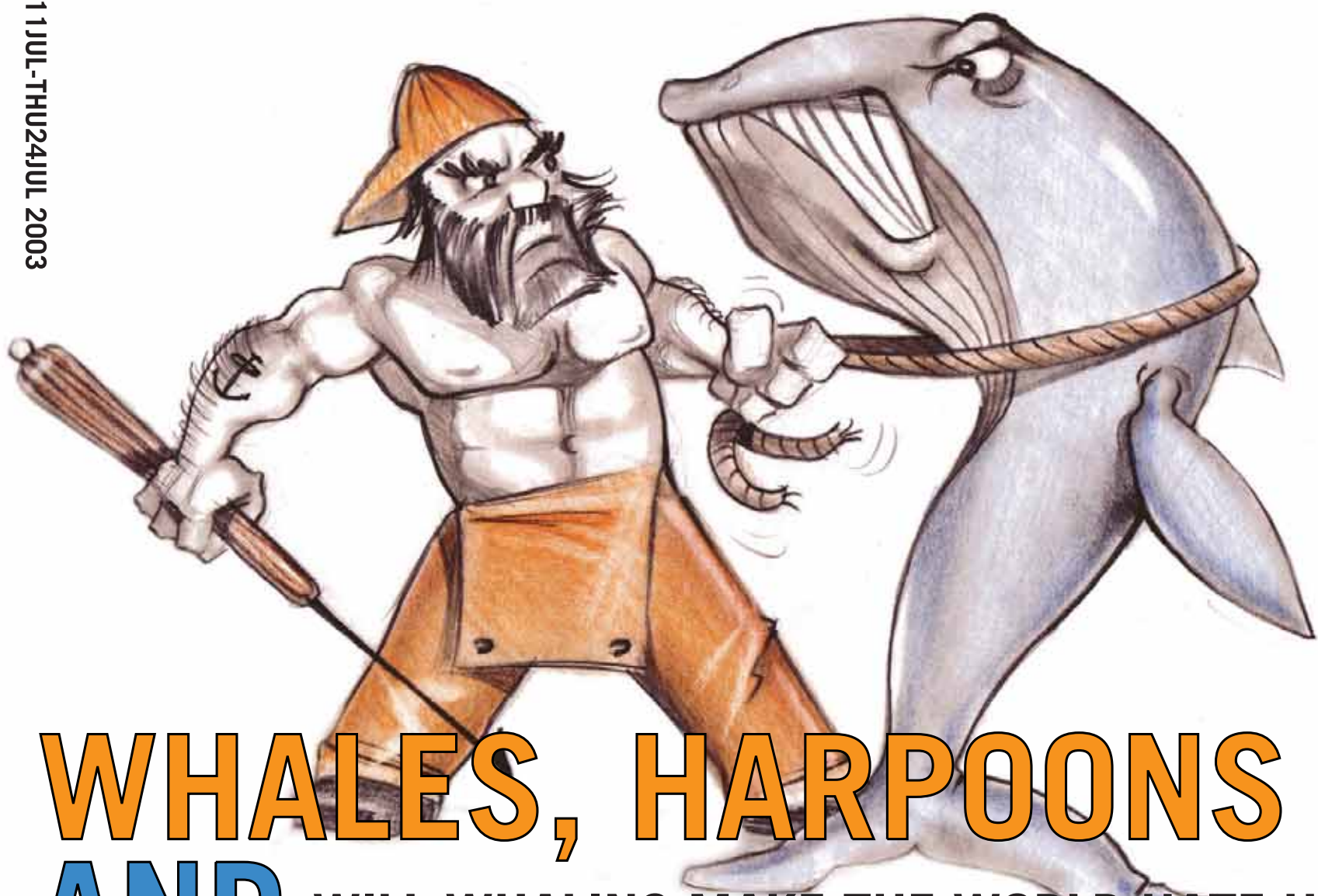




T H E R E Y K J A V Í K

GRAPE VINE

ISSUE3 FRI11JUL-THU24JUL 2003



WHALES, HARPOONS AND WILL WHALING MAKE THE WORLD HATE US? OTHER WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

THE REYKJAVÍK GRAPEVINE - ISSUE3 FRI11JUL - THU24JUL 2003

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AND WELL AND LIVING IN
REYKJAVÍK

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GO JUMP OFF A CLIFF:
A RECREATIONAL SUGGESTION

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MASSACRE TO KEIKO:
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LETTERS

Feel like bitching about the weather or the prices, need reassurance but your friends won't talk to you, want to open your heart but even the drunks at your local bar won't listen, just can't stop raving about Grapevine or if there's anything at all we can do for you, you've always got a sympathetic ear here in the letters column (especially for the latter). Please send your mail to grapevine@strik.is, or just stick it in the mailbox addressed to:

The Reykjavík Grapevine, Blómvallagata 2, 101 Reykjavík.

Dear Grapevine,
Greetings from an Alaskan, here cycling through Iceland for two months. Upon my arrival in Reykjavik I happened to pick up a copy of the first edition of Grapevine. After the Independence Day festivities and dancing in the rain, I retreated to my cozy tent and had a look at your publication. Not only did it have the answers to several questions I had been pondering, but I found myself laughing out loud at least a dozen times! It had everything a keen visitor such as myself would want – cultural and natural history, a bit of politics, music and film news and even an explanation of why getting smashed is a favorite pastime. I can hardly wait to find a copy of the second edition (no one here in Húsavík has heard of it, might I find one in Akureyri?) Anyway, thank you so much for providing this little gem – I enjoyed every word. I have cycled nearly halfway around the island already (gotta love those killer tailwinds...) and have found the people to be friendly and helpful. Looking forward to exploring the north coast.

Sincerely,
Suzanne Greenwood
Homer, Alaska

God bless you too. Hope you survive your trip, and that you'll continue to find these little pockets of civilisation that carry Grapevine.

Hi There,
Nice paper!!! It is great to have an English paper for those of us that just can't get the language or any language except the one we were forced to learn as kids. Luckily my brain was in better condition back then. I would suspect there are some traditionalists in Iceland that are not too keen on you producing an English paper? They have a tendency to want to keep what they have as is without outsiders spoiling things, especially like promoting a foreign language in their country. Looking forward to hearing from you.
Michael Parks

Alas, Grapevine's deteriorating brain has deprived it of the ability to speak Icelandic, so we're all in the same boat.

Hi again,
I have 2 funny stories about foreigners trying to learn Icelandic. I am NOT making these up. They really happened to people I know.

1. There was an Irishman who moved to Iceland around Christmas time one year. Everyone was saying "Gleðileg jól" to him and no matter how hard he tried to make his tongue say those words he could not produce anything comprehensible. So he sat and thought about it for a long while, trying desperately to come up with an English word or words which would sound "close enough" so that there wasn't an awkward silence when people wished him a merry Christmas in Icelandic. Finally, triumphantly, he came up with 2 words which did the trick: "Jelly roll" he said to one and all and everyone said "Gleðileg jól" right back in his face. For several years this bloke was known to many of us in the foreign community as Jelly Roll.

2. Two British sisters married Icelandic men and moved to Iceland. When their mother died, their aging father moved to Iceland to be near his daughters. He lived in Seyðisfjörður with one daughter and was sending a package to the other daughter in the Westmann Islands. The old fellow was very sincere and dedicated to learning Icelandic and carried a pocket dictionary with him at all times to look up the words he needed. When the package he had mailed to his daughter in the Westmann Islands arrived, there was



a carefully printed notice on the wrapping paper which read "Handfang hjá umsjón". We can only imagine how flummoxed and mystified the postal workers in both Seyðisfjörður and the Westmann Islands were when they read this cryptic message which was the old man's attempt at writing "Handle With Care" in Icelandic.

If I come up with any bright new ideas for future issues, you can be sure that I'll let you know immediately, if not sooner.

Love,
Hopey

Well, thanks to Grapevine, no one need attempt learn Icelandic again. God is great.



The cabbie was getting very angry with ET

"Wulffmorgenthaler" is a comic strip made by two Danish humans, named Mikael Wulff and Anders Morgenthaler. They've got feet, pelvises, the faces of stupid angels and move like floating, feather-like dancers. Morgenthaler directs movies, does animation and in 2003 made two music videos, which were both shown on MTV. Wulff is a comedian, writer and called by some people "the cheese surgeon". For the past year these two men have produced this strip. One strip every day. Until now it's been published exclusively on the net on www.k10k.net and on their own site: www.wulffmorgenthaler.com, where it's also possible to check out other stuff. There's the

hideously honest diary of a creature called The Toucan Kid: a miserable being, that's 28% bird and way too emotional and triumphantly fragile. In the strips the tone shifts between the slightly surreal, the witty, the topical and something which is outright disgusting and involves a whole new depiction of human orifices. Morgenthaler, who does the drawing, was fed up with the tiresome meticulousness of drawing clothes on people so he just stopped doing it. Who cares about clothes in comic strips anyway? Now every character in the strip, no matter how mundane the setting, is naked. And that's it. It's not a message. It's not a call for flower power hysteria. "Wulffmorgenthaler" does

not in any way condone any form of nudity, non-conformist behaviour or spontaneous orgies in any public areas. No way! ... In the fall "Wulffmorgenthaler" plans to publish a heavy book full of strips and jokes. And in the future they'll work towards getting their work published in more printed media like those international magazines full of glamour and prestige. That way they'll get more successful and more people will be able to enjoy their work, which is fun and original. The Reykjavik GrapeVine will bring one Wulffmorgenthaler strip in every issue.

FROM THE EDITORS

FEELING BORED?
GO JUMP OFF A CLIFF

It was supposed to be just another hangover day at Vitabarinn. I was in the process of ordering up a blue cheese and garlic burger, and was considering the option of fries versus onion rings when Mensi arrived. I thought this would be the greatest challenge encountered that day, and happily anticipated stuffing ourselves and spending the rest of the afternoon recovering. But it was not to be.

As he entered he did not make straight for the bar, and I knew something was wrong. Worse still, it seemed from his expression that he'd just had an idea, for he was radiating like a child that had just discovered his willy could be used for more than peeing. I braced myself.

"What do you think about leaving the city for a change?" I had been prepared for worse, but the relief was to be brief. "To do what, precisely?" I inquired. I was hoping he'd suggest going for a drive back and forth, some food along the way, preferably something that did not entail too much walking.

"To jump of a cliff," he said. I prayed that the Cliff in question was some American acrobat type. But no, this was an actual cliff that some of his friends had spotted when out on a walk the day before, and lemming like, had not been able to resist the urge to jump off it. Unlike their rodent spiritual brethren, however, they were deterred by lack of swimwear. This was something that was to be remedied this very afternoon.

"So, do you want to come along," said Mensi cheerfully, as if he'd just suggested something sensible such as going to the pub;, if, of course, we weren't already in one. Any suggestion for the immediate future that did not involve a burger with garlic and blue cheese could not be a good one, but as I looked into that face bursting with infantile innocence, I just could not bring myself to tell him that this was the dumbest idea I'd ever heard. Instead, I followed him into a car where two of his friends and a girl were waiting. Somewhere in the back of my head, a line from Star Wars echoed. My subconscious often resorts to Star Wars metaphors when it has something important to tell me. "Who is more foolish, the fool or the fool who follows him," it said. I was still mulling over this as we left civilisation, or what passes for one in these parts, behind us and headed out into the barren wasteland that consumes most of the rest of the island. At least Mensi had not been the originator of the idea, so perhaps our friendship, if not our lives, would be preserved.

We drove past Hvalfjörður (meaning Whale Fjord), which housed a US Navy base in World War Two, and a whaling factory until the trade was banned in 1989 (see page 10). Finally, we reached the cliff where it had been decided we should throw ourselves off. We removed our civilian clothes and got ready for proceedings to begin. "We might be making a mistake," said Steini, as he surveyed the cliff. "Do you think?" I retorted. But it was too late now. The

escapade, having been embarked upon, had to be seen through. It used to be that mothers of illegitimate children were thrown off cliffs into the freezing water below, and a place in Þingvellir still bears the name Drekkingsarhylur (Drowning Pool). This practice didn't accomplish its aim though, as most Icelanders today are born out of wedlock; bastards, I believe, is the technical term. Perhaps there is something in the collective racial consciousness that has induced this lemming-like need to jump off cliffs to atone for the sins of our mothers. Or perhaps it is just sheer stupidity.

In any case, I found myself on top of the precipice looking straight down, knowing I was supposed to leave the comforts of solid ground for the altogether more uncertain ones of thin air. I looked at my compatriots, hoping the girl at least, out of either cowardice or at common sense would withdraw from the endeavour, and perhaps bring about a full-scale retreat. My hopes were quickly dashed as she, without waiting for anyone, flung herself off. She crashed into the water, and as she did not remerge again, I thought about suggesting calling it a day. While I debated with myself whether it was better to be dead and cool than alive and uncool, and veering towards the latter, her head shot out of the water. She immediately started making towards land, which seemed to indicate that she was still alive. Once the first one went off, there would be no stopping the lemmings giving in to their nature. In they went, one after the other. And one by one they swam to shore, leaving me alone on the cliff. It was a long way down, but the alternative, walking back down the rocky hillside without shoes on did not seem too appealing either, not withstanding the endless jibes that I would have to live with as a result. I looked down towards the cold, blue abyss. My survival instincts told me not to throw myself into it. I didn't listen.

I seemed suspended in slow motion as I soared downwards. In the French film "La Haine," a man falls off a building and convinces himself that everything is alright, for he has still not hit the ground. This is taken as a metaphor for society, closing its eyes to its problems as it heads towards inevitable collision. None of this entered my mind as I headed towards the surface. My thoughts at that moment, if recorded, would probably be phrased in a single word, which would either be "whoopee" or "oh shit." I plunged down into the freezing cold water. Down I went, ever downwards. The light on the surface seemed to grow farther and farther away. I was only just coming to terms with the inevitability of death when, as if tied to a bungee rope, I shot up again. Gasping for air as I penetrated the surface, it was only now that I noticed how cold the water was. Quickly as I could, I swam towards land. As I got a hold of some rocks and pulled myself out, I realised I didn't feel cold at all any more, even though I was soaking wet and the sun was long gone. Appar-



Grapevine jumps off a cliff.

ently, the shock of the freezing water had inoculated me against feeling the cold of the atmosphere. I had been told this by Finns who jump through holes in ice for recreational purposes, but never quite believed it.

Mensi and his friends spotted an even higher cliff and made towards it. I decided to stay put, feeling that I had proven whatever it was I had come here to prove. Continuing this for enjoyments sake seemed like sheer folly. They emerged on the top of the cliff. The slope didn't go directly down but leaned into the water, so you had to jump off far enough not to let the rocks dissect you on the way down. Even Mensi seem to have second thoughts. "Go KR!" (Reykjavik football club) someone shouted to egg him on. I wondered how many people had died with those words on their lips in circumstances such as these. Still, Steini stayed put. Then the girl started goading him, and the result was a foregone conclusion. He backed away, but this was not a sudden moment of clarity. It was just so that he could get a good run at it.. He came down in a nice arc, barely missing the rocks, and landed safely, if not necessarily comfortably, in the water. Everyone now having attempted and failed to kill themselves, we could head back home. As we approached that den of corruption and vice that is Iceland's capital again, it struck me that I had forgotten all about my hangover. Now, if only my testicles, still in shock from the cold water, would come back down. This was beginning to become an un-nerving habit.

TOURISTS OF THE DAY



Names:
Lauren, Kathleen and Emily
How do you like Iceland?
Love it! We can drink in the streets

without being bothered by the police.
Where are you from?
We're all from Seattle, USA.
What in the name of Thor are you doing here?
Taking courses about small states and European integration in the University of Iceland.
Have you been here long?
We've been here a week and a half, and we're going to be here 3 weeks in total.
Have you tried any Icelandic delicacies?
...errr.....just the beer..... and the fish

is good!
Whaling: right or wrong?
Lauren: WRONG!
Kathleen: Totally fine!
Emily: If it's done in the proper matter without over-fishing.
Should North America be returned to its rightful owners, the Icelanders?
Well... if you bring with you your laws on alcohol, and how old you must be to consume it, and also your environmental policy, sure!
Do you know who Davíð Oddson is?
We've heard of him, we talked about him in class.....nothing more....
Do you know who Bubbi Morthens is?
...errrr.. who? No!
Do you know who Keiko is? Yes, he's Free Willy!



TOURIST INFORMATION
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at the *Tourist information centre, 2nd floor*



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ANALYSIS

AN INTRODUCTION TO LOCAL POLITICS:
NO, WE DON'T GET IT EITHER

article BY

JOHN
BOYCE

So you can't tell your Althingi from your Þingvellir, or know what the difference between the Independence Party, the Progressive Party and the Alliance (neither can most people). Fear not, John Boyce is here to enlighten you about the wonderful world of Icelandic politics, with a comparative analysis of other countries with similar political cultures such as Ireland and, erm, India.

Parliamentary democracy in Europe does not come much older than in the proud republic of Iceland. In fact these sophisticated island folk are credited with having the oldest parliament in the world. Vikings, in the 10th century picked an idyllic spot just 50 kms from Reykjavik to elect their representatives and settle their disputes in an orderly manner (how Scandinavian can you get) and called it Þingvellir. It was not until 1845 that political affairs were moved to the capital.

Unlike the US and many European countries including Britain, Iceland has only one legislative house and a modest number of political representatives. Every four years the electorate returns 63 members of parliament from at present five main political parties. The present government, in common with so much of Europe, is composed of a coalition, the conservative Independence Party and, their junior partner in government, the even more vaguely titled Progressive Party. This unlikely sounding combination is just two months into a staggering third term of office, having prevailed against the early pre-election odds to secure victory once more. The basis of this extraordinary reign has been the 90s economic boom which has seen the Icelandic economic

capacity grow in leaps and bounds. Even a slowdown in productivity and creeping recession failed to knock the coalition from its political perch.

While the junior partner in this unholy alliance is a small rural based entity that evolved from the old Farmers Party, the senior member, the Independence Party, has been the national political heavyweight since independence. Though Iceland gained a large degree of freedom in 1918 it was only in 1944 that Iceland ceded completely from the, by then, largely defunct Danish empire. Since Iceland became an independent republic the Independence Party has enjoyed the fruits of political office for a staggering forty-two of the last 60 odd years.

This, it would seem, is not unusual, but indeed a classic post-colonial democratic pattern. Many former colonies that gained independence in the last two hundred years have displayed such tendencies. This manifests itself in an overwhelming and long-held dominance by one particular political grouping. India's Congress Party, elements of which were at the forefront of the independence movement has ruled this vast subcontinent more or less continuously since 1948. It is only in the last decade that complacency and

corruption have combined to threaten its dominance. Mexican politics too has suffered a similar stagnation. Last years elections saw defeat of the Revolutionary Party for the first time in almost seventy years.

The Irish republic's political life since independence in 1921 has evolved along almost identical lines to Iceland. My country's largest party, the dramatically titled Fianna Fáil (soldiers of destiny) has held the reigns of power for almost fifty of the last seventy years, including two unbroken 16 years stretches. Only in the last 15 years or so have they repeatedly failed to achieve overall majorities and suffered the indignity of having to share power with a tiny coalition partner.

Iceland differs from these examples in that the Independence Party, from the outset, has always had to share power with another party, more often than not their current bedfellows the Progressives, who for their size have also had more than their fair share of office, often holding, as they do now, the balance of power between left and right.. Our latest dear leader, Prime Minister and Independence Party leader David Oddsson, is now entering his 13th year as premier. If, as planned, Oddsson retires to the back benches in two years time he will become the longest serving Prime Minister in Europe edging out such luminaries as Maggie Thatcher and Hitler for the title.

In terms of style and background freakish parallels can be drawn to yet another late twentieth century political megastar, Ronald Reagan. Like Reagan, David has a glamorous showbiz past. In previous incarnations Oddsson has been a writer of short stories and poems and the presenter of a successful radio show. According to recent surveys it seems that just like Ronny, Oddsson is the most popular politician in the history of his country too. And the spooky comparisons don't end there. Oddsson also appears to have taken to simple-



Unlike the seat of government, this is not a former jailhouse, but it sort of looks like it should have been. Or should be.

minded liberal economics with the same gusto as "the great democrat". Luckily for independently minded left leaning third world countries everywhere, Oddsson's army-less and powerless Iceland is no position to emulate Ronnie in foreign fields.

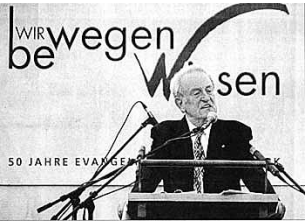
To avoid confusion it should be pointed out that the Independence Party's conversion to Thatcherite economic policy is a fairly recent one. For a lengthy period after the war all parties in Iceland would have been, to greater or lesser degree, based on Scandinavian socialism and, at least by American standards, quasi communistic

The history of those political groupings that have remained at least nominally leftist in Iceland is a sad, sorry but oh so familiar tale. The Icelandic left is composed of various factions whose longstanding inability to unite and work together and admittedly the afore mentioned post colonial political syndrome cost them dearly and has seen them occupy the opposition benches for the overwhelming majority of their history. In 1999 three of the four main leftist groupings finally

amalgamated to form Samfylkingin. This new entity has followed the European socialist stampede to the centre leaving the environment minded Left Green Party as the only one even mouthing socialist sentiment these days. The Liberal Party brings up the rear as the smallest, though recently augmented, presence in parliament with four MPs.

After riding high in the polls for months before the election Samfylkingin peaked too soon and had their electoral ambitions thwarted once again last May. When the post election dust settled, the details of the deal that put the incumbent coalition back in power provided the biggest news of decade so far. After fifteen years Iceland will have a new Premier. In return for his continued support of the Independence Party, the year 2005 will see Progressive leader and eternal coalition doormat Halldór Ásgrímsson finally accede to the highest office in the land. With over 30 years in politics and countless political humiliations under his belt he is surely living proof that all good things truly do come to those who wait.

NEWS IN BRIEF



German President Johannes Rau came on a state visit on the 1st of July. He was received by President Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson, who, apparently, did not offer him the part of a guard in a film about the holocaust. Germany and Iceland remain on good terms.

The United States is said to be developing unmanned superfighters, which are supposed to be able to hit targets anywhere from the United States within two hours, thus making the army base at Keflavik unnecessary.

More than a dozen employees at Northern Lights Corporation, which runs, among other things, Channel 2, Skifan record stores and a string of radio stations, have been questioned regarding infringements of tax laws. Some employees are suspected of embezzling tens of million krónur. The main owner of Northern Lights, Jón Ólafsson, is suspected of neglecting to pay some 3,2 million in taxes owed. A verdict in his case is expected in autumn.

Atlantic Aluminium, a company jointly owned by British firm Transal and Icelandic firm Altech are requesting permission to build a 300 ton plant in Húsavík.

An inflammable liquid was poured on the

door of a house in Laugardalur and set it on fire. Police arrested three young men suspected of the deed.

245 kilos of dynamite were stolen from a warehouse near Rauðavatn. Police have sent out an announcement saying that handling explosives can be dangerous and should only be attempted by



fully licensed individuals. They also ask anyone who might have seen suspicious individuals in the area to contact police.

Authorities have reprimanded two drug-stores for sending information regarding customer's prescriptions through email. The stores have until the 1st of January to start coding their information.

Former presidential candidate and leader of the party Peace 2000, Ástþór Magnússon, has been cleared of terrorism charges. He was accused of sending an email wherein he warned that possible use of Icelandic planes to transport US forces to the Gulf might lead to retaliation being taken against Icelandic passenger jets. Following this, he was arrested by police on grounds of having issued a threat, and had to spend the night in jail. He insisted on representing



himself in the case, and was unhappy with the court appointed lawyer, refusing to come to court again. He freely admitted to having sent the email, but insisted it was not without cause. The court admitted the he had thought the danger was real, and felt it to be his duty to report it, even if it did not materialize, hence clearing him of all charges of issuing unfounded threats. Ástþór admitted he had had frequent visions which had led to him forming Peace 2000.

A lot of people were caught speeding over the first weekend of June, the police at Vík í Mýrdal alone stopping over 100 culprits. In the worst instance, the driver was driving at 192 km/h and lost control of his vehicle. 3 people were killed in



accidents in 4 days.

Prime Minister Davíð Oddsson has admitted that the government was aware of US plans to withdraw its forces before the elections, but chose to not inform the public of this, claiming they decided to leave the matter to the professionals instead. Two members of the opposition, both of whom are members of the foreign affairs committee, have criticised the government harshly for informing neither them nor the public, claiming this might have influenced the outcome of the elections.

A night watchman claims that the public television channel has wrongly listed



him as a TV owner. Anyone owning a television set must, by law, subscribe to the channel. Two representatives of the company, searching for unlisted TV sets, came to his house and got his Czech wife to sign a form admitting they had a television. The man claims his wife can speak neither Icelandic nor English, and hence was not able to issue the correct statement. A spokesman for the company said employees could have spoken to her in either Russian or German, as they are well versed in languages. The man

is currently trying to change his status as a listed TV owner, whereas the company still claims he owes them money in unpaid dues. More than 2000 unregistered TV sets are discovered every year.

A caretaker for youth activities for a rescue service has been accused of sex crimes against teenagers in his care.



A small Lithuanian plane found itself far to the east of Reykjavik airport when coming in to land. It barely missed the tower of Hallgrímskirkja and was only a few dozen meters above the surrounding residential areas before finally managing to land on the airstrip.

An American short plane lost an engine west of Greenland and was forced to land in Keflavik airport.

The most expensive court case in Icelandic history seems to have come to an end after 7 years. Two individuals were accused of selling 102 counterfeit paintings. They were found guilty of selling 2 of the paintings, and sentenced to six and four months respectively. The defence sees the ruling as a victory, but the prosecution might pursue the case to the Supreme Court.



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COLUMNS

THE MOMENT OF TRUTH: EUROVISION

It is still early evening, and the nation, wearing its finest, radiates with anticipation and joy. The clock in the room strikes loudly seven times, and people noisily attempt to quiet each other down. Then, as the clock concludes its countdown, all sit down as one, champagne in hand. All of course, except for the youngest, who are already vibrating in their seats with excitement. Finally, the moment has arrived. But what is the nation celebrating; the birth of a saviour or the coming of yet another year? No, better still. It is Eurovision night.

In this country, Eurovision is numbered among the major events. People gather together after many weeks of prayer and preparation in so called Eurovision parties, and nobody can be counted among those that matter unless they are hosting, or at least invited to, one of these.

As the performance begins people hold their breaths and out on the streets not a straggler is to be seen, save for a lonely leaf blowing in the breeze past a solitary tourist lost in a desolate city. The moment the show is over, however, Ghost Town metamorphoses into Party Town. The solitary tourist becomes joyful once more as cars run the hapless leaf down and the city explodes with overdressed locals drowning their sorrows after yet another failed attempt to win the respect of the world through success in Eurovision.

The reason for this is embedded deep in the national consciousness of this ancient Viking culture. Every year Icelanders think of their contribution as being most likely to win, and to prove this they quote examples from polls and comments from foreign reporters who always seem to predict an Icelandic victory. For some reason, we never get to see these polls or reporters directly, relying instead on indirect quotes from faceless prophets.

Iceland first participated in Eurovision in 1986 when three spectacular songbirds sang about the "Joy Bank" wearing glimmer bedecked jogging suits and glow in the dark headbands on their sweaty foreheads to complement the look (Editors note: This was the 80's, you were supposed to look like that).



The Icelandic Eurovision team moments before results were announced.

It was not just the banks that were joyful in those days, the nation as a whole seemed more optimistic than at any time since the foundation of the Republic. People seemed so assured of victory that it hardly seemed necessary to send the contestants to Oslo. But the rest of Europe did not seem as attuned to glimmer and gladness, for the steamroller stalled in 16th place. Somewhat less optimistically, but still with a great deal of enthusiasm, an entry was sent out the following year, but alas, once again stalled at 16, as it did the year after that. All hopes were then finally, brutally crushed in 1989, when Iceland wound up in last place, with not a single point to its name. Still the nation that survived famine, plague and oppression for 700 years weathered the storm, and every year hope was rekindled in our hearts as the media yet again started predicting assured victory, contestants were elevated to the status of national heroes, and some people suggested they be inducted to the Order of the Falcon by the President. Until, of course, they lost. And in Eurovision, as elsewhere, it seems everyone who isn't a winner is a loser.

This one night a year the nation experiences a communal spirit in front of the tube, and 290.000 hearts beat out tune of the national anthem out of sheer patriotism. The few pariahs who dared to criticize the competition for

corniness or just general silliness still find themselves glued to the screen and holding their breath as points are counted.

I belong to that sizeable minority which says every year that they are not going to watch it and it would be for the best if Iceland got no points at all since we never win anyway. Nonetheless, whenever I hope no one is noticing I frequently find myself watching and feeling that pang of pride when they play "our" song. Then, when the points start rolling in I quickly come out of the closet, jump to my feet and do a tribal rain dance on those rare occasions when we get points. When we don't get them, I wholeheartedly support the Icelandic announcer who threatens a trade ban on those countries who ignored us, until I find myself having made a vow to only buy products from Estonia and the Republic of Malta. Sadly, at the end of the night it transpires that Iceland has lost yet again. As the announcer bids goodnight the blue glow from the screen fades along with the country's hopes for victory in Eurovision. Disappointed and shocked, the nation as one reaches for the hard stuff as the moment of truth has passed and the time for oblivion is at hand.

But who knows what will happen next year...

Beggó

AND THE WORLD WENT TO WAR (OVER THE WEB)

Ain't the WWW great? I don't know how much time you spend there, but if Jack Straw is to be believed, then Iraq's military secrets are to be found willy-nilly. At least he likes to think so. And he likes the world to think so. In fact, what he found there was justification for his world to go to war.

Reminds me of the Wizard of Oz. The Great Deceit. (Didn't Goebbels say the greater the lie, the more likely it is to be believed?)

If so, then Straw would have be (who else) the scarecrow made of straw, the one that needs a brain. The wizard, of course, is Bush, pulling the strings, to whose tune the Great Nations dance. France needs courage, Germany a heart, and I guess Dorothy is Russia. ("Stop that, you bad, bad wizard!")

I wonder, what's the national security level in Kansas? :)

You gotta love it. The wicked witch is Saddam Hussein, Al Qaeda, and whatever happened to Bin Laden? Great stuff this; espionage, intrigue and war.

It used to be the wizard worked with smoke and mirrors. Now he's got the



From left to right: Russia, Germany, France, Jack Straw and George Bush.

worldwide media. Scared? George Orwell saw it coming. Only now Big Brother's got Internet and TV to make announcements like "New Enemy in the East," "Troops win Decisive victory," "Happiness levels Up," etc..

And ain't it strange, this fruit? When is life imitating art? Reminds me of deja vú....

Say, whatever did happen to Bin Laden?

AJB

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FEATURE ARTICLE

WHALES, HARPOONS AND OTHER WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

article BY

In the 80’s, whales became a symbol for the green movement, and nations that continued whaling became a target for activists and boycotters. Two whaling ships were even sunk in Reykjavík harbour by the organisation Sea Shepard. Now that discussion is underway to resume whaling, do we again face the prospect of bringing the worlds wrath down upon us, or is it necessary in order to keep life in the oceans in balance?

VALUR GUNNARSSON

The ferry sailed past the summit, and we could see seagulls nesting on the cliffs below the underground hangars used by the US Airforce, probably soon to become vacant. The shore receded in the distance but there was, as yet, no sign of whales. Somebody mumbled that they had probably become extinct years ago, and that this brought back memories of a trip he’d taken monster spotting on the Loch Ness. Grapevine tried to console

we approached they took evasive action, and we saw what was the cause of their commotion. Squadrons of seagulls lined up in formation and then dived down, sending up streams of water as they penetrated the surface. The fish below jumped suicidally out of the sea, playing the Polish cavalry to the birds Stukas. Some of them seemed to be jumping right towards the beaks of the waiting birds, perhaps taunting them, perhaps

It has been suggested that frequent whale sightings is one of the reasons people settled here in the first place.

itself with the fact that the ocean melting into the sky somewhere on the far horizon wasn't a bad view at all, when the guide excitedly shouted out “12 o clock!” Tourists hurried to the front of the boat (the stern, I believe, according to experts), cameras were wielded and flashes were flashed. A fin disappeared back into the big blue, but reappeared moments later. Perhaps it says something about Grapevine's private life that this seemed like the greatest thrill imaginable. Well, almost More fins appeared and the guide kept shouting out times of day. Meanwhile, seagulls were gathering on the horizon like a storm, hugging the surface of the water, gliding as low as possible as if they were fighter pilots showing off to imaginary beach babes. As

playing their own version of extreme sports, perhaps just seeing to it that nature takes its course. Any close encounter with nature reminds you of its brutality, as is evidenced by its favourite offspring, mankind. Millions of animals are systematically killed in factories every day to supply its insatiable hunger. And yet the debate rages over one particular species eaten by this most voracious of predators. Whales are mentioned in some 18 sagas, and it has even been supposed that frequent whalesighting in these waters is one of the reasons people settled here in the first place. Whales frequently drifted ashore, and these were prized assets. Sometimes people were even killed in disputes over ownership of whale carcasses. To this day, the phrase hvalreki (whale

drift) is still used about great fortune befalling someone. The Norwegian medieval script Konungsskuggsjá, tells of whales that drive fish towards fishing boats when men are peaceful, but when blood is shed, it drives the fish away. It concludes that the whale is edible, but hunting is banned since they are more useful as is. This rule did not always apply. As times grew harder, whaledrifting became ever more important, and regulations were set regarding the dividing of carcasses. One law stipulated that a tenth should be given to the poor. The whale may indeed have saved many lives during the famines of the 17th and 18th centuries. In the 19th century, whaling grew to such a degree that whales became a rare sight, and it was banned in 1916.

Two whaleships were sunk in the harbour before the culprit made it back to the USA. An Icelandic MP has demanded the terrorists be handed over.

In 1948 it was assessed that the species had recovered, and whaling was resumed. It remained steady at around 380 animals a year. In 1986, the International Whaling commission temporarily banned whaling, although it was still conducted for scientific reasons until 1989. Growing impatient, a man named Paul Watson from the organisation Sea Shepard sunk two whaling ships in the harbour in 1986 before making off back to the USA. Lately, an Icelandic MP has quipped that the terrorist should be handed over, and no distinctions should be made between terrorists and the countries that harbour them. For 14 years the whaling ships have been lying still rusting in the harbour. This might be about to change, for recently, the government announced its intention to hunt 250 animals for scientific purposes, prompting an outcry from some conservation organisations. So what is the case for and against whaling? Among the crew of the ship, some worry about the impact whaling will have on their industry, and that whalers will not respect their wishes, even harpooning whales within sight of camera wielding tourists. The guide, Katja, a marine biology student from Denmark, says that whales are a heritage for the whole

world, and should not be hunted. It is hard to determine exactly how many whales there are left. They only mate every other year, and often have a hard time finding each other to mate. Apparently, dating difficulties is something that plagues all species of a supposed higher intelligence.

The Case for Killing Whales Meanwhile, on the other side of the hill, sits Kristján Loftsson, manager of Whale Inc, formerly the main whaling company. He says that with modern methods it is quite easy to determine approximately the amount of whales, and hence to only hunt in small enough amounts that it doesn't threaten the species, the whales in these waters being in no danger of extinction.

when one species is left alone and the others are hunted, it upsets the whole balance. Both whales and men prey on the same fish stocks, which might in the end have catastrophic results if both continue to do so undeterred. We asked Kristján about the concerns of whale watchers that whaling might harm their industry. He says it wouldn't because whale watching is conducted close to the shore, whereas to whale you need to sail out at least 10-15 hours to get to the most desirable whaling grounds. He compares it to not being allowed to harvest sheep since there are sheep on display in the petting zoo. Finally, I ask him about whales supposed intelligence, he says: “Well, they keep coming back to



A day out in the Faroes.



Photos: Aldís



The whaling boats in Reykjavík harbour titled Hvalur (Whale) 6-9, dormant for 14 years. The two furthest to the left were sunk by activists in 1986.

has been growing steadily, and today visitors number some 60.000 per year. He says that it would be difficult to combine both whale watching and whaling, since whalers would scare off the animals, and those least afraid, and hence best for watching, would be the first to get killed. Regarding the increasing whale population having an adverse impact upon the fish in the sea, he says that the amount of whaling suggested, 250 minke whales out of a population of an estimated 58-70.000, would be too little to have any impact, whereas it would hurt tourism immeasurably. It seems, paradoxically, that the resumption of whaling, far from driving them into extinction, would actually have too little effect to achieve the desired result for the fishing industry at all.

From whaling to whale watching...and back?
Pro- and anti-whalers tend to be barely on speaking terms, with tempers flaring on both sides. We met one man had actually made a living on both sides of the fence, a former whaler who now works as a guide for Elding whalewatching company, located at Reykjavik harbour, and asked him for his opinion on the subject.
“Do you see any fundamental difference between hunting whales and other marine animals?”
“No. It’s all a part of the community based on harvesting nature.”
“Since you’ve been observing whales every day, have you changed your mind regarding whaling?”
“I cannot look at it from another



To the left, a boat, to the right, a whale.



The crew onboard whale watching boat Moby Dick. Perhaps they’ll soon receive competition from prospective Ahab’s.

It is interesting to note, though, that anti-whaling objections from whale watchers are almost all based on financial rather than moral grounds.

perspective than that we use our right to harvest our surroundings. But that entails approaching it as a farmer approaches his stock. A farmer can be very proud of his

cows and his sheep, and become attached to them, but he still has to make a living. For someone who has been around whales his whole life, it means a lot to be able to be close to them. I respect whales, but we also

We might, ironically, be finding ourselves in a situation where whaling is morally right but financially wrong.

respected whales when we hunted them. It wasn’t about barbarism or cruelty, there were specific laws here in Iceland that stated that you couldn’t kill an animal that was too young, or a mother who was still weaning her offspring. If you did you were fined, and didn’t get your share of the whale. But we shouldn’t hunt whales if we cannot use them. If we cannot sell the product, there’s no point in hunting them.
“Do you think, in the present circumstances, that whaling would pay off?”
“I’m not in a position to judge. I know how to do the job, but I don’t know about the market.”
“As someone who currently makes his living from whale watching, do you think it would hurt that industry?”
“I understand those concerns, I think it would be stupid to hunt whales in those same areas.”
“But do you think the two can be combined, as long as they are kept in separate areas?”
“If that is done, yes, otherwise not.”
“If whaling were to be resumed, would you change your profession and go back into hunting?”
That’s a difficult question. I can’t answer that. I love doing both, I would have to make that decision if

the situation would arise. But being around whales in one capacity or another is a part of me.”
A whale jumps out of the big blue, hurling up gallons of water as

Today it is the only place where you can get whalemeat in Iceland. The meat is red and served as a steak, and tastes rather wonderful. The chef, Úlfar, says they have enough supplies for one year more, so he’s

he crashes back down. Perhaps they jump out of the sea as a means of communication, perhaps it is to get parasites off their skin, or perhaps it is just for fun. As always, there seems to be little we know for sure. “Do you still want to kill them?” asks Katja as we reach shore again. To be honest, I really don’t know. They are truly majestic creatures. Tasty, as well. The restaurant 3 Frakkar bought up the remaining stock of whale meat and put it in the freezer back in 1989.

hoping for a resumption of whaling before then. Ironically, we seem to find ourselves in a situation these days where whaling seems to be morally defensible but financially unsound. Then again, if more is to be gained from watching whales than eating them, perhaps the solution is pretty clear cut after all.



The greatest thrill of Grapevine’s life, as seen through a lens.

HOW SMART ARE WHALES?

If intelligence were to be measured in brain size alone, then without a doubt the sperm whale would be the most intelligent species on the planet. However, this would also mean that men are smarter than women, and that the African elephant is smarter than both (this might apply to men, I hear you saying, but surely not to women?). When brain size is measured as a percentage of body weight, we come to the more satisfactory conclusion that humans, that is to say both men and women, are indeed the most intelligent, although which one of these is more so remains open to debate. Using this method, we can also conclude that bottlenose dolphins are indeed one of the smarter species, its brain weight being 0.94% of body weight, as

compared to humans 2.10%. However, this puts the sperm whale considerably lower on the list, notching up a pathetic 0.02% brain weight, considerably lower than the aforementioned African elephant, and even lower than your average pre-hamburger cow, which manages 0.08. The fin whale does even worse, with 0.01. Quite a few scientists maintain that comparative brain size does not tell the whole story. For example, the spiny anteater has a relatively much bigger neocortex (the most developed part of the brain) than humans, but so far, anteater civilisation has generally been considered to be lagging behind that of people, and even behind that of its favourite food. So what is the reason for this discrepancy?
Some scientists maintain that REM, or dream sleep, helps to

avoid overloading of the brain. Hence, animals who do not go into REM sleep need to find other ways to deal with this, and the only mammals so far tested that do not dream are dolphins and anteaters, both of whom have disproportionately large brains. Dolphins and some whales do communicate through the use of sounds, but no evidence as yet substantiates that this goes anywhere beyond being an aid for hunting and exploring the environment, an ability found in many species, one of the more sophisticated systems being that used by bees.
The one thing scientists seem to agree on is that intelligence is something that’s very hard to measure, be it in animals or humans. So let us then examine the circumstantial evidence. Whales live in the sea and yet

breathe fresh air. This seems somewhat ill conceived, and, since they like to hang around notorious peoples such as Icelanders, Norwegians and Japanese, having to come up for air can be downright dangerous. The reason for this is that, like most other species, whales started out in the sea, emigrated onto dry land and then thought better of it, returning to the oceans once more. Then again, considering the way things have been going on land, perhaps this does indicate a certain awareness of things. And when you take into account that they

tend to migrate to the Caribbean in the winter, you might conclude that they seem considerably more enlightened than some other residents of the far north.



The ant eater: the smartest species on earth?

CULTURE

HITT HÚSIÐ:
YOUTH CULTURE IN THE JAIL CELL

article BY

VALUR
GUNNARSSON

Those who have seen strange figures such as those on the right striking poses in the street, girls carrying wheelbarrows full of paper, or an instrumental trio playing in the swimming pool might be forgiven for wondering exactly who they are and what they are doing. Wonder no more, dear reader, and read on.

At Pósthússtræti 3, there used to be a police station. The basement there was usually known aptly as “The Basement,” and was mostly used to keep drunkards off the streets. The jail cells were said to be somewhat shorter than coffins, and only slightly wider. The suicide rate among inmates was high. The Basement these days belongs to Hitt Húsið, (The Other House), a youth cultural centre, so called because it’s supposed to be a home away from home

People can come there with their ideas and apply for grants, and among projects currently being put into practice is the theatre group Ofleikur (Overacting), wherein a director and ten actors, all around 20 years of age, put on a production and receive their wages from the City. Another acting group plays out sketches and scenes on the city streets. Other artists being employed are musicians, poets and even a group which is painting the trashcans of the downtown area according to their own designs. These artists, around 50 in all, are fully employed in these pursuits, and some of them might be starting artistic careers that could be the beginning of a lifelong occupation. The house itself houses an information centre where you can come and be informed on employment here and abroad and get help with everything from



Yes, this actually used to be a jailhouse.



Photos: Aldís

The Ku Klux Klan practices its morning aerobics.

sexual problems to how to fill out your tax forms. In fact, they claim that everything the young person needs to know is located under the same roof, or at the very least, they will point you in the right direction. On the ground floor people can get free access to the internet (within reasonable limits, they say) between 9 and 6, and there is also a gallery where young artists can exhibit their works for free, each exhibition being shown for on average 2 weeks. On the top floor there is a concert hall, which houses concerts in the winter.

Currently there is a group touring the country on behalf of peer education, the idea being that people will be more willing to listen to people their own age telling them not to do drugs rather than their elders. Every Friday in July there is an event going on, called Föstudagsbræðingur (Friday Melt). On the 11th of July, the theme is Tjillað á Tjarnarbakkanum (Chilling by the Pond). Happenings start at 12.15 at City Hall, when Tríó Cantabile, featuring three classically trained musicians playing tunes from different periods, will perform. At 13.00 by the pond,

Lúðrasveit lýðsins (the Marching Band of the Masses) and the poetry group Ljóðaleikur (Street Poetry) perform. From 15.00-17.00, there is an open record player on Ingólfstorg where anyone can try out their DJing skills. At 16.00 there is an open practice at Tjarnarbíó Theatre by Lifandi Leikhús (living theatre). Meanwhile, in the centre of town, the group Fusion performs dances from the musical Chicago. Also on offer is a classic radio station, radio Mandolin, at FM 98,3. The last Friday festival will be held on the 25th of July, and is supposed to outdo them all.

The Marching Band of the Masses

The Band was formed on the 1st of June by three music school students. The band is comprised of cellist Sandra Ósk, guitarist and band leader Guðmundur Steinn and trumpeter Einar Hallgrímur. They mostly play original tunes, which they claim sound as if they haven't been written by anyone in particular, hence the name. They also celebrate the National Days of various countries. On the 17th of June the celebrated the Republic with Frelsi frelsi berum vér í hönd (Freedom, Freedom We Carry in our Palms), a song which is already ingraining itself into the hearts of the nation. On the Fourth of July they played two original tunes composed for the occasion at a gig in Siglufjörður; Hægri sveifla vinstri snú (Right Wing Left Turn) and Grásleppusoð (Grey Fish Concoction), a tune dedicated to Benny Goodman. On Bastille Day, 14th of July, they will debut further compositions, including Le Petit Garçon, and Ostsaelgni (Cheese Lust). On the 17th of July, on Iraq's national day, the will mark the occasion by playing traditional Iraqi tunes in country western arrangements in honour of the country's induction into the US Empire.



The masses take a break from marching.

On Friday they will play on Hólmur, that tiny island in the Reykjavík pond, and they're starting a citywide tour of pensioner's homes and swimming pools. The ideology behind the band is to bring marching band music to the people, wherever they may be, and they define their music as popular.

The band can be contacted at ludrasveit@musician.org to celebrate your national day, or indeed any public gathering.

Street Poetry

Two young poetesses sat around in a coffeeshop one afternoon, as is the habit of young poets, dreaming about how much fun it would be to spend all summer dedicated to their craft and doing nothing else. So they went to Hitt Húsið, applied for a grant, and now they're doing just that. Among their exploits this summer is transporting poetry in wheelbarrows (“moving” poetry), where from people can draw a poem at random for 10 krónur. They also chalk verse onto sidewalks, and organise various readings. Their goal is to make the poem more visible, poetry being the traditional form of artistic expression for Icelanders, but these days seemingly taking second place to other performing arts. They have a reading every other Wednesday at Blái Barinn bar (just above Pasta Basta), and read every Friday at the Hitt Hús Friday events. On the 17th of June they had people reading poems from various phases of history, dressed in period costumes, who were all duly rained on as has become traditional on the National Day. They cooperate with the web page ljod.is, encourage, and have been receiving inquiries from various



young poets regarding participation in events. Their goal is to create a poetry network, to enable up and coming versesmiths to express themselves, and to bring poetry back to the forefront of Icelandic culture.

AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH CREMASTER MATTHEW BARNEY

(Answers courtesy of exhibition catalogue, questions courtesy of Grapevine)

Grapevine does not, as has been stated, pretend to understand modern art. This particular reporter sees it at best as an opportunity for gratuitous nudity that might not otherwise get an airing (using nudity to attract attention, now there's a novel idea) and at worst an attempt to part fools from their money in the vein of The Emperors New Clothes. Or perhaps its merits are the other way around. Because of the former, at least, Grapevine is something of a modern art exhibition goer, and one rainy Saturday found itself at the Living Art Museum to view Matthew Barney's Cremaster cycle.

The Cremaster cycle, it turns out,

is a film in five parts, recorded in the order 4, 1, 2, 5 and culminating in the middle, in part 3. So far, so Star Wars. Unlike the Lucas cycle though, the films are shown all five at once, on screens situated in a circle in the middle of a room bedecked with a fake grass football field. One can sit wherever one likes in the room, usually seeing two screens at once, but the one facing the entrance is out of the horizon unless you block the entrance. Nothing much happens, but when it does, its usually on two screens at the same time, which inevitably leads to you missing both. One of the films shows Ursula Andress miming along to an opera with a pair of lightbulbs on her head. The one next to it shows an orc like figure crawling through something that looks

like a giant vagina, or perhaps that's just Grapevine's interpretation. The visuals are not too bad, but retaining the services of a screenwriter would seem advisable. What are they actually about?

“There was a kind of system that I laid out before Cremaster, which started in a place called “Situation,” a sexual place trying to define drive or desire.

“So it's all about sex?”

“That impulse would then pass through a kind of visceral funnel, called “Condition,” that would shape that raw drive.

“Is that really a giant vagina?”

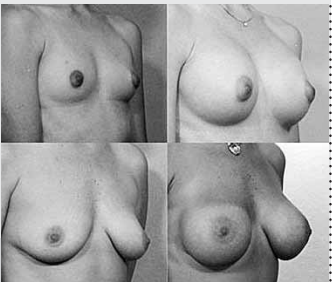
“Production was an anal or oral output that would be bypassed by connecting those two orifices and making a circular

system.

“So now we know. But what the hell is a cremaster anyway?”

“Well, I was at my sister's wedding, sitting next door to a doctor, Dr. Lung, a man I grew up with in Idaho. I was talking to him about this system, about an unfixed, general point of sexuality, and he said I should look at the cremaster muscle, which is associated with, but not actually related to, the height of the gonads during sexual differentiation in the womb. A story could be developed about a sexual system that could move at will, and within this fantasy the cremaster muscle would control that, although in fact it does not”

Indeed. One of the screens starts showing something that looks like genital bagpipes giving a brief



Some gratuitous nudity

concerto, and Grapevine is sure in its former prejudice that modern artists are, for the most part, sick, twisted, sex crased individuals, and can't wait for the next exhibition to start.

Vladur



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FILM

ICELANDERS IN THE MOVIES
BLINK AND YOU'LL MISS THEM

Texas Chainsaw Massacre (1974)



Gunnar Hansen, Leatherface himself, was born in Reykjavík in 1956 and moved to the US at the age of 5. Also mans the chainsaw in Hollywood Chainsaw Hookers, as the high priest of a cult which traces the worship of the chainsaw back to the ancient Egyptians, with appropriate human sacrifices. Has been in other films, such as The Demon Lover and cowrote and starred in 1995 horror film Mosquito, but Chainsaw Massacre remains undoubted highlight of acting career.

More American Graffiti (1979)

Anna Bjorns has a part in the flop sequel to Lucas' 1973 hit. Also billed as Elizabeth: Cromwells Whore in The Sword and the Sorcerer from 1982. Highlight of career probably Get Crazy, wherein Malcolm McDowell plays Reggie Wanker, a decadent rock star who converses with his own penis. Surprisingly, it failed to break the box office. Last seen in episodes of Remington Steele and Different Strokes.

The Carny (1980)

Jóhann Pétursson, known as Jóhann Risi (the Giant), was the tallest man in Icelandic history, and, at the time, in the world, measuring some 2,34 cm. He was born in 1913, and, as he had a hard time finding employment here, left at the age of 22 to become a circus attraction. He starred in the Danish film Hjertetyven in 1943 when he was stuck in Denmark during the occupation. After the war he went to Hollywood, where he played Guadi the Giant in Prehistoric Women (1950). His last role was as himself in 1980's The Carny, wherein Gary Busey and Robbie Robertson play a couple of carnival hustlers both in love with Jodie Foster. There is currently a museum dedicated to Jóhann Risi in his hometown of Dalvík.

Free Willy (1993)

Four cute, well dressed, demographically diverse kids who also happen to be homeless, beg and vandalize on the streets, until authorities intervene and

put the cutest of them to work feeding killer whales. There he falls into the pool, and Willy the killer whale, rather than eating him as killer whales are wont to do, bonds with his lunch, seeing in him a fellow orphan, and performs tricks for him when no one is looking. When evil business men attempt to kill the whale for insurance money, the lad helps him to escape. This prompted authorities in the United States to demand that the actor playing the part of the whale, Keiko, the worlds second most famous IcelanderTM, also be set free. The US Air force fished him out of his tank in Seaworld, and got him back to the Westman Islands, from where he was eventually released back into nature. Was last seen off the coast of Norway, begging fish from passing fishermen, apparently unable to fish for himself.

D2: The Mighty Ducks (1994)

After the United States triumphed in the Cold War, thanks largely to Rocky Balboa's turn in the ring, the Americans went looking for another worthy adversary and found, well, Iceland. Nazi looking types with names like Wolf and Stahl represent Iceland's finest (quite apart from the fact that Iceland does not have a hockey team to speak of, nor anyone named either Wolf or Stahl). America seems to have problems keeping its players on the field due to their violent behaviour, and Emilio Estevez is too busy eating ice cream with Icelandic chicks to coach, but nonetheless, they eventually triumph by deciding not to stoop to the Icelanders level. Maria Ellingsen, veteran of Santa Barbara and local films such as Agnes, Foxtrot and A Man like Me, plays love interest/supporter of evil Icelandic children's hockey team. The Icelanders, for some reason, alternate between speaking Icelandic and English with one another. Includes the classic line "Áfram, áfram, destroy!". Also includes a rather profound analogy, saying that America is a teenager among nations, awkward and yet on the verge of greatness. On the verge of greatness perhaps, but still seemingly unable to graduate, go to college and stop picking on the smaller children.

The Viking Sagas (1995)

Michael Chapman, cinematographer and director of Clan of the Cave Bear directssomeone named Ralph Möller in this B-movie mish-mash of various Viking tales, shot in Iceland, opposite former Eurovision contender and star of cult hit Veggfóður, Ingibjörg Stefánsdóttir. Ralph Möller went on to star in Conan: The Adventurer TV series and play Thorak in The Scorpion King. Ingibjörg currently serves vegan food at Grænn Kostur.

The Suburbans (1999)

Sometime local pop star Rich Scobie has a bit part, enabling Jennifer Love Hewitt, to show off her omnipotence and address him in Icelandic.

Dancer in the Dark (2000)

And Björk, of Course. The World's Most Famous IcelanderTM puts in a tear wrenching performance as an almost blind Eastern European single mother who comes to America hoping to find a cure for her sons approaching blindness, and winds up working in a factory, breaking out into song on occasion. Nominated for an Oscar for best song, showed up at said awards dressed in a swan, failed to win. Had a falling out with Danish director Lars Von Trier, blaming him for 600 years of oppression, and vowed never to act again.

K-19: The Widowmaker (2002)



A surprisingly good film about a Cold War Russian submarine that breaks down in the Atlantic, despite Harrison Ford standing out like a sore thumb as the only cast member attempting a Russian accent. A nuclear meltdown is imminent, which might bring about World War III and the annihilation of the planet. Ford and Liam Neeson bicker, while one of Iceland's most popular actors, Ingvar Sigurðsson, heroically sacrifices himself and saves said planet.

Monster (2003)

The titular monster is an alcoholic insomniac in the throes of an existential crisis, living in Iceland. Seems like he'd fit right in. He's tired of terrorizing mankind, and want to end it, but is, as it turns out, indestructible. He gets a pretty young girl, whose boyfriend he has previously eaten, to find a mad scientist who can kill him. The mad scientist turns out to be Baltasar Kormákur, director of 101 Reykjavík and star of Devils Island. In supporting roles are almost every local actor that can still find his way to location. This beauty and the beast tale soon turns into a brilliant satire on the modern world, wherein the world is portrayed is it would be if the media were painting an accurate picture, where every trip to the airport inevitable involves encounters with nuclear weapons smugglers and international terrorists (JFK Airport is, interestingly, played by Keflavík's Leifstöð Airport). Finally, Mad Scientist convinces Monster that there is no need for him anymore, since we have the media to scare us these days. Brilliant.

VG

MEET THE NEW BOSS, SAME AS THE OLD ANIMAL FARM

These days, with the Soviet Union thoroughly relegated to the scrap heap of history, George Orwell's Animal Farm seems more like a pean for animal rights than an attack on totalitarianism. In any case, it's still a gripping, thought provoking story. This film takes the animal speech technique pioneered in the more harmless Babe, and uses it to bring Orwell's Other Masterpiece to life on the screen. The result, in some cases updated to take in modern consumerism and political apathy, is truly astonishing. During a crucial vote, Napoleon turns on the television to distract the animals while the proposal is carried by ayes from him and Squealer alone. At the outset, the farm is badly run by a drunken farmer Jones (an exellent Pete Postlethwaite), aided by a cowardly raven who keeps the animals in check by his gospel of "thou shalt not kill," and promises of Sugar Mountain for those who die miserable. The villains are suitable cartoonish, especially a man with a

silly mustache hell bent on invading the farm,(to think that real life villains once looked like this, perhaps some modern day ones will seem as silly to the future.) It is this invasion which sets off the story's almost unbearable misery. Some scenes manage to be at once both darkly comic and tragic. The hen's feet hanging from the gallows during the purges, and especially the brilliant duck led propaganda film towards the end, add a cinematic punchline that the book could not. The film, however, doesn't end with pigs turning into men and vice versa, but goes on to portray the farm crumbling due to mismanagement, and Jesse the she-dog (somehow bitch seems inappropriate) embracing freedom, although in actuality none suffered as much from the collapse of the Soviet Union as the women who had participated in the struggle the first time around and were left begging on the streets by the "New Russians." Towards the end, she is praising the



new bosses, who come driving in their Cadillac singing pop songs, but whether this is meant to be ironic is unclear. Is the point that animals are simply unfit to govern themselves? Or was it a dream that could have come true but for the greed of a single pig? Perhaps another Animal Farm will, one day, be written about how the promise of 1989-91 led to the pigs prevailing yet again in this endlessly tragic nation. Let us hope not.

VG

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Premiers July 10th

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4, 6, 8 & 10 pm

Premiers July 25th

Laugarás

phone: 553 2075

RESPIRO

Sometimes it seems the filmmaking industry is more dedicated to making bad films than it is to making money. The same might apply to those who screen them. It is hard to think of any other reason why, in Reykjaviks many and spacious cinema's, there's on average about 10 films on offer, almost all of it Hollywood fare aimed at the early teens. Surely, a large part of the population with con-

siderable money in their pockets is being left out. At the time of writing, this is the only "foreign," ie non-American film on offer, which makes you want to give it a big hug. Whether the film itself is any good or not is almost irrelevant, it's just a relief to see a film that isn't set in California or New York. So, in this rare instance, we find ourselves in an Italian fishing village, where the men go out to sea and drink beer, and tanned youths form into gangs and steal each others clothes or shoot each other with slingshots. Valeria Golino hasn't been seen on these shores for around 15 years, at which time she seemed set to become Penelope Cruz before the latter ever got there, when she made her first Hollywood outing, Hot Shots. Age has treated her well and this time, she's back in her home country, playing the manic depressive mother of two boys who, quite literally, lets the dogs out (thankfully without the Ba'ha men on the soundtrack), and gets

ostracised by inhabitants of the town. This is the plot, such as it is, slow moving, lyrical and poetic. And, like most poems, you're never quite sure what its saying, but it seems profound. Because it hasn't been script doctored into oblivion, the result is never predictable, and it is a pleasure to watch the day to day life of a culture that you're not saturated with every time you turn on the television. You wonder why it was that this picture managed to break what seems like a cultural boycott. Perhaps it's some fishing themed exchange deal, and at the moment they're showing some Icelandic fishing village flick in Rome. In any case, people should see this film to support cultural diversity, quite apart from it being worthwhile on its own merit. It might not be the best Europe has to offer but can we please, please see what else is out there.

VG

ÁLFABAKKA

SAMBÍÓIN



ERIC BANA JENNIFER CONNELLY NICK NOLTE

HULK



HILARY DUFF

THE LIZZIE MCGUIRE MOVIE



PAUL WALKER TYRESE GIBSON EWA MENDES

2 FAST 2 FURIOUS



ALDOUS LUNNEY COLIN FERGUSON

What a Girl Wants

JULY 18

KRINGLUNNI

SAMBÍÓIN



HILARY DUFF

THE LIZZIE MCGUIRE MOVIE



JULIETTE BINOCHÉ JEAN RENO

JET LAG



PAUL WALKER TYRESE GIBSON EWA MENDES

2 FAST 2 FURIOUS



ALDOUS LUNNEY COLIN FERGUSON

What a Girl Wants

JULY 18

HÁSKÓLABÍÓ



ERIC BANA JENNIFER CONNELLY NICK NOLTE

HULK



PAUL WALKER TYRESE GIBSON EWA MENDES

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CITY GUIDE

GRAPEVINE IN YOUR POCKET
THIS PULLOUT HAS ALL THE INFORMATION ONE MIGHT NEED,
SO FOR A SAFER JOURNEY. PULL IT OUT AND PUT IT IN YOUR POCKET

LEAVING THE CITY

If you're not going to hitchhike your way out of town and you haven't got a bike, there are three ways to do it.

Rent a car

A comfortable way to if you can afford it, renting a car for 24 hours can cost anywhere from 6.900kr (89\$/83EU) with insurance and unlimited mileage. You can rent anything from a four wheeled aluminum tin can (usually a VW Polo) to a huge Motor home/ VR, jeeps are also available. Car rentals are situated in most of Iceland's larger towns, e.g. Reykjavik, Akureyri, Ísafjörður, Selfoss and Egilsstaðir. You must be at least 20 years old, and you must have been licensed to drive for at least one year at the time of the rental. The rental company usually require payment by credit card..

Taking the Bus

Reykjavik's main bus terminal is BSI (www.bsi.is). It opens at 7:30 (9:00 in weekends) and closes at 19:00. BSI's bus routes go all around Iceland, at a rather reasonable price.

The buses are accurate and usually on time, a big advantage, but the time between trips from one place can sometimes vary from a few hours to a couple of days, a disadvantage for the less patient.

You can also check out BSI's guided tours either at their website (www.dice.is), or simply contact the bus terminal.

Get airborne

There are two airlines that handle Iceland's domestic flights, Flugfélag Íslands (Air Iceland) and the smaller islandflug. We recommend you visit their websites for more info on their fairs and so on. Both airlines are situated on Reykjavik airport in the center of Reykjavik. Flying to Akureyri, usually costs around 7.500kr (100\$/90EU.) and flights to all destinations are frequent, often up to three times a day, but if you think you're going to be enjoying the view on your way, you will be disappointed.

www.flugfelag.is
www.islandsflug.is

and of course you can always walk.

SPOT THIS

The Little Christmas Store
Grundarstíg 7
101 Reykjavik
Downtown



In what used to be a garage in 101 Reykjavik, Christmas is celebrated all year round. A tiny store specializing in hand crafted Christmas items remains open for all seasons. The owner, whom you'll always find behind the counter, has gathered all kinds of Christmas related stuff from all over Iceland and is offered for sale at a rather reasonable price. She can actually tell you who crafted your item of interest, where he or she lives, and from what the item is made (if that isn't obvious anyway). A Santa made from stone originally from the town of Blönduós, or Christmas elves made of wood from a farm in east Iceland are among the items on display. Having already acquired the mandatory stuffed puffin, woolly jumper and Viking helmet, there nothing like some Christmas related item from the world's northernmost capital to flesh out your collection. It is also one of the few shops that carry matrushka's imported directly from Russia, sadly not Viking or Santa themed ones (or a Viking with a Santa inside), but we're sure that's something that'll soon be remedied.

Open: mon-fri: 10 - 18
sat: 11 - 16
sun: 13 - 16

café

1. Te og Kaffi

Laugavegur 27
Because of it's small entrance, it easy to miss while walking by. Being not only a café, but also a gift shop, it is well worth the visit. It's Reykjavik's answer to Starbucks, with a large selection of coffees, teas and everything you need to consume your coffee at home. The café itself may not be the best place to sit down in, but does great takeaway.

2. Ráðhúskaflfi

City Hall
With view over the city pond, Ráðhúskaflfi is situated inside Reykjaviks City Hall. Coffee and great cakes as you enjoy the view. Free internet access for costumers and around the corner inside the City Hall, you'll find a big 80m2 model of Iceland.

3. Grái Kötturrinn

Grái Kötturrinn is across the street from Iceland's National Theater and very small and very popular in the early hours of the day. A good place to start a day the British way, with eggs and bacon and other traditional breakfasts on the menu. The lunch menu is also inviting.

4. Kaffitár

Bankastræti 8
The colors of the Rainbow meet you when you enter this café on Bankastræti, with a different color on every wall. It's small but has good coffee and tasty side dishes. It's one of these places that make you want to sit down and watch daily life go by on one of downtown's busiest streets, or simply just to read the newspaper.

5. Súfistinn

Laugavegur 18
The only no smoking café in the centre and always crowded. Being inside Mál & Menning bookstore on Laugavegurinn is it's biggest advantage. You are allowed to pick up books, magazines and newspapers from the bookstore, and read them there over a cup of coffee and/or a snack.

6. Mokka

Skólavörðustígur 3a
An Icelandic tradition since 1958, Mokka is the oldest café in Reykjavik and the first one to make coffee with an espresso machine. Mokka celebrated its 45th birthday on May 24. The walls are covered with art for sale and seats usually filled by loyal customers.

7. Kaffivagninn

Grandagarður 10
By the harbor where fishermen and sailors along with bus drivers and old badasses gather for lunch and a cup of coffee. If you want to try out traditional Icelandic food, pancakes or bread covered with smoked lamb this is the right place although you might feel slightly apprehensive about the tough old guys, don't worry! They're not going to be the last thing you see in this life.

8. Café Paris

Austurstræti 14
Situated in the heart of the city with view over Austurvöllur, its spacious, popular and usually full. Offers you light meals and the opportunity to sit outside when the weather is nice. Middle aged Icelanders on every other table, and tourists in between, the usual crowd, Café Paris is international like the city it's named after.

9. Tíu Dropar

Laugavegur 27
With the exception of Mokka café, Tíu Dropar is the oldest café in downtown Reykjavik. The place has a very special feel to it, the decor, the tables and the chairs, along with the service makes you feel very much at home, it's almost like you sitting down for a cup of coffee in your grandma's kitchen. The menu is limited, but has the advantage of constant changes, with new items every day.

bar and bistro
(most are cafés too)

10. Café Victor

Hafnarstræti 1-3
Spelt with a c rather than with the more traditional k in order to be more cosmopolitan. This play seems to be working, as the bar has become something of a hangout for foreigners. The Viking ship sitting on top of the house might also add to the appeal. The crowd is very mixed, both in origin and age, and so is the music.

11. Hverfisbar

Hverfisgata 20
Very long queues to get in, and once there, you wonder what the fuss was about, or whether the queue was the best part. When it's four o'clock on a Sunday morning and you're still going strong, this might be the place you'll wind up, by which time you probably won't care that the same song seems to come on every half hour.

12. Grand Rokk

Smíðustígur 6
A place true to Rock 'n Roll. Leather, long hair and bands that don't do covers. Well known and less known Icelandic bands play for free (free drinks for band members, need I say more?) usually no less than three bands a night, four nights a week. Grab a beer and rock on! During the day this is a hangout for chess players, challenging each other and anyone that might wander in here for a game. Some of them seem to have finally decided to abandon participation in the outside world in favour of the afternoon drinking and chess.

13. Sólon

Bankastræti 7a
One size fits all is what this place is going for, and it's usually a very crowded pick up place. Somewhat expensive, and whether it's because of this, an attempt at masculinity or just general despair, people have been known to jump from the second floor balcony. This is not recommended, as a broken leg is most often the result, and the girls remain duly unimpressed.

14. Kráin

Laugavegi 73
An atmospheric place, which has its regulars and and is sadly one of few places that has Kronenburg on tap. A rather quiet place to chat on the weekdays, and troubadour plays there every weekend. It also has occasional jazz piano concerts.



15. Cafe 22

Laugavegur 22
Weird inside out and now it's a place where you can pass through all the stages without leaving the building, from chatting on the first floor, dancing on the second, to passing out on the third, where the atmosphere is more of an intimate late night one. Still maintains the feeling of being a place for people who don't necessarily fit in anywhere else, which makes it a great place to hang out.

16. Kaffibarrinn

Bergstaðarstræti 1
Kaffibarrinn is cool Reykjavik, or at least tries to be. Reykjavik prides itself on having more artists per capita than any other capital in the world, and the crowd here seem to be trying to prove the point, with musicians, actors and writers, and a whole lot of wannabes. You can't say you've partied in Reykjavik unless you've partied here, although civilians might have a hard time getting in. Blur's Damon Albarn owns a piece of this one wisely figuring it was cheaper than paying for drinks.

17. Sirkus

Klappartígur 30
Weird inside out and the tropical forest painted on the outside gives you a hint of what's to come. It's Reykjavik's underground wildlife in a small cage, it's kinda like someone threw a party at home, and things got a bit out of hand... months ago. It's as tiny as an apartment for two and the second floor looks just like someone's living room. Cramped, but the bathroom queue is a good place to meet people.

18. Nelly's

bingholtstræti 2
Has just changed management, so what will happen now is anyone's guess. All we can do is hope they maintain their policy of being the cheapest bar in Reykjavik.

19. Dillon

Laugavegur 30
A nice place to sit and chat, good folk themed music and no dance floor to worry about. Has interesting horse themed decor,

and the balcony is open on the weekends. Finds a nice medium somewhere between the hipsters and the drunks.

20. Vegamót

Vegamótastígur 4
Wants to be the in-spot to be seen, and is just that. Dress up, flaunt it and enjoy the view as others do the same. It's a jungle in there, and the fittest, or at least the fittest looking, come out on top.

21. Kaffibrennslan

Pósthússtræti 9
On the sober side of town, but ironically with the largest selection of beers in Reykjavik, good coffee and even better service, (and imagine, we're not getting paid for saying this). One of these cafés/bars that should fit all, the editors admit they drink coffee here more often than they should.

22. Celtic Cross

Hverfisgata 26
Arguably the bar in town that comes closest to deserving the title of Irish, even though the Dubliner tries harder. Except for the coffin in the back, it's very much alive. Live music almost every night and middle aged philosophers asking themselves questions about life during the day, over a pint of beer or a cup of coffee.

23. Prikíð

Bankastræti 12
Always a classic, no matter if it's early on a Monday morning or very late on a Saturday night, Prikíð makes your day (or night if that's your thing). Nice coffee, better music and remember to dance, if you can manage to take advantage of the very limited space

24. Svartakaffi

Laugavegur 54
Read the newspaper, have a cup of coffee, have a philosophical conversation with your cigarette and enjoy the specialty of the house, soup in a bread. Aim high, it's not on the ground floor.

25. Coffee Shop 11

Laugavegur 11
Owned by the same people as 22, and sort of its little brother. Usually has decent rock music and a pretty good jukebox if you're still not happy. Foosball on the upper floor, and if you ask Gústi the bartender nicely, he might perform the house trick for you, which is putting a match into his mouth and pulling it out of his nose, and if you meet him on a good day, he might even put a pen into one nostril and take it out the other as an encore. Watch out for slam poetry nights first Thursday of every month.

26. Kaffi Kúltur

Hverfisgötu 18
For those who grow tired of seeing nothing but palefaces about town, Kaffi Kúltur might be a pleasant diversion. During the day it's something of a hangout for the actors from the National Theatre, just across the street, but in the evening it is populated by both new and older Icelanders. They have multi-ethnic food and frequent concerts. Wednesday night is tango night. Anyone can join in, but this is not a place to learn.

clubs

27. Spotlight

Hafnarstræti 17
With perhaps the exception of the Vatican, every self respecting city has at least one gay club, and this is Reykjavik. Gay, bi or simply curious, are supported by a crowd that's there to dance rather than to make moves (if you know where I'm going). Cool happening club and likely to be entertaining unless you're particularly prudish. Crowd: 20+

28. Gaukur á Stöng

Tryggvagata 22
Iceland's oldest club is turning 20 this fall. During the day it's a pool pub and on weekday evenings there are often live rock concerts. On weekends there is usually a lot of action with cover bands playing everything from Britney to the Beatles.



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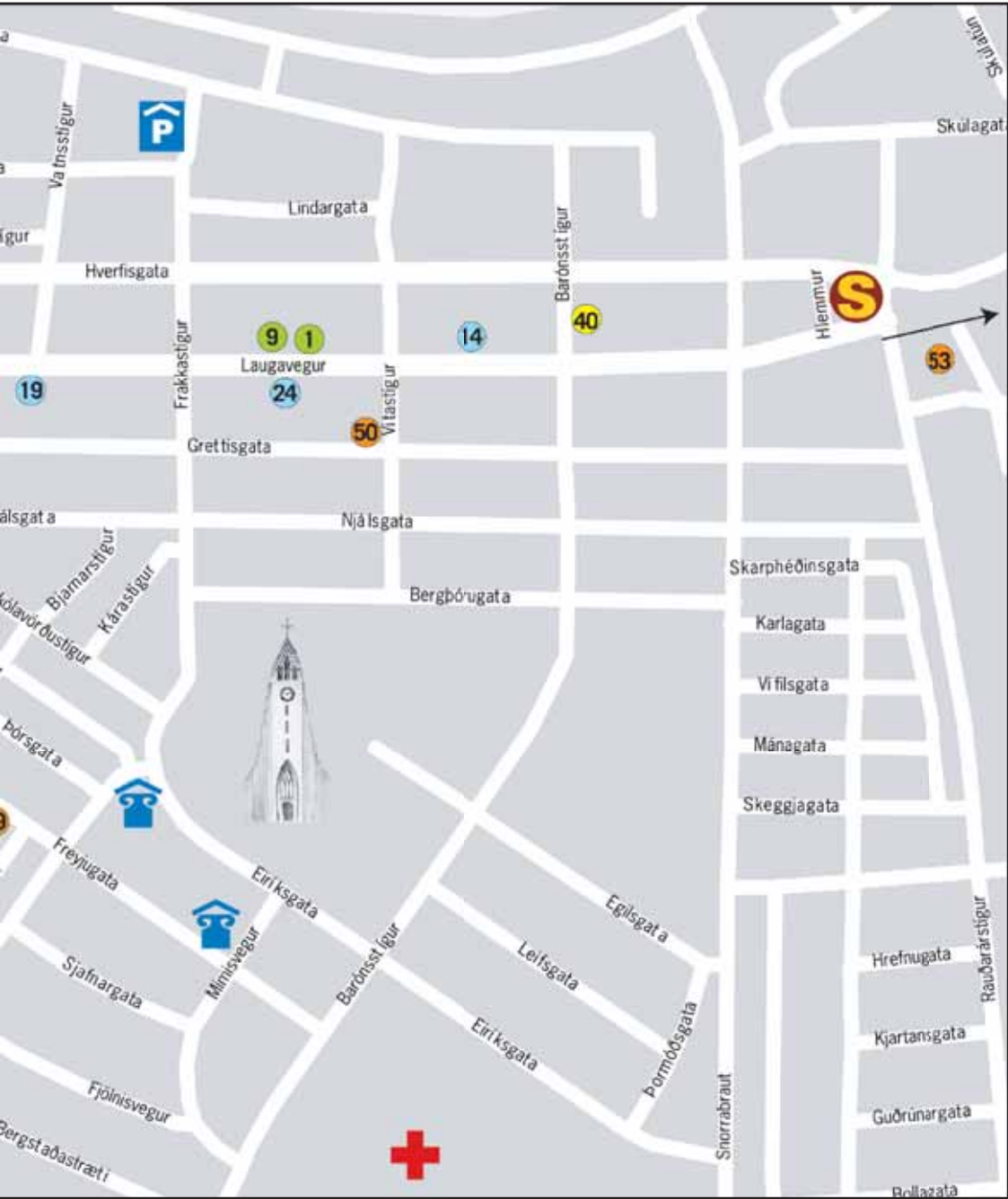
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Reykjavik has no trams trains or subways, only buses. These yellow things can take you pretty much anywhere in Reykjavik's suburb areas. It's a slow system and you might have to change buses a couple of times to get where you want to though usually things run smoothly, and on time. The price of a single fare is 220kr, for an adult, (60kr for children under 12). If you are in town for more than a few days then 9 ticket package for 1500kr would be a better bet. Bus cards valid for two weeks a month or three months are also available. You have to pay as you step on board and it has to be the accurate amount, unless you want

to pay more for your ride. The driver can not change your money. For those of you used to the honesty system, this system is as honest, because if you don't pay, you don't ride. You can ask the driver for a free time limited exchange ticket, if you need two buses to complete your journey. The bus system is closed during the night, you can catch your first bus between 6:40 and 7:00

in the morning, and last call is around 24:00. The main bus stops in Reykjavik are Hlemmur and Lækjartorg (see map), there you'll be able to get all the information you need.



Without exception you'll be charged at least 1000kr for entrance in the evenings.
Crowd: 20+

29. Nasa
by Austurvöllur
Used to be a theater, but is now a club. New in Reykjavik's nightlife and it seems that there was need for it. Great sound system and occasional live bands. Most come to dance and space out. Because of little competition it is perhaps the only super-club downtown. Admission 1000 krónur.

30. Leikhöskjallarinn
Hverfisgata 19
Recently opened again and is gaining respect, It's a Restaurant during the day but a dance place during night (weekends of course). The crowd here is usually little more mature then in the other clubs. Talented DJs play with the drunken crowd.
Crowd: 25+

restaurant

31. Einar Ben
Veltusund 1
Full of 19th century charm the restaurant Einar Ben is named after one of Iceland's finest poets, Einar Benediktsson. It is situated in the older section of Reykjavik's midtown, close to the harbor. A fine menu features a contemporary version of the Icelandic international kitchen. The Menu is composed by Chef Bardur Brandsson, whose magic is outstanding. The food and the old Einar Ben. Atmosphere is something you can't miss. A visiting journalist has likened it to a Hollywood photo from Gloria Swanson's personal family album. Seriously !!

32. Apotek
Austurstræti 16
Formerly the central drugstore of Reykjavik, established in the late 18 hundreds, the Apotek is now a modern restaurant

with Art Deco Interior. You can still see the names of the chief managing pharmacists/owners on the wall of the bar. Today, this "drugstore" serves a different type of milkshake. Now look for a sizzling visual kitchen (behind a glass wall) with a Super Menu! Apotek is an eating experience not to be missed.

33. La Primavera
Austurstræti 9
Everybody laughed when we discovered a contemporary restaurant that has its most notable influences from Northern Italian cooking but using local Icelandic produce. The unique menu that results from this combination features homemade pastas, risotto, gnocchi, polenta and a wide variety of the freshest vegetables, fish, poultry, meat and game. The menu, the atmosphere and a comprehensive, exclusively Italian wine list has made La Primavera a favorite among the locals. They laugh no more!!

34. Við Tjörnina
Templararund 3
The most novel fish restaurant in Iceland. The owner, Chef Runar Marínsson, is known for innovative fish dishes made from a variety of rare fish and shellfish and related raw materials. Mr. Marínsson is also a respected food and cooking personality and the author of several cookbooks. His respect for his raw materials is a tribute to fish and shellfish, showing off their natural goodness without artificiality. Chef Marínsson is really a natural wonder and a particular favourite with Icelanders!!

35. Húmarhúsið
Amtmannsstíg 1
One of the most popular places in Reykjavik or should we say Iceland, - a gourmet restaurant in the heart of Reykjavik. The kitchen has a menu with various types of shellfish, lobster and the amazingly sweet and succulent langoustine (sometimes called Icelandic Lobster). The specialty of the house is a rich Cream of Lobster Soup has been hailed all over the world by international gourmet writer David Rosengarten, whose comments appear in the finest food magazines in Europe and in the States.

36. Sommelier
Hverfisgata 46
The Sommelier not only has an excellent menu – Icelandic cooking with delicate French Touch – but the Sommelier wine list is admired for its variety of specially selected wines. The service is impeccable and the waiters take time to discuss the qualities of each and every wine listed, if you wish. The wine list has two hundred entries! This is where you may just happen to meet stars of stage and television, if you're lucky !

37. Hótel Holt
Bergstaðarstræti 37
An exclusive hotel housing Iceland's Most Renowned Restaurant, the Gallery.
An evening at The Gallery Restaurant remains an unforgettable experience, if your passion is good wine and food. The superb cuisine is inspired by French culinary tradition and includes a variety of Icelandic seafoods and organic lamb. The impressive selection of vintage wines is unique for lovers of the grape. This is where you will see original Icelandic art, without having to go to a gallery. The Holt has the largest privately owned art collection in Iceland.

38. 3 Frakkar
Baldursgata 14
This is a restaurant that cannot be ignored. A very small place with an atmosphere. Here you may enjoy the house specialties of Icelandic traditional dishes prepared in the good, old-fashioned manner, including catfish, shark, and whale steaks. And of course much more.
If you're lucky, Chef Úlfar Eysteinnsson, the owner, may be present regaling the clientele with wild whaling tales. Don't forget to ask Chef Úlfar for dark Icelandic pumpnickel bread with pure Icelandic butter.
Don't forget to make a reservation !

39. Siggí Hall at Óðinsvé
Þórsgata 1
Ask Chef Della, the only Italian who is "Commandeur de la Commanderie de Cordons Bleu de France". Ask Chef Burmistrov at the Corithia Nevskij Palace in St. Petersburg. Ask Chef Jeff

HOW TO USE PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Tunks over of the fabulous DC Coast in Washington DC. Ask anyone who is somebody in the culinary world, and they will tell you about Siggí Hall, Iceland's famous chef and television personality. Siggí Hall has presented Icelandic gourmet food all over the world. His television show is very popular and so are his cookbooks. The Siggí Hall restaurant at Hotel Odinsve is one of the 100 best new restaurants in the world according to Condé Nast Travel Magazine. Need we say more.

40. Argentina
Barnsstígur 11a
"A dark cavernous, off-beat restaurant called Argentina...""A steak house where the lamb has killed the beef.." and "a gastronomic delight." are just few of the impressive compliments paid to this restaurant.
David Rosengarten wrote in his American Newsletter not too long ago: "Lots of chefs in Reykjavik riff on local lamb, but if you want to see it in its most pristine form, you can dine at Argentina." There are few places in Reykjavik where you can simply sense the deep passion for simply prepared seasonal foods.

41. Tapas
Vesturgata 3b
For those with a bit of money and time on their hands, the evening can hardly be better spent than at Tapas, where you can vile away the evening having course after course of wonderful miniature dishes served. Particularly recommended is the garlic fried lobster and duck in apricot sauce. If afterwards, you don't feel like getting up right away, there's also a rather large lounge to lounge in, and the paintings are worth a look.

fast food

42. Nonni
Hafnarstræti 11
The owner is a miser, so always count your change. Having said that, this is almost certainly the best junk food in the Greater Reykjavik area, and quite possibly farther a field. The subs are great, none of that Subway commitment to healthy living, and they probably contribute significantly to the ever increasing "size" of the nation. They also serve burger and sandwiches, and have good lunch time offers.

43. Serrano
Hafnarstræti 20
A new place right next door to the above. A Mexican themed eatery, but tight on the chili. Slightly cheaper and lighter on the cholesterol, but somehow not quite as fulfilling. Still, you can get a large burrito and Pepsi for 599, which is one of the cheaper ways to fill your belly in this too expensive town.

44. Hiðilli
At Ingólfstorg
Where Nonni used to work before he went solo. The original, but not necessarily the best. They have a somewhat larger selection of subs, and of different sizes, but somehow manage to be slightly on the soggy side, and miss the heavenly Nonni sauce.

45. Bæjarins bestu
Tryggvagata
They claim to have the best hot dogs in town, and for once the product lives up to the hype. Ask for one with everything, and you'll get a dog in a bun with ketchup, mustard, remulade (don't ask), fried and raw onion, the standardized Icelandic hotdog, only better.

46. Pizza 67
Tryggvagata 26
The local pizza chain that's trying to take on the world, and who currently operate a place in the Faeroes, as well as nation wide here in Iceland. They have a Summer of Love type theme, which doesn't really extend beyond the names of the pizzas, a few slogans and a few posters, but the pizzas are nice. They also do deliveries.

47. Kebab
Lækjargata 2
The only kebab place in downtown Reykjavik, surprisingly. Does not really stand comparison to more established kebab places on the continent, but its presence gives Reykjavik a more international, rather than just Americanised, feel.

48. Waffle Wagon
At Lækjartorg
Sort of comes and goes like an apparition. One minute its there to serve you its delicious, chocolate soaked Belgian waffles, the next it's just the empty pavement. Close your eyes and pray, and it might appear before you.

49. Eldsmíðjan
Bragagata 38a
Oven baked pizza's simply don't get much better than this. It is slightly more expensive than other pizzerias, but well worth it. A wide selection of toppings, including that sorely missed pizza delight, snails. Also delivers.

50. Vitabar
Bergþórugata 21
Actually a bar, but best known for its hamburgers. A burger with fries for 500 is one of the best meal deals in town, but special mention must go to the Forget-Me-Not blue cheese and garlic extravaganza. The Viking beer always feels particularly cold.

51. First Vegetarian (Á næstu grösum)
Laugavegur 20b
Used to be called One Woman Restaurant, as there was always the same woman working there. Has new owners and a larger staff, but the theme is still vegetarian, with one vegan and one wheat free dish always on offer. The only vegetarian restaurant licensed to carry beer and wine. Remains on the right side of the 1000 krónur bill at lunchtime, slips slightly over in the evening.

52. Grænn kostur
Skólavörðustígur 8
Located in a parking lot, which is actually not as bad as it sounds, chicken is the only vegan restaurant in Reykjavik, and is frequented by visiting rock stars so inclined, including hardcore band Sick of it all. Has a selection of fairly reasonably priced specials of the day, and some delicious cakes you can devour guilt free. Watch out for Antonio the cat, so called because he's stocky as a Latin lover, the only customer who gets treated to milk based products.

53. American Style
Skipholt 70
An all-Icelandic chain, as you may have guessed, with a selection of burgers, chicken and steak. Pictures of rock stars on the wall complete the theme. Mostly on the right side of the purple note and you can refill your glass with soda as often as you like. Still, you find yourself wondering, is all that cheese and bacon on the chicken breast strictly necessary?

USEFUL NUMBERS

Car rentals	
ALP	562-6060
Avis	591-4000
Budget	567-8300
Europcar	591-4050
SBK Car Rental	420-6000

Internet Cafés
BSI, Vatnsmyrarvegur 10 101 Rvk.
Ground Zero, Ingólfstogi, 101 Rvk.
k-LANIÓ, Laugavegi 103, 101 Reykjavik
Ráðhúskaffi, City Hall 101 Rvk.
Netkaffi, Kringlan mall 103 Rvk.
Tourist information center, Lækjargata 2, 101 Rvk.

Post offices
Central Post office, Pósthússtræti 5, 101 Rvk.
Post Office, Kringlan Mall, 103 Rvk.

Laundry Services
Embla Laundry, Barónsstígur 3, 101 Rvk.

Taxi services	
Borgarbilastöðin	552-2440
BSR	561-0000
Hreyfill	588-5522

Useful for emergencies	
Emergency phone	112
Information	118
Dentist	575-0505
Doctor	1770
Pharmacies (find your closest)	call 118

Phone companies	
Landssíminn	800-7000
Og Vodafone	599-9000

Rent a bike
Borgarhjól, Hverfisgata 50, 101 Rvk
BSI, Vatnsmyrarvegur, 101 Rvk
Tourist information center, Lækjargata 2, 101 Rvk.

Useful Websites
www.icelandtourist.is
www.visitreykjavik.is

Select swimming pools
Laugardalslaug, Sundlaugarvegur, 105 Rvk.
Sundhöll Rvk. Barónsstígur, 101 Rvk.

Embassies	
Canada	
Túngötu 14, 101 Rvk.	575-6500
Denmark	
Hverfisgötu 29, 101 Rvk.	575-0300
France	
Túngötu 22, 101 Rvk.	551-7621
Germany	
Laufásvegi 31, 101 Rvk.	530-1100
Norway	
Fjölögötu 17, 101 Rvk.	520-0700
United Kingdom	
Laufásvegi 31, 101 Rvk.	550-5100
United States	
Laufásvegi 21, 101 Rvk.	562-9100

REVIEWS BY

Restaurants	Sonny Greco
Bars, clubs, bistros, cafés and fast food	The Editors
Map	Bjarki Þór Kjartansson

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EVENTS

SAFN LAUGAVEGUR 37

LISTINGS

from the United States exhibits drawings.
Handverk og Hönnun, -13 to 17 -Exhibition of contemporary and traditional Icelandic art and crafts.
Sigurjón Ólafsson Sculpture Museum, -14 to 17 -Portraits and Abstractions
Safn, -14 to 18 -Collection includes both international and Icelandic contemporary art.
ASÍ. Art Museum, -14 to 18 -Icelandic art from 1950-1970
Hallgrímskirkja Church, -starts at 12 -Lunch time concert, Roger Sayer organ.

Night
Little Central, 3 men Jazz band Steipa plays, 500kr entrance fee including a beer
Celtic Cross, Coverband 3Some downstairs and Troubadour Ómar Hlynsson upstairs
Gaukur á Stöng, Coverband Menn í svörtum fötum, or Men in Black. The debate rages regarding the singers sexual preferences. Judge for yourself!
Dillon, DJ Andrea Jónsdóttir
Coffee shop 11, DJ Andri plays some Rock 'n Roll
Hverfisbar, DJ Atli Partycop
Café Victor, DJ Gunni, 80's music
Sirkus, DJ Kári
Prikið, DJ KGB
Amsterdam, DJ Master
Glaumbar, DJ Þór Bæring
Kaffibarinn, DJ's of the House
Vidalín, FRÆBBBLARNIR. Icelands premier punkband of the last 25 years.
Nelly's, Live Music by Búi Bentson
Dubliners, Singer Rut Reginalds plays some music
De Boomkikker, Troubadour Danni
Kráin 73, Troubadour Ingvar Valgeirsson
Ari í Ögri, Troubadour Óskar Einarsson
Leikhúskjallarinn, Old school dance sing-along party. House DJ.

Sunday, July 13

Both Day and Night
Austurvöllur out door exhibition, Earth from Above. Aerial Photographs by Yann Arthus-Bertrand.
Café Sólón, Exhibition - Mosaic mirrors by Rósa.

Day
Reðursafnið, Phallological Museum, A fine penis and penis related selection from various mammals.
Árbæjarsafn, Folk Museum, An exhibition shows life and work in the years 1950-60.
Gallery Ófeigur, Black Silver. Exhibition of silver jewelry works of Niklas Ejve from Sweden.
National Gallery of Iceland, Exhibition of selected works by Icelandic artists from the National Gallery's collection.
National and University Library, Exhibition of the founder of the city's documentation, also, childrens literature, texts and drawings.
Culture House, Images of Iceland - milestones in cartography
Kling og Bang Gallery, Sculptures and paintings from Pétur Gunnarson who graduated from the art academy last year.
Norræna húsið, Nordic House, The Big Nordic Elephant Show
Reykjavik Museum of Photography, The Five Elements. Photographs and etchings from French-Vietnamese artist Claire Xuan.
Ásmundarsafn, Sculpture museum, The Modern Man, works of popular sculptor Ásmundur Sveinsson.
Einar Jónsson Sculpture Museum, The works of Iceland's first modern sculptor.
Hafnarhúsið, Reykjavik Art Museum, -10 to 17 -Lobster or Fame Two Decades of Bad Taste Ltd. Also Erró's War paintings and Insight into international contemporary art in Iceland. Admission 500 ISK. Free on Mondays.
Kjarvalsstaðir Art Museum, -10 to 17 -New times in Icelandic Photography. Admission 500 krónur
Saga Museum, -10 to 18 -History face to face, historical figures and major events in Icelandic history presented in a unique way. Admission 800 krónur.
Hafnarborg Art Gallery, -11 to 17 -Barbara Cooper from the United States exhibits drawings.

Handverk og Hönnun, -13 to 17 -Exhibition of contemporary and traditional Icelandic art and crafts.
Sigurjón Ólafsson Sculpture Museum, -14 to 17 -Portraits and Abstractions
Safn, -14 to 18 -Collection includes both international and Icelandic contemporary art.
ASÍ. Art Museum, -14 to 18 -Icelandic art from 1950-1970
Night
Gaukur á Stöng, Band Mastodon (USA), opening acts are Forgarður Helvitis, Changer and Brutal
Coffee shop 11, Foosball Match
Kráin 73, Jazz Pianist Finnur
Grand Rokk, Mastodon. US Metal band.
Dubliners, Troubadour Ingvar
De Boomkikker, Troubadour Óskar Einarsson

Monday, July 14

Both Day and Night
Austurvöllur out door exhibition, Earth from Above. Aerial Photographs by Yann Arthus-Bertrand.
Café Sólón, Exhibition - Mosaic mirrors by Rósa.
Day
Reðursafnið, Phallological Museum, A fine penis and penis related selection from various mammals.
Árbæjarsafn, Folk Museum, An exhibition shows life and work in the years 1950-60.
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Kjarvalsstaðir Art Museum, -10 to 17 -New times

Three modernists
ASÍ Gallery
June 20th - August 17th



A not too large but highly enjoyable exhibiton at the ASÍ Gallery shows how varied Icelandic painting was around the middle of 20th century and proves Icelandic artists have by no means been a bunch of sheep-sketching loners cut off the international art scene.
Nina Tryggvadóttir completed her artistic training in New York in 1946. While she is probably best known for her abstract art, the exhibition presents paintings from 1940' influenced by cubism, with both forms and colours strongly reminiscent of Cézanne's work.
The upper floor of the gallery, flooded with daylight that streams through the large floor-to-ceiling windows, provides an excellent location for the explosive colours of paintings by Svavar Guðnason. Svavar is in particular associated with the CoBrA group and its abstract expressionism, and was the first artist to hold an abstract art exhibition in Iceland in 1945.
Kristján Davíðsson's work represents yet another possible way to approach painting. There is a strong emphasis on paint structure, and the three portraits show the directness and freedom of expression of Art Brute, an artistic style that found its inspiration in the works by untrained artists or children.
Tues-Sun 14:00-18:00
Admission free

Paintings by Ingó
12 Tónar
Record Store
July 15th - September 1st



As well as being a connoisseurs record store, 12 Tónar doubles as an art gallery. A new exhibition, by Ingó, is starting there on July 15th. Ingó is currently going through his palm tree phase. As well as sporting a new palm tree themed tattoo, he tries to work palm trees into most of his works. His current exhibition is connected with, and features lyrics from his upcoming album, the follow-up to 2001's Escapism. Also on display is the artists' first piece, from age 12, with blowups that document the birth of artistry.
Open Mon-Fri 10-18, Sat 10-14.

Just when you think you know Laugavegur like the back of your hand, having walked up and down a million times, you discover a hidden gem: the large gallery window at Laugavegur 37 turns out to lead to three floors filled with art, books on art and devotion to art.

The exhibition presents works from the private collection of Pétur Arnason, a businessman whose clothes shop was located in the house, and his wife Ragna Róbertsdóttir, an artist.
Pétur Arnason had a keen interest in art since his childhood. In 1960s he began to travel to Amsterdam on business and became even more aware of what was happening in contemporary art. In 1969 he married Ragna Róbertsdóttir, whose critical eye checked and channelled his collector's enthusiasm.

The collection has been steadily growing for over thirty years now, and was presented to the public in 2000 The excellent catalogue from the exhibition held at Kópavogur Art Museum is on reference at Gallery. In the 1990s Pétur Arnason and the artist Ingólfur Arnarsson ran a gallery on the second floor of the house and many works are actually acquisitions from the 'Second Floor' gallery exhibitions. One of the artists remarked what an excellent museum the building would make, with its many diverse rooms instead of one giant open space, and Pétur took the idea up. The couple moved out, the shop was closed, and after a reconstruction of the house Gallery was opened in spring 2003.
You won't find much 'oil on canvas X inches per Y inches' on display at Gallery. The exhibition presents drawings, paintings and, in particular, mixed-media installations that all work with phenomena outside of the frame of a painting, such as the relationship of time and space, where the work is divided into two parts and is only seen complete after the visitor has walked down a flight of stairs, or the relationship of sound and sight in the parallel setting of Hekla pumice, which as ashfall obstructs the view after a volcanic eruption, and the noise of FM waves that have blended together and obstruct the clear sound of a single radio



If this prints well, it should look like a work of art.



Plates in a pool.

frequency. Some works explore the role of accident, as two dozen china bowls of different sizes float in a children's pool and create a continuous melody clinking as they collide.
Another builds on the artist's personal experience, represented by pebbles he had gathered on his Iceland travels and arranged in a pattern that changes depending on the viewer's position relative to the work. Some of the works were created specifically for a given place, including works created for this particular exhibition. All the exhibits place emphasis on the concept of the work, the artist's initial idea and the finished work's communication with the viewer. Conceptual art is a notion many have difficulties coming to terms with: when the SUM group was founded in Iceland in 1969 as a reaction to the sweeping influence of abstract expressionism of 1940s, many regarded it arrogant and offensive, and indeed it might have been. Conceptual art does not serve its message on a silver platter, it requires the viewers' involvement in order to finalize the work. It shocks with the intention of forcing the viewers to pause and think but, unfortunately, many pause and walk angrily away.
Inevitably, the works by SUM members such as Kristján Guðmundsson and Hreinn Friðfinnsson can be found in the collection. Several other Icelandic artists are also represented, such as

Ólafur Eliasson, whose 'Colour Vision Kaleidoscope' is one of the latest acquisitions, although the majority are artists from USA, Holland, France, Britain and other countries. The age span ranges from those born immediately after the second world war to artists in their early thirties, but the exhibition also presents a

painting by the Icelandic painter Hörður Ágústsson (b.1922)
The current exhibition is a cross section of the entire collection. Starting this autumn, the plan is to choose one artist at a time and offer a more comprehensive presentation of his or her work, with exhibits both from the collection and on loan from other galleries. Further more, Gallery intends to invite, every year, one or two foreign artists not represented in the collection, as well as present the work of renowned foreign artists and young Icelandic ones.
Unlike many other exhibition spaces, Gallery places emphasis on education. Surprisingly enough, while Iceland's art scene is alive and kicking, general art awareness is not very high: Neither schools nor daily newspapers give visual arts the same amount of attention as they give, for example, literature or music. Gallery intends to provide space and material for students, researchers and anyone interested in art. The current exhibition is supplemented with leaflets in Icelandic and English with basic information about the artists and the works. In addition the owners have made their extensive library available, with books mainly about the artists represented in the collection but also on art in general. Eventually a computer with internet access will be added for research and there are also plans to organise public lectures.
'I don't want to be an artist, I want to be happy' is the title of Ben Vautier's work from 1992, and its message is cristal clear to me: art is not a profession you adopt, art is what you live and explore and the joy of the search. Similarly, Laugavegur 37 Gallery is not a museum you walk through ticking paintings off your 'to see' list. For years the house has obviously been a place where art was lived, where artists met to think and discuss and create. It is an inspiring enviroment that has now opened up to share its experience and love for art with other visitors.

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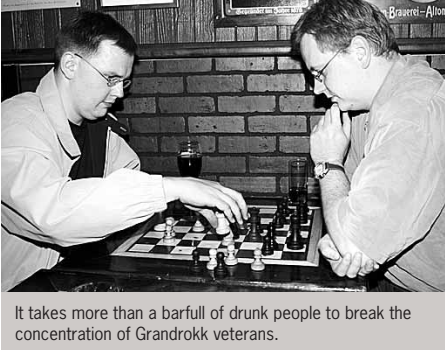
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NIGHTLIFE

AN EVENING
AT GRANDROKK
CHESS, BEER AND INEXPLICABLE
MATCHTRICKS

Grandrokk is one of those places that has what so many pubs promise but few deliver, atmosphere. What is it that gives a place atmosphere? It's certainly not the stale air, cigarette smoke or stench of alcohol oozing from every pore. That applies to every bar in Reykjavík, and probably the world. It has something to do with decor, but that doesn't tell the whole story, or any dive with a few amusing placards and posters of 70's rock stars would have atmosphere. It's got something to do with staff. Bartenders are given power seldom entrusted to mere mortals. At a whim they can send you farther up into the heights of drunken bliss, or have you banished into sobriety, and the amount of money in your pockets does not always determine whether you wind up in one group or the other. You are completely at their mercy, and pray they treat you kindly, offering a sympathetic ear and refreshments for a small fee.

But most of all, atmosphere has to do with the clientele. You can have the most intimate decor, and the most benevolent of bar staff, but if the clientele doesn't add colour, or even stays away altogether, your bar will be nothing but an empty shell. Grandrokk used to be situated at Klappastigur 30, where Sirkús currently resides. Grapevine spent many a Saturday afternoon there in its youth, downing pints and dreaming of a promising future in publishing. Little has changed but the price of beer. At the time, you could get Jever on tap for 300kr, by far the cheapest in town, and this attraction cut



It takes more than a barfull of drunk people to break the concentration of Grandrokk veterans.

across many a cultural divide. At Grandrokk, you would find teenagers coming to get drunk for the first time and old bohemians getting drunk for the last, and everything in between. On occasion, someone would spontaneously get up to read poetry, the music was turned off and everyone would quiet down and listen. Ah, happy days. But alas, it was not to last. Grandrokk moved to its present location at Smiðjustigur 6. The number of beers on tap multiplied, but, tragically, so did the price, and a nightly pint of Jever became a thing of the past. Nonetheless, the atmosphere moved to the new place, or, in fact, spread evenly among the two successor bars. The younger cats, the hipsters and the artistic wannabes and willbes remained put at Klapparstigur, whereas the older ones relocated to Smiðjustigur. The most notable of these was the chess club Hrókurinn (The Rook). Almost every table in the bar has a built in chessboard, and you can come in there at any time of day to play, and be sure



Don't worry, these men are in a band.

to find a number of willing opponents. Be careful of playing for beer, though, as most members are pretty proficient, and have often gotten in foreign teams to compete. Among notables who have played The Rook are Kasparov, and Anand. The Rook won the Icelandic cup for chess clubs in 2002, and has just returned from a tour in Greenland.

As Grapevine enters the bar at 5 o'clock on a Friday, the evening is just kicking off. First up is a pub quiz. 30 questions are asked, and the winner wins a crate of beer, but the catch is that at least 15 questions must be answered correctly. The regular quiz host is unavailable, and the newcomer is given a hard time of it. It happens to be the 4th of July, so the questions are dedicated to American Lowbrow culture. This does not amuse the regulars, most of whom know more about Icelandic poetry and the sagas than about Oprah or Star Wars. Every question is second guessed and/or shouted down, the host puts up a heroic defence but is in

the process of becoming the most reviled man in the room. He asks who was the commander of British Forces in World War I, in one of the questions not dedicated to the theme of the day, and the audience smell blood. He neglects to mention whether this refers to Army, Navy or combined forces, and for a moment it seems as if Iceland might witness its first lynching of the century. As tempers flare he belatedly announces that it was the Army he was asking about, his life is spared and the competition resumes. As it turns out, the result is a tie between two people who both managed 13 points, but no one was a contender for the crate of beer, so the sudden death rule is not invoked (Grapevine manages a measly 9).

The quiz over, there is no pressing need for the use of mental faculties, at least for those not playing chess, and hence the bar is hit hard. The regulars at Grandrokk are considerably more talkative than your average Reykjavík bargoer, and this with

only the aid of moderate amounts(as yet) of alcohol. The first man Grapevine finds itself engaged in conversation with to claims to have designed the backdrop for films such as Angels of the Universe and Núi Albinói, and says he wrote the story Ikingut, also made into a film. He lectures Grapevine on JFK and the magic bullets, and about how LBJ and the southern oil barons had him killed. Then, in yet another attempt to expose Grapevine's ignorance, he pulls out 12 matches and challenges Grapevine to take one away, promising that Grapevine will wind up with the last match, and hence lose the game. Grapevine duly finds itself holding said last match.

Everyone having had their share of merriment, and chairs being requisitioned by chess players, it now finds itself talking to a man who titles himself an artist. He proudly announces that unlike most of his peers, he is a member of the Conservative Party. Attempting to convince Grapevine of the merits of this, he tells us that all this talk of the poor getting poorer is merely relative, it is in fact the rich getting richer, and hence there is no need to worry. Grapevine finds itself quite as dumbfounded by this as by disappearing matches, and decides to concentrate on the drinking. We think it best to end our report here, and let Grapevine go about its business, among the friendly late night drinkers at atmospheric Grandrokk.



Vladur

LISTINGS

DJ Mike Scott
Vídalín
Saturday July 19th



Mike Scott deep passion is spinning vinyl for crowds of hungry music lovers. Mike Scott has been spinning in clubs, on the radio and at parties since he was 16 yrs old. His passion for music comes thru in dynamic sets and in his explosive energy as he takes the dance floor to different pulsating levels that makes them crave for more. Mike's skills have also taken him into the studio for production of original music, remixes, and production. Party starts: 22:00, admission ISK 1000

Light Nights, lðnó
Theatre
Every Friday and Monday



Light Nights, now in its 32nd year, is starting up again. It is probably the best place to see Viking dancing, chanting of old rhymes, traditional wrestling, and what some sources say is the scariest ghost story of all time. Show starts at 8.30.

Lunga, Arts Festival of
Young People on the
East Coast, Seyðis-
fjörður.

July 16th - July 20th



The 4th annual youth festival is held at Seyðisfjörður, on the east coast of Iceland, incidentally in the same town where passenger ship Norræna docks. The festival kicks off on the 16th at 9 o'clock. Over the next four days people can participate in various events such as morning aerobics and belly dancing. They can also take part in various workshops, and have their products displayed on Sunday. On Thursday there is a clothing design competition with three categories; T-shirts, headgear and Oscar suit/gown. On Saturday there is a song contest held in two categories, best original song and best arrangement. All singing must be live, accompaniment not necessarily. Entrance fee to workshops and competitions is 500kr. On Friday the band Bris plays, and on Saturday í svörtum fótum (Men in Black) perform.

in Icelandic Photography. Admission 500 krónur
Saga Museum, -10 to 18 -History face to face, historical figures and major events in Icelandic history presented in a unique way. Admission 800 krónur.
Hafnarborg Art Gallery, -11 to 17 -Barbara Cooper from the United States exhibits drawings.
Light Nights Summer Theatre, -starts at 20:30 -Real authentic Icelandic show performed in English, including the most thrilling ghost story ever told; The Deacon of Myrká

Night
Gaukur á Stöng, Magga Stína, member of the band Risaedlan (Dinosaur) plays.
Dubliners, Troubadour Ingi Valur

Tuesday, July 15

Both Day and Night
Austurvöllur out door exhibition, Earth from Above. Aerial Photographs by Yann Arthus-Bertrand.
Café Sólun, Exhibition - Mosaic mirrors by Rósa.

Day
Reðursafnið, Phallological Museum, A fine penis and penis related selection from various mammals.
Árbæjarsafn, Folk Museum, An exhibition shows life and work in the years 1950-60.
Gallerý Ófeigur, Black Silver. Exhibition of silver jewelry works of Niklas Eje from Sweden.
National Gallery of Iceland, Exhibition of selected works by Icelandic artists from the National Gallery's collection.
National and University Library, Exhibition of the founder of the city's documentation, also, childrens literature, texts and drawings.
Culture House, Images of Iceland - milestones in cartography
Norræna húsið, Nordic House, The Big Nordic Elephant Show
Reykjavík Museum of Photography, The Five Elements. Photographs and etchings from French-Vietnamese artist Claire Xuan.

Ásmundarsafn, Sculpture museum, The Modern Man, works of popular sculptor Ásmundur Sveinsson.
Einar Jónsson Sculpture Museum, The works of Iceland's first modern sculptor.
Hafnarhúsið, Reykjavík Art Museum, -10 to 17 -Lobster or Fame Two Decades of Bad Taste Ltd. Also Erró's War paintings and insight into international contemporary art in Iceland. Admission 500 ISK. Free on Mondays.
Kjarvalsstaðir Art Museum, -10 to 17 -New times in Icelandic Photography. Admission 500 krónur
Saga Museum, -10 to 18 -History face to face, historical figures and major events in Icelandic history presented in a unique way. Admission 800 krónur.
Handverk og Hönnun, -13 to 17 -Exhibition of contemporary and traditional Icelandic art and crafts.
Sigurjón Ólafsson Sculpture Museum, -14 to 17 -Portraits and Abstractions
ASÍ. Art Museum, -14 to 18 -Icelandic art from 1950-1970

Night
Dubliners, Troubadour Ingi Valur

Wednesday, July 16

Both Day and Night
Austurvöllur out door exhibition, Earth from Above. Aerial Photographs by Yann Arthus-Bertrand.
Café Sólun, Exhibition - Mosaic mirrors by Rósa.

Day
Reðursafnið, Phallological Museum, A fine penis and penis related selection from various mammals.
Árbæjarsafn, Folk Museum, An exhibition shows life and work in the years 1950-60.
Gallerý Ófeigur, Black Silver. Exhibition of silver jewelry works of Niklas Eje from Sweden.
National Gallery of Iceland, Exhibition of selected works by Icelandic artists from the National Gallery's collection.
National and University Library, Exhibition of the founder of the city's documentation, also, childrens literature, texts and drawings.
Culture House, Images of Iceland - milestones in cartography
Blái barinn, Poetry evening. Most poets read in Icelandic, but there's always something in English as well.

Norræna húsið, Nordic House, The Big Nordic Elephant Show
Reykjavík Museum of Photography, The Five Elements. Photographs and etchings from French-Vietnamese artist Claire Xuan.
Ásmundarsafn, Sculpture museum, The Modern Man, works of popular sculptor Ásmundur Sveinsson.
Einar Jónsson Sculpture Museum, The works of Iceland's first modern sculptor.
Hafnarhúsið, Reykjavík Art Museum, -10 to 17 -Lobster or Fame Two Decades of Bad Taste Ltd. Also Erró's War paintings and insight into international contemporary art in Iceland. Admission 500 ISK. Free on Mondays.
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Sigurjón Ólafsson Sculpture Museum, -14 to 17 -Portraits and Abstractions
Safn, -14 to 18 -Collection includes both international and Icelandic contemporary art. Admission 200 krónur
ASÍ. Art Museum, -14 to 18 -Icelandic art from 1950-1970

Night
Gaukur á Stöng, Geir Ólafsson, of whom one reviewer said "ekki meir, Geir," (no more Geir) sings along with legendary non-singer Magnús Kjartansson.
Kaffibarinn, Red Wine night, DJ match
Dubliners, Troubadour Bjarni Tryggva
Sirkus, Varous Jazz DJ's

Thursday, July 17

Both Day and Night
Austurvöllur out door exhibition, Earth from Above. Aerial Photographs by Yann Arthus-Bertrand.
Café Sólun, Exhibition - Mosaic mirrors by Rósa.

Day
Reðursafnið, Phallological Museum, A fine penis and penis related selection from various mammals.

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INTERVIEW

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ASÍ. Art Museum, -14 to 18 -Icelandic art from 1950-1970
Night
Little Central, 4 piece Jazz band Rubics Cube, 500kr entrance fee includes a beer
Gaukur á Stöng, Band Oblivious
Hverfisbar, Bítarnir 60's band.
Kráin 73, Blues duet Einar and Jói play guitar and harmonica
Glaubar, Corona Night, DJ Atli Partycop
Hverfisbar, Cover and singalong band Bítarnir Sirkus, DJ Anna
Coffee shop 11, DJ Sunboy
Grand Rokk, Síggi Ármanns plays (recently played with Sigurrós)
Dubliners, Troubadour Bjarni Tryggva
De Boomkikker, Troubadour Óskar Einarsson

Friday, July 18
Both Day and Night
Austurvöllur out door exhibition, Earth from Above. Aerial Photographs by Yann Artthus-Bertrand.
Café Sólón, Exhibiton - Mosaic mirrors by Rósa.
Day
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National Gallery of Iceland, Exhibition of selected works by Icelandic artists from the National Gallery's collection.
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Culture House, Images of Iceland - milestones in cartography
Norræna húsið, Nordic House, The Big Nordic Elephant Show
Reykjavik Museum of Photography, The Five Elements. Photographs and etchings from French-Vietnamese artist Claire Xuan.
Hitt Húsið (Youth culture house), The Friday Meltdown, watch out for various happenings!
Ásmundarsafn, Sculpture museum, The Modern Man, works of popular sculptor Ásmundar Sveinsson.
Einar Jónsson Sculpture Museum, The works of Iceland's first modern sculptor.
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Light Nights Summer Theatre, -starts at 20:30 -Real authentic Icelandic show performed in English, including the most thrilling ghost story ever told; The Deacon of Myrká
Night
Little Central, 4 piece Jazz band Rubics Cube, 500kr entrance fee includes a beer
Ari i Ögri, An acoustic duet take care of the entertainment
Amsterdam, Coverband "Smack" playing
Gaukur á Stöng, Coverband Á móti sól
Celtic Cross, Coverband Spilafíklar downstairs and Troubadour Garðar Gardarsson upstairs
Hverfisbar, DJ Atli partycop.
Café Victor, DJ Heiðar Austmann, dance music
Sirkus, DJ KGB
Glaubar, DJ Þór Bæring
Kaffibarinn, DJ's of the House
Prikkið, DJ's Snake 'n Tiger
Dubliners, Downstairs: Troubadour Martin, Upstairs: Coverband Ingvar and the Scandles
Kráin 73, Folk Punk band Örkumi
Grand Rokk, Poet and musician Megas plays along with duet Súkkat,
De Boomkikker, Troubadour Óskar Einarsson
Leikhúskjallarinn, Freshest DJ in Iceland, party all night

Megas and Súkkat
Grandrokk
Friday July 18th



In a league of his own as the finest lyricist of the rock era in this country, Megas made his first album in 1972, and right away started delighting and shocking his countrymen with his bizarre (or perhaps just truthful) take on famous personalities in Icelandic history. He made a string of great albums in the 70's before retiring in 1979 to become a dockworker and then art school student. Made a comeback in 1986 with the brilliant album Í góðri trú (In Good Faith), perhaps surpassed the year after with Loftmynd (Airview), celebrating Reykjaviks 201st anniversary, and featuring a certain Björk on backing vocals. Has since then made consistently credible albums, and was, at the turn of the century, voted as the second greatest wordsmith in Icelandic history, surpassed only by Halldór Laxness (Nobel Prize Winner, just had to get that in somehow). His stories often portray the darker side of Reykjavik and are sometimes shocking, sometimes tender, but never less than interesting. Regularly gives solo performances of old and new classics, sometimes supported by acoustic duet Megasukk.

The Friday Meltdown
Various spots in the centre
Friday July 18th



Watch out for various happenings from "The Other House" in the afternoon, in downtown Reykjavik. The following youth culture groups will perform: "Ofleikur" drama group will be fixing people up on Laugavegur. This dating service will enjoy the expert knowledge of the world renowned Dr. Linda. The drama group "Reykviska Listaleikhúsið" will have an open rehearsal of the play "Faith Healer" by Brian Friel. The dance group "Fusion" will perform. The Other House Street Theatre will perform a big happening. Watch out for times and venues at Tourist Information centres, newspapers or www.hittusid.is

Fictional Reykjavík
City Library
Friday July 18th
A literary walking tour of the downtown area, starting at the Reykjavik City Library in Tryggvagata 15 (only seconds away from the downtown Tourist Information). There will be a short introduction at the library about Icelandic literature and films based on Icelandic novels, and then the guides will take you to some downtown sites that play a roll in Icelandic fiction. The tour is free of charge and will be run every Friday

DEAD ALIVE

Photos: Aldis

Shopping street Laugavegur, the only shopping street in Reykjavik, has its ups and downs, though of course ups and downs depend on what you're looking for and where your interests lie. The average tourist can find his puffins and mini Vikings in one of the many souvenir shops, or his books on elves and trolls in the bookstores. A rich old lady with her husband's Platinum credit card can buy her fur coats and jewelry in countless stores along main street, and those who long for a skull on a T-shirt can also find it if they look in the right places, in our case, in the cellar of Laugavegur 11.

In the cellar is the recently opened "Nonnabúð" shop, owned, run and named after the 35 year old Jón Sæmundur (Nonni is a pet name for Jón), who's legally an artist by trade and lives up to his title with a colourful career spanning numerous art shows and happenings making him quite well known for his work, at least in Iceland.

But why open a shop one might ask? "I was tired of doing manual labour to get by while trying to concentrate on my art in my spare time " says Jón Sæmundur "I had been working on, among other things, my own T-shirts and I had even sold 1000 pieces to Japan under my own label, Dead. But selling my labelled t-shirts in Reykjavik's stores wasn't worth it, since my piece of the pie was almost too small to mention unless I sold them in my own store."

So you decided to just start a business? "Well, I look at it more as a part of a happening, I designed and built everything myself, and sell mostly clothes and stuff I design myself too. Well, almost everything, but I also sell Bad Taste LP's and postcards (Sugarcubes and Björk) and t-shirts designed by the coolest label in Iceland at the moment designed by two cool sisters, Bára and Raven."

What about your Dead label, why death? "I think a lot about death, I'm



The one on the left is Jón Sæmundur, the one on the right asked his name not be disclosed.

a little obsessed with it, especially the moment when you actually pass away. It's something everybody will eventually go through but nobody has a clue how it feels until it happens. I think people

about it but to be at ease with it rather than fear it," says Jón.
So are you going to be a clerk in your store forever? "No! Not really, I think what I want to do next, though I'm

It's something everybody will eventually go through. I think people should think more about death.

should think a little more about death than they do. Death is a part of living and one dies eventually, such is life. People shouldn't be so afraid to talk and think



It was painfully obvious to onlookers that he didn't stand much of a chance with her.

not sure when, is to go abroad and learn how to stuff animals. I want to be able to do this, not for economic reasons, but for the purpose of art. I had this idea to stuff a horse, full scale, and give its face and figure a human expression of fear. This idea is related to Shamanism and bringing people back from the dead... (...he rambles on about this for a while, and starts drawing explanatory diagrams, which leave Grapevine none the wiser).
But you just recently opened so you're not quitting for something new just now? "That's true, the store just opened on my 35th birthday, the 16th of June, so I'm not retiring from this right away" says Jón, and adds, "also, I'm starting a new label this fall called Rock 'n Roll" and exporting both that and the "Dead" label to London."
Any famous last words? "Yeah! Rock 'n Roll"

I bid farewell and return from the head of Dead still, it would seem, alive.

Jónði



MUSIC

THERE COMES A POINT WHEN YOU GET SO SICK OF IT ALL YOU JUST HAVE TO START A BAND CALLED: SICK OF IT ALL

For those not familiar with the term “hardcore” as one of many rock and roll styles, it is starting point to know that it started in the eighties as an evolution of the punk rock style. It is different from punk in that the music is faster and some say more aggressive, but the lyrics are less destructive. All such definitions can be argued about for a long time and this is usually done amongst fans of the style. One of the biggest bands playing that kind of music today is a New York band who started in the mid eighties called Sick of it All. They have over the years released ample albums but their main strength lies in their stage performance, which is the most powerful known to any hardcore fan. When attending a SOIA concert expect to get dragged into a pit of fans bumping and cutting into each other and it is not uncommon to find yourself holding someone's foot or other body parts when people are jumping of the stage to surf on the crowd.

For most people this seems a scary and risky activity but for the initiated such as me it is not only great fun but also the only way to enjoy a band of this genre. Especially when this band is Sick of it All.

When I heard that they were coming here my hardcore heart instantly started jumping to the beat of the last SOIA concert I attended back in 1999 in the parking lot under the national radio station.

I was somewhat disappointed when I heard about the venue though, because although Gaukur á Stöng can serve rock and roll concert well it isn't sufficient for a hardcore show. The stage is too small, the floor is too narrow and above all, since it has a bar, the majority of the teenage fans are not allowed to enter. Fortunately, since there were two shows it was possible to make one an



“all ages” show and although I am well into my twenties I decided to go to the first one and indulge myself in some serious slamming with the kids instead of standing cross-armed in the back row nodding my head to the beat with an intellectual expression on my face. The badly chosen venue wasn't the only problem. The warmup bands were the Icelandic acts I Adapt and Botnleðja, two great bands but very different in style and genre and the latter very different from anything that goes on in a regular hardcore show. I Adapt is a refreshing and amicable hardcore band who have had, during the last two years, a strong group of followers who know all the lyrics and like to jump around with the singer who frequently passes the microphone to the crowd while he grinds in the pit. When they had finished their program and Botnleðja came on stage the vibe instantly changed for the worse. The crowd stopped dancing and the atmosphere was suddenly more like you would expect at a public execution. It was embarrassing for everyone present, especially for those who actually enjoy Botnleðja's music, as I do, but just not



in this context. At the very least they should have opened the show. For a split second I thought it was all over and done with but SOIAs stage experience after fifteen years on the road ultimately saved the day.

Personally I liked the show four years ago better since both the crowd and the hall were much bigger, but they managed to create a domestic feel with sing-a-long numbers and chatty conversations between the numbers instead of the regular shout-outs. The majority of the songs were from their most popular album Scratch the Surface which is at the moment the only one available here, so everyone could sing along using the microphone handed to them by the singer.

Sick of it All is one of the BEST live bands in the world and their live performances are always hectic, I have the hardcore bruises to prove it The organisers choice of a band to import was perfect so I hope they will do something like this again soon, and hopefully learn from their mistakes on this one. Hats off to them!

sad to say because the hardcore scene was established on the idea of keeping an open mind to everything and having the freedom of expression. But now it seems like this isolation between styles has put a little bit of a damper on that freedom.

In the early nineties there was a shooting incident that was subsequently blamed on your music... do you think that had any effect on how you evolved into moving away from violence in your music?

I don't think so, because what this incident did for the band was that all of the big media, like the daily newspapers that otherwise weren't interested in us at all, started interviewing us on this and we gained more recognition from it and also it helped remove violence label pinned on us at the time.

Yeah but, did your music change in style after this... did you try to be less violent in your expression and were there any sell-out rumours because of that?

The thing is that our lyrics have never been violent at all... although our music is aggressive and somewhat violent in that sense, our message has never been about glorifying violence. The sell-out rumours were mostly because we had gained more recognition and we had started playing bigger clubs and moved to a bigger label. And the fans view of us is a bit related to what we just said about the isolation of styles, they started following our music because the sense of the underground appealed to them but when we got bigger many fans turned their back on us.

Do you think there is any difference between the American and the European hardcore scene?

What i is cool about the European scene is that it sort of brings back the ultra high intensity and the sound of the past. For instance the band Refused from Sweden have had a huge impact on American hardcore. Just by being really innovative and creating the old school dynamic and so many American bands were inspired by that... doing something different when really they were just working with the old sound. So the bands kind of influence each other in that way.

Are you familiar with other Swedish bands like for example Raised Fist or other Scandinavian bands?

Our booking agent also books Raised Fist and he's always trying to get us to tour with them, we haven't heard them so I can't really say but we like Amulet from Norway, they are a really good band and we might be touring with them this fall.

Aðalsteinn Jörundsson
Ragnar Egilsson

LISTINGS

Lobster or Fame: Two Decades of Bad Taste Ltd. Reykjavík Art Museum
June 13th - August 31st



Smekkleysa SM, widely known as Bad Taste SM Ltd is the record label that launched The Sugarcubes, Reptile, Ham, Maus, Björk, Sigur Rós and Mínus. This summer it celebrates Icelandic music, culture and its 16th birthday at Reykjavik Art Museum with a blend of photography and music. Lobster or Fame is an overview of the labels' history, displaying posters, record sleeve designs and photos that capture an apparent naive joy and vibrancy. Historically significant, the rarely seen photographic images weave into the creative core of a label whose anarchic and quirky spirit has produced extraordinary artists and made a lasting mark on both the Icelandic music and art scenes as well as having had considerable impact further afield. An informative and appropriately tasteless catalogue is published in connection with the exhibition. In it you will find rare photographs from the infamous Bad Taste Evenings of the '90s, sleazy details about its famous members and inside information on people you have never heard of – and in the spirit of tastelessness there is even a never before seen picture of a poet with a dried cod sticking out of his fly. Splendid!

Summer Exhibition
National Gallery of Iceland
May 24th - August 31st



Walking through the National Gallery of Iceland this summer is like leafing through a book on 20th century Icelandic art. The summer exhibition maps the development of modern Icelandic art, presenting the works by more than fifty artists. Each name is a dictionary entry that opens up a different chapter in the history of Icelandic art. The emphasis is on painting. Chronologically arranged, the exhibition leads us from the first modern landscapes by Thorlákur B. Thorláksson and paintings by Kjarval, Schevig and Ásgrímur Jónsson to expressionism and abstract art at the middle of the century. By the 1960s this style of painting gave way to new movements such as return to realism or op art inspired geometrical abstraction. The last part of the exhibition focuses on the varied tendencies of today and works by contemporary young artists. Open Tues-Sun 11-17, admission ISK 400, free admission on Wednesdays

Saturday, July 19
Both Day and Night
Austurvöllur out door exhibition, Earth from Above. Aerial Photographs by Yann Arthus-Bertrand. Café Sólun, Exhibiton - Mosaic mirrors by Rósa.

Day
Reðursafnið, Phallological Museum, A fine penis and penis related selection from various mammals. Arbæjarsafn, Folk Museum, An exhibition shows life and work in the years 1950-60. National Gallery of Iceland, Exhibition of selected works by Icelandic artists from the National Gallery's collection. National and University Library, Exhibition of the founder of the city's documentation, also, childrens literature, texts and drawings. Culture House, Images of Iceland - milestones in cartography Norræna húsið, Nordic House, The Big Nordic Elephant Show Reykjavik Museum of Photography, The Five Elements. Photographs and etchings from French-Vietnamese artist Claire Xuan. Ásmundarsafn, Sculpture museum, The Modern Man, works of popular sculptor Ásmundur Sveinsson. Einar Jónsson Sculpture Museum, The works of Iceland's first modern sculptor. Hafnarhúsið, Reykjavík Art Museum, -10 to 17 -Lobster or Fame Two Decades of Bad Taste Ltd. Also Erró's War paintings and Insight into international contemporary art in Iceland. Admission 500 ISK. Free on Mondays. Kjarvalsstaðir Art Museum, -10 to 17 -New times in Icelandic Photography. Admission 500 krónur Saga Museum, -10 to 18 -History face to face, historical figures and major events in Icelandic history presented in a unique way. Admission 800 krónur. Hafnarborg Art Gallery, -11 to 17 -Barbara Cooper from the United States exhibits drawings. Handverk og Hönnun, -13 to 17 -Exhibition of contemporary and traditional Icelandic art and crafts. Sigurjón Ólafsson Sculpture Museum, -14 to 17 -Portraits and Abstractions Safn, -14 to 18 -Collection includes both international and Icelandic contemporary art. Admission 200 krónur ASÍ. Art Museum, -14 to 18 -Icelandic art from 1950-1970 Night Gaukur á Stöng, 3 man band Buff entertain with songs like "Who Put Broken Glass in the Vaseline?" and share meaningful lyrics about their perverted thoughts with the audience Little Central, 4 piece Jazz band Rubics Cube, 500Kkr entrance fee includes a beer Ari í Ögri, An acoustic duet take care of the entertainment Amsterdam, Coverband "Smack" playing Celtic Cross, Coverband Spilafíklar downstairs and Troubadour Garðar Garðarsson upstairs Hverfisbar, DJ Atli partycop. Café Victor, DJ Heiðar Austmann, dance music Prikið, DJ Kári Glaumbar, DJ Þór Bæring Kaffibarinn, DJ's of the House Dubliners, Downstairs: Troubadour Martin, Upstairs: Coverband Ingvar and the Scandles Grand Rokk, Rock band Brain Police Sirkus, Sigga's Birthday, who knows what's gonna happen Kráin 73, The band Masters of the Universe play De Boomkikker, Troubadour Óskar Einarsson Vidalin, -starts at 22 -DJ Mike Scott from Holland, admission 1000 krónur Leikhúskjallarinn, Iceland biggest and most popular DJ's, Gullfoss and Geysir.

Sunday, July 20
Both Day and Night
Austurvöllur out door exhibition, Earth from Above. Aerial Photographs by Yann Arthus-Bertrand.

Day
Reðursafnið, Phallological Museum, A fine penis and penis related selection from various mammals. Arbæjarsafn, Folk Museum, An exhibition shows life and work in the years 1950-60. National Gallery of Iceland, Exhibition of selected works by Icelandic artists from the National Gallery's collection. National and University Library, Exhibition of the founder of the city's documentation, also, childrens literature, texts and drawings. Culture House, Images of Iceland - milestones in cartography Norræna húsið, Nordic House, The Big Nordic Elephant Show Reykjavik Museum of Photography, The Five Elements. Photographs and etchings from French-Vietnamese artist Claire Xuan. Ásmundarsafn, Sculpture museum, The Modern Man, works of popular sculptor Ásmundur Sveinsson. Einar Jónsson Sculpture Museum, The works of Iceland's first modern sculptor. Hafnarhúsið, Reykjavík Art Museum, -10 to 17 -Lobster or Fame Two Decades of Bad Taste Ltd. Also Erró's War paintings and Insight into international contemporary art in Iceland. Admission 500 ISK. Free on Mondays. Kjarvalsstaðir Art Museum, -10 to 17 -New times in Icelandic Photography. Admission 500 krónur Saga Museum, -10 to 18 -History face to face, historical figures and major events in Icelandic history presented in a unique way. Admission 800 krónur. Hafnarborg Art Gallery, -11 to 17 -Barbara Cooper from the United States exhibits drawings. Handverk og Hönnun, -13 to 17 -Exhibition of contemporary and traditional Icelandic art and crafts. Sigurjón Ólafsson Sculpture Museum, -14 to 17 -Portraits and Abstractions Safn, -14 to 18 -Collection includes both international and Icelandic contemporary art. Admission 200 krónur ASÍ. Art Museum, -14 to 18 -Icelandic art from 1950-1970 Night Coffee shop 11, Foosball Finals Dubliners, Troubadour Ingvar De Boomkikker, Troubadour Óskar Einarsson

Monday, July 21
Both Day and Night
Austurvöllur out door exhibition, Earth from Above. Aerial Photographs by Yann Arthus-Bertrand.

FOOD

LISTINGS

Day

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National Gallery of Iceland, Exhibition of selected works by Icelandic artists from the National Gallery's collection.

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Culture House, Images of Iceland - milestones in cartography

Norræna húsið, Nordic House, The Big Nordic Elephant Show

Reykjavík Museum of Photography, The Five Elements. Photographs and etchings from French-Vietnamese artist Claire Xuan.

Ásmundarsafn, Sculpture museum, The Modern Man, works of popular sculptor Ásmundur Sveinsson.

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Kjarvalsstaðir Art Museum, -10 to 17 -New times in Icelandic Photography. Admission 500 krónur

Saga Museum, -10 to 18 -History face to face, historical figures and major events in Icelandic history presented in a unique way. Admission 800 krónur.

Hafnarborg Art Gallery, -11 to 17 -Barbara Cooper from the United States exhibits drawings.

Light Nights Summer Theatre, -starts at 20:30 -Real authentic Icelandic show performed in English, including the most thrilling ghost story ever told; The Deacon of Myrká

Night

Dubliners, Troubadour Ingvi Valur

De Boomkikker, Troubadour Óskar Einarsson

Tuesday, July 22

Both Day and Night

Austurvöllur out door exhibition, Earth from Above. Aerial Photographs by Yann Arthus-Bertrand.

Day

Reiðursafnið, Phallological Museum, A fine penis and penis related selection from various mammals.

Árbejarsafn, Folk Museum, An exhibition shows life and work in the years 1950-60.

National Gallery of Iceland, Exhibition of selected works by Icelandic artists from the National Gallery's collection.

National and University Library, Exhibition of the founder of the city's documentation, also, childrens literature, texts and drawings.

Culture House, Images of Iceland - milestones in cartography

Norræna húsið, Nordic House, The Big Nordic Elephant Show

Reykjavík Museum of Photography, The Five Elements. Photographs and etchings from French-Vietnamese artist Claire Xuan.

Ásmundarsafn, Sculpture museum, The Modern Man, works of popular sculptor Ásmundur Sveinsson.

Einar Jónsson Sculpture Museum, The works of Iceland's first modern sculptor.

Hafnarhúsið, Reykjavík Art Museum, -10 to 17 -Lobster or Fame Two Decades of Bad Taste Ltd. Also Erró's War paintings and Insight into international contemporary art in Iceland. Admission 500 ISK. Free on Mondays.

Kjarvalsstaðir Art Museum, -10 to 17 -New times in Icelandic Photography. Admission 500 krónur

Saga Museum, -10 to 18 -History face to face, historical figures and major events in Icelandic history presented in a unique way. Admission 800 krónur.

Handverk og Hönnun, -13 to 17 -Exhibition of contemporary and traditional Icelandic art and crafts.

Sigurjón Ólafsson Sculpture Museum, -14 to 17 -Portraits and Abstractions

ASÍ. Art Museum, -14 to 18 -Icelandic art from 1950-1970

Night

Dubliners, Troubadour Ingvi Valur

De Boomkikker, Troubadour Óskar Einarsson

Wednesday, July 23

Both Day and Night

Austurvöllur out door exhibition, Earth from Above. Aerial Photographs by Yann Arthus-Bertrand.

Day

Reiðursafnið, Phallological Museum, A fine penis and penis related selection from various mammals.

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Safn, -14 to 18 -Collection includes both international and Icelandic contemporary art. Admission 200 krónur

ASÍ. Art Museum, -14 to 18 -Icelandic art from

Dúndurfréttir

Gaukur á Stöng

July 23rd - July 24th



So many coverbands, so much waste of time, with one exception. The exception calls itself "Dúndurfréttir" or "Big News" and is a 5 piece band playing only songs by Led Zepelin, Pink Floyd, Deep Purple and Uriah Heep. All members are from other bands but share the passion for the 70's giants of rock by spending their free time from their usual bands mastering the oldies successfully. "Big News" have staged both a complete Dark Side of the Moon concert and a complete The Wall concert (except for the physical wall itself and the lightshow, but hey!). Rolling Stone magazine has even stated that they are "the best Pink Floyd coverband ever". Well if your never saw the real thing, this is as close as you can get to it, in Iceland. Admission 500 kr.

LISTINGS CONTINUED

1950-1970

Night

Gaukur á Stöng, Dúndurréttir or "Big News"
 (covering Pink Floyd, Uriah Heep, Deep Purple and
 Led Zeppelin)
Kaffibarinn, Red Wine night, DJ match
Dubliners, Troubadour Bjarni Tryggva
De Boomkikker, Troubadour Óskar Einarsson
Sirkus, Various Jazz DJ's

Thursday, July 24

Both Day and Night
Austurvöllur out door exhibition, Earth from Above. Aerial Photographs by Yann Arthus-Bertrand.

Day
Reúrsafnið, Phallographs Museum, A fine penis and penis related selection from various mammals.
Arbæjarsafn, Folk Museum, An exhibition shows life and work in the years 1950-60.
National Gallery of Iceland, Exhibition of selected works by Icelandic artists from the National Gallery's collection.
National and University Library, Exhibition of the founder of the city's documentation, also, childrens literature, texts and drawings.
Culture House, Images of Iceland - milestones in cartography
Norræna húsið, Nordic House, The Big Nordic Elephant Show
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Safn, -14 to 18 - Collection includes both international and Icelandic contemporary art. Admission 200 krónur
ASÍ. Art Museum, -14 to 18 - Icelandic art from 1950-1970

Night
Grand Rokk, Bands Lokbrá & Ókind (Killer sheep?)
Glaumbær, Corona Night, DJ Atli Partycop
Hverfisbær, Cover and singalong band Bitlarnir
Sirkus, DJ Natalie
Príkíð, DJ Þórhallur
Gaukur á Stöng, Dúndurfretir or "Big News" covering Pink Floyd, Uriah Heep, Deep Purple and Led Zeppelin
Dubliners, Troubadour Bjarni Tryggva
De Boomkikker, Troubadour Óskar Einarsson



Photos: Aldís



Chef Kim at the end of another hard day at the office.

When you come into a restaurant like Krua Thai you really have no idea about what to expect. The simple straightforward interior is far from being fancy and the atmosphere has little that reminds you of the so-called "Siamese Elegance." Even the background music leaves much to be desired. However, you soon find that special feeling of being welcome, the feeling of being in the right place.

No Thai restaurant seems to be like another Thai restaurant, - particularly outside Thailand, where the Menus have bowed to the preferences of their local customers (some of whom have never been to Thailand), and serve food that, in the end, becomes a cheap imitation of the real thing.

At the Krúa Thai in Reykjavík, of all places, you'll experience the real thing. Not only is the Menu authentic, but you can order specific regional spices and dishes, if you go for "that sort of thing!" The daily Menu, that is altered quite frequently, has at least 25 standard dishes. But you are also encouraged to ask about specialties that may depend on the "catch of the Day" or Mr. Kim's vivid imagination. When I dined there the other day, there were 26 items on the Menu and the price range was from 750 krónur to 890 krónur!!

Oh yes, I forgot to tell you about Krua Thai's Mr. Kim. Talk to this fine chef and he will tell you about the secrets of "Keang keao wan," a chicken in green curry and his very popular meat with chilli peppers and basil leaves in a fine oyster sauce with rice.

Mr. Kim is really amazing. To some he may look like a softball coach from the Hispanic side of Morningside Heights

in uptown New York City, wearing his baseball cap like a professional catcher. But as soon as you hear him explain the finesse of his preparation of fresh fish, you realize that here is a professional.

doubt the best in town and the Thai dishes, from the various regions, are authentic. A friend who lives in Bangkok part of the year claims that the “Tom yum talay” soup (Mixed seafood and

At the Krua Thai in Reykjavik, of all places, you'll experience the real thing.

Mr. Kim is not "just somebody from Thailand who likes to cook," - he has 8 years of valuable experience. His 8 years of preparing fine Thai food in Japan are among his credits.

For those who love Asian beer, the Krua Thai offers both Thai beer and Singapore beer. Of course you can also have Icelandic and Danish bottles, but no draft. Sorry, I forgot to look at the wine list! Perhaps you can find your favourite Asian wines there, although I doubt that very much.

The fish at Krua Thai is beyond any

rice) is better at Krua Thai than in the finest restaurants of Bangkok. (Watch out Hotel Oriental!!)

The Krua Thai is a family restaurant. The room accommodates about 40 guests who are served by a staff of four. Khun Som, the owner, attends to your gourmet wishes whenever you visit; she seems to spend 25 hours a day on the job! Khun Som has been in Iceland for about 15 years, but her restaurant will be only 2 years old in September.

Sonny Greco



GAMES & BOOKS

EVE ONLINE:
THE SECOND GENESIS

review

JANNE
MAKELA

Ever felt that big, gaping hole in your life when you’ve won every level of your favourite computer game? When it seems as if there are no challenges left out there, no more worlds to conquer. Well, after the advent of Eve Online, you need never do anything else ever again.

Eve Online is the game that Freelancer should have been. After five years in the making, and more missed deadlines than anyone cares to remember, Digital Anvil’s space trader sim finally materialised a couple of months ago, and while Freelancer is a passable if brief single player experience, it failed to deliver what the developers promised, and what got us so excited about the game in the first place: a MMORPG (that’s Massively Multiplayer Online Role Playing Game) version of the ruling champion of space sims: Elite. To this day, twenty years after its original release, the Braben-Bell classic remains the game that all space combat/exploration/mining/trade sims are measured against.

Now that Eve Online: The Second Genesis is here and X2: The Threat is just around the corner, we can expect Freelancer to sink like a stone. It just may be that Iceland’s CCP have succeeded in creating the Holy Grail of space games, the challenge that proved too much for Digital Anvil: a functional online equivalent of Elite, where each character the player encounters is an actual, human player. There is no single player option – the game is played in a living and constantly changing online universe.

There are no less than 5,000 solar systems that the player can explore and exploit at will, and any ship that the player comes across will be piloted by another player. It is here that we come

to the most controversial thing about Eve: you cannot avoid player vs. player conflicts. Unlike most recent MMORPGs, some of which do not feature PvP at all, Eve does not give the player the option of sticking to “safe” areas (or, in this case, safe systems) or any other forms of protection from player killers. Eve operates on the same principle as the

game that began the online-RPG revolution, Ultima Online: other players can and will attack you, and if you lose and die, it’s all over and you have to start again from scratch.

Hrafnkell Oskarsson, Eve’s storyline editor, explains that the team did not even attempt to appeal to gamers that are put off by PvP. “Eve is not for everyone – it is more competitive and ruthless than other MMORPGs.” Of course, this means an open season on newbies, who will be preyed upon mercilessly by more experienced players.

At its core, Eve is a traditional role playing game, where the objective is to acquire wealth and better equipment and to improve your skills. But unlike previous RPGs where new skills were gained through battle and adventure, Eve takes the easy, 21st Century approach and promises immediate gratification to anyone with the cash: the necessary skills are simply “installed” in your brain. All technological improvements are researched automatically – you simply click on the appropriate icon and wait. You don’t even have to be online during

the research. Eve’s technology tree is not a tree, it’s a forest. Still, it is so well designed that tackling it will seem like a satisfying challenge rather than an overwhelming chore.

Visually, Eve is stunning. The environments are vast but still astonishingly detailed. The spaceships of the four different available races all have their own distinctive styles – nothing fancy or terribly original, but definitely very well done down to the last details. This is quite important, since it’s the ship itself, rather than the character the player creates at the start, that the player will be looking at most of the time.

One thing that Eve has in common with Freelancer is the mouse-keyboard interface, with no joystick support. The ship’s piloted from a third-person view from outside the ship, and while the controls are not perfect, they are definitely above average for this particular genre.

As always with this type of game, it is still too early to predict how Eve will develop, but that is just the beauty of it: it is the players themselves who determine how the game universe develops. Like

all MMORPGs, Eve has had its share of bugs, server problems and inconsistencies – but they are nowhere as severe as the horrible problems that still continue to plague, for example, Asheron’s Call 2. If you can get past the game’s extremely steep learning curve and don’t mind having to survive in its ruthless, dog-eat-dog world, then Eve Online:

The Second Genesis is as good an online multiplayer as they come. Eve is just a few months into its undoubtedly very long lifespan, but we wouldn’t be surprised if at the end of it Eve were considered a true classic for SF games. A very impressive first game for Crowd Control.

8.5/10
An ADSL-connection strongly recommended

In addition to the price of the game, players are also charged a monthly fee.



Seems somewhat more exiting than the day job.



And girls even look at you.

REEFER MADNESS

Reefer Madness, the latest book by Eric Schlosser, is an investigation into the under-reported life of the American underground economy and its meetings with the law. It is a spirited, concise, well-researched expose of three facets of the black market: marijuana use, immigrant labor and pornography.

A respected journalist and author of Fast Food Nation, Schlosser focuses on the development of these industries since World War II and on the result of their rise: a free market either left unchecked by government or consistently over-legislated against.

The first section charts the stories of a number of independent marijuana users, growers and sellers. A man in Indiana charged for brokering the sale of seven hundred pounds of marijuana grown on a nearby farm is tried and convicted under federal law, never before having been charged with drug trafficking, having no history of violent crime and having only been the transaction’s middleman. He is convicted solely on the testimony of co-conspirators cooperating with the government and is sentenced to life imprisonment without possibility of parole. His case is similar to that of hundreds of marijuana offenders now serving life in US federal prisons, while the average convicted murderer serves eleven and a half years or less.

Schlosser’s investigation takes him to America’s ‘Heartland’, the area from the Appalachian Mountains west to the Great Plains where the majority of US marijuana is being grown, sometimes

to supplement or replace the failed cash crops of farmers ruined by federal government farm policies during the 1980s. In 2001 the value of the nation’s largest legal cash crop, corn, was about \$19 billion, exceeded by estimates for marijuana that range up to \$25 billion.

Since the 1980s, state marijuana laws have toughened considerably and now vary greatly. In 2001 alone, approximately 724,000 people were arrested in the US for violating marijuana laws – more than were arrested for heroin or cocaine, and most of the time for simple possession. No exceptions are made for the handicapped or AIDS patients who use the drug solely for medicinal use.

Schlosser draws a history of the government anti-drug programs that began in the 1950s alongside the communist witch hunts of the McCarthy era and the machinations of the FBI’s J. Edgar Hoover. Liberal Democrats wishing to appear ‘tough on drugs’ have done little to reduce the mandatory minimum sentencing on marijuana charges, which now approach those for cocaine and heroin. Schlosser comments on the ineffectiveness of marijuana prohibition through sheer numbers of growing usage in the US despite the advent of employer drug testing. (Congress meanwhile has refused to pass legislation imposing drug testing on its own members.) Schlosser admits marijuana’s effect as a powerful intoxicant damaging to teenagers, but cites that American children aged eleven to thirteen now

drink alcohol almost four times as often as they smoke marijuana, quoting a substance abuse expert on the far more deadly effects of alcohol and nicotine. He considers drug addiction a health problem similar to alcoholism, “suffered by Americans of every race, creed, and political affiliation, not grounds for imprisonment or the denial of property rights.” He feels that the government’s strange and inhumane laws, which jail marijuana users while murderers go free, “will not withstand public scrutiny for long.”

The second section covers the travails of over one million migrant farmworkers now employed in the United States, of whom 30 to 60 per cent are illegal immigrants. Migrants are among the poorest workers in the US, the average migrant earning less than \$7,500 a year for twenty-five weeks of farmwork.

Schlosser visits the farming valleys of California where migrant workers live in “Third World shantytowns within throwing distance of expensive suburban homes” and sleep in ditches, cars, rented garages or apartments holding ten or twenty people to a room. Sharecropping arrangements created by growers have trapped farmworkers under debts reaching \$50,000 or more, recalling images of feudal landlord systems. By year’s end many sharecroppers will earn less than farmworkers paid minimum wage; some will have earned nothing at all.

Considerable improvements in working conditions, wages and benefits

achieved by the United Farm Workers union in the 1970s were quashed by two successive Republican California governors who gutted these policies. Union workers were then fired, replaced by illegal immigrants.

Schlosser considers that “no deity that men have ever worshiped is more ruthless and more hollow than the free market unchecked” and feels that soon “there is no reason why shantytowns should not appear on the outskirts of every American city.” Far from being the anomaly, California may be the gateway.

The final section covers the rise of the porn industry and the creation of one man’s international pornography empire, covered partly for its moral criminality as charged by anti-pornography groups and mainly for the economic crime of depriving the US government hundreds of millions of tax dollars.

Schlosser charts the history of courts and committees who work to qualify what is ‘indecent’. The most interesting development belongs to the porn industry itself: its ingenuity in creating private ways to reach the US consumer since the 18th century, its constant stance at the forefront of technology, and its increasing acceptance into the mainstream of American life. From the



silent stag films of the 1920s to its current pay-per-view tv respectability, the conservative war on pornography has “coincided with an exponential increase in America’s consumption of porn.” Americans now spend \$8 to \$10 billion a year on adult entertainment. Porn has moved from the underground of American life to its mainstream.

Schlosser concludes the underground to be “a good measure of the progress and the health of nations. When much is wrong, much needs to be hidden.” Reefer Madness is a quietly waving flag of alert in a time of pro-American policy worldwide, that all is not well at home.

Reefer Madness: Sex, Drugs and Cheap Labor in the American Black Market, by Eric Schlosser. Houghton Mifflin Company, 2003, \$23.00.

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ART

SOCIALIST REALISM
BY HRINGBRAUT

article BY

BEATA
RÖDLINGOVA

With the Berlin Wall reduced to rubble fifteen years ago, the fact that Eastern Europe had once been under the grip of communism had long evaporated from my mind. Walking down a street in Reykjavík one day, I was as far from the monstrous ideology of my childhood as I could be both in time and in space - or at least I thought so. What a shock it was then when I suddenly stood face to face with a stock-character five-year-plan worker, a man with an inhumanly augmented shoulder, who was leaning on an anvil and sporting a hammer that was definitely not Thor's.

The sculpture in question is The Smith by the Icelandic sculptor Ásmundur Sveinsson and it stands in front of the Country Hospital by Hringbraut. It was not the first time I saw a work so strikingly similar to what I had learned to classify as propaganda and not art. Some of it was work from Western Europe between the two world wars, and some of it was Scandinavian sculpture that made me shudder at the way it resembled the Nazi celebration of man. Since then I

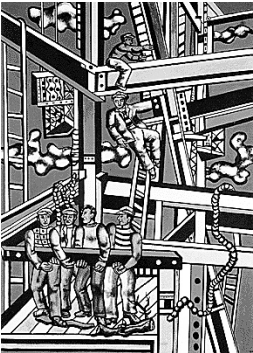
indisputable pluses It is not obvious at first hand, yet extremely effective. It creeps into our minds and affects our subconscious, particularly if it follows us from the cradle to the grave. Official art is not meant for private collections It decorates the railway station you commute from every morning and the school where you have spent nine years of your life, with the image eventually burning itself irrefutably into your mind. You may tell yourself again and again how well you are aware of



Ásmundur Sveinsson - The Smith, 1936

always wondered why would artists create something like this when they were not forced to do so by political circumstances? Political leaders have always been aware of the explosive potential of art : the power to influence and manipulate. After all, much of the religious art that art connoisseurs of today like to admire was straightforward propaganda, be it church murals that were bringing the message of the Scriptures to the non-literate public, or the grandeur of the building itself, to remind the common man of how insignificant he was. Propaganda can be carried out in different ways and manipulation through art has its

being manipulated but your senses will beat the brain anyway, after all isn't that what subliminal advertising is all about? You can see proof for yourself, even if you do not have a totalitarian regime handy: just pay attention to the art posters you are hanging on your children's bedroom walls. Sooner or later, your choice will manifest itself and you'll have your Much-exposed offspring well on their way to Kleppur... Believe me, I have had posters above my crib, too. Some propaganda art is more obvious than other work and can be identified at first sight, communist art being a prime example. Europe, east of the Iron Curtain, was a realm



Fernand Léger: Construction workers, 1950, Musée national Fernand Léger, Biot. Although resembling the communist shock-worker art in its form, this painting may be just an expression of a genuine fascination with technology and its achievements

inhabited by muscular supermen and superwomen, who were clutching hammers and sickles in their giant fists, standing firm on the newly nationalized land and looking with a determination in their eyes to the bright future. Hand in hand with the uniformity of subject went the uniformity of form, or rather, the lack of form. For in propaganda art the emphasis is on the message the work of art conveys and, being meant for the general masses, the message needs to be delivered as simply and directly as possible. We can see examples of this every day - the Bónus pig, for example, does not really promise highly sophisticated shopping, does it? The same principle is hidden not only in advertising but in many subtle details. The next time you are near a newspaper stand, notice the typography of the individual papers - the ones that have a three-page analysis for each political issue will have headlines in some classical font, while the fact that Ms Spears is dating a new man is given point-blank sans-serif. In art for masses the forms are simplified, with clear outlines and bright colours.

Art is not there for your aesthetic pleasure, pal, art is to brainwash you inside out...

Human anatomy is distorted to place emphasis on the clues to the message, hence the giant fists, and muscles that are able to work immeasurable amounts of steel as well as crush any enemy of the nation that comes their way. Close reading of the simplified forms brings to mind another idea. Perhaps the simple forms are a visual expression of the belief that in this ideology there is no place for grey areas and doubt, that everything is either white or black: those who are not with us are against us. It is the form of an era when everybody had to take a stand, and decide which side they were on. A third possible explanation, is that the artists repeated visual cliches for they simply could not do any better. After all, the term applied to some of these works is socialist realism, so perhaps they all were supposed to be realistic but some just did not make it. Artists commissioned by a totalitarian regime are not chosen because they are the cream of the artistic crop but because they are willing to conform. An artist's political

opinion and his work are considered inseparable, you simply cannot admire someone's paintings when the man in question listens to Radio Free Europe in his leisure time. The idea presented in a work of art by an officially approved artist is not the artist's personal vision but his contribution to ideology and a political statement. Given the above, I always wondered why artists, who did not have the need to resort to propaganda cliches because they lacked the ability to do better and were not forced to serve the ideology, would adopt this style of expression? In my opinion the phenomenon can be explained in two ways. First, communism looks like a really good idea in theory. From each according to his ability, to each



according to his needs', equality and common ownership are all very attractive concepts. When Israel was to be transformed from a barren

land into a civilized independent country, it was this ideology that lead to the establishment of kibutz. Unfortunately, apart from such emergency situations the ideology never works. It also has the drawback of despising the elites though, frankly speaking, people can be given equal opportunities but they can never be equal as such. The second problem is the thin

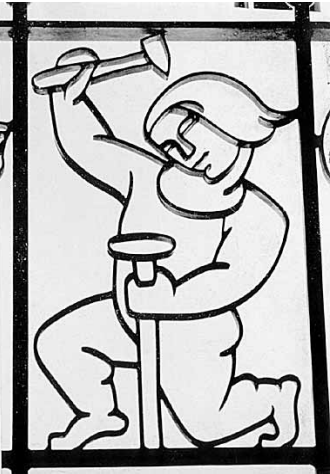


Ásmundur Sveinsson – iron decoration at the Laugarnes school, 1945



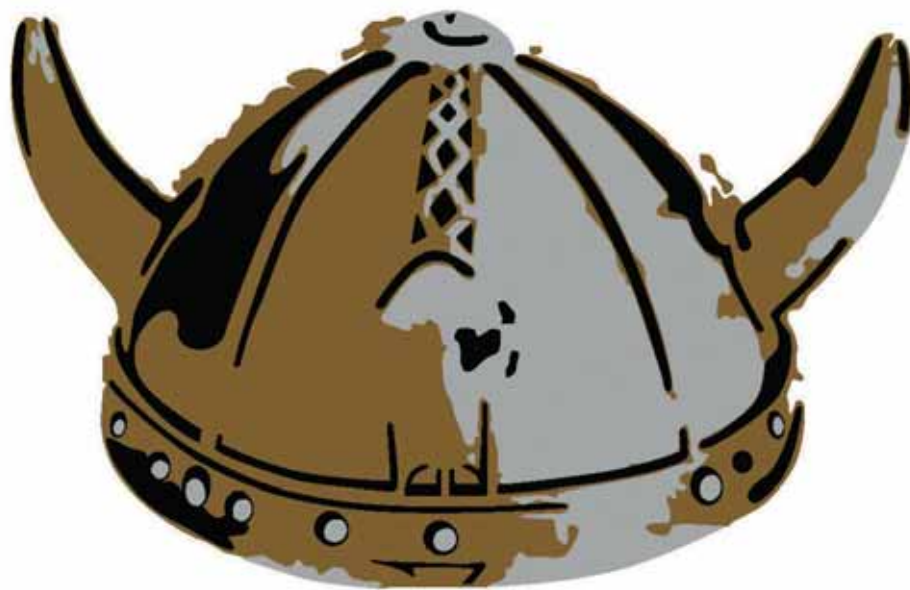
Ásmundur Sveinsson - Einar Benediktsson, 1946 The object behind the statue is supposed to represent the poet's harp, as the sculptor believed a famous person should always be portrayed at their work for this is what brought them fame. To an Eastern European eye, however, it has without any doubt the shape of a sickle.

borderline between an expression of personal enthusiasm and a ideological political statement. Enthusiam is a mighty drug, and can blur your thinking easily. Many people must have been drawn to communism because the ideology itself is so revolutionary, because it promises the possibility of individuals fighting for better lives in the here and now. It places faith in man and his power to change his fate. It is an ideology of a new beginning, and 20th century was full of turning points and new beginnings. In technology for instance it is not difficult to imagine how fascinating the leaps of progress mankind was making must have been. In politics, nationalism was a torrent sweeping the world and many small countrys like Iceland gained their independence, and of course the horror of two world wars and the determination to wipe the political slate clean ,to start anew It may be difficult to discern where art ends and sheer propaganda begins. Although the majority of works of art that look like propaganda in fact are, we should never make a judgement based on first impressions and condemn an artist as an ideological slave simply because of a superficial similarity. Art is a highly personal matter but artists are people, too, and as such they cannot help reacting to, and being influenced by, what is happening around them, be it specific political events or the emergence of new ideologies.



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Smiðjustíg 6, p: 551-5522

WANDERINGS

EMBASSIES
AND WHAT THEY TELL US ABOUT YOUR CULTURE



This imposing building houses our old Cold War adversaries the Russians, who for 50 years fought Iceland over domination of the world. Iceland, of course, emerged victorious, as is evidenced by Björk’s command of the music scene, although TaTu have recently represented a resurgence in Russian Power. This street, Garðarstræti, also houses Unuhús at no. 15, which used to be the hangout of a whole generation of writers, including Laxness, Þórbergur Þórðarson and Stefán from Hvítadal. At no. 25 the town watchman used to reside, somewhat appropriately for a country that has given birth to so much violence and so much poetry.

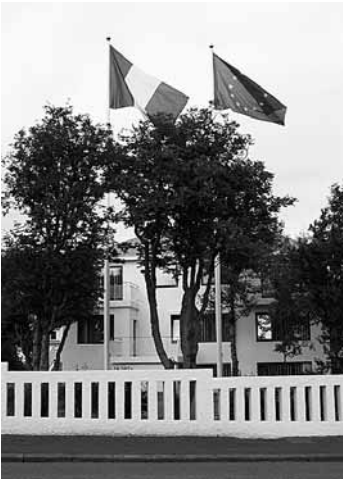


Old habits die hard. The Danish imperialists, at one time masters of the world from Skane to, well, Greenland, still like to keep a mighty posture. Hence this medieval style castle, perhaps built to withstand attacks from rebels in the event of Iceland being reunited with the Danish crown. It lies on the street Hverfisgata, or Neighbourhood Street. In 1912 a paper reported that the street was so full of holes that it was hard to drive sheep down it, and a year later someone suggested it be renamed Bonebreaker due to its hazards. This was not done.

Writer Þórbergur Þórðarson remembers that they used to turn all street lights off at 12 o clock midnight, and says that when you walked down Laufásvegur you could never be sure, when you encountered a shadow, whether it belonged to a being from this world or another, and that not all such creatures were heavenly in those days. Today, the street houses Americans, and whether they are heavenly or not remains unsaid. In any case the street outside the embassy at 21 is a popular meeting place for young people, who like to hang around there, wave placards and give each other free coffee.



The Canadian embassy is the newest addition to the attaché family. Supposedly, this belated exchange has something to do with fishing rights, or perhaps negotiations are underway about handing Newfoundland back to the descendants of Leif Ericsson. This house, at Túngata 14, also houses the Women’s Society, The Union of Women in Reykjavík and Women’s Rights Association of Iceland. Apparently, the Canadians can be trusted to make sure that gender equality is observed. Or can they?



Hidden behind trees and the imposing flags of France and the EU is the French embassy. The staunchly Catholic French of course built their embassy in the same street as the Catholic Church. Catholicism was first legalised with the granting of the constitution in 1874, and the first Catholic Church was built by a French missionary in 1859. Catholicism gained in popularity in the 20’s due to endorsements from young writers such as Halldór Laxness, and a new and bigger church was built here in Túngata, close to the present French embassy. Down the street was a legendary brothel, but this, of course, is mere coincidence.



At Laufásvegur 36, from 1922 onwards, lived Ford dealer Páll Stefánsson who worshipped the Brits and acquired an English officer’s cap which he always wore. When the British Army occupied the country in 1940, this caused some confusion, but he was allowed to keep the cap. At 31 you can now find the British embassy, which, interestingly enough is in the same house as the German Embassy. Iceland had to fight them both in the Cod Wars, so it seems all that business about World Wars was just a diversion in order to get us to believe they were enemies in order to steal our fish.

OUTSIDE THE CITY

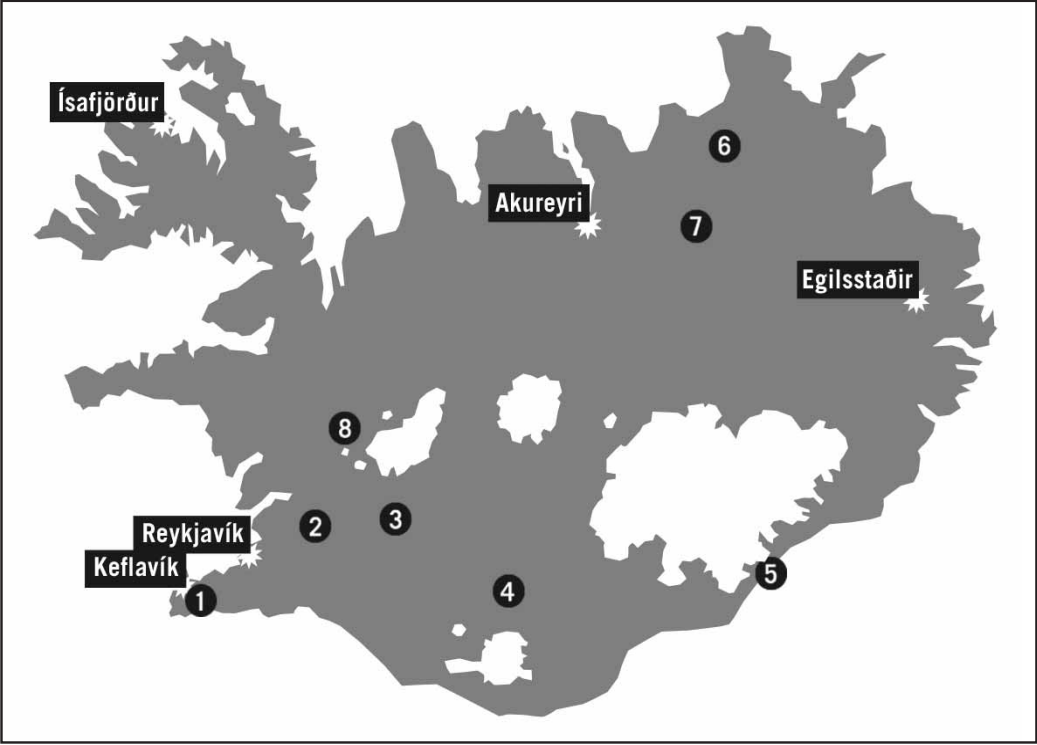
ICELAND: A USERS MANUAL

1. THE BLUE LAGOON

One of the first stops for any visitor, and situated very close to Keflavík's international airport. The lagoons' mud is believed to have healing powers, especially for people suffering from psoriasis or other skin diseases. The distinctive blue colour is due to the warmth and the high level of silicone in the water. Sadly, there's no evidence that this increases cleavage size.

3. GULLFOSS & GEYSIR

Usually these two are mentioned together, partly because of geographic proximity, partly because they both start with the letter G. Geysir is the geysir from which all geysirs derive their name. Sadly, it rarely erupts these days, the family business having been taken over by heir Strokkur. Gullfoss is generally thought to be Iceland's most beautiful waterfall, hence the name, meaning "Golden Waterfall."



Other places worth looking at:

Snæfellsjökull
The glacier which was the entrance point to the centre of the earth in Jules Verne's story, and thought by some to be an alien tourist attraction (although the aliens are reputedly invisible), which should be good enough for us humans.
Hallormsstaður
The only forest in Iceland with trees taller than two feet. Man made, of course.

Vestmannaeyjar
A volcano erupted in 1973, destroying most of the town and forcing the occupants to flee. Most of them resettled on the islands as soon as the lava cooled down.
Dettifoss
Europe's most powerful waterfall, which makes you feel insignificant next to the forces of nature etc.
Kjölur
Simply a gravel road across the highlands.

Dyrhólaey
A big hole in a huge rock. Lives up to its name of "doorhill island."
Laugarvatn
On your way to Geysir, check out the food 'n fun duet here, the natural sauna and next to it, restaurant Lindin for good grub.

Ask in your nearest tourist info for more info on tours and traveling tips.

2. ÞINGVELLIR

In 930 a.d. the Vikings decided they needed to find a way to settle their disagreements, so they founded a parliament, and called it Alþingi. Today, although relocated, it is the oldest (sometimes) functioning parliament in the world. The Vikings, when not busy hacking limbs of one another, were quite aware of the beauty of nature and picked this breathtaking spot to meet. The American and European continental plates meet precisely here.

4. LANDMANNALAUGAR

Probably one of the most popular jeep excursions, tours is a round trip from Reykjavík to Landmannalaugar. Not surprising since Landmannalaugar is actually a natural swimming pool in the middle of Iceland's highland desert. Don't bring shampoo or soap because this pool is so natural that we wouldn't want to spoil it would we? If you're up to a 12 hour journey, most the time inside a huge jeep, it is usually worth it.

5. JÖKULSÁRLÓN

If it's good enough for 007, it's good enough for you. Ian Fleming's master spy has a tendency to pop up here every now and then, first as Roger Moore, and later as Pierce Brosnan. Even without Bond skating across it being chased by helicopters, it's still quite a view (to a kill, even), with a glacier, and a lake full of icebergs and lost camera equipment. Truly beautiful, especially during the summer months (though that's not cool enough for Mr Bond)

6. ÁSBYRGI

If you had a 8 legged horse called Sleipnir were a god of all gods called Odinn, went out for a spin and by accident stepped onto the face of the earth, Asbergi might be the result. A 3.5 km long hoof shaped canyon with up 100m tall walls. Naturally unique and if you've got the time, stop there on your way to Mývatn. Ásbyrgi is only 65km away from Húsavík.

7. MÝVATN

Mývatn is an oasis with nothing but strangely color desert surrounding it. Get lost in the lava labyrinth of Dimmuborgir (who have given name to a Norwegian black metal band) and fall in love with the unique landscape. Geothermal and geologically very active, there are a lot of warm springs and bubbling cauldrons in the area. After a busy day rent a room in a decent hotel and relax in the natural bath of Bjarnarlaug.

8. HÚSAFELL

Only about two hours drive from Reykjavík city, Húsafell is a place which has a lot to offer but is still mostly visited by Icelandic tourists. The area is basically a large camping site surrounded by summer cottages and beautiful landscape. Service offers anything a normal person needs for a shorter or a longer period of time, including a swimming pool, gas station and a golf course.

THE LAND OF THE MIDNIGHT SUNSTROKE

Iceland is weather - a great big dollop of weather. The country hangs from the Arctic Circle like a pendant in the middle of North Atlantic. The Gulf Stream curls upwards from the equator and the Greenland current is sucked downwards from the polar ice cap. What is it that they bring with them? - weather! Two glaciers, one the largest in Europe, dominate the west and South of the country and they create their own micro-systems, they add an extra piquancy to this already potent meteorological cocktail. Much has been written about Icelandic weather. Laxness tells us, "the rain has only set in when the stones have been wet for a week." I've spent winter here and whilst not seeing the stones wet for a week, five days is enough - believe me. Think of weather in all its forms, the majestic to the surly - even the majestically surly and vice versa - and you have Icelandic weather. Billy Connolly once wisely observed that, "Weather is neither good nor bad, it's just weather." He was writing of Scotland. The words ring particularly true, 1,200 miles to the North West of Glasgow.

Icelanders have a seafaring gene. Their ancestors travelled the oceans in pursuit of fish and exploration, some still do, but the majority now choose less testing forms of travel and work. The point is, that only a madman would go out into seas that he could not predict. Wild they may be, hardy certainly, but

mad the Icelander is not. He likes to know his weather. The ebb and flow of his life is played out against it.

I was brought up to believe that it was only the 'British' who would talk about the weather, so incessantly as to bring ridicule of global proportions. It is a charge that we stand equally guilty of. But, we can take some solace in the knowledge that, whoever first made this observation and the legions that have since proved its validity, had obviously never met an Icelander. Icelanders not only open conversations with it, but many use it as a backbeat throughout each and every topic. The most extraneous chat can find its way back to the state of the isobars and the temperature of the sea. Weather is serious business.

Here, news reporters seldom smile. Whether it is the rigours of the autocue or a throw back from a bygone age, I cannot say, but, if the newsreaders are gloomy, then the weather presenters have me reaching for the happy pills. Exaggeration surely! I hear you cry, well turn on the radio or listen to the TV with your eyes closed during the weather report. Even on a day when computer generated suns litter the map, the monotone voice talk us through the regional reports, as an undertaker would relay funeral arrangements. It's the only place in the world that I'm aware of where a weather reporter has

been taken 'off the air' for being too light-hearted. Television channels around the globe treat 'weather presenting' as a legitimate springboard into a wider broadcasting career. In Iceland it is an end in itself.

It is little wonder that Icelanders are in touch with the seasons. Not the four that those in easier latitudes enjoy, but two; winter and summer. Here, spring and autumn only happen in retrospect - a dream viewed from the morning after. Icelanders leap gleefully into the first day of summer in late April each year. It is a public holiday and roundly celebrated. This year it could easily have been the first day of winter. It's always like this, however, as I think we just get tired of waiting. It is as if the whole nation is willing the sun to follow the birds, which have started to return from their winter's travels. People shrug as the grey of another rain-soaked first day of summer - 'Sumardagurinn fyrsti' draws to a close. It won't be long - it won't be long 'Ekki langt thangad til....'

Late June found me walking in the country to the north of Borganes. I carried with me my lunch, a few beers and a fishing rod. The sun beat down as I walked the three hours up to Lambafoss in pursuit of an early Salmon. As I relished the spray, whipped from the lip of the foss into my shelter from the sun, it occurred to me that whilst Icelanders

do 'bang on' about the weather they have a legitimate claim so to do. They actually go out into 'it'. They walk, run, roller-blade, ride, skidoo, kayak and fish in it. They go out there. In the winter children, like extras from 'South Park' bumble around the playgrounds. This is the only country I know where the word camping isn't a dirty word. The mention of the 'C' word back home elicits looks of horror from any one between 12 and 25, and sympathy from anyone older. In Iceland people actually enjoy camping and to enjoy camping means the 'weather' in all its forms.

Icelanders may be attached to their cars like tortoises to their shells, but they, unlike the rest of the 'civilised' world, are still prepared to make the break from time to time and brave the elements. I make no apologies for sounding like Baden-Powell when I say that the country is all the better for it. The summer gatherings in the Westman Islands and Thorsmork are not exactly what the great man envisaged when he created the 'Scout's Jamboree', but he would have to acknowledge the Icelander's unswerving commitment to nature along with the more 'easy' pleasures of life.

I returned from my walk to the Foss, fishless but happy. The sun still shone as I returned to my lodging. I rested for a while, then stood up to change the CD



and promptly collapsed on the floor. A heart attack? Aneurism? No, sunstroke. 'Sunstroke in Iceland?' I hear you say. Yes sunstroke I reply. No hat, balding head, enough said? Sunstroke in Iceland, now that should be something to make the weather presenters smile.

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Robert J Jackson 2003

Robert Jackson is a writer. He divides his time between Reykjavík, Vik and the UK. His first book 69 Degrees North, an adventure love story with an environmental twist, is available at Pennin Eymundsson, Austurstraeti 18 or through Amazon.com

MISCELLANEOUS

ICELAND KILLER SHEEP SIGHTINGS

Danger is lurking out in the wild, where people with no respect for the wilderness and sheep and with no respect for people are slowly but surely closing in on one another.

Who could ever have imagined that this creature, which has somewhat miraculously kept us alive for ages, would finally turn on us? They can now be found in small groups of KILLER SHEEP around parts of Northern Europe, and yes, in Iceland too, we believe. Sceptics do not all agree upon their existence, but we know better...

Around Poland, and especially Scotland and the Orkney Islands there have been several sightings of sheep that have switched to a new and carnivorous lifestyle. Some sheep are reported to have adopted small ducklings as their favourite dish. A more frightening incident occurred when a flock of sheep

aggressively pushed a middle aged woman over a cliff, the resulting fall proving fatal to the poor woman. This not being enough, they then chewed on her clothes. (Some claim that her death was accidental, the flock of sheep going berserk when they thought that the woman was attempting to pet them).

But why should sheep, who've been eating grass and moss for centuries, suddenly decide to turn to meat. Some scientists claim this may be caused by a severe lack of calcium and minerals in their traditional diet, and they have therefore started seeking it in other sources. "This may be as good an argument as any other, but we may never find out the real motivation if we don't look at things in context within its surroundings and eco system," says Dr. Thoe Gubbinsky, professor in environmental studies in the University



of Rostock. Some environmentalists even claim there have been cases where sheep have possibly mutated due to extreme phosphor and flour pollution in massively concentrated areas, mostly around aluminium welding plants such as Álblendiverksmiðjan Grundartanga and Álverið Straumsvík. Until now this has not been officially proven.

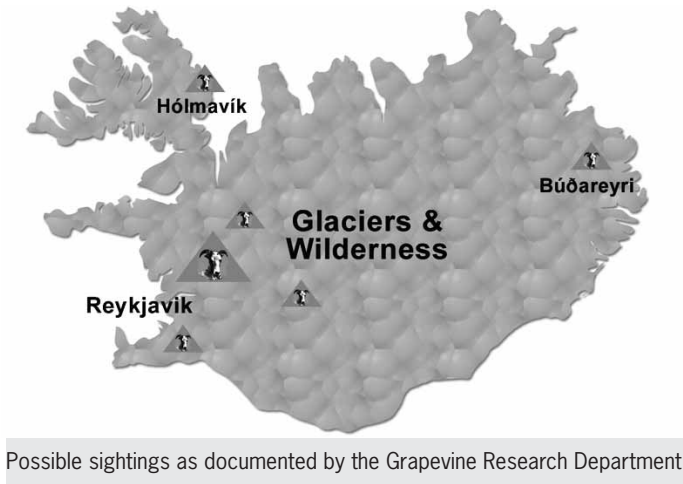
Sightings in Iceland are extremely rare, the main causes of this probably being the scarcity of populated areas and the vast, uninhabited interior. But we are always keeping watch and with your help we will continue to make new discoveries. Until now, few sightings have been reported, but chances are you just might run into a blood-thirsty killer sheep if you find yourself at the right (or wrong) spot at the right (or wrong) time. The possibility of sightings is greatest around South and West Iceland - at midnight and again just before dawn.

But whatever you do, take no fur-

ther risks when staying in Iceland. The Killer Sheep is a beast to be aware of. This might sound like a bad joke, but ending your vacation (and earthly existence) being chewed on by a Killer Sheep is not amusing at all.

T. Gunnarsson

Attention
WHAT TO DO IF YOU SEE ONE...
- RUN LIKE HELL AS FAST AS YOU CAN (without falling)
- THROW FOOD AT IT (Hotdogs will do just fine)
- GO DOWN ON ALL FOUR AND ACT LIKE A SHEEPDAWG*
* The last we recommend only if you're physically fit. Remember your camera!!!



Possible sightings as documented by the Grapevine Research Department



Killer T-shirts!

For all those not ready to risk their life and limbs climbing the nearest mountain looking for killer sheep there's always the T-shirt. The Puffin got his, the Fat Icelandic Viking got his, and now, finally, the Icelandic Killer Sheep are getting theirs...

The Reykjavik Grapevine Research Department has found the only store

in the Reykjavik area that supplies the one and only Killer T-shirt. Wear it on your way out of the country, or make it the perfect giveaway when you arrive safely at home.

The Killer T-shirts are available exclusively at Dixie Co, just across the street from Mál og Menning bookstore, at Laugavegur 17 - the main shopping street in Downtown Reykjavik.

FUNNY MONEY

Icelanders are stubborn, independent and extremely proud of their history, which is fine. Iceland's currency reflects these things being both colorful, and full of history. The bills have pictures of historically famous or important people, while the coins have engravings of various types of fish (reflecting Iceland's biggest industry). Still, you probably haven't got a clue who these people are, or what type of fish it is on you're the coins, and if you simply don't care, don't read any further than this.

A rare sight is the 2000 króna bank note. It is the latest addition to the family of Icelandic bank notes, and by far the least used one. Icelanders don't seem to see the point in using a note easily replaceable by a couple of the

more loved 1000 króna notes, but if you by accident get your hands on one, take a close look. The note is more "arty" and colorful than the older notes and has a right to be. On the front is a picture of Icelandic painter Jóhannes Kjarval (1885-1972) and his painting "In and Out" takes care of most of the



back side. Jóhannes Kjarval is one of Iceland's most loved artists and also one of the most efficient ones with a career as an active painter that spans almost 60 years. The Kjarvalsstaðir Art Museum has an all year around exhibition of his work and was specially built to do so, serving its purpose well for the past 30 years.

What's it worth?
Judging from the information above, a 2000 króna note can buy you as much as a couple of 1000 króna notes, which means four pints of beer if purchased in a pub, or a dozen if bought in a liquor store. A need to know bit of information for



those who measure all things in beer. For the rest of you, who do not use beer as the measure of all worldly goods, 2000 krónur can pay for good grub in a cheap restaurant for just one (two if it's a lunch offer), or buy you two tickets to a movie theater, including popcorn and coke. For one, that is. One thing's for sure, you'll spend it faster than you earned it, but such is life.



The 5 króna coin doesn't do much more than put weight in your pockets, but it does have an engraving of two dolphins on one side and Iceland's coat of arms on the other. Actually all coins in Iceland have the coat of arms on the backside, except for the 1 króna coin. You would have to carry around more than 2600gr of 5 króna coins to equal each 2000 króna note. No wonder bank notes are printed.

Classified advertisements in the Reykjavik Grapevine

Massive and a hip shelf for sale. Only 10.000 ISK. Contact: 663-7818 or bqrgy@msn.com

1991 Mitsubishi, 4x4, 1/2 ton pick-up, 4 cylinder diesel, 140,000 Km, 4 doors, red color and has a camper shell on the back. Good reliable vehicle and great work rig, but it will not win the beauty contest or be good to pick up chicks with. 175.000 ISK or make offer. Contact: 696-5253 or mepco@yahoo.com

Diving Suit. 7mm thick neoprene, Andy's make, one piece commercial diving dry suit. New, never used. Small size, +/- 140 Cm great for a 12/13 yo child or woman. Great to

snorkel and free dive in Iceland with too. 30.000 ISK. contact: 696-5253 or mepco@yahoo.com

Diving Under Garmets. These are fleece one piece jump suit style and used under a thin rubber dry dive suit. They are for extra warmth come in small and medium sizes only. They are also great for outdoor activist to warm up as they are easy to jump in after kayaking, rafting, hot springs, running naked in the rain in Reykjavik! They are comfortable, washable and stylish! Make an offer. contact: 696-5253 or mepco@yahoo.com.

Tired of one night stands in Iceland? Cozy apartment for sale or long term

rent, 5-10 minutes walking distance from town center Reykjavik. For further information and pictures email: apartment@hlunkur.com

I'm a 25 years old white male, medium build. Looking for women & men to extend my social network. I speak Russian and English. Contact: 845-4769

I'm a 25 years old white male, medium build. Looking for women for fun, nights in and out, clubbing, pubing, cinema and more. I speak Russian and English. Contact: 845-4769

I'm looking for an old record player for free or at very reasonable price. Contact 823-3039 or ingi@internet.is

I'm trying to get rid of my stereo amplifier. It's a Tecnics with channels for CD, 2 x Video, Phono and a built in Tuner. It's very powerful and robust, in full working order. Going for a meagre 10.000 ISK. Contact: 551-2383 or alunhart@hotmail.com

Looking for an electronic Keyboard, any brand will do. For free or very cheap, contact: 869-7796 or jondinn@yahoo.com

Second hand clothes wanted, anything from the 60's, 70's and 80's. Will come and pick stuff up. Contact: 898-9249 or hilmagr@yahoo.com

Need a TV, must be color and must work, remote preferred but not needed. Contact: 552-6167 or johnboyce99@yahoo.com

Want a Coffee Machine with experience, preferably for free. Contact: 865-2294 or hordurkristb@lhi.is

Lonely co-editors seek female company, either individuals or groups, preferably financially independent but not a must. All inquiries will be accepted. Contact grapevine@strik.is or 869-7796

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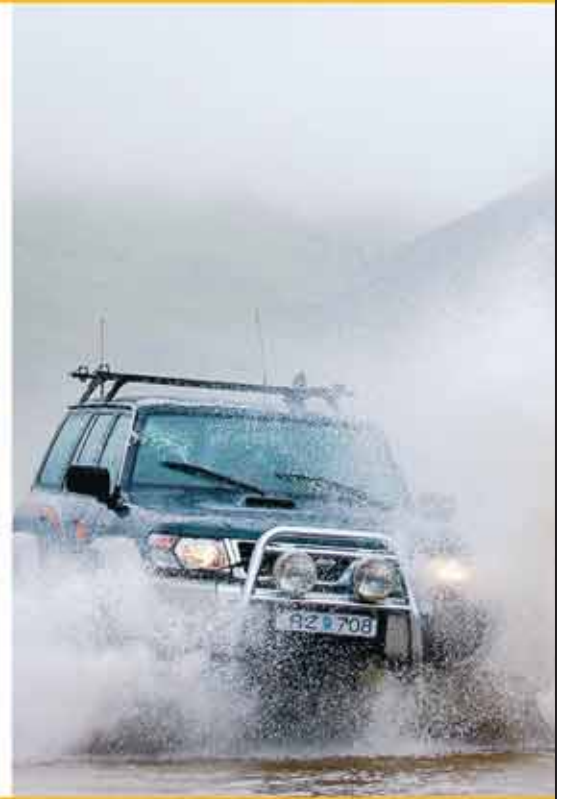
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