30-16:00</p> <p>Gallery Auga fyrir Auga Hverfisgata 35 E4</p> <p>Gallery StartArt Laugavegur 12B E4 Tue-Sat 1-17 www.startart.is</p>	<p>Gallery Ágúst Baldursgata 12 F4 Wed-Sat 12-17 www.galleriagust.is</p> <p>Gallery Fold Rauðarárstigur 14-16 G7 Mon-Fri 10-18 / Sat 11-16 / Sun 14-16 www.myndlist.is</p> <p>Gallery Kling & Bang Hverfisgata 42 E5 Thurs-Sun from 14-18 this.is/klingsogbang/</p> <p>Gallery Turpentine Ingólfstræti 5 E3 Tue-Fri 12-18 / Sat 11-16 www.turpentine.is</p> <p>Gerðuberg Cultural Centre Gerðuberg 3-5 Mon-Thu 11-17 / Wed 11-21 / Thu-Fri 11-17 / Sat-Sun 13-16 www.gerduberg.is</p> <p>Havari Austurstræti 6 E3</p> <p>Hitt Húsið - Gallery Tukt Pósthússtræti 3-5 E3 www.hitthusid.is</p> <p>i8 Gallery Tryggvagata 16 D2 Tue-Fri 11-17 / Sat 13-17 and by appointment. www.i8.is</p> <p>Living Art Museum Skúlagata 28 F6 Wed, Fri-Sun 13-17 / Thu 13-22. www.nylo.is</p> <p>Lost Horse Gallery Vitastigur 9a E3 Weekends from 13-19 and by appointment on weekdays.</p> <p>Hafnarborg Strandgötu 34, Hafnarfjörður</p>	<p>The National Gallery of Iceland Frikkirkjuvegur 7 F3 Tue-Sun 11-17 www listasafn.is</p> <p>The National Museum Suðurgata 41 G1 Open daily 10-17 natmus.is</p> <p>The Nordic House Sturlugata 5 H1 Tue-Sun 12-17 www.nordice.is/</p> <p>The Numismatic Museum Einholt 4 G7 Open Mon-Fri 13:30-15:30.</p> <p>Reykjavík 871+/-2 Aðalstræti 17 D2 Open daily 10-17</p> <p>Reykjavík Art Gallery Skúlagata 28 F6 Tuesday through Sunday 14-18</p> <p>Reykjavík Art Museum Open daily 10-16 www listasafnreykjavikur.is</p> <p>Ásmundur Sveinsson Sculpture Museum Sigtún Hafnarhús Tryggvagata 17 D2 Kjarvalsstaðir Flókagata I7</p> <p>Reykjavík City Theatre Listabráut 3</p> <p>Reykjavík Maritime Museum Grandagarður 8 C3</p> <p>Reykjavík Museum of Photography Tryggvagata 16 D2 Weekdays 12-19 / Sat-Sun 13-17 - www.ljosmyndasafn-reykjavikur.is</p> <p>Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum Laugarnestangi 70</p>
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Geysir Fact #1 Cheap Cars

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Reykjavík 871 +/- 2

Landnámssýningin
The Settlement Exhibition

The exhibition and museum shop are open daily 10-17

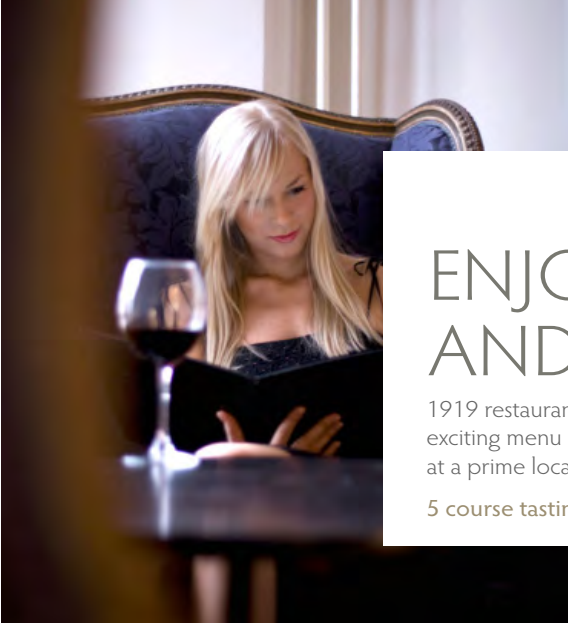
Aðalstræti 16
101 Reykjavík / Iceland
Phone +(354) 411 6370
www.reykjavikmuseum.is

Reykjavík City Museum

Step into the Viking Age

Experience Viking-Age Reykjavík at the new Settlement Exhibition. The focus of the exhibition is an excavated longhouse site which dates from the 10th century AD. It includes relics of human habitation from about 871, the oldest such site found in Iceland.

Multimedia techniques bring Reykjavík's past to life, providing visitors with insights into how people lived in the Viking Age, and what the Reykjavík environment looked like to the first settlers.



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Listasafn Reykjavíkur
Reykjavík Art Museum

Key works

Alternative Eye

Portraits

Nudes

"I choose blossoming women ..."

In the Collection of Imperfection

Reykjavik Art Museum

Hafnarhús
28 May 2009 - 12 Sep 2010
Erró - Portraits
20 May - 29 Aug
Vanitas - Still-life in Contemporary Icelandic Art
28 May - 12 Sep
Erró - Portraits Dolls

14 May - 29 Aug
Nudes - Gary Schneider
20 May - 29 Aug
In the Collection of Imperfection - Unnar Örn J. Auðarson

Kjarvalsstaðir
3 May - 31 Dec
Kjarval - Key works
14 May - 22 Aug
Alternative Eye - Selected photographic works from the collection of Pétur Arason and Ragna Róbertsdóttir
14 May - 22 Aug
Photo&graph - An educational workshop for the family

Ásmundarsafn
1 May 2010 - 17 Apr 2011
"I choose blossoming women ..." - Woman as Symbol in the Art of Ásmundur Sveinsson
20 May 2010 - 17 Apr 2011
Sleep Light - An installation by Ráðhildur Ingadóttir

Hafnarhús
Tryggvagata 17
Open daily
10 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Thursdays 10 a.m. - 10 p.m.

Kjarvalsstaðir
Flókagötu
Open daily
10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Ásmundarsafn
Sigtún
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Listasafn Reykjavíkur 2010

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REVIEWS

Home-style Harbour Cookin'



If you want a really good seafood meal, it's best to get as close to the source as possible. Short of actually getting on a boat and pulling it right out of the water, you can head down to the old harbour where the former fish storage houses have recently been converted into a wide selection of restaurants, cafés and shops. Amongst these is Höfnin, an elegantly rustic restaurant with a home-style feeling that serves up traditional Icelandic comfort food.

My date and I arrived without reservations and quickly found out that even on an early Tuesday evening this place is packed. We decided to order a drink and spent our 20-minute wait at a table outside with a beautiful view of the harbour. By the time our drinks arrived we were almost immediately given a table inside. We were surprised to find that the patrons were mostly locals and not tourists, despite what the location might entail. The place has only been open for a few weeks but they are very popular – and clearly understaffed.

After half an hour we finally placed our order with our frazzled but very friendly waiter. I picked the marinated guillemot with deep-fried Brie cheese and herbs (1.770 ISK) as a starter, while my date chose the lobster and smoked mackerel on soft malt bread and fried onions (1.980 ISK). I presumed the guillemot would taste a lot like puffin, but the dark, gamey bird was quite unique and had a similar texture to prosciutto. The cold beet purée it was served added a sweetness to the meat that was really nice,

and those fried balls of cheese... holy crap, I could eat those all day. My date's starter was also a hit, especially the smoked mackerel on malt bread, which had a powerful, tangy flavour and grew even bolder with a sprig of the dill sprinkled on the plate.

We had a bit of a wait before our main courses arrived. I tried to have my drink refreshed several times, but by this point the queue for a table was spilling out the front door, so my attempts were in vain. I did finally get a refill with a smile and our plates arrived piping hot. My date went with the steamed mussels with French fries (3.780 ISK), which are actually quite a novelty in Iceland. I decided to go for the lamb cutlet "fricassé" with fried lobster, dill, carrots and a baked potato (3.550) – basically an Icelandic take on surf'n'turf!

My date and I were both really excited about the mussels she ordered, but when she dug in she found them rather bland and underwhelming. They were meaty and well cooked but lacked a defined flavour, while the tarragon sauce they were served with did them no favour whatsoever. My meal, on the other hand, was the kind of delicious food that had us repeatedly questioning just what the hell they did to make it so good. It turns out that "fricassé" is a term for slow-cooking meat in gravy and vegetables, in this case asparagus. Even though I was close to bursting, I mopped up every bit of the sauce with my baked potato and could have licked the plate.

We managed to keep a tiny corner for dessert and it was worth it. As my

Höfnin

Geirsgötu 7c

What we think: Step up the service a bit and you got a clear winner

Flavour: Fancy, home-style Icelandic cooking

Ambiance: Leisurely elegance, rustic comfort

Service: Super friendly, but understaffed



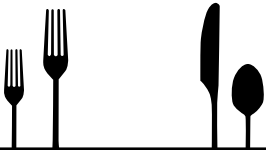
date kept pointing out, the mark of a good restaurant are their desserts. Our waiter's recommendation of the chocolate cake was bang on (1.460 ISK). The hockey-puck shaped treat was covered in pecans and came with real caramel sauce and unctuous liquorice ice cream. We also ordered a skyr parfait full of berries, crunchy corn-flakes and vanilla ice cream (same price), which was a fluffy, refreshing delight. It was a truly luxurious ending to a lovely, leisurely meal. 🍴

 REBECCA LOUDER

 JULIA STAPLES

Food & Drink | Venue finder

3 Frakkar Baldursgata 14 G4	Balthazar Hafnarstræti 1-3 D2	Geysir Bar/Bistro Aðalstræti 2 D2	Icelandic Fish & Chips Tryggvagata 8 B2	Mokka Skólavörðustígur 3A E4	Sjávarkjallarinn Aðalstræti 2 D2
Aktu Taktu Skúlugata 15 E6	Bæjarins Beztu Tryggvagata D3	Garðurinn Frakkastigur 37 F4	Indian Mango Frakkastigur 12 F5	Nonnabíti Hafnarstræti 9 D3	Sólón Bankastræti 7a E3
Alibaba Veltusund 3b D2	Brons Pósthússtræti 9 E3	Glaetan book café Laugavegur 19 F5	Jómfrúin Lækjargata 4 E3	O Sushi Lækjargata 2A E3	Sushibarinn Laugavegur 2 E4
American Style Tryggvagata 26 D2	Café Cultura Hverfisgata 18 E4	Grái Kötturinn Hverfisgata 16A E4	Kaffi Hjómálin Laugavegur 21 E4	Pisa Lækjargötu 6b E3	Sushismiðjan Geirsgötu 3 B2
Argentina Steak-house Barónstígur F6	Café d'Haiti Tryggvagata 12 D2	Grillhúsið Tryggvagata 20 D2	Kaffifélagið Skólavörðustígur 10 F5	Pizza King Hafnarstræti 18 D3	Svarta Kaffi Laugavegur 54 F5
Austurlanda-hraðlestin Hverfisgata 64A F5	Café Loki Lokastigur 28 G4	Habibi Hafnarstræti 20 E3	Kaffitár Bankastræti 8 E4	Pizza Pronto Vallarstræti 4 E2	Sægreifinn Verbúð 8, Geirsgata B2
Á Næstu Grósum Laugavegur 20B E4	Café Paris Austurstræti 14 E3	Hamborgarabúlla Tómasar ("Bullan") Geirsgata 1 B2	Kaffivagninn Grandagarður 10 A1	Pizzaverksmiðjan Lækjargötu 8 E3	Tapas Vesturgata 3B D2
B5 Bankastræti 5 E3	Café Roma Rauðarárstígur 8 G7	Híðla Bátar Ingólfstorg D2	Kofi Tómasar Frænda Laugavegur 2 E4	Prikið Bankastræti 12 E3	Thorvaldsen Austurstræti 8 D2
Bakkus Tryggvagata 22 D2	Deli Bankastræti 14 E5	Hómið Hafnarstræti 15 D3	Komið Lækjargata 4 E3	Ráðhúskaffi E2 Tjarnargata 11	Tíu Dropar Laugavegur 27 E5
Ban Thai Laugavegur 130 G7	Domo Þinghóltsstræti 5 E3	Hótel Holt Bergstaðarstræti 37 G3	Krua Thai Tryggvagata 14 D2	Santa María Laugavegur 22A, F5	Tívoli Laugavegur 3 E4
Basil & Lime Klappargstíg 38 E4	Einar Ben Veltusundi E2	Humarhúsið Amtmannstígur 1 E3	La Primavera Austurstræti 9 D2	Serrano Hringbraut 12 H3	Vegamót Vegamótastígur 4 E4
Babalú Skólavörðustígur 22A G5	Eldsmiðjan Bragagata 38A G4	Hressó Austurstræti 20 E4	Lystin Laugavegur 73 F6	Shalimar Austurstræti 4 D2	Við Tjómína Templarasund 3 E2
	Fiskmarkaðurinn Aðalstræti 12 D2			Silfur Pósthússtræti 11 E3	Vítabar Bergþórugata 21 G5



Still Got It



Entering Shalimar on a Monday night was a treat, and immediately put my date and I in good spirits. The tables were full and the atmosphere buzzing as scents of bubbling curries rose from the kitchen, tickling our noses and stirring our appetites.

The ground floor dining space in which we were sat is a small and cosy one, the tables crammed close together, reminiscent of restaurants in much larger cities with much less space to offer (note that they also have an upstairs dining room that offers more privacy if you are thus inclined). Rubbing elbows with your fellow patrons and the chatter that fills the room, along with some choice Indian tunes, adds a vibrant feel to the experience –the mood somehow felt entirely appropriate for enjoying the food on offer.

Indeed, the kitchen is practically a part of the dining space, making you feel like you are sat in someone's living room and they are preparing you some grub.

Our meal was off to a good start.

We soon learned that the service at Shalimar is very, very relaxed and lacks any sort of attentiveness, to the point of appearing outright lazy (during the course of our meal we asked for water a total of three times. We never got any). We sat waiting for over five minutes before our waitress showed us any attention. This waiting was made especially hard by the fact that the room smelled all sorts of delicious, and that we could watch as the chef prepared fresh naan, which came out of his oven steamy hot and visibly delicious. What torture!

We were nibbling on tablecloth by the time our orders were finally in.

We decided to start with some pappadums served with mint raita and mango chutney (550 ISK), as we suspected we wouldn't have to wait for them. We were right, and they were delicious. We drank mango lhassies (XXX ISK) with it, and those were really, really good too. Some of the best we've had, in fact.

For a main course, my date decided on Tandoori chicken served with rice, salad, raita and chutney (1.550 ISK) while I went for the "very, very hot version" of Murgh Vindaloo (2.990 ISK). We also ordered garlic and butter naan (290 ISK), and

Shalimar

Austurstræti 4

What we think: Still going strong

Flavour: Hot, if you're thus inclined. Otherwise jus plain delicious

Ambiance: Vibrant and fun

Service: Fine if you're paying 1.550 ISK, not so much if you're paying 2.990 ISK

some Tiger beers to go along with it.

The Tandoori chicken was good; moist, flavourful and delicious. It was not the best we'd ever tasted (we've been around), but it was certainly a bargain at 1.550 ISK.

My bright red Murgh Vindaloo was indeed very, very hot. But it was also savoury, moist and plentiful, with all these elements combining to make somewhat of a perfect dining experience. I'm not gonna lie, I love me some spicy food. And this course was spicy, but it wasn't all 'empty heat' if you get my drift. The dish was clearly made with love and attention, and gets my top marks.

Such a spicy dish needs to be diluted with a lot of rice, but for some reason the rice portion that came with it was rather small. Requests for more rice yielded more rice, though, so all was forgiven.

The naans were just right, too.

We were very full after eating (in fact, we got to take home some leftovers), so we decided to skip dessert.

Grapevine readers and staff recently picked Shalimar as the best place for Indian food in Reykjavík (see issue 09), applauding their "authentic ingredients," moderate pricing policy, "top notch mango lhassies" and their ability to make "proper spicy food."

In short: we can confirm this verdict. 🍀

HAUKUR S. MAGNÚSSON

JULIA STAPLES

EAT AND DRINK

3 X BAKED GOODS

1 BAKARAMEISTARINN Suðurver 18

This shop, right across Kringlan, is always packed and for good reason. Operating since 1977, Bakarameistarinn has mastered the process of making some tasty cakes, sweet snúðar, and plain old delicious breads. The selection is endless and for those who wake at the crack of dawn it opens surprisingly early, at 6:30 AM!

2 SANDHOLT Laugavegur 36

This swanky bakery offers up freshly baked breads, artisan sandwiches, exotic cakes, handmade chocolates, and some fairly authentic macaroons. Not the cheapest bakery on the block, but in Sandholt's case you get what you pay for. Be sure to check out the confectionary counter, full of sweets like Turkish delight, petit fours, and chocolates that look like Eyjafjallajökull.

3 BERNHÖFTSBAKARÍ Bergstaðastræti 13

Many have lauded this homey bakery and we can't really find any reason to disagree. Full of some tummy-pleasing breads and snúðar, Bernhöftsbakarí is the oldest bread and cake producer in the country. You can't beat a history like that.

3 X SPECIALTY SHOPS

1 OSTABÚÐIN Skólavörðustígur 8

Quality cheese is not something one can find just anywhere in Iceland. If you're looking for some superior Icelandic cheese or the rare imported, smelly good stuff, you can certainly find it here. This delicatessen is also packed full of select salamis, fancy oils, and luxurious foie gras.

2 MAI THAI Laugavegur 118

This store is a bit random, but if some authentic Asian foodstuffs wind up on your grocery list your best bet is to head here. They've got caramelized ginger, real Pocky, and so many types of noodles you never knew existed. Mai Thai is like an alternate universe, but we're glad it's here.

3 YGGDRASILL Rauðarástígur 10

For the environmentally-minded consumer, this shop is a haven of specialty organic and fair trade products that make Mother Nature smile. They carry a slew of healthy alternatives and staples for every dietary choice as well as a slew of safe household products to reduce your carbon footprint.

1 KAFFIFÉLAGIÐ Skólavörðustígur 10

For a real solid cup of coffee on the run, drop into this little hole in the wall brimming with the rich smell of fresh roasted beans and java goodness. They serve it up quick and strong so you can keep buzzing through the streets all day long.

2 NOODLE STATION Skólavörðustígur 21a

For a piping hot bowl of real Thai noodle soup, Noodle Station tops them all in this city. Specialising in two kinds – chicken or beef, both 850 ISK – you can adjust your own degree of spiciness and add in various nuts and toppings to get it to your taste. Perfect for slurping.

3 CAFÉ BABALÚ Skólavörðustígur 22

One of the cosiest little cafés in town run by some of the friendliest folks you could ever meet, this is the next best thing to hanging out in your own living room. The food is wholesome and really well priced (nothing over 1.000 ISK) and perfect for studying or having a laid back chat with old or new friends.

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Jamie Oliver’s Diary

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musicians and artists do.

That’s true. I was lucky to have all that behind me when I started at 27. Had I started my solo career at age 17, things might have been very different. Being in the position where more people are eager to hear what you’re saying and your music is fortunate. I realise that. I’ve never really known a lack of attention.

But there is also a philosophy that I derived from Grammið [the notorious record store that would go on to become Bad Taste/Smekkleysa] and Smekkleysa. First you have to plant the seeds, then you wait, then you maybe have a plant. You can’t just stand around shouting: “Where’s the harvest! Where’s the harvest?” Things have to be done in the right order. You need to plant your seeds, make ten mistakes, start all over again and then, maybe...

Oops, now I sound like I know it all, like I have a degree in music career management or something. That’s not the case. We [The Sugarcubes] weren’t even trying to get noticed when we got Melody Maker’s song of the week. It was all word of mouth, based on six or seven years of steady playing.

A lot of people think—and I had many conversations about that when I first moved to London around the time of ‘Debut’—that I was this big networker and careerist. An expert at presenting myself. That’s not the case at all, and it is not my interest. People had been hearing my voice for five years by then, and they were interested. They kept coming. I wasn’t desperate on my knees, pining for attention.

And the record [Debut] sold slowly at first. Many people forget that. It took a year and a half to gain momentum. There was no crazy marketing campaign or any of the like. It was a word of mouth record.

ON WRITING LETTERS

Back to the Magma deal. You’ve been corresponding with Magma CEO Ross Beaty over the past week [see elsewhere in this issue]. Would you care to reflect on that? It surprised me. I was really trying to be careful when we launched the campaign ten days ago. We started preparing it in May, when we learned Magma was acquiring a 98% stake in HS Orka. It took a while to get the thing running, but when we first started planning it the last thing I wanted was to make it all personal. To make it into me against some person.

However, the local media seems intent on turning every discourse on issues into a personal argument. I realise I cannot avoid it. And for the public, maybe the letter format makes the information easier to digest. When I write Ross Beaty a letter and address him in the first person, it perhaps makes the issues easier to take in than long tracts filled with complicated specialist language. I also realise I can’t control everything; I just had to go with the flow and ride the wave as it happened.

So maybe putting information across in this manner [of correspondence] is effective and easier to digest, but at the same time it turns me into some anti-Magma robot or icon. I cease being a person. This is not what I set out with or intended. But you’ve got to work with what you get.

What would be the desirable outcome of the Magma deal, in your opinion?

Well. Hopefully, we’ll get a national referendum on the sale of HS Orka, maybe on our resource policy in general.

Do you have anything further planned in this specific case?



I just don’t know. I never plan these things. I just plan on making music, then something comes up and I find that I cannot contain myself. Like when we staged the Náttúra concert in 2008, the summer before the economic collapse. It was during the purported height of Iceland’s economic bubble, and everyone was gearing up to build five aluminium smelters. When I learned that, I went straight into producing that concert, to protest. And then I saw that it had no effect at all, fifteen thousand people showed up and nothing changed. Everything went back to normal.

Then I returned from my tour and went straight into working with municipal governments around Iceland, trying to create jobs. We worked for four months straight. I skipped making music for that time and jumped into the deep end. And there wasn’t a lot of governmental support or interest in fostering these start-up companies that we were trying to harbour and encourage.

We worked on ideas; we handed in a large document of ideas and proposed law changes—that would help create a better environment for startup companies—to the Prime Minister [at the time, Geir H. Haarde]. We turned in the results, and indeed some things were changed.

Eventually, I withdrew and went back to working on my music. I knew of the Magma case, but I thought it would be stopped for sure. I thought the notion that it would be allowed to carry on was just absurd.

Then in May I learned that it was still happening, on and on I went. I would much rather not have to focus my energy on this, that someone would just take care of it and make sure such foul things don’t occur.

There are some things I simply cannot be silent about.

ON WHAT SHE HAS BEEN UP TO THIS YEAR, AND NOT JINXING IT

What have you been up to this year?

I am working on a project that I started over a year ago and has grown a bit in the process. It’s gotten quite large in scope, actually, so nothing will probably come of it until next year or the year after. I am superstitious and would rather not talk about it—often, if I talk too much about a project before completing it, it implodes. So I’d rather not talk about it.

But it is what most of my year has been devoted to, and it will see the light of day next year or the year after. This is why I haven’t been talking to the media this year; I’ve learned a rhythm over the last twenty years. I enter an introspective mode when I am working, and then I switch to ‘extrovert’ when the music is released and needs to be promoted and toured. Actually, all this action over the last two weeks has left me scared that I am getting too extroverted in the middle of my introvert process, that I might not be able to enter it again.

We can stop right now if you want. Well, I won’t talk about my project, but I can talk about these projects I’ve guested on this year, since they are already completed. So I can’t jinx it.

“How am I supposed to live with myself if I stand back and potentially allow the worst possible scenario to arise, without attempting to fight it? Iceland has given me so much, I feel as if Iceland’s nature was bestowed upon me and all the rest of us as a gift, and I feel a great need to defend it. I simply cannot ignore that.”

ON WORKING WITH DIRTY PROJECTORS AND FEELING A CERTAIN RESONANCE WITH A GENERATION

Let’s talk then. What are these projects?

The first one to appear is the one I made with Dirty Projectors. It’s an EP called ‘Mount Wittenberg Orca’ that’s being sold on-line [www.mountwittenbergorca.com] and all the proceeds are going to creating international marine protected areas, in cooperation with the National Geographic society.

I had been talking to them before. The music website Stereogum organised a tribute to my album ‘Post’, where different musicians recorded covers of the album’s songs. And one of the participating bands was Dirty Projectors, and they wrote a really nice treatise on how my music had influenced them. Stereogum put David and I in touch, and we were e-mailing back and forth. Then they released ‘Rise Above’, the Black Flag record, and I fell in love with it. Especially what David was doing with the voices. And he had been talking about how he was inspired by Medúlla. We kept on e-mailing, sending each other notes and ideas and vocal processing software tips; it soon transpired that both of us were total vocal geeks.

Back in May of 2009, I performed a concert with them in New York. [Stereogum writer] Brandon Stosuy had suggested we do something together. They had just completed their record ‘Bitte Orca’ at that time, and I had just started my current project. And I told David: “You’ve just completed an album. That’s the best time for side projects. All the wheels are greased. Perhaps you should write it and I’ll just be one of your voices.” Then we recorded it a year later and now it is out.

Anyway. It happened. And it’s been great, the whole process. There was so much positive energy, and the collaboration was really fertile. Hats off to all of them! It could have been so complicated, me with my world and they with theirs. But it wasn’t, not at all.

I feel a certain resonance with their generation of Americans. For some reason I have more in common with them musically than my own generation. Some musicians have mentioned Medúlla to me, and there seems to be an upswing in acapella music, which I am really enjoying. When I was in England, singing was all but illegal in the circles I moved in, with the whole Warp scene and so on. Having vocals on your track was tantamount to selling out, or selling oneself short. Everything was instrumental. It’s funny to see how things turn around. Everything goes in circles. I really enjoy all these vocal harmonies in bands like Animal Collective, Grizzly Bear and Battles.

I think these are exciting times, and I am really thankful for getting to observe this generation making its way in music, and getting to interact with its members. When I first started dividing my time between Reykjavík and New York back in the early 2000s, I could not at all relate to what was going on there. I was all nostalgic, shopping music off Bleep.com and thinking about England. And it’s just so great, what’s happened since. The difference between New York in 2010 and 2000 is vast. I guess it’s just closer to my

personal musical tastes. People like Antony [Hegarty, of Antony and the Johnsons] and Joanna Newsom and Dirty Projectors and Animal Collective. It’s all music that I really enjoy.

And you are actively interacting with it now, in the form of your collaboration with Dirty Projectors

Yes. I feel this is very fertile and giving. The fact that David has talked about my music inspiring him and then I just walk into the studio and tell him back: “I am ready to be your instrument. I trust you, and I will obey.” There is a healthy rotation there. Trust. They were so creative in the studio, and the mood was just right. I have the feeling that they’ve only just begun making great records; that they have many to come.

Why do you think you connect so well with this generation of Americans?

I have a homemade theory about this... The same year I moved to the US, Bush took over the White house and stayed there for eight years. I used to think it didn’t matter who was President, but now I know different. It matters. I can imagine a similar situation as punk was being born in the UK during the Thatcher era. I wasn’t that politically involved then, but now I observe that Bush taking over spurred a certain contingent of people to retreat to nature. There was so much anger in America, from people who didn’t support Bush and his policies, who didn’t feel at home in the mainstream. So much anger and a need for something new. I think it’s no coincidence that Britney Spears and pop stars like her reigned over the Bush year. They’re not exactly ‘organic’...

All the while, this underground was brewing, an underground of people who yearn for organic things, for connecting with nature. Eight years pass, and these people start gaining a following, moving up from the underground. People like Joanna Newsom and Animal Collective, which would have been written off as hippie remnants a decade earlier. People started thinking: there must be other ways.

Anyway, this is my homemade theory.

And I come from a country that is very connected to nature. When I was at their age, Iceland didn’t have banksters or corporate Vikings, no one was planning to build five aluminium smelters. It was all very organic and in close connection to nature, maybe with similar emphases as this generation is now making. I am raised in that climate, so maybe that’s why I relate to them.

Working on that EP was obviously a great experience, but how do you feel about the results? Do you like the album?

I need to listen to it. I last heard it while it was being mixed, and I haven’t heard it since. I need to download it... Things have just been so crazy with this Magma thing, but I really want to find a time to listen to it on a nice stereo, in a car or something. Listening in a car is always nice.

I am really happy with it, though, and proud of it. When we initially performed this project in the Housing Works we had only practiced it two times, it was very spontaneous and

fun. When the girls started doing their thing, with their voices, I jumped and had to be careful not to scream with excitement. It was like a new World Record in acapella. I was really in awe, and honoured to get to be a sort of vocal ‘old aunt’ that was invited to the acapella party, so to speak.

ON WORKING WITH ÓLÖF ARNALDS AND NOT BECOMING A BURDEN

You’re appearing as a guest on albums by Antony and Ólöf Arnalds. You haven’t really collaborated with many artists like this—outside of your own albums anyway—in past years. Is there a reason why it’s happening now all of the sudden?

Actually, these three projects that I’m appearing on in 2010—Dirty Projectors, Ólöf Arnalds and Antony—they aren’t connected at all. But I was wondering about it. Maybe it’s because I’m older now and, as the oldest of three brothers and three sisters, it is natural for me to assume the role of the oldest sibling. Maybe a new period in my life has begun? I used to always be the youngest, like in the Sugarcubes, but maybe I am more comfortable with being the oldest. I always tell the boys of Sigur Rós that I am their old, proud aunt, so it is a role that maybe comes naturally to me.

With Ólöf, I really get energized from hanging around with her. She has heaps of creativity surrounding her, and the energy is infectious, like what happens between her and Davíð Þór [Jónsson, stellar Icelandic musician]. It’s exciting. For that project, I really didn’t mean to butt in like that, but she played me a song and as soon as I heard it, a vocal to go with it popped in my head. I didn’t tell her about it, I thought it was a really tacky thing to do, but when I heard the track for a second time the vocal part jumped out again.

So I told her. I said: “I have this vocal part in my head, and if you want to record it, I’ll be happy to sing it. I’ll totally understand if you decide to not use it in the final mixes, and I won’t get upset.”

I felt I needed to make that clear. It can sometimes be a burden for a young musician, having some old-timer singing all over their record.

Were you really afraid of becoming a burden to her?

Yeah, I was laughing about it with Ólöf the other day. Saying that it’s as if she’s a beautiful little bird sitting on a branch, singing its youthful melody, when all of the sudden this big peacock sits on the branch next to her and breaks the tree. Ólöf and I are friends and equals, but as interpreted by some American blog that doesn’t know anything, my singing on her record might become a burden. But it all worked out, though, and she decided to use my vocals in the end. Hopefully I didn’t break her tree.

Tell us about working with Ólöf. What do you think of her music?

I think she’s an original, she has her own style. I really like her songwriting style, and she is also a brilliant lyricist—I don’t think she gets enough credit for that. I also think her songs will be sung later on, like Megas’s songs.

And her best is definitely yet to come, even though the forthcoming record is great. She still has a lot of growth in her. She has already grown a whole lot and matured since I started following her, I think it is exciting to witness...

Continues over.

ON WORKING WITH ANTONY AND
 STREAMING ENERGY BACK

Then the Antony thing came up a bit differently. When I was making Volta, I rented a studio in Jamaica for a month and invited him for a visit, and to sing with me on ‘Dull Flame Of Desire’. We spent a few days singing together, and during that time he wrote a piano song that I sang over in gibberish Icelandic, you know, that hazy undefined scratch vocal you make when you’re coming up with a melody

What, you mean Hopelandic?

Well, it sounds really new age-y [laughs], but when I’m writing a melody I’ll generally just start off with sounds and empty vowels. Then I write a lyric and sing that. I’ve always respected Jónsi for daring to leave it at that first stage. But anyway, I was improvising over his piano track, coming up with a melody. After I went to bed, Antony stayed up all night, recording vocals and harmonising all my gibberish with these lush four part harmonies, effectively making a choir out of it. When I woke up in the morning, he told me he wanted to play me something. I was really honoured when I heard his work. And the track is great. It’s him singing in Icelandic, even if he has no idea what he’s singing about.

Afterwards, we didn’t really know what to do with the track. It was completely different from the rest of his album, a tiny accident. In the end, I told him: “This is your song, you do with it as you please.”

It’s been a while since we recorded it. It was during Easter of 2006. So this is a four-year-old song. I am very happy that he finally used it, I was always very thankful that he made the trip to Jamaica to make a song with me, and it is beautiful that we can stream the energy back and he can use something from the sessions. It is all very healthy.

ON BEING SAVED BY
 PARIS HILTON

You are working with all these people and singing their praises. All of them have made some stunning music, but none seem to have breached the mainstream like you did. None of them have had a top forty hit. Have times changed since you came up? Are the masses harder to reach?

One day, the internet showed up and changed everything. All of our yardsticks are in flux. A band like Dirty Projectors can be called big on the Pitchfork scale—but it maybe doesn’t translate to physical copies sold. Things are different now. The posters are hung in other places. We are still figuring out how to define ‘success’ in this day and age. When the last Animal Collective album was released, they were on the covers of all the magazines in New York, and they won ‘record of the year’ everywhere. Isn’t that success? I don’t know ...

I think these are exciting times; we are inventing our own definitions of success. Both in terms of record sales, but also these... these Lady GaGa moments that keep popping up. She is the first superstar of our time. She maybe isn’t doing anything new or interesting musically, but she still is a very interesting character. She has individual style.

I’m no musicologist or specialist in pop matters, but it seems to me that everything was perfectly aligned for her to make her appearance. And I feel that a similar thing happened—albeit in an entirely different way, with a different outcome—for me when I released ‘Post’. All these different factors lined up to make it as big as it could get.

I can’t judge how it happened,

though—I am too involved with it to do that. There are probably several reasons. Instrumental electronic music had been around for a while then, all these introverted electronic scenes, like Acid House, were dominant and upcoming, but it lacked all narrative and all lyrics. There was a big hunger for that when I lived in London. People would say: "This is great music, but where are the songs?" Songs, not as in techno songs, but songs with stories and refrains and choruses. They were missing. That was one of the hoops we passed through...

You’re saying the environment that young musicians face these days, especially in regards to the media, is totally different from what you experienced? And still in formation?

This populism that has followed globalisation and the internet, it is so crazy. People are gagging on it. Like how they treat Britney Spears. She can’t exit a cab without panties without close-up shots of her crotch being spread all over the internet five minutes later. This is vulgar. People do not want to participate in this. I can imagine people that are in their early twenties now and maybe releasing their first records not wanting any part in this atmosphere.

I think people are more and more starting to bypass these places, this sphere that has been created by the tabloid newspapers and gossip websites. Media gossip has changed so much since I was young. It’s so pervasive and dominant. Amy Winehouse leaves a club, five minutes later there are clips of her throwing up on YouTube.

When... [makes an old woman voice] when I was young, being a ‘celebrity’ really only consisted of one thing. You got invited to these premieres or charity events, and if you were interested or curious you went along and got photographed on the red carpet. You maybe gave an interview, posed for some photos and then you were done.

Now, we’re facing quite a different situation. A whole new league has been created, this Paris Hilton league, with her and Lindsay Lohan and others. I was actually pretty grateful when this new media culture appeared. It meant people like myself and Radiohead—people that would rather focus on making the music and didn’t want to participate in the whole celebrity package—could leave the stage to these new people. Sheesh! What a relief! I experienced it a bit when I was living on Warwick Avenue in England, with forty photographers camping in my backyard, stocked with zoom lenses and stuff. I cannot thrive in that environment, and that’s why I backed out of it. And I was lucky, as soon as I got totally sick of it, the internet and this new league of celebrity fascination came along, these people like Paris Hilton that were really craving the attention.

They saved us.

Like celebrity martyrs, hanging on their cross to set the rest of you free?

Exactly. And this is maybe causing a lot of the music websites and outlets that cover new music to not focus on the persons behind it so much. They’re not publishing crotch shots of Animal Collective all the time.

People are exercising their freedom to choose. They can choose this way, or the other. And I like that.

That’s certainly a refreshing way to look at it. Every time I go online and see all these news sites turning into sleazy gossip blogs I feel disheartened. It is a lot nicer to think that the über-gossip is isolating itself, and those interested can take care of it.

Yes, not pretend I know everything again, but in my experience: You have a choice. I got caught up in the whole celebrity gossip ride, and I had a choice. I simply chose not to participate. I did have to move to another country, but I chose to do that.

ON MOOMIN

I understand you’ve also recorded a track for the upcoming Moomin feature film?

Yes. That was very joyous. They contacted me and asked me to write music for the film. After seeing a screening copy, I agreed to write the title track, and I asked [novelist, poet and frequent collaborator] Sjóón to write the lyrics. The film looks great, and I feel it is much truer to the Moomin spirit than some of these Moomin things I’ve seen, which often stray from the original stories, have all these pastel colours and depict the Moomins as being all cute. This is a full length movie, about the comet, and it isn’t at all cute. It’s real, like the Moomins.

I felt that writing the track was a great opportunity to support [Moomin author] Tove Jansson. I’ve read many of her books—she wrote a lot beyond the Moomin series—and is now finally receiving due credit as a writer, not just of children’s novels. She has this great philosophy, and the way she lived her life on a small island is also inspiring. All her characters are different, everyone gets to be as they are and they all live in harmony. I agree with a lot of her messages, and really empathise with Tove.

So you’re big on the Moomins?

Yes! Yes! That’s just the way it is.

ON RECEIVING THE POLAR PRIZE

Then I heard you got nominated for some ‘Polar Award’

Yes, it’s some award. They’re apparently very respectable; they always select one pop musician and one composer. Ennio Morricone is the composer this time around...

What does this entail?

I got to invite my parents along, and I think the prince or king of Sweden will be there to meet us. A lot of interesting projects have received this award in over the years. I had no idea, though, when they contacted me. Usually when I get nominated for such awards, I just say no. A lot of them are just some celebrity drivel—they’ll just need celebrity presence to top off their party and they award you for all sorts of ludicrous things—I don’t know what. And not about music. You can have it as a full time job, accepting awards, attend-

ing premieres and being a socialite. I cut that off after ‘Debut’ and ‘Post’, so I would have time to make music. When they contacted me about this award, I was just about to say “no thank you, I don’t have the time” and get back to my music... then everyone around me got all upset; “Are you crazy? It’s the POLAR PRIZE!” And I realised this was apparently a very big deal.

It was a nice surprise actually. A lot of these award ceremonies or charity events are just preposterous. When I still attended those, I would often walk in all excited about helping cancer patients or whatnot, only to be met by a group of socialites dressed in deluxe garments, comparing their shoes or dresses, sipping on champagne. Very little concern for the cause, sitting around loaded with diamonds, talking about poverty. What’s the context? What’s the context?

ON SOMETHING THAT HAS FOL-
 LOWED HUMANITY SINCE WE
 WERE APES

One last question. I mentioned earlier that whenever we print something about you in the paper we get a huge response from people from all over the world—your fans. There seem to be a lot of people looking up to you, looking to you for guidance, even. That given, it is reassuring that you are trying to use your influence in a positive manner and raising attention to important issues, but... it also must be weird for you...

It comes with the job. I don’t know why. Singers that wrote their songs a hundred years ago maybe didn’t face the same reaction. Then again maybe they did. Religion is at a strange place right now, and not what it was a century ago.

I think most of it doesn’t have anything to do with me as a person. It’s just a certain need in society. Also, when you step on the stage, a certain shamanism is put in motion, something that has followed humanity since we were apes, or even longer. On the stage you are not yourself, you are a representative, a symbol, it is symbolic and it raises you to a frequency level.

And you realise this once you’ve been doing it for a while, it’s not that I’m so great, the concert is not about me. I am not focusing on my blemishes and shape or who I am, exaggerating my particularities. I rather try and tap in on how everyone is feeling; I rather enter the stage and sing about an emotion that I know everyone experiences, over something specific, like I hate this thing or the other. I keep those emotions to myself. ☘



A Smattering Of Ideas
 For Innovators &
 Entrepreneurs

Because not every solution needs to involve heavy industry

Just prior to the economic collapse of 2008, Björk and her Spark team engaged in an active dialogue with job development agents, job developers, innovation centres, universities, specialists and investors in all parts of Iceland. The idea was to try to find start-up companies and idea seeds that need nourishment; to encourage further innovation and sustainable development in Iceland, and to underline the need for start-ups and seed companies, for small local industries as opposed to more heavy industry.

Below is a sampling of some of the ideas that were mentioned in the dialogue – which is ongoing – as compiled by the Spark group. It is not meant to be definitive or final, merely a conversation starter and a way to draw attention to the fact that there are other ways, and those ways need support and care.

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SOME IDEAS

Water in different forms

- a) For export
- b) Production based on water, such as beer, soda, energy drinks, health and tea-drinks
- c) Food production that requires a lot of water
- d) Fragrances, contact lens solution, cosmetics and other solutions that require a lot of purified water

(Clothing) Design

- a) There are numerous established designers in Iceland, and countless young ones
- b) In relation to clothing design accessories, such as handbags, watches, jewellery and many other things can be designed and even produced locally

Food production in various forms

- a) Using Icelandic vegetables in a more diverse manner, such as producing high quality baby food for export
- b) Pet food from seafood leftovers, etc
- c) Freeze-dried protein for food-, medical-, and chemical industries The production requires a lot of energy and steam for drying
- d) Slow food and direct-from-farm local foods
- e) Eco-farmers

Ecological products/services

- a) Production of hard kernel tires
- b) Recycled plastic for production
- c) Recycled waste for production of bio-fuel and bio-charcoals
- d) Production of small transportable geothermal energy generators for export
- e) Carbon recycling for production of gasoline incentives
- f) Consultancy service related to geothermal energy worldwide

Software solutions

- a) On-line language courses
- b) On-line data banks
- c) On-line music services
- d) Software solutions for ships, homes and transportation to reduce energy consumption
- e) Value added service for customers of Icelandic data centres
- f) Identification software for law enforcement
- g) Search software for aggregating on-line feedback

Energy solutions in different forms

- a) Data centres in various sizes
- b) More vegetable production

Media/Art/Entertainment

- a) Animated films
- b) Computer games
- c) Software solutions for the music- and film industries

SOME MORE IDEAS

- Glassmaking from sand
- Solar panel production
- Solar-silicone post-production
- Fish farming: cod, trout, salmon, mussels
- Nanotechnology solutions
- Artificial intelligence research and development
- Using hot water for fish farming: production of warm sea fish species
- University of the Ocean: An international research centre relating to the ocean, fishing industries, fish farming and the environment, located on the Westfjords
- Historical tourism
- Memory research technology development
- Winter tourism
- Wellness tourism
- Medical products from fish skin
- Effective use of by-products from shrimp production, for production of bio-chemicals.
- Post-production of algae, production of alginate and materials for food supplements, food and cosmetics.
- Production of high-quality fly-fishing wheels.
- Production based on the use of herbs, flowers, fungi and moss.
- Sea angling
- Natural, hot geothermal pools.
- Wellness, sleep and health centres/hotels
- Long term scientific studies in pharmaceutical- and biotechnology
- Submarine production
- Blue shell mussel production

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July 4 at 5 pm
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Denmark



July 10 at 12 noon
July 11 at 5 pm
Dame Gillian Weir
England



July 17 at 12 noon
July 18 at 5 pm
Winfried Böning
Cologne Cathedral
Germany



July 24 at 12 noon
July 25 at 5 pm
Guðný Einarsdóttir
Iceland

June 5 - August 15



July 31 at 12 noon
August 1 at 5 pm
Steingrímur Þórhallsson
Iceland



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August 8 at 5 pm
Kári Þórmarr
Iceland



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IN HALLGRÍMSKIRKJA
AT 12 NOON**

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Eygló Rúnarsdóttir (mezzo soprano)
- July 8:** Lára Bryndís Eggertsdóttir - Denmark
- July 15:** Sigrún Magna Þórsteinsdóttir - Akureyrarkirkja
- July 22:** Sveinn Arnar Sæmundsson - Akranes Kirkja
Kristín Sigurjónsdóttir (violin)
- July 29:** Kári Allansson - Grindavíkurkirkja
- August 5:** Magnús Ragnarsson - Áskirkja
Þórunn Elin Pétursdóttir (soprano)
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Dog | Days

Dog Love (Or Lack Thereof) In Reykjavík And Beyond

Bitchin' about dog-ownership laws in Iceland



Words
Emily Burton
Photography
Julia Staples

Vikings were the first dog-lovers in Iceland. Indeed, they brought their canine companions to the island when they first ventured here around 874 AD. Today, Iceland is home to over eighty different breeds of dogs although only one, the Icelandic sheepdog, is native. In the late 19th century, Icelandic sheepdogs started dying from tapeworm and spreading them to humans, leading to a ban on the importation of dogs. Bordering on extinction, nearly 75% of the population had died out by the end of the 20th century. The ban was lifted in 1989, but the negative attitude towards dogs still lingers according to Stefania Sigurðardóttir, one of the top Icelandic sheepdog breeders in the country.

I talked to Stefania about how she started breeding and what she thinks about the dog ownership laws in Iceland. I also asked people on the street about their opinions on different dog breeds in Iceland. Reykjavík has some seriously strict laws about owning a dog in the city, and I wanted to investigate if they were making more responsible dog owners or contributing to intolerant attitudes towards dogs?

“In Reykjavik, if people see a shit somewhere and it’s from a dog, everyone goes crazy. But if a drunk man makes a mess, then that’s ok.”

A story about a woman who took her love for dogs to the next level
Stefania started breeding Icelandic sheepdogs in 2001, but she has been involved with breeding dogs since she was twelve. She grew up on a farm in Selfoss where her parents owned sheep, horses, and Icelandic sheepdogs. With a dog by her side at all times, she grew to love everything about dogs. During her childhood, Stefania’s family moved to New Jersey while her father studied at Princeton. Impressed by the amount of dog owners and the freedoms they enjoyed in the city, Stefania felt inspired to get proactive when she moved back to Iceland.

She started working with a small community of dog lovers at the Kennel Club near her hometown. Stefania describes her experience: “I was just thirteen when I was on the board. I think that they liked me a lot. I encouraged them, because I had a very open mind for dogs. The Kennel Club was fighting for people to have their dogs in Reykjavík.”

The Icelandic Kennel Club was

founded in 1969 to protect the rights of dogs and their owners. For many years, the Icelandic Kennel Club fought for dog ownership to be permitted in Iceland and for the reduction of the dog license fee. According to their website, the Icelandic Kennel Club was responsible for the 50% reduction in the fee for any dog owner who has attended an approved obedience-training course with their dog.

At sixteen, Stefania moved to Reykjavík. Her mother warned her not to take her dog because of the strict ownership rules in the city. She did anyway. Stefania remembers, “I always had a dog and that worked out for me, but it wasn’t easy. I had to fight for it a lot.”

Stefania recalls walking her dog around her neighbourhood. Kids teased her dog to bark by holding cats out the windows of their houses. Then they would run and tell their parents if the dog barked. “You’d get the grown-up people against you just by having a dog.”

Stefania believes the ban causes people to view dogs in a negative light, even to this day. “In Reykjavík, if people see a shit somewhere and it’s from a dog, everyone goes crazy. But if a drunk man makes a mess, then that’s ok. Reykjavík after the weekends is horrible. They have to clean the city. Nobody complains about that.”

Why some Icelanders are hatin’ on mixed breeds
Walking around Reykjavík, one might notice more purebreds at the end of

leashes than mixed breeds. I asked one dog-owner why she chose to go against the norm and get a mixed-breed. Anita, owner of a Collie/Icelandic sheepdog mix, says she got her dog from a farm where they normally breed purebred Icelandic sheepdogs. She explained her dog was an “accident”—he came from a litter that was never supposed to have been bred. When I asked her if she thought people should breed mixed-breed dogs, she replied, “They should never breed mixed dogs because they don’t cost anything. They don’t have any value.”

To Anita, owning a “valuable” dog is important. “There are a lot of mixed dogs that people don’t want, so they just put them down to sleep.” She also believes that Iceland is not a very dog-friendly country. Anita complained that there are not enough places where dog-owners can let their dogs run free. “In other countries they are in the shops and cafes and in the malls and on the bus and everything.”

When I asked Stefania what she thought about mixed breeds, she answered, “I think that every nice dog is a nice dog. I can see it in a dog’s eyes if it’s nice. I love all dogs.” Whether you own a purebred or a mixed breed, all dog owners must pay for a license, and they aren’t cheap. Dog owners pay 17,000 ISK a year per dog. Dog-owners are also required to get the proper vaccinations and a microchip for each dog, which add to costs.

In Iceland, the money from dog li-

censes goes into the city’s budget. Stefania complains, “Dog owners don’t get anything back. Maybe they [the city] could offer something, somewhere we could stay with our dogs. But we don’t get anything back.”

Lost dogs
What happens to a dog when it accidentally gets loose in Iceland? Stefania explained to me that “it’s locked up and if you don’t contact them [the city], after ten days, the dog is dead.”

In the 1950s and 60s the situation was much worse. Stefania explains, “If the police heard about a dog in Reykjavík, the dog owner was followed, like in a murder case or something. When the dog owner’s house was found, somebody from the police came, and the dog was taken and killed.”

What does “dog-friendly” even mean?
One thing is for sure, however, dog lovers exist everywhere. Stefania is hopeful that Iceland will become more accommodating for dog-owners and their dogs in the future. This past spring, the Icelandic Kennel Club helped organise a clean-up after dogs in areas around Reykjavík. Stefania thinks it’s a positive step. “We [the Icelandic Kennel Club] are always working to promote dog ownership in Iceland. It takes more than one generation of people to change the way people think.” 🍷



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I’m Not Afraid Of Anyone

Haffi Haff is all real and doesn’t give a shit what you think

After becoming a breakaway hit in 2008 while competing to represent Iceland in the Eurovision song contest, 25-year old Icelandic-American performer Haffi Haff has worked his way up and down the ladder to establish himself as a serious artist with solid goals. Since his first smash hit, he has spent the past couple of years writing songs, playing hundreds of shows and putting together his first full-length album, ‘Freak’, which was released this past June. Now ready to take on Iceland and the rest of the world (starting in his hometown of Seattle), he will first hit the big outdoor stage at the Gay Pride celebrations on Saturday, August 7 at Arnarhöll.

Tell me about yourself and what you do?

I am a singer, but I would say it’s more than that. I think in today’s world, you’re not just a singer, but you’re a representative. To me that’s more important than being a singer. Anybody can be a singer, there are a lot of singers on the planet and I’m not the best one. I’m more representing something.

What, then?

Being yourself. I’ve always been colourful, in personality and appearance-wise as well. I’ve always had fun with that and I’ve always done it even though I was told it was not right when I was younger. I had a pair of clown shoes that were the most colourful, horrible things you’ll ever see but I liked them and I wore them. I think I only wore them once because people were so terrible, and it’s like why? It’s just something on your feet, it gets dirty and nasty over time anyway, but I think at that point kids aren’t that open to different things. I’m also gay, which makes me another type of minority. Shocking! Whoa, hold the phone! I am a homosexual! You know there are rumours that I’m actually straight and it’s all just an act.

Are there really such rumours?

Could you imagine what a fantastic act that would be? I would be the biggest fooler ever. Well I am not straight, thank you very much!

Tell me about your music.

It’s hard to explain, I guess. This city is really used to being super-indie, super-edgy, super-rock. There isn’t a lot of pop that comes along that does something that’s going to appease your type of reader, but you never know. You would hope that people wouldn’t be closed off because I’m not closed off at all. But this album is pop oriented.

Tell me about the album. I understand it took you about two years to make it, is that right?

Well, I mean the first time I sang on-stage was live on television for Eurovision. I had six months of preparation. Let me put it this way: I wasn’t a singer. I’m not classically trained. I just know that I have aspirations. Oddly enough, it was never a thing for me. It wasn’t like I really sat there and said to myself ‘Oh, this is what I want to do’, but I knew that I would do something big. That was always apparent to me. I could just feel that. So whatever it was that I wanted to do, I would just do it big.

Would you say you are doing that now?

Absolutely. This is just the beginning of it. I’ve been told since I was little that I was gonna do something great. I don’t know whether it was what they told me that made me want to do it or whether



I knew it myself, but I kept going. To be at this point is just proof to me that this is what I’m supposed to be doing, and I should just keep doing it.

What was the process of making the record?

The first song I was ever a part of was called ‘The Wiggle Wiggle Song’, written by my friend Svala Björgvinsdóttir. I did Eurovision with her and the song went number one. It became a humungous success by complete surprise. It was number one for three weeks and then number two, so it was on top for four weeks. I guess you can say that would be a lot of pressure to follow up something like that! I wrote my first song after that. It was called ‘See Me Now’ with a band called Mercedes Club. After that I got a call from the producer of that year’s Eurovision song who said they had a song for me, so I went in and we did that. We released that one [‘Give Me Sexy’] in February 2009 and it charted at number four.

Then I said: ‘I’m gonna do an album. That’s how this is gonna work.’ Through a lot of chance meetings I met some new producers that I wanted to work with. We worked on seven new songs and an intro over the past six months, put the album together and released it last month. I would say that we nailed it, because a lot of people did not expect very much, which is sad but also understandable. They don’t think I’m a real artist, they don’t think I’m a real person because of the circumstances that I came about in. That’s fine, whatever. I feel that I have proved otherwise.

Do you think there is sincerity in pop music?

Absolutely! Just because I want to actually reach a large audience doesn’t mean that I’m not writing about important topics. You will listen to the three songs that came especially from me, because I co-wrote the rest, those are the ones that speak about something very, very intimate. They’re just stories

“They don’t think I’m a real artist, they don’t think I’m a real person because of the circumstances that I came about in.”

from my life. I don’t know what these city slickers are writing about or doing but I would imagine that they are doing probably the exact same fucking thing that I am: sitting in front of a computer for hours at a time, waking up in the middle of the night in sweats or panics and writing something down.

How does one find that sincerity when, let’s be honest, pop music is so manufactured and so much of it is so insincere?

Yes, like this video of Katie Price I saw the other day. Absolutely terrible! She was attempting to sing a song in an atrocious outfit with atrocious dancers in the corner of the TV studio. It was just so terribly done and I think she knew it. That’s what I don’t understand is: why does everyone go to music, as if that’s going to be what makes you something? And you don’t say anything in it! You don’t have a smidgeon of truth or sincerity. This is a pedestal. It’s a place where you stand on something high and say something or try to entertain people. You can do both. They are using her to just push some crap, which is the reason why people are like ‘Ugh, another pop villain.’ And that’s okay! It’s just a reason to fight and I’ve totally fought it with my fists. I’m not afraid of anyone. I know what I’m doing and I don’t have to answer to anyone. 🍌



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No Fleas At This Market

Kolaportið is pure awesome

On a good weekend stroll in downtown Reykjavík there is an indispensable stop that any sensible (and batshit insane) person will not miss: Kolaportið. The huge market down by the harbour has been running every weekend since 1989 in the lower level of the customs house on Tryggvagata. It has since become a staple shopping tradition for anyone looking to score some hidden gems or just plain crazy crap.

There is really something for everyone in this place, whether you are hunting for towels of bikini clad biker chicks, limited print LPs, necklaces with giant bejewelled crosses, second-hand clothing or just some great harðfiskur and candy. The whole place is a bustling affair welcome to all and swarming with people from all types of life here in Iceland, so it's also a great place for social observation and fun eavesdropping. A must go for locals and visitors alike. ♡

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Survive Verslunarmannahelgi

With minimal discomfort!

This guide does not cover the basics. If you can't remember to pack your sleeping bag or an extra pair of underwear, you shouldn't go anywhere, anyway. For what we do have here: we cannot guarantee that it will prevent you from waking up in a pool of your own vomit, in fact we cannot guarantee anything. But here are some tips and tricks for Verslunarmannahelgi anyway.

iPod

If you think Icelanders go out 'til ungodly hours on the weekends, just imagine what it's like when you throw them into the countryside with the sole purpose of getting drunk. So if you're expecting to get any sleep during the festivities, you'll need a way to drown out those fuckers frolicking around your tent. This is where your iPod comes into use (you can also bring a Walkman or something, if you hate technology): shove it in your ear and listen to some soothing tones of whatever you like to fall asleep to.

Diaralyte: (The Ultimate Hangover Cure)

There is no spiritual or uniquely natural Icelandic remedy for a hangover (just one: more drinking). Looking at a pair of

puffins mating is not going to make you feel less queasy. So before you throw yourself into a volcano from sheer pain, try dissolving a couple of sachets of Diaralyte in water (one before bed and one when you wake up). This shit's like magic

And it handily doubles up as a treatment for diarrhoea.

Pac-A-Mac

A raincoat that you can roll into a matching bag. Things don't get any simpler. Or uglier. This is something you may have branded as tourist-wear but it will undoubtedly come of use at some point. You may not look like the coolest kid on the campsite, heck, you'll probably be laughed and pointed at.

But when your tormentors are all hospitalised with pneumonia, you'll be the one laughing.

Toilet Roll

You will need it.

Swiss Army Knife

To cut stuff up, or to open bottles.

Duct tape

To tape back together the stuff you cut up. And to close bottles.

Fanny pack

Just like every other country inhabited by people, Iceland too sports its own brand of assholes that are more than eager to steal your belongings (although there are probably fewer, given the scarcity of people on the island). A fanny pack comes in handy when keeping your money, valuables, Swiss Army knife and duct tape safe from folks that probably need them more than you.

Water Bottle/Flask

You can use your flask to store water in when you aren't thirsty. Then, when you get thirsty, you can drink the water. What a plan! What a plan!

Regular Condoms

Icelanders keep forgetting these! It doesn't matter how many TV commercials, radio adverts or shocking statistics are shoved down their throats, nothing seems to spur them into buying a pack of rubbers (let alone using them). So this time make sure to pack them in your bum bag, unless you want to bring back a permanent souvenir. Like chlamydia. ♡

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Booking services and information centres are entitled to use a Tourist Board logo on all their material. The logos below are recognised by the Icelandic Tourist Board.



List of licenced Tour Operators and Travel Agencies on: visiticeland.com

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Numismatic Museum



The Central Bank and National Museum of Iceland jointly operate a numismatic collection that consists of Icelandic notes and coins, foreign money from earlier times, especially if mentioned in Icelandic sources, and more recent currency from Iceland's main trading partner countries. A selection from the numismatic collection is on display in showcases on the ground floor of the Central Bank's main building.

Situated in the Central Bank's main building in Kalkofnsvegur 1, Reykjavík. Open Mon.-Fri. 13:30-15:30. Free admittance.

The Diversion Sessions

Markús Bjarnason discusses his music

Words

Santiago Angel

Photography

Julia Staples

Former Skátar rocker Markús Bjarnason shows a softer side on his new album ‘Now I Know.’ Recorded under the name Markús & the Diversion Sessions, ‘Now I Know’ is a set of more gentle acoustic songs written over the past few years. Grapevine met up with Markús to discuss his new path.

“Diversion Sessions is just, like, the concept or the name of the project. That’s the Diversion Sessions,” Markús tells me when I ask what the name denotes, and if there is a band behind it. “The diversion is the guitar; it’s a session of songs that have been piling up for ten years.”

You’d played these songs before, but this is the first time they’re released?

‘Now I Know’ is a seven song album. It’s not an EP, but it’s not a full CD either. It’s like twenty minutes. It’s the songs that could stand alone, without drums and without extra instruments. I’ve played a lot of them live, but I added a little extra vocals, a little bit of percussion for the record. The next album is going to be more complex, with more drums and bass and some different stuff.

How does your solo stuff differ from your work with bands?

I used to play bass in a prog-rock type band, Sofandi. We played a lot of melodic stuff. We put out two albums that I was really proud of, I was happy with them. I then joined a progressive rock band – well, not really progressive, more of a noisy guitar rock band with a progressive elements – called Skátar. I sang and screamed there, as well as playing synths. I’ve been in these bands where you just couldn’t bring in your songs that you’d been writing on your acoustic guitar, simple verse or a sing-a-long. So I had all these pop songs laying around that I’d been playing over and over in my home, and I started playing them, you know, five times a year and then more and more.

It’s a complex thing, when you’re a band it takes more money and more organizing and touring is more difficult. I wanted to do music more, so I decided to make this solo thing real and put out stuff professionally. I’ve been playing solo for two years, and now I’m putting together a band because many of the songs really demand it. I also can’t really play an entire song in one rhythm; I always speed up and think, “Oh, I’ve sped up too much!” Now I really need a drummer.



When I mentioned I’d never heard your music in the US, you said that “There are no countries anymore, everything is on the internet...if you have internet you can just google it.”

It just hasn’t arrived. I was just making a joke, I’m really lazy using the internet, that’s why I’m kind of making fun of it and making fun of myself at the same time. I also am slowly accepting the fact that you have to work on the internet if you want to promote your music; it’s just a thing you have to do. It’s a lot of work, because you have to spend an hour or two hours doing office work. Artists have people doing it for them, but you have to do it yourself, at first.

Are you primarily a musician?

I’m not that schooled in music, I’m not a session player or a musician, I’m not doing gigs whenever, wherever. I’ve been playing in these independent, indie bands that only perform their own songs, and alternative music. So I would never make any real money. But with Skátar, with a progressive rock band, we made some money but it all just went into making more music and into travel. We weren’t losing money, so we were happy. With this I’m aiming to survive from it as a side job, 20-30 percent, two months a year, three months touring, stuff like that. I wouldn’t want to be a full time artist, travelling all the time. I have a family now and the travelling seems like such a hectic job. I work for the city. I work with an after-school program with kids.

Have you found anything that works well when writing music?

Yes. (Pause) Yes, if you really want to write music, like new music, you kind of have to switch between that and learning an instrument. I was learning piano and then I stopped learning piano and a couple of months later I wrote my first song on a piano. It’s the same thing with guitar, I studied guitar for three or four years and then I just stopped. And then I suddenly started picking up the guitar and writing



songs on it. I think if you’re really a good musician then you have feelings, but you’re learning a classical instrument and you’re learning cover songs and theory and blah blah blah. You kind of have to stop and pause that, experience some stuff, leave the instrument alone and pick it up when you’re feeling like you want to create something.

How do you know when something you play is a song, and when a something is nothing?

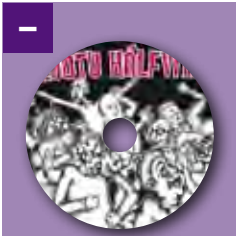
Just when it feels really like a cliché that has been done many times over and there’s nothing new. I sometimes just play something really cliché, really just pop and it’s been done many times before, but then I play it and I find a new angle, or a bridge or something from it and maybe the context makes it funny. Sometimes I write something and I think, “Oh, this has been done,” and I won’t want to play it for anybody. And it’s OK to forget stuff.

I also discovered that if you decide two months from now to record five songs and put them on the internet, a week before you get to the recording part and you’ll sit down and the songs will be ready. It’s really amazing, and if they’re not ready you just start recording and then you just finish them.

Something magical happens, like sending a message to the universe or something: “I’m going to make an album on this day,” and then suddenly this magical thing happens, you invent a really cool riff for it and then the song and everything just comes together, exactly then. But if you don’t even have a name for your project or aren’t planning on doing a gig, and it’s just like really airy, then nothing happens. You have to send a message to the universe. A really good thing for that is a great name for your project or something where you make up a universe for it. You make a world for it.

What’s next for you musically?

This type of thing with a drummer and a bass, I’m just putting together a band. 🍆



Ljótu Hálfvitarnir

Ljótu Hálfvitarnir

ljotuhalfvitarnir

They may be idiots, but that’s no excuse.

Am I the only one not entertained by this stupid gypsy-folk shtick? This ridiculous bullshit pretty much writes itself and should by no means consider itself music, but if it’s comedy you’re looking for, and you find yourself entertained by adequately-rhymed tales of slapstick debauchery, not wearing underwear, amnesiacs, bad dancers and extremely fat people, then look no further. You may also find yourself entertained by the hideous liner art; the fact that the artwork manages to be dumber and more unbearable than the lyrics is a feat of no small accomplishment.

But that’s the thing: the tight traditionalism of the song craft and smooth, grandpa-friendly production tells a tale other than that of anarchic comedians. I think Ljótu Hálfvitarnir secretly long for nothing more than to be a pop band, filling dancehalls full of loving revellers singing along to every word, and, sure enough, there’s a catchy hook or two in every other song, but the lameness deftly conspires to bury it all under a mound of prepubescent ‘humour’.

–SINDRI ELDON



Ourlives

We Lost The Race

ourlives

Pass the laudanum, here comes sonic winter

Thanks, you bastards. I was having a zonked-out Sunday there, minding my own business, before your proggy, introspective tunes made my hangover come up again. This is not, of course, a bad thing: the first track on your wily debut album, ‘Anything Can Happen Now’, has quite lovely strings and such downbeat gorgeousness it meant I cried out half the absinth from my body, which I desperately needed to do. If there they sound a little bit like a world-weary Belle & Sebastian, on other occasions an opiate-mumbly Keane rears its head. This is not a bad thing either. Keane turned out to make some decent music in the end and the lead singer is much taller than you might think. Elsewhere, when things rev up a little, such as ‘No Need’, there’s a Musey drive to the band that suits the reedy voice of Leiturr rather less well, which is a bit of a shame. Oh, and try the title track for one of the reasons we couldn’t get through to the end of the review without mentioning Sigur Rós. Sorry lads.

–JOE SHOOMAN

HOW TO DRIVE SAFELY IN ICELAND

Conditions in Iceland are in many ways unusual and often quite unlike what foreign drivers are accustomed to. It is therefore very important to find out how to drive in this country. In order to reach your destination safely, you must keep your full attention on driving.

LIVESTOCK ON THE ROAD & SINGLE-LANE BRIDGE

In Iceland, you can expect livestock to be on or alongside the road. This is common all over the country, and can be very dangerous. Sometimes a sheep is on one side of the road and her lambs on the other side. Under these conditions, which are common, slow down and expect the lambs or the sheep to run over the road to the other side.

There are many single-lane bridges on the Ring Road. The actual rule is that the car closer to the bridge has the right-of-way. This sign indicates that a single-lane bridge is ahead.

See further instruction on www.drive.is

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Grapevine Grassroots Concert
Hemmi & Valdi, July 23rd 2010

Grapevine Grassroots #18 took place on July 23rd, and featured an avant-garde piece by brass trio, Mora, selected readings by Sigurður Þórir Ámundason and jazz infused electronics from Vibe O' Razor.

Mora, comprised of a trombonist, trumpeter and French horn player, started out with notes that sounded like the tuning of low-pitched sirens. Weaving dissonant tonal patterns together, they managed to create a loose-fitting collage of melancholy sound scenes, falling somewhere in between definitive orchestral movements and flowing atmospheric music. Using extreme breath control, each instrument moved from airy pulsations to sustained, full-bodied tones with the occasional swing note. The trio put down their instruments half way through the piece and picked up 3 electronic megaphones, recreating some of the brass lines through haunting ooohs and aahs. Towards the end, the piece slowly shifted from a nightmarish haze into a funeral-like folk song. Just as soon as a melody was discernable, the music spiralled apart, ending in a cloud of dismal chaotic sounds. As a whole, the experimental sounds and discordance of the piece worked due to constantly changing motion of the chords and the arcing dynamics within each phrase.

Some of the matching octaves could have been tighter and the few and far between major chords could have been expressed with more clarity for a more

pronounced contrast. The musicians sometimes looked unsure of themselves (although it didn't show in the music itself). I would like to have seen more of a visual connection between the musicians. Although not all modern and experimental music needs to be visual, it would have helped Mora's minimalist effects and overall presentation. Throwing in touches of cool jazz, the women of Mora floated briefly into a darker and twisted version of Miles Davis' "Kind of Blue" with a structure similar to an organic Phillip Glass composition. Hopefully Mora will continue doing what they do and put out an album with the stuff they performed on the 24th.

Last of the night was Vibe O' Razor accompanied by a muted trumpet, saxophone and electric guitar. Using a mixer with delay, reverb, and two-track playback, Vibe O' Razor reminded me of Thievery Corporation's 'The Richest Man in Babylon' but with more jazz ambience and less world music influence. The trumpeter and trombonist filled out the sound, changing dance beats into sophisticated electronic music. The brass instruments followed the beat for the most part while the guitar stayed in the background. The guitarist used clean, one-note embellishments that lacked the presence of the brass. Some finger-picking or jazz lines from the guitar would have been nice. The music was pleasant enough to listen to, but seemed be more appropriate as background music at a fancy bar than on a concert stage.

EMILY BURTON



NÓRA
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Arcade Fire." Congratulations, you've just made the official 'World's fucking laziest music comparison'.

But this comparison is perfect for NÓRA's album, 'Er einhver að hlusta'. They've realised it's not about having thirty members all playing the Hurdy Gurdy. Instead, it's all about an expansive, ambitious sound with sweeping highs and melancholic lows. Epic Lo-Fi, if you will.

And it is certainly a stormer. Each track contains simple yet immediate melodies, linked with muscular percussion, slivers of sampled electronica and clear, strong vocals. Soft, intimate moments abound ('Prentvillur'), but they're not afraid to tear it up now and again ('Sæfarinn Ólons').

Oh, and any new bands best pay attention to songs such as 'Horft inn' to get a lesson in how a song should build up to a proper climax.

—BOB CLUNESS

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Article | Gay Rights

Let Freedom And Matrimony Ring

Iceland's queer community get the love they deserve



Words
Rebecca Louder

Photography
Hörður Sveinsson

On June 27, 2010 Iceland became the ninth country to legalise equal marriage between all persons, regardless of gender. This was a milestone that the gay and lesbian community of Iceland had been fighting for since the mid 1980s. While Prime Minister Jóhanna Sigurðardóttir promptly changed her civil union to official married status as the law went into effect, the issue of same-sex union continues to be one of the most contentious and divisive ones throughout most of the world.

Taking it to Alþingi
Iceland has only recently begun making strides towards equality for their homosexual population. The nation first began recognising civil unions between same-sex couples in 1996, mak-

ing them the fourth European nation to grant them. A parliamentary committee was set up in 1992 to investigate the status of lesbians and gay men in Iceland in order to reach new legislation regarding anti-discrimination laws. The committee completed their investigation in 1994 and delivered a lengthy report which, in addition to recommending new regulations for discrimination against homosexuals, unanimously agreed that homosexual couples receive the right to registered partnerships with equal benefits as heterosexual marriages. The committee was split, however, on the issue of adoption and in vitro fertilisation for same-sex couples and could not reach consensus on the matter.

At the time both Samtökin 78, Iceland's gay rights coalition, and the Government Agency for Child Protec-

“Additionally, the National Church of Iceland did not approve of performing ceremonies for same-sex couples so civil unions could only be performed by a judge.”

tion recommended that step-adoption be legalised for children already within same-sex couples, as it would provide important legal protection for both the child and parents. The Icelandic government did not support this and when registered partnerships were first legalised in 1996 it did not include provisions for adoption or assisted pregnancy. It did however award same-sex couples to be awarded joint custody of children in same-sex relationships, making it the first country in the world to pass such legislation. Additionally, the National Church of Iceland did not approve of performing ceremonies for same-sex couples so civil unions could only be performed by a judge. While this caused much tension within the religious community, as parties were very divided on the issue, religious influence had little impact on the passing of the bill as no political party in Iceland has direct religious affiliations. The bill was passed in parliament with 44 votes out of 64, with one vote against, one abstained and 17 members absent.

The law came into effect precisely fourteen years prior to this year's historical new legislation, on June 27 1996, the international gay liberation day (also known as Christopher Street Day). As the registered partnership law came into effect, so did new anti-discrimination laws that added the clause of criminalising actions of hate and persecution based on sexual orientation. The wheels of progress were now in real motion and same-sex couples began hitting up their local judges to seal the deal. In 1996 alone, eleven gay couples and ten lesbian couples entered into civil unions.

Who will save our children?
The number of civil unions over the next decade tapered off somewhat until 2006, when the next big step was made towards the equal rights of same-sex and opposite sex unions: they were finally given the right to

adopt and seek assisted pregnancy. This issue had become paramount to the gay community, as the past decade had brought them more visibility and showed that many of them had children and families. As it stood, they had no legal protection for the rights of their families and were not granted the same protection for children in straight marriages. Amendments to the laws regarding adoption and assisted parentage had been put forth several times to parliament, either going nowhere or being outright rejected.

After much lobbying from Samtökin 78 and the urging of a group of members of parliament led by Guðrún Ögmundsdóttir, another government committee was set up in 2003 to further review the status of gay and straight couples to recommend reforms to the law. The main goals of their investigation were to review the rights of same-sex couples to adopt children and for lesbians to seek in vitro fertilisation, as well as to investigate the exposure and discourse given to the queer community within the education system at the time. After a two-year review process that split the committee on issues several times, the government put forward a bill to equalise the full rights of same-sex couples, granting them adoption and assisted pregnancy rights. The bill came into effect on Christopher Street Day 2006, with a huge celebration at the Reykjavík Art Museum.

We all bleed, we all love
Two years to the day later, the registered partnership bill was further amended so that members of the clergy could perform same-sex unions. At this point, the law of marriage between persons of different gender and the registered partnership bill for persons of same-sex were, on paper, exactly the same. A group of parliamentarians led by Kolbrún Halldórsdóttir proposed a bill in 2008 that argued for unifying the two laws, as many felt it was absurd to have two identical laws with different titles based on gender and sexual orientation. The bill was not brought to a vote, but the fight did not cease.

In March 2009, the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights submitted a new draft of the law to parliament, which would make the law of civil unions obsolete and instead create a single marriage law. The new law elim-

Sailing Loud, Sailing Proud

Cruising for the queer community used to generally refer to trolling for tawdry, anonymous, popper-filled sex in parks and bathhouses, but some genius in the travel industry took the term to a literal level and turned gay cruises into a million dollar idea. Last year during the pride festivities, the Elding Whale Watching company threw an independent queer cruise party that turned into such a smash hit, it sold out within minutes. They had such a great time that they are throwing another one this year and decided to offer it up as an official event in the Gay Pride 2010 programme.

Eva María Þórarinsdóttir is the marketing manager of Elding and amongst the 10% of the company's queer employees. She is also going to be DJing the cruise along with her girlfriend. She says that they are a very gay-friendly company and wanted to take part in the pride celebrations and also give back to the community that many of them are part of. “The gay cruise is very popular with the community because going on a cruise is something we do to escape our daily life,” she told us, “Here in Iceland maybe that is not the case, but it's definitely something fun to celebrate our freedom. It will be very casual and a lot of fun.”

The cruise takes off in Reykjavík's Old Harbour on Friday August 6 at 21:30. It sails for about an hour and a half around the city, giving attendees a nice new perspective of the city. Along with fun, danceable pop tunes, they will be serving up drinks at the bar and everyone will be pretty and witty and gay! The cost is 1.500 ISK and it is recommended to book in advance.

inated the wording of the marriage law as being between a man and a woman to being between two individuals. The law was unanimously voted in on June 11, 2010 with many members of parliament expressing their support for the matter. The queer community's lengthy fight for the full rights to love and raise a family as heterosexual people do has been won and is an example of achieving equality by democracy and persistence, blazing the trail for more countries to recognise everyone's right to love and be loved. ♡

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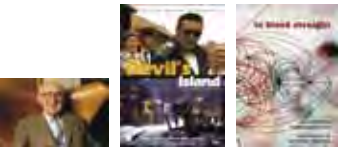
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Travel | Greenland



East Greenland Frozen In Time

A Journey to Kulusuk and Tasiilaq in Ammassalik, Kalaallit Nunaat

A rocky mass jutting out of an ocean full of icebergs revealed itself below the clouds as our plane began its descent into Kulusuk, East Greenland. The icebergs grew larger and larger in sight until our plane touched down on a small dirt runway. Only two hours earlier we were boarding the plane in Reykjavík, Iceland, after making a last minute dash for the bank to exchange our Icelandic krónur for Danish kroner.

TO GREENLAND AND BACK – IN TIME FOR DINNER

Inside what must be one of the smaller international airports in the world, we met our guide, Jóhann Brandsson, an Icelander who has lived in Kulusuk with his wife and son full- or part-time since 1997. “There’s no need to change your clocks,” Jóhann said, holding his arm up above the group and gesturing to his wristwatch.

We would later find out that Greenlanders have a relatively detached relationship with time and engagements. “The only times that matter are 8 and 4,” Jóhann told us, “the opening and closing times at the Settlement House, where Kulusuk villagers meet to drink coffee, do their laundry and partake in workshops. Otherwise, it doesn’t matter.”

Nonetheless, for the group signed up on Air Iceland’s day trip to Kulusuk, it really did seem unnecessary to turn clocks back two hours only to turn them forward again later that evening. The trip, which departs from Reykjavík’s local airport at 10:10 am, returns again at 6:20pm, just in time for dinner. That is, if you are still hungry after the complimentary meal served on board.

TRADITION FROZEN IN TIME

Jóhann proceeded to guide us into town, an idyllic 3-kilometer walk from the airport. To our right, snow capped mountains rose magnificently across the deep blue water. We were on a small island off the coast of the mainland. A lone construction truck drove past us on our left, kicking up a large cloud of dust above the dirt road. “We need rain soon,” Jóhann said. “It has been very dry this summer.”

Before reaching town, we stopped at a small cemetery full of white crosses and graves well groomed with colourful plastic flowers. “You will notice there are no names on the graves,” Jóhann pointed out. “Greenlanders believe in what they call, ‘name-souls’. When someone dies, the name of the deceased is recycled as soon as possible and the soul then acts as a guardian to the newborn bearing their name.”

Whereas West Greenland was colonized and Christianized more than 300 years ago, East Greenland, due to its inaccessible location, remained untouched until a little more than 100 years ago. As a result, Inuit traditions have been preserved to a greater extent in the east than in the west. Even today, supply ships cannot reach East Greenland except for five months of the year when the ice permits. When the first supply ship arrived on June 14 this year, East Greenland’s largest town, Tasiilaq, had been without soda, beer and wine for a month.

SEAL FOR BREAKFAST, LUNCH AND DINNER

From the top of the hill past the graveyard, a view of the town finally opened up before us—a picturesque assortment of green, yellow, blue and red wooden houses, where some 300 Greenlanders make their

home. In the foreground, their small harbour was full of icebergs and motorboats.

Greenlanders are seal hunters. “They eat seal for breakfast, lunch and dinner, if they have to,” Jóhann told us. Traditionally, the seal is either boiled or dried and it can be seen hanging next to people’s houses around town. Yet, fast food has made it to the island and the town store was well stocked with the same goods you might find in a Danish grocery store.

The Danish influence is undeniable. Although in a recent referendum 75% of Greenlanders said they wanted independence from Denmark, Jóhann didn’t think it could happen. “Denmark heavily subsidizes the country, providing half the annual budget,” he explained.

The unemployment rate in Kulusuk is 70%, the biggest employers being the Kulusuk airport and hotel. “But, the figure doesn’t take into account those who go out and hunt seal for their families,” Jóhann reasoned. “Of course there are those who have given up and stopped hunting, but with nothing here, many are doing the best they can and some are doing quite well.”

A TIGHTLY KNIT COMMUNITY

When we reached town, the tour broke up to allow for some free time. With so many people, so to speak, unemployed, there were few people hanging out about town. Yet, Jóhann told us that social integration is a central tenet of Greenlandic society. Families are important and an outcast member would not survive long.

We walked past one man feeding seal meat to his dogs. Greenlandic dogs are working dogs em-

ployed to pull snow sleds in the winter. They remain outside year round, working during the winter and when the snow melts in the summer, they are kept chained to the ground because snow sleds are of little use. To prevent the breed from losing its ability to withstand the arctic conditions, Greenland forbids dogs from being brought into the country.

To survive the imaginably harsh isolation of the arctic, it too only seems natural that Greenlanders have developed important mechanisms of survival, living in tightly knit families and sharing food, being one of them.

KAYAKING AND DRUM DANCING

Reconvening with the group, Jóhann brought us to the edge of the water to see traditional kayaking and drum dancing. As we looked out onto the ocean, Kulusuk Mayor Pele Maratse came kayaking into view. “If he gains anymore weight, he will have to get a new kayak,” Jóhann joked. An Inuit invention, the traditional seal skin kayak is tailored to fit the individual. Even special anoraks were made to fit around the opening of the kayak to keep the kayaker dry. Today, the Greenlandic words “kayak” and “anorak” are borrowed in languages around the world.

Then, dressed in a traditional white anorak, sealskin boots, and beads, Anda Kuitse came before us to demonstrate traditional drum dancing. Drum dances served to entertain, heal and solve judicial disputes. Grabbing an enthusiastic guest from the group, Anda demonstrated a judicial dispute. You wouldn’t have known it by the big grin plastered across his face, but he was delivering insult after insult in Greenlandic, such as, “you are a



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lousy hunter and cannot support a wife.” After the exchange, which might be compared to a modern day rap battle, the community decided who won the dispute.

And with that, the tour came to an end and everyone piled into small motorboats for a 15-minute ride back to the airport through the iceberg-laden waters. The boat ride costs an extra 30 DKK, but it is well worth it. And, when checking in to your flight, be sure to ask for a seat on the left side of the plane, (seats A and B), because you don’t want to miss the incredible view of Greenland as you fly off back to Reykjavik again.

EXTENDING YOUR STAY

After the guided day tour, the Grapevine decided to spend a couple of extra days exploring East Greenland on our own. In addition to spending more time in Kulusuk, our adventures took us to Tasiilaq, which is a short helicopter or boat ride from the island of Kulusuk. The following is a small sample of what we did:

KULUSUK

Hike in Kulusuk – There is a hike in Kulusuk, which leads you up to a cliff overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. It’s a nice 10 km walk each way, and

Hotel Kulusuk offers rides if you are not much for walking. The view of icebergs, some of them poking through a layer of low-lying clouds, is spectacular.

Night at Hotel Kulusuk – Hotel Kulusuk provided us with a night’s stay in clean rooms and comfortable beds. Be sure to ask for a room with a view over the water. The hotel offers complimentary breakfast and serves lunch and dinner as well. Expect Danish cuisine.

Boat Ride to Tasiilaq – The best way to get to Tasiilaq from Kulusuk for a reasonable price is to find someone at the harbour who is heading that way. We happened to see Georg Utuaq walking with a couple girls carrying a tank of fuel and large coats, a sure sign they were on their way to sea. Lucky for us, they were going to Tasiilaq to do some shopping and Georg was happy to give us a lift in exchange for a few hundred crowns. We climbed into his small motorboat and, equipped with a compass and a GPS, he navigated with ease between the large and small icebergs standing in the way between Kulusuk and Tasiilaq. The trip is incredible. Be sure to dress warmly.

TASIILAQ

Visit Ammassalik Museum – Museum Director Carl-Erik Holm gave us a wonderful run through of

the history of East Greenland. When East Greenlanders first came into contact with the western world in 1885, they lived in turf houses and wore sealskin and face paint. In the last 100 years they have experienced a rapid modernisation. Carl is also a great resource about life in East Greenland today, sharing tidbits such as East Greenland ran out of soda, wine and beer a month before ice conditions allowed the supply ship make into the harbour on June 14 this year.

Dinner at The Red House – Finding Greenlandic cuisine is not simple. We were told the best way to try seal for example, is to ask the locals around town if they have any. Otherwise, there really isn’t a market for it on the street. Another way to experience Greenlandic cuisine is to eat dinner at The Red House. Robert Peroni, who runs the guesthouse and restaurant, uses Greenlandic ingredients purchased from the locals as much as possible, although he admits the cook tends to add a French or Italian flair. “Eating plain boiled seal meat day after day is not that exciting,” he told us matter of factly.

The fixed menu for the evening included Greenlandic winter mussels (small and salty), a halibut fish soup (creamy and delicious), minke whale bourguignon (not unlike beef bourguignon) and a raisin cake (I suppose there’s no such thing as a

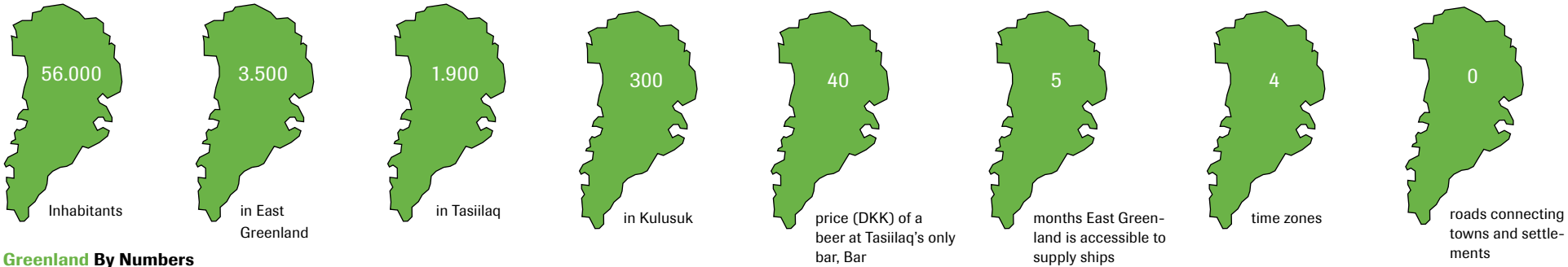
Greenlandic dessert). Two thumbs up for this one. Trying the local cuisine is a must, Robert was very friendly, and everyone is provided with a comfortable pair of crocs to wear inside, which is just fun.

Have a drink at the bar, “Bar” – Getting a drink at Tasiilaq’s only bar is a good place to meet socially lubricated locals (as it is in any town). It wasn’t long before Sophie, a friendly Greenlander, waved to us from a couple of tables down and welcomed us to join her at a table with her friends.

Night at Hotel Angmagssalik – Greenlandic brothers run Hotel Angmagssalik and Hotel Kulusuk, and so it’s not surprising that the hotels are quite similar. This hotel sits on a hill overlooking the town, their soccer field, and the bay. The view is fantastic.

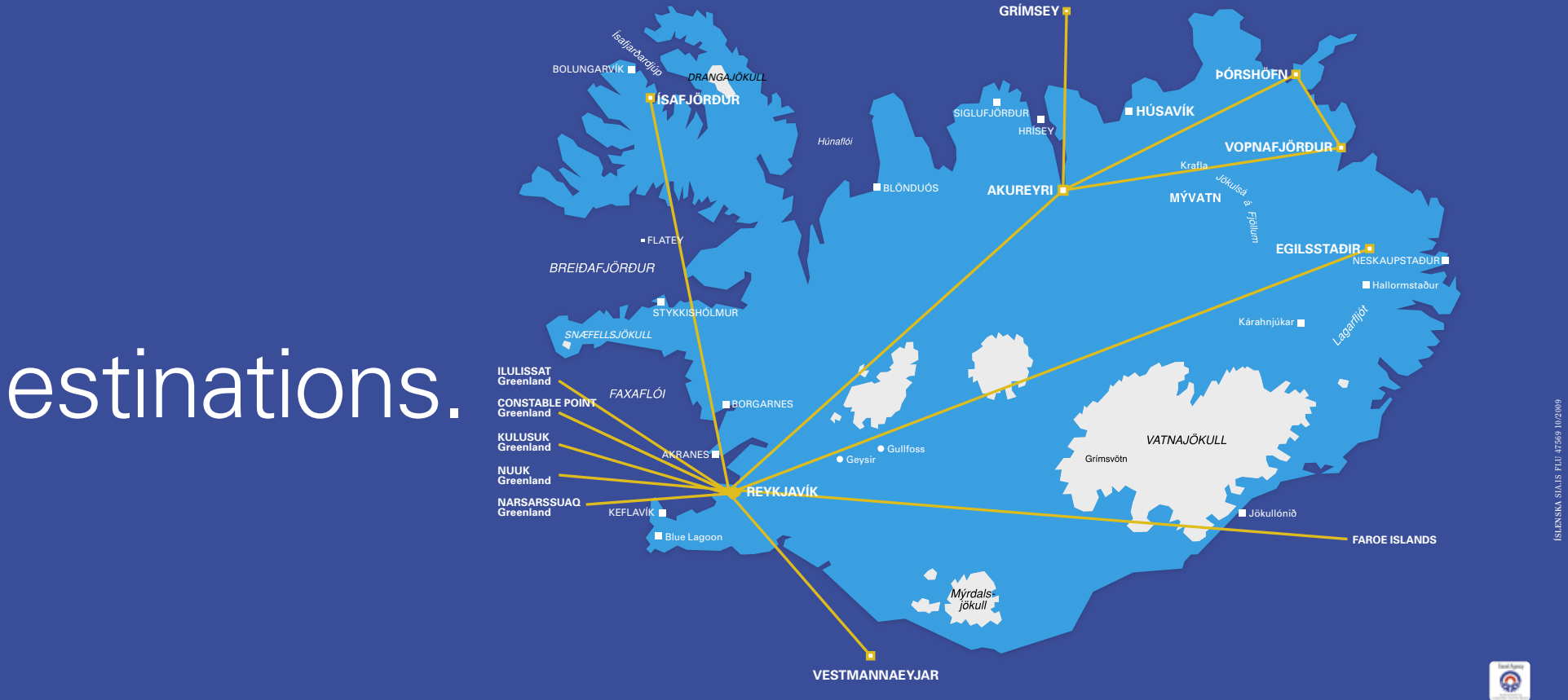
Talk to People – Greenland is called “Kalaallit Nunaat” in Greenlandic, which translates to “Land of the People.” In our experience, Greenlandic and Danish locals were exceedingly friendly and interesting. So, the last piece of advice I leave is to get to know the people. 🍷

✍️ ANNA ANDERSEN
📷 JULIA STAPLES



Greenland By Numbers

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The Way To The Great Valley

Maxing and relaxing in Þjórsádalur and Landmannalaugar

Landmannalaugar is one of the many beautiful places in Iceland that is highly spoken of and kind of tricky to access. The highly geothermically active area is located just east of Mt. Hekla in the Fjallabak nature reserve, up in the Icelandic highlands. This makes it accessible pretty much only by 4x4 vehicles because the roads going up there are ROUGH. You can attempt to get there in a compact vehicle if you have no regard for the road laws (F-roads indicate 4x4 only) or you don't care about your car (don't take a rental though, they will fine you), but it is not easy driving.

Our day tour to Landmannalaugar provided by Reykjavik Excursions started bright and early in Reykjavik and headed towards the Þjórsádalur valley, also known as the Saga Valley for the location figuring several times in the Settlement Sagas and Icelanders Sagas. Our tour guide on the bus was extremely chatty as soon as the wheels started turning and kept up an incredible stamina for espousing various facts and extremely random tidbits about Iceland for the next several hours. Despite the incessant talking over the bus intercom, the drive through the valley was really conducive for taking a really deep nap.

The Destruction Of Iceland's Nature Tour

The description of the day tour on the website said that we would be stopping at a reconstructed medieval farm house, but I was sort of stunned and very confused to find out this was not the case. Instead, we were just told the story of Gaukur á stöng, a Viking who was bludgeoned to death with an axe and had a legendary bar in Reykjavik named after him (now the site of Sódóma, Bakkus and Venue). We also quickly stopped at Hjálparfoss, a cute little waterfall next to the not-so-cute Búrfell power station.

The next couple of hours of the trip somehow ended up mostly pointing out the various power stations and dams that have been built in the region in order to harness the massive hydro-electric potential of the region. While these places were being drawn to the tour group's attention as points of pride and achievement, I could just feel my stomach churning thinking of all the land that was flooded and destroyed in

order to build these dams. By the fourth one our guide pointed out, I decided this tour might as well have been called Destruction of Iceland's Nature Tour.

A different world

We finally hit the Fjallabak nature reserve and, damn, it is really nice! It's totally unspoiled and really feels as though you are transported into an entirely different world. The harsh, dirt road made it a bit difficult on the head and stomach, so anti-nauseants are a must if one is prone to motion sickness, but it's still a fun drive. The first quick stop was at one of the smaller crater lakes of the area, an intensely cold blue pool plunged deep down in a ring of sharp, iron-coloured hills. We teetered on the tiny spit of land overlooking it until the cold wind became too much for us and headed off to our main destination.

As we descended the final stretch towards Landmannalaugar, the hills in the distance seemed to rise through the clouds out of nowhere and never end. The closer we got, the brighter the sun began to shine and the colours in the hills began to burst out like a double-rainbow. We forded two small rivers and were finally at our main attraction. We disembarked into the campsite and walked around, bemused by its resemblance to a California desert hippie community. Our guide led us through the main area and pointed out the swimming area in the natural hot-stream and the beginning of the Laugavegur hiking trail that leads from Landmannalaugar to Þórsmörk (about a four day hike).

Surprisingly, of the twenty or so people in the group, a grand total of three brought their swim gear. So the three of us set off to the hot-stream and hopped into the beautiful, natural bathtub surrounded by a field full of Arctic cottongrass and sheep peacefully grazing nearby. Lying down in the hot-stream is instant relaxation and detoxification. The stream ranges temperatures as you move through it, comfortably warm around the wooden stairs we climbed in on, much hotter upstream, and no luck finding a cool patch. We easily stayed in for about an hour, but could have stayed longer, had time permitted—the tour only stopped here for two very brief hours. Too bad, because it would have also been nice to do some walking around before heading back to the bus, but alas.



As we descended the final stretch towards Landmannalaugar, the hills in the distance seemed to rise through the clouds out of nowhere and never end."

One final nap

So we got back on our coach for the bumpy ride out of Fjallabak that conjured up quotes from The Land Before Time to mind; heading West (follow the bright circle...), past the volcanic rock formations nicknamed 'Jurassic Park' (the rock that looks like a long-neck...) and past the beautiful Mt. Hekla (the mountains that burn). I curled up for one final-nostalgia induced nap for the homestretch of the trip with a bouquet of Arctic cottongrass in my hand. And even our tour guide was quiet. 🐾

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Ask Paola

Psychologist Paola Cardenas answers your dilemmas

 While I was sitting in a coffeehouse in downtown Reykjavík minding my own business I could not help but overhear a couple next to me arguing. It all seemed to start with the expression “take a chill pill.” I just want to clarify that I don’t go around coffee houses eavesdropping on people... OK, maybe if the conversation is interesting. Anyway, so then I started wondering what this expression really means, and why do we use it as a way to insult people?

Knowing that medications like antidepressants, anti-anxiety and ADHD medicines are commonly prescribed today and that their use has increased considerably in the past decade, I wonder if the meaning of this expression has become more of a suggestion rather than an insult. This imaginary pill seems to be the recommended remedy of choice when we want to tell someone to just relax, chill out and stop worrying or stressing about something. I think maybe we should chill out in prescribing the chill pill and begin acknowledging people’s feelings and concerns. It might be time to go back and reinstate the more compassionate hippie expression “I hear ya, man.”

On this compassionate note I heard your questions and here are my answers.

I have been feeling down for some time, and my boyfriend suggested I started taking antidepressants. I am just wondering what are the side effects of antidepressants and if there are other options for me?

If you’re suffering from major depression, antidepressant medication may relieve some of your symptoms, but is not the only treatment for depression. Some of the typical side effects of antidepressants are nausea, insomnia, anxiety, decreased sex drive and dry mouth.

An alternative to antidepressants is psychotherapy, which has proven to be

as effective as antidepressant medication. Therapy can help you overcome your sadness and teach you to recognise symptoms and prevent future relapses.

I suggest you meet with your family doctor and/or a therapist and tell them how you feel. Doing some research on the Internet about the pros and cons of antidepressant medication and therapy can also be helpful. Learning the facts about the different treatments and weighing the benefits against the risks can help you decide on what treatment is right for you.

And one more thing to think about... how do we know what real happiness is when we have never experienced real sadness?

I am really bothered these days by a crush I have on someone. I am doing the classic waiting by the phone and refreshing my e-mail inbox and seeing them visibly online and feeling completely frustrated at their lack of response to me. I feel adolescent and obsessed over this. I think what I am just wondering is what I can do to stop this kind of behaviour. I am an adult and I'd like to stop feeling like I am thirteen every time I begin to like a person.


I just want to start by saying that what you are describing is perfectly normal. We have all experienced some of what you are describing and it really does not have to do with age or maturity level; this type of behaviour is universal. Irrational crushes are so common that we have them for celebrities, older men/women, professors, our boss, etc.



You speak about obsessing about whether they are online and waiting for them to contact you; I would not worry about that, this is just part of the “crush behaviour.” A crush is one of our original human impulses; it is the need to be with someone who complements us and that we imagine ourselves happily spending the rest of our lives with.

The feelings involved in the experience of having a crush are both exhilarating and uncomfortable and might even feel overwhelming, but don't forget that what you are going through is a life affirming experience, a *raison d'être* and these are the sort of feelings that keep us alive. There are many people out there stuck in empty relationships that would love to experience what you are living right now. I suggest you embrace this experience, but if it starts taking control of your life please write again.

Why does it affect me so much what others think of me and how can I stop worrying about that sort of thing?

Humans are social beings and in many ways we depend on others approval and acceptance. We are part of a group and as a group we all have an effect on and are affected by others. To some extent, we all care about what others think of us and want others to like us. The important thing is where you stand on the scale; how much is this affecting your life? One thing is considering other people’s opinions and another thing is to be directed by those opinions. You might need to be more confident and trust your instincts, when you do so you can stop being afraid about making decisions that others might not approve of. “Dance as if nobody was watching”—this sentence might be old, but the meaning is as current as the economic crisis in Iceland. Once we stop worrying about what others think of us, we start living. So as a first experiment, the next time you go out dancing put on your purple shirt and your disco dancing shoes and move like there was no tomorrow.

Need some help solving your dilemmas? Ask Paola by sending your questions to:
askpaolasala@gmail.com 

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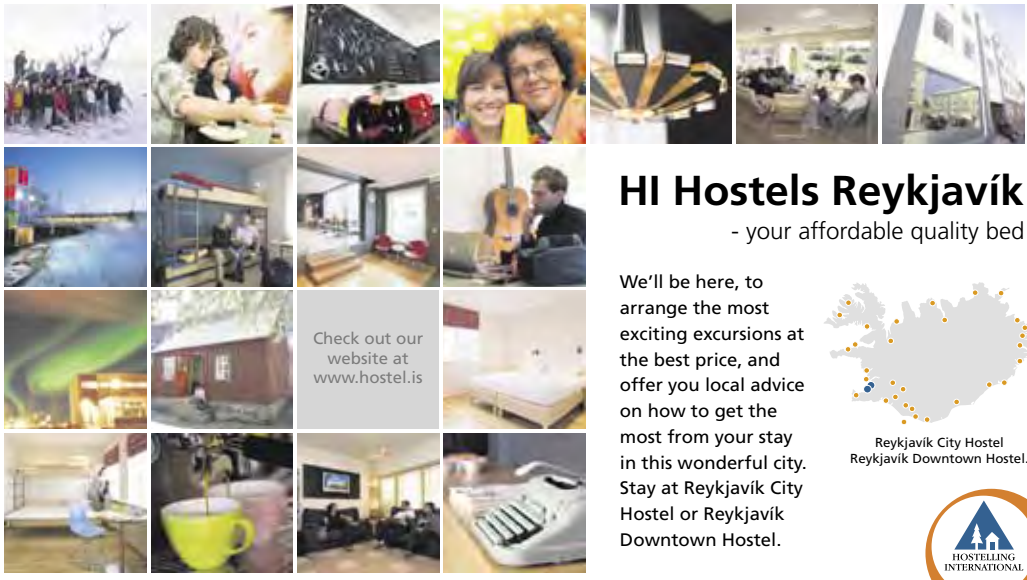
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Vikings in America

by Graeme Davis
Birlinn, 2009



By now we all know that Scandinavian settlers reached Greenland in the late 900s and built settlements there that endured for more than four hundred years. Since the 1960s, we've known that the literary accounts of Greenlanders' voyages to America are at least broadly true: the remains of a settlement at the northern tip of Newfoundland have been excavated and there is no question that it was of Scandinavian design.

Is that all to the story, though? Was Scandinavian interaction with North America limited to a few voyages between Greenland and L'Anse aux Meadows? Or, over the course of those four centuries, did the settlers in the Greenland colonies journey more widely in what's now Canada—trips which did not happen to get recorded on calfskin manuscripts back in Iceland?

Graeme Davis sets out to answer this question in this book. Davis has a Ph.D. from St. Andrews University and has previously written on Germanic linguistics and the early history of Orkney and Shetland. The book starts with a summary of Scandinavian expansion across the North Atlantic from roughly 800 to 1000 AD. Then Davis turns to his real questions — where did the Greenlanders travel to? He reviews the evidence of Greenlandic contacts with Newfoundland and “Vinland,” Ellesmere Island and the High Arctic, Hudson Bay, and with Dorset Culture and Inuit settlers.

His presentation is clear, forceful (to the point of

being overconfident), set out in easy-to-read language, and relatively even-handed. The book is very well written, keeps the text down to 180 pages, and includes helpful maps and illustrations.

For me, among Davis's most interesting points were that there is evidence that the Greenlanders made summer visits to collect eider down far to the north on Ellesmere Island, where remains of Nordic-style cairns and eider duck shelters have been found. Another of his points is that L'Anse aux Meadows is probably not the settlement mentioned in the surviving saga literature, that the site itself gives evidence that voyages to America were more numerous and wide-ranging than the literary remains suggest, and that the Greenlanders' most pressing reason to sail to America was to collect timber.

Davis doesn't hesitate to plunge into controversial and speculative topics, such as the Kensington runestone (which came to attention in Minnesota in the late 1800s and bears an inscription allegedly left by Swedish and Norwegian explorers in the 1360s), the Newport Tower (a stone structure in Rhode Island that may well be from the 1600s but that some have thought pre-colonial) and the Vinland Map (an early European map which shows the North Atlantic continent but which many think is a hoax). Davis is scornful of the scholars who reject out of hand the idea that Scandinavians could have made it to Minnesota or Rhode Island, but demanding in the standard of proof he would require from those who want to argue for genuineness. He is, however, fanatically open-minded about the possibilities of finding more evidence of Scandinavian contact with North America—and given recent the history of discovery, that seems like a wise stance to me.

I would like to be able to praise his approach as critical and sceptical overall, but Davis himself goes a bit off the deep end in some of his speculations. I wasn't convinced by his suggestion that a year-round European settlement on Ellesmere Island survived after the end of the Greenland colony (page 101). His argument that the word America derives from the Scandinavian word merki didn't convince me either. His certainty that we will eventually find evidence that the Vikings reached Minnesota (p. 129) seems a little too open-minded to me. I also thought the idea that the Narragansett Indians of Rhode Island gained tubercu-

losis resistance by intermarrying with Scandinavian settlers (pp. 160-165) a bit more far-fetched than he does, and his figure of “tens of thousands” of Vikings who made the journey to North America (p. 5) seems a little high. However, I think Davis is right to urge us not to stifle research by rejecting such ideas in a knee-jerk way.

Davis footnotes his text, but not well enough. The reader who wants to confirm his assertions or do further reading on a given topic may feel frustrated. He mentions recent DNA studies of Victoria Island Inuit to see if they had partly Scandinavian ancestors (p. 127) but provides no actual reference. We are told that Columbus spent the winter of 1477-1478 in Ólafsvík on Snæfellsnes (p. 5), but the evidence cited for this assertion feels rather vague and I learned elsewhere that it is controversial. We learn about the apparent survival of Dorset Culture communities in Hudson Bay as late as 1902 (p. 134), but get incomplete suggestions for further reading. Davis cites explorers' reports of Scandinavian remains on Ellesmere Island, but no recent reviews. Despite his saying that he wanted to keep the book “free from a heavy critical apparatus,” the lack of references weakens his credibility. Davis is a linguist, not an archaeologist or anthropologist, and my confidence in his ability to make judgements from physical evidence is a little shaky.

Overall though, we can thank Davis for pointing out how patchy the archaeological work in northern Canada has been, how unreliable the sagas are as a historical source, and how little we can rule out about Greenlanders' contacts with the American continent. He convinced me that there's a distinct possibility that more evidence of contact will be discovered in the next decades, as it was in the last. He gets credit for trying to answer fascinating questions in a popular but critical way. It would be nice if Davis had worked a little harder to boost the credibility of the book, and some statements need to be taken with a grain of salt. Vikings in America should be balanced with other books on the Canadian Arctic (I liked Robert McGhee's The Last Imaginary Place). But I still recommend it to anyone with a casual interest in the medieval North Atlantic. 🍷

Fist And Shout
Yet another weekend in the life of Reykjavík's lovable professional hipster

I went to Bakkus' one-year birthday celebration. I was to help with the decorations and set up a kissing booth.

I got there late, seeing as there was a woman in my bed when I woke up. The party started at four but I was too fucked from the previous night to start drinking. Instead, I went to the pricey Sushismiðjan and got vegetable sushi sans cheese and egg cake. Every time I go there they screw up my order at least twice. If this had been in Amerikkka the meal would've been free. Nice people though.

Then I decided to try out the veggie burger at Hamborgarabúllan. It was really good, but it was definitely missing something. It was still better than the food at Á Næstu Grösum. I got tired of their bland tasting food and partially cooked rice a long time ago.

When I got back Einar Sonic was playing his usual set of crowd-pleasing post-punk. Bakkus was giving away loads of free beer and whale meat. There was fish stew from Ísafjörður on offer and free face painting. No bouncy castle though. It was like a less exhausting version of Eistnaflug or a Gathering of the Juggalos minus the meth.

I think I kissed around fifteen people that night. At least four of them were women. Some even came for seconds. One pervert wanted one for free. Felt dirty at first, but then got used to it. I'm thinking about prostituting myself full time if this writing thing doesn't work out.

A lot of people lost more than their minds that night. I lost my sunglasses and, thanks to Bob Cluness, my innocence. I didn't see that many regulars as I thought I would. They were probably camping or at a touristcore concert.

Fist Fokkers created a mini-mosh on the Astroturf. Reykjavík!-lite fucked with people's heads a la Flipper or free jazz-era Black Flag. Afterwards there was a dance performance with contact mic scribbles by Slack9Bricks. Mr. Silla played next. She's by far one of the most sincere performers I've ever seen.

Later on DJ Musician set the roof on fire and Quadruplos brought the ruckus to the ladies. Fell in love with those guys when I saw them play at Crymó Gallerí.

There was a helium tank in the kissing booth. A lot of people got some shots of helium as well as a kiss. Outside I found a three-joint weed circle. I was very surprised to see a certain artist there. She still hasn't introduced herself to me. I've come to learn in my two years here that almost everybody here is high on something, and that I should stop being surprised when I see the most unlikely person snorting in the bathroom. I've also come to learn that everybody here has fucked each other.

Other than everybody feigning surprise at me rolling in the fake grass, this night is up there with Airwaves '08 and Eistnaflug '10. Afterwards a girl told me that somebody had peed on it during a performance. Still have to confirm that. 🍷

Reading The Eddas (With Google Translate)

Living abroad I regularly get asked about this miraculous language I speak—Icelandic—and if it's true that we make new words for everything under the sun and can read the 13th century Eddas as easily as if we were drinking ice-cold mead in the midnight sun. Icelandic is supposed to be pure and untouched. The language that stood still, century after century, like a bee in amber, so that Icelanders could drink their skulls off with Breezers in Ibiza and brag to the world.

All of this would be sufficiently intolerable if it were true—but as a collective national deception which fosters a rampantly conservative attitude towards language it's causing infernal mayhem on a daily basis. Not only does every new generation feel less and less comfortable manoeuvring within this immovable 19th century construction we call 13th century Icelandic, but it actually generates a sort of slow, stale death where (mostly younger) people give up on adapting words to their (younger) language and pick up foreign words and sentences (primarily from English) untouched and unrecontextualised—i.e., they give up on their mother tongue.

Let me just state this clearly for the record, and let no one tell you otherwise: Icelanders can NOT read 13th century Icelandic any better than they can speak Swedish or German (i.e. a few can, most

can't). The only people who can properly read the Eddas are those who have either learned to read Old Norse or have access to the texts in modern translation—that is to say (almost) everyone who speaks any other language than Icelandic (since the myth of us understanding them relies on us pretending to be able to, modernising the texts would be tantamount to treason).

The fact is that Icelandic changed very much through the centuries and varied immensely between parts of the country (making it even harder for a modern man to read 17th century Hallgrímur Pétursson in the original than 13th century Snorri Sturluson) but all of Icelandic's peculiarities—it's dialects and accents, as well as common Latin and Danish phrases—were killed off and the language homogenised and rebound by 19th century nationalist poets and scholars who teamed up with a Danish (!) linguist with a fetish for a 12th century Icelandic grammatical treatise. And as for neologisms; yes, we have “sími” (telephone), “sjónvarp” (TV) and “tölva” (computer)—but internet in Icelandic is just “internet”, the hood (of a car) is “húdd”, and video is “vídeó”. Every other word is Nordic by origin, and yet conservationists forbid Scandinavianisms like “ske” (happen) but not “bíll” (car) or “jörð” (ground). These people are perhaps shallow enough to think that their rules make sense—and arrogant enough

to convince others.

Neologisms are fine—they are creative and fun, and we should have shitloads of them. But you can't boss around a language like this. If Icelandic is to survive (let alone thrive) as a language it has to have an enjoyable presence, it has to be an enjoyable experience for the people talking and hearing it. The moment a language becomes an obligation it ceases to induce anyone with passion—except, of course, for the irritable pedagogue who feels he or she can constantly “teach” others how they should speak their own mother tongue. Icelandic, just as any language, is (mostly) comprised of foreign words, and our grammar—like our sayings, idioms and proverbs—makes variably much sense. The new silly bits aren't any worse than the old, traditional silly bits. Language is, when observed up close, a very illogical thing—despite all of its inherent logic and morbid obduracy (do I contradict myself? Very well then, I contradict myself ...)

In short. A people's language ruled by the fist of the eternally incensed and bitterly arrogant will become less and less wieldy with time until it no longer does the trick, until it is no longer capable of carrying the thoughts of the people, whereupon the people will move up and out, pick up and leave—adios, goodbye, nice to know ya. 🍷

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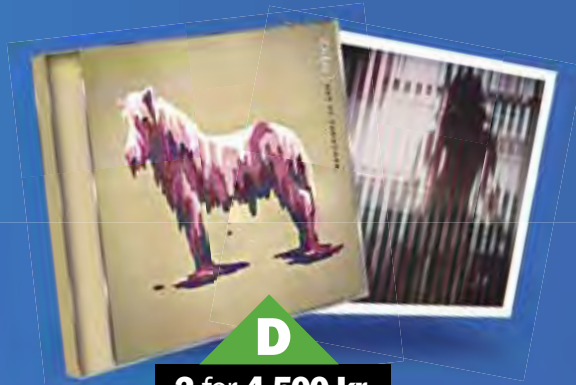
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PAGE 24

I had a pair of clown shoes that were the most colourful, horrible things you'll ever see but I liked them and I wore them. I think I only wore them once because people were so terrible, and it's like, why? It's just something on your feet, it gets dirty and nasty over time anyway.

Haffi Haff is all that. And more.

PAGE 8

Let her put her money where her mouth is, as I am personally doing.

Magma Energy CEO Ross Beaty proposes to Björk

PAGE 8

“please don't insult our intelligence by playing the great benefactor“

Björk responds to Ross Beaty's proposal

PAGE 18

How am I supposed to live with myself if I stand back and potentially allow the worst possible scenario to arise, without attempting to fight it? Iceland has given me so much, I feel as if Iceland's nature was bestowed upon me and all the rest of us as a gift, and I feel a great need to defend it. I simply cannot ignore that.

Björk, on her fight

PAGE 6

If I do not exist, then neither do you. I have a hard time believing that. The facts speak for themselves. If I am not real, then how could I fly to Finland, send myself a postcard with a picture of Tarja Halonen, the President of Finland, fly back home and welcome the mailman that brought me the card? I don't know.

Mayor Jón Gnarr welcomes you to Reykjavík

PAGE 26

They may be idiots, but that's no excuse.

Sindri Eldon on how Ljótu Hálfvitarnir do not cast a lovely gypsy spell over him

PAGE 22

“They should never breed mixed dogs because they don't cost anything. They don't have any value.”

A Reykjavík dog owner explains why mixed dogs are not as special as purebreds in Iceland

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