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AND WELL IN HVERAGERÐI

GARÐABÆR'S SJÁLAND GOES ON
YOUR 2020 CUISINE CALENDAR

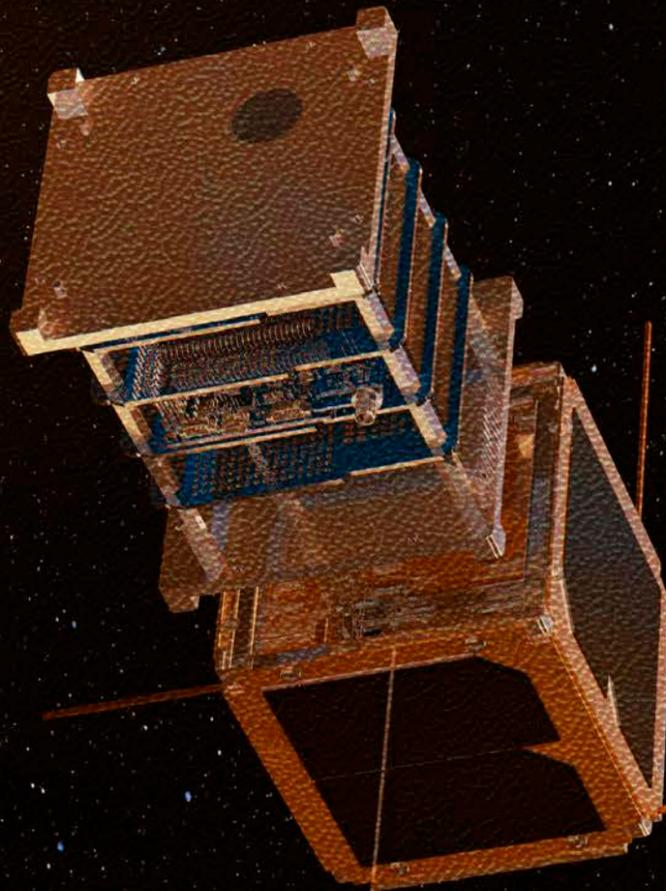
THE G REYKJAVÍK GRAPEVINE

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A SECRET HISTORY

50 YEARS IN THE MAKING

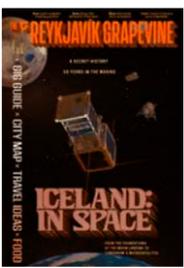


ICELAND IN SPACE

FROM THE FOUNDATIONS
OF THE MOON LANDING TO
TOMORROW'S MICROSATELLITES

IS ICELAND DOING ENOUGH
FOR QUEER PEOPLE?

MIGHTY BEAR IS BACK AND
AS GLAMOROUS AS EVER



COVER PHOTO:
3d illustration by Sveinbjörn Pálsson. Imagery describing the feature article. Front and center is the Icelandic microsatellite.

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EDITORIAL

StormNation And The Political Pandemic



When the pandemic began in March, Icelanders took it seriously straight away. False information wasn't part of the discussion; we knew then what remains clear now: this was bad. And we knew that we needed to take action as one nation.

The incredible scientists who have led us through this pandemic gave the nation the latest information at their daily briefings and everybody in Iceland followed their advice. We lost ten lives during the first wave and thought that it could not get any worse.

The reward was rich. We were one of the first nations in the world to flatten our first wave and had a good summer. We travelled, we met family and friends at the bar, at home and anywhere else we wanted. We opened our borders quite early and it looked like we had things under control.

We genuinely believed that was it.

One explanation for how well Icelanders handled the pandemic in the beginning is because we are a stormnation. We have gone through so many hard winters, raging storms and satanic seasonal swings. We are accustomed to taking certain precautions just to assure that the weather is not a serious threat.

But, here's where storms differ from pandemics; they are over quickly. And this is where Iceland's weakness is unveiled. We can handle the fleeting threat of a storm, but we have a much harder time planning for the future and taking long-term action.

The third wave that we're currently riding has proven to be a real challenge for Icelanders. We have reverted to the lockdowns that marked the beginning of the pandemic. No one has died, but—statistically—it's just a matter of time. To top it off, unemployment is at a record high. Most of the unemployed are immigrants. But that fate will hit more and more Icelanders soon enough.

The government has yet to unveil

any convincing ideas for creating jobs and have been slow rolling out solutions for companies or communicating the fine print of existing bandaids, leaving companies desperate at the end of the month, not knowing if some of the important government solutions for companies will be extended. Meanwhile, the government has focused on saving a massive corporation like Icelandair, even though the borders are essentially closed for tourism. There were less than 12,000 arrivals in the whole of September.

There is no wholesome future vision when it comes to the pandemic. Perhaps we will have a vaccine at the beginning of 2021. But it could be just 50% effective and it could take at least a year to produce enough to get the economy back on its feet. In short, Iceland, like most governments in the world, is not acknowledging the fact that this pandemic will control our lives at least until the turn of 2022. Possibly longer.

So, where are we now? We are at the beginning of another kind of pandemic, a political one, and it could last even longer than COVID-19. 🍷

Valur Grettisson
Editor-in-chief



Elin Elisabet is an illustrator and cartoonist born and raised in Borgarnes. At the tender age of 15, Elin moved to Reykjavik and hasn't looked back, except for the annual springtime impulse to move someplace quiet and keep chickens. Elin likes folk music, stationery, seal videos, the country of Ireland, and eggs.



Hannah Jane Cohen is based out of Iceland by way of New York. She's known for her love of Willa Ford, David Foster Wallace, and other such "intellectuals." Her visionary work is known for expanding the definitions of emotion, introspection, and above all else, taste. Hannah is also the current Drag King of Iceland, HANS.



Catherine Magnúsdóttir studies social sciences and came to the Grapevine for the internship her studies mandate. And for fun of course. When she's not reconnecting with her Icelandic roots, she's either watching video essays or attempting to finally come up with a good story idea that she can actually finish writing.



Iona Rangeley-Wilson is an English graduate from the UK. She writes children's books, but has decided to also go into journalism on the absolutely minuscule off-chance that her first book doesn't immediately turn her into a multimillionaire. Her hobbies include getting up late and indulging in illusions of grandeur.



Sveinbjörn Pálsson is our Art Director. He's responsible for the design of the magazine and the cover photography. When he's not working here, he DJs as Terrordisco, hosts the Funkþátturinn radio show, or sits at a table in a Laugardalur café, drinking copious amounts of coffee and thinking about fonts.



Art Bicnick is an international man of mystery. He moves like a shadow through the subcultures and soirees of Reykjavik, never still, often ghosting the scene in a puff of blue smoke—the exhaust fumes of the elusive, well-travelled Bicnick mini.



Andie Sophia Fontaine has lived in Iceland since 1999 and has been reporting since 2003. They were the first foreign-born member of the Icelandic Parliament, an experience they recommend for anyone who wants to experience a workplace where colleagues work tirelessly to undermine each other.



Jess Distill is a musician, artist and wannabe writer from St. Albans, England. As a long time lover of Iceland, and recent copywriting diploma graduate, Jess came to the Grapevine to expand her writing portfolio whilst seeing if she could hack it as an Icelandic resident.



Valur Grettisson is an award-winning journalist, author and playwright. He has been writing for Icelandic media since 2005. He was also a theatre critic and one of the hosts of the cultural program, 'Djöflaeyjan' at RÚV. Valur is not to be confused with the dreadful football club that bears the same name.

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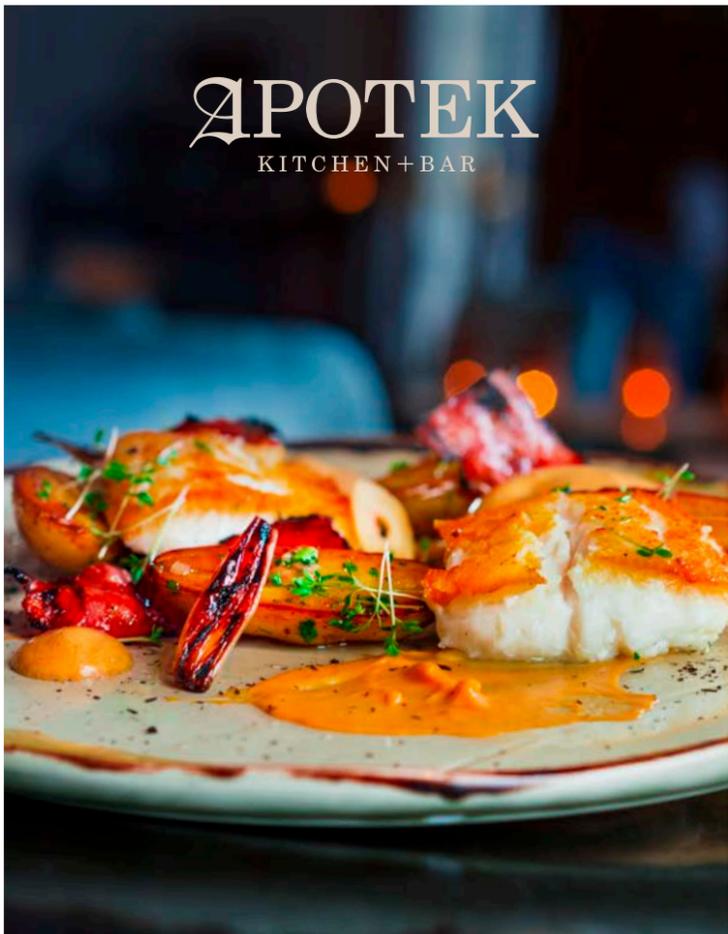


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Our illustration department imagines Jeff Koons' view of Corona

What Are Icelanders Talking About?

The topics that are getting people banned from the comments

Words: **Andie Sophia Fontaine** Illustration: **Sveinbjörn Pálsson**

NEWS This probably won't come as a surprise to our readers, but the hottest topic right now is the **increased domestic restrictions** in response to the **coronavirus pandemic**. The restrictions, which went into effect at midnight on October 5th, limit social gathering to 20 people; shut down bars, restaurants, gyms and Reykjavik-area pools; and require the use of masks everywhere it's not possible to maintain a two-metre distance between people.

Two points of conflict have raised concerning which facilities are closed and the now-mandatory policy of wearing a mask on the bus. Gym owners in particular have been upset about the restrictions, pointing out that while they can create conditions for proper social distancing, for whatever reason Icelandic authorities are allowing contact sports to continue. Meanwhile, regular bus users were not alerted about the mask policy through the apps they use and those who do mask up have complained that some drivers are admitting passengers without mask. So it would seem there are still a few kinks to work out.

A great many Icelanders are seriously concerned about **China allegedly spying on us**. Shortly after news broke that some **400 Icelanders were included in**

the massive Zhenhua Data leak, where millions of influential people around the world were ranked in terms of their interest to Chinese authorities by a company with ties to that country's military and intelligence sector, **the Chinese embassy in Reykjavik** has come under fire for another sort of alleged surveillance: its **CCTV cameras**. Reportedly, the embassy's video surveillance



CCTV, but ART

covers a much wider swath of ground around the embassy than is deemed necessary and Iceland's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has asked the embassy to move the cameras. With that in mind, whatever you do, don't do anything anti-China anywhere near the embassy;

they may be watching you.

Apparently **Centre Party chair** and **disgraced former Prime Minister Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson** is not getting enough attention, as he chose to direct national focus on himself by **speaking out in opposition to a bill that would protect intersex children** from medically unnecessary, non-consensual and, in many cases, psychologically damaging surgeries on their genitalia. Sigmundur spared no hyperbole, calling the bill "probably the scariest parliamentary issue I can remember in recent times"—pretty rich coming from a guy named in the Panama Papers. Response came swiftly from director of the National Queer Organisation Þorbjörg Þorvaldsdóttir, who said in part, "This is the most extremist talk I have ever heard.

He wants, in other words, that we continue to perform unnecessary surgeries on children who have no say in the matter." The bill is from the Prime Minister and its passage is all but certain, no matter what Sigmundur has to say about it. ♡



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Áslaug Arna, pictured without her helicopter

Minister Floats Refugee Camps, Idea Sinks

“Not possible,” says coalition MP

NEWS

Words: **Andie Sophia Fontaine**

Photo: **Art Bicnick**

Minister of Justice Áslaug Arna Sigurbjörnsdóttir was asked in Parliament by Centre Party MP Þorsteinn Sæmundsson what kind of supervisory capabilities the government has over people who are facing deportation from Iceland.

Áslaug responded by floating the idea of creating what she called a special “deportation area” where such people could be held and kept under close watch, to make sure they don’t try to save their lives by going into hiding. The idea was not exactly warmly received.

“Why is there a child prison in Iceland in 2020?”

The response was as fast as it was strong. Many pointed out that no matter what language the minister used, what she was describing was a prison. Criticism came from opposition MPs and human rights activists alike. Þórunn Ólafsdóttir, who has long fought for refugee’s rights, was amongst them, asking, “Why is there a child prison in Iceland in 2020?”

It also bears mentioning that the idea would appear to violate the holy writ of Icelandic refugee policy: the Dublin Regulation. In particular, Arti-

cle 28.1 makes this very clear, where it states, “Member States shall not hold a person in detention for the sole reason that he or she is subject to the procedure established by this Regulation.” Several articles of the Geneva Convention on Refugees also expressly prohibit Áslaug’s idea.

Ruling party dismisses idea

All eyes were on the Left-Greens, who lead the ruling coalition and have been criticised for being ineffectual when it comes to protecting refugees. In response, Left-Green MP Bjarkey Olsen Gunnarsdóttir took to Facebook to say: “The issue in question is, of course, nothing more than a refugee camp or a prison and it is not possible to set such up on the part of the Left Green parliamentary party. A new law would be needed to make this a reality, and such a bill would not pass through my party.”

ASK AN Elf Expert

Q: Do Elves Really Disrupt Construction?



Over the years, stories about Iceland have appeared in international media that have captured everyone’s imagination, particularly those about construction work being sabotaged—by elves! Which has got this Brit wondering: Do Icelanders really believe in elves? And do elves often cause trouble, or do they live in harmony with man? We asked author and elf authority Páll Ásgeir Ásgeirsson.

Several stories exist about clashes between building projects and elves. Work has often already started when messages come from the elves to stop. Nobody listens and then machinery breaks, work’s halted and roads have to be rerouted. Most of these situations date back 40 or 50 years and such clashes with the elf folk rarely happen anymore. But elves are extremely clever and often several steps ahead of us; they monitor our behaviour and have the means of changing our decisions without conflict.

Elves like living near people, in inhabited rural areas. Therefore, most of the stories about elves interrupting construction happened when roads were first being built and cities and villages were growing rapidly. Nowadays the elves have moved into urban areas, finding homes in manmade structures. A large elf community lives in the ocean wall in Reykjavik—I hear it’s the most popular place to live. They seek structures they don’t have to share with humans. Many live in Hallgrímskirkja, museums and other public buildings. They don’t like buildings where humans reside. Incidents where “mould” is found and people vacate buildings show how elves keep humans in place, driving us out of places they want for themselves. They’ve also realised that national parks and reserves are carefully protected, so those who don’t want to live in cities instead make their homes in places like Þingvellir.

FOOD OF ICELAND

Hverabrauð



What do you do when you’ve tried a food, enjoyed it, but found that it’s not quite Icelandic enough?

That’s right, you put it in a volcano! Well, maybe don’t toss your loaf of rye into an actual volcano—

you might end up with some well-done toast in that case—but burying it by a volcanic hot spring is close enough. In fact, most traditional Icelandic rye bread is baked that way. The name “hverabrauð” literally means “hot spring bread,” but its other nickname “þrumari” translates to the even more

exciting “thunder bread.” (Though this becomes less exciting when you realise that it refers not to the awe-inspiring elements that helped create it, but to the flatulence that follows its excessive consumption.) Though most Icelandic rye bread is cooked in ovens nowadays, there are still some

bakeries that insist nothing tastes quite as good as their ancestors’ method. The Laugarvatn Fontana is one such place: dough here is placed in a lidded pan, cling-filmed, and buried in the hot sand for exactly twenty-four hours. The result is dense, chewy and sweet—a little bit like gingerbread.

For the most traditional combination, serve warm with melted butter, smoked trout and some hard boiled eggs. You can cook these in the hot spring, too, if you’re feeling adventurous and you, well... have a hot spring nearby. For the full Zac Efron ‘Down to Earth’ experience, eat whilst wearing a beanie and saying “whoa!” and “awesome!” uncomfortably often. **IRW**

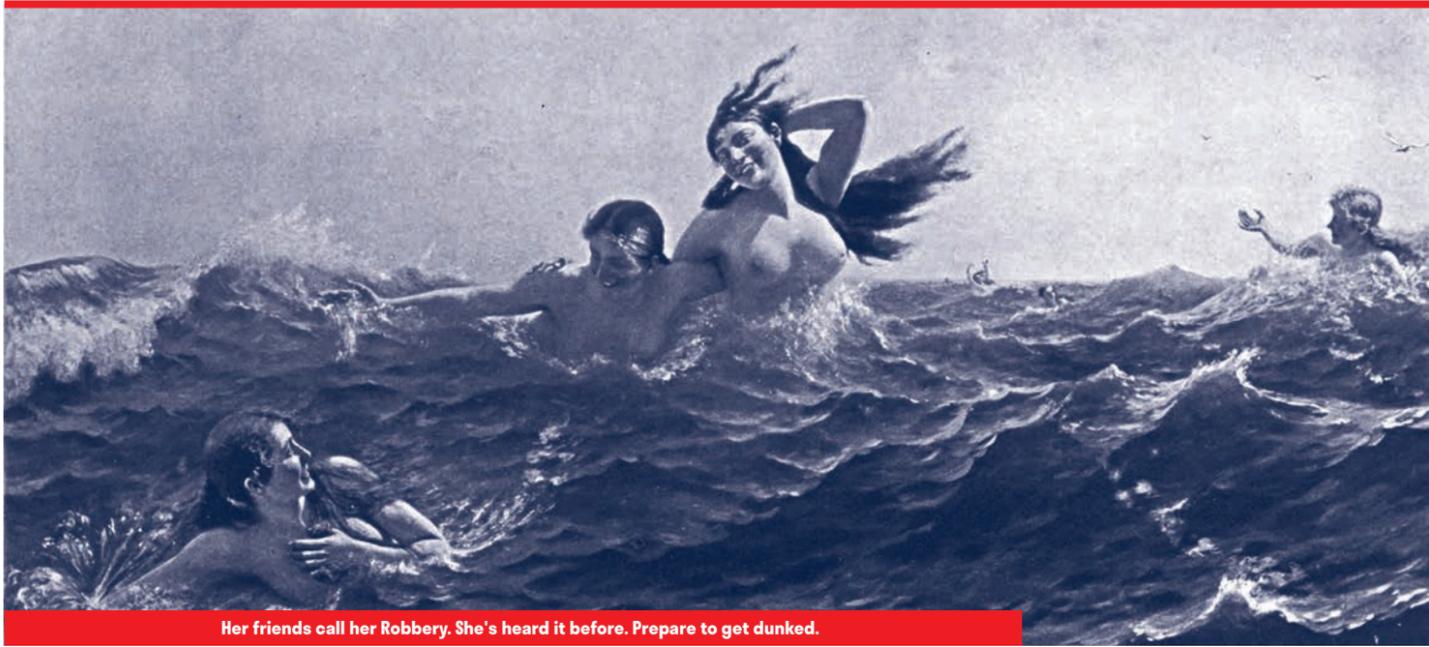
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Her friends call her Robbery. She's heard it before. Prepare to get dunked.

Rán, The Sea Goddess

The Goddess who will literally drown you

DEITIES OF ICELAND

Words: **Andie Sophia Fontaine**

Illustration: **Hans Dahl via Wikimedia Commons**

Rán is the wife of Ægir, a jötunn (a kind of giant) associated with the sea. While Ægir is all about the more positive aspects of the sea—sailing, exploring, fishing and such—Rán has but one mission in life and that is to literally drown you.

Where Thor has a hammer and Freyr has a magic sword, Rán has a net. And she uses that net to literally drown you.

Icelanders to this day feel a great deal of emotions about the sea, which

they both revered and feared since Settlement times. Icelandic poet Egill Skallagrímsson, writing *Sonnatorrek* in the 10th century, lamented the loss of his son Böðvarr, who drowned at sea, saying in part, “Greatly has Rán afflicted me/I have been despoiled of a great friend/Empty and unoccupied I see the place/which the sea has torn my son”.

Why will Rán literally drown you? Because she can. Some people bake bread, some people knit, Rán literally

drowns people. Much like the sea, she does not have any rhyme or reason in terms of who will be lost in her watery embrace—one only needs to be in the wrong place at the wrong time for Rán to see you, cast her net, and literally drown you.

Today, the Icelandic noun “rán” means a robbery of some kind. While having your car stolen is upsetting, it’s certainly better than being out to sea and having a powerful goddess throw a net at you, and then literally drown you. 🍷

Superpowers: Will literally drown you

Modern analogue: A woman who will literally drown you

Weaknesses: None

JUST SAYINGS

“Að lifa eins og blóm í eggjum”

Is everything going great? Are you “living the life”? Well then—in Iceland—you are “living like a flower in an egg.” This saying might be confusing for those who know that there are no flowers in eggs, just slimy yellow yolks. But, unless you’re Donald Trump (who is definitely still confused by this), you might have figured out that “flower” here is the yolk. Potentially, this originated from

Iceland’s former oppressor, the imperialistic swine in Denmark, whose word for yolk in their hideous language is “æggeblomme” (egg-flower). So if you’re not currently being oppressed by the Danes—or knowingly spreading COVID around the Republican party—then you could say that you’re living like a flower in an egg. 🍷 🍷

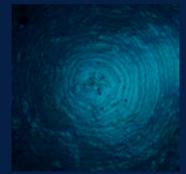
GRAPEVINE PLAYLIST



Jónsi & Robyn - Salt Licorice

“Salt Licorice” is an aggressive take on ballroom house, with a thumping beat contrasted by eerie vocals. In it, Jónsi and Robyn—what a duo, right?—share the sorrows of aging, nostalgia and depression. A 2020 revelation, for sure. 🍷

goth that’ll have you lavishly swaying around your apartment in a lace gown and headpiece. Lugosi, don’t be afraid of this art. 🍷



Ólafur Arnalds - Woven Song

“Woven Song” is something that you would imagine aliens on distant planets would love. But if you enjoy odd voices, beautiful piano melodies and incredible videos directed by Thomas Vanz, you’ll like it too. Ólafur Arnalds is, as always, unique and his songs are like a shot of future technology straight into your forehead. This is no exception. 🍷



The Post Performance Blues Band - ooh I am blue

Smoking in the gym? What’s not to like about this super-aggressive, kind of self-hating indie techno track by the most interesting performance group/band in Iceland? The video itself is a masterpiece and the song is like if Björk went to the gym and had a stroke at the same time. That’s a good thing. I think? 🍷



Sólstafr - Her Fall from Grace

Who said 2020 didn’t need a melancholic, atmospheric, depressive anthem? (Probably everybody.) That didn’t stop Sólstafr from giving us one. With a music video that peculiarly features Queen Águsta Eva herself, Sólstafr have once again proved they are the Kings of weirdly-addictive bummer tracks. We mean “bummer” in the most complimentary way, btw. But what else would you expect from a band that is releasing an album titled “Endless Twilight Of Codependent Love”? 🍷



Rex Pistols - Don't Be Afraid Of My Heart

Grapevine-favourite Rex Pistols proves once and again that goth isn’t dead. And by “goth,” we don’t mean those green-haired TikTok kids who dramatically lip sync to Top 40. No, this is pure, old-school, synth-laden, delectable



BARFLIES REYKJAVÍK 2

As the name of this book suggests, it is a follow-up to an earlier book by the same name. Again, the people portrayed are the Kaffibarinn regulars. Some of the faces you will recognize from the first book, just a quarter of a century older. Others were not born when the bar served its first drink.

Available at Kaffibarinn Bergstaðastræti 1, 101 Rvk



Iceland's Unlikely Role In Space Exploration

FROM 1965 AND INTO THE FUTURE

Words:
**Andie Sophia
Fontaine**

3D illustrations:
**Sveinbjörn
Pálsson**

Photos:
**Art Bicnick,
Nasa, Space Iceland,
Space Nation**

With the launch of Sputnik 1 in 1957, Earth's exploration of space began in earnest. Since then, the focus has been primarily on two countries—Russia and the United States—although in more recent times, India, China, Japan and a host of others have made remarkable strides in the exploration of Earth's orbit, the Moon, Mars and beyond. Even Iceland has played an important role in space exploration since the 1960s and continues to do so. Today the country has its sights set on becoming a member of the European Space Agency (ESA).

Iceland's unique geography, its technical expertise and its keen interest in participation on the world stage have all played a part. Its involvement in space exploration has included the launching of a suborbital rocket from Langanes just last August; the ongoing development of AI and remote sensing technologies; the study of Iceland's pristine lava caves as a means to ascertain the possibility of building habitats on Mars, where such caves could shield inhabitants from the unforgiving levels of radiation that bombard the planet; and the development of what may become Iceland's very first orbital satellite. In this feature, we spoke with a few of the people trying to make Iceland's role in space exploration even greater.

Walking on the moon

While the Soviet Union and the US engaged in heated competition to achieve a series of firsts in space exploration, the former had been outpacing the latter for years, and Iceland largely stayed out of it. The 1950s and 1960s had been a time of prosperity for Iceland, but it remained largely neutral during the Cold War, focusing instead on internal matters and enjoying the wealth of the post-WW2 years.

All that changed in 1965, when NASA sent prospective astronauts to Iceland to train for a potential moon landing. They were sent again in 1967. In all, 32 astronauts trained in Iceland and 14 who would eventually get to the moon—including Neil Armstrong—trained here first.

The reason was simple, best summed up by Apollo Program geologist Dr. Elbert A. King: "We took one of our best field trips to Iceland. If you want to go to a place on earth that looks like the Moon, central Iceland should be high on your list, as it beautifully displays volcanic geology with virtually no vegetation cover."

"When the Americans went to the moon, that was a huge part of space, which was why they came here to train," Thor Fanndal, the director of Space Iceland, explains. "The reasoning was that obviously we have an amazing environment when it comes to space. Iceland does look a bit like the moon, and even more like Mars. The astronauts were mostly pilots; they weren't scientists. There was a need for them to have the ability to pick the best rocks, for example, for analysis down here. NASA at first attempted to teach them in classrooms, and apparently, they showed absolutely no interest in it. So the idea came up that maybe they should do field trips."

Today, you can visit the Astronaut Monument, located outside the Exploration Museum in Húsavík, commemorating Iceland's contribution to the space race. But the adventure didn't end there.

Enter Space Iceland

Space Iceland, as Thor describes it, is



a sort of “knowledge hub” that helps make things happen. As a service entity, they work closely with the Icelandic government and bring together institutions, companies and individuals who want to do anything space related in Iceland.

“It’s an odd job, but what’s so odd about it is it’s like any other office job,” he says. “It’s very stressful and mundane most days, but then you have these tidbits that make it a bit weird. Like, ‘we need to go and buy gunpowder’ or ‘meet an institution because we want to send up a rocket’ or welcome astronauts because you’re taking them to training. But 90% of the job is just being on the phone, writing reports and making sure that everything functions. I feel really fortunate to be able to do this job, but I think a lot of people get disappointed. But in the end the projects we do help with value, create jobs and contribute to space in particular.”

Thor believes it only natural that Iceland gets even more involved in space.

“We get this question of ‘why should Iceland participate in space?’ he says. “We make a point of telling people that we do participate in space; the only questions we’re facing now is do we want to do it on our terms so it leaves as much investment behind as possible, or do we want to stay in the passenger seat? There’s no real question as to how or why we would participate in space; we’ve been doing it for 50 years.”

Is there life on Mars? Ask Iceland

There is greater potential in Iceland’s environment for learning more about space than just the presence of wide expanses of rocks and sand. Oddur Vilhelmsson, a professor of biology at the University of Akureyri who has collaborated with NASA’s astrobiology projects, believes Iceland could hold clues for how to detect life, present and past, on Mars.

Oddur first met Thor in Húsavík, where he learned about Space Iceland and became “quite enthusiastic” about the endeavour.

“This opens an exciting door in the field of research with international universities and institutions,” he told us. “There’s a lot of demand now that these institutions come to Iceland and do research related to the field of space. It’d be highly desirable to have a regular budget for this, to welcome these people and assist in the research. Personally, I find it a rather fun and exciting subject; it’s not more complicated than that. I find it fascinating to consider

where the ‘edge of life’ is, where one can find microorganisms and where one can’t, why and why not. This to me, is a fundamental scientific and even philosophical question, which is very exciting. It’s something I’ve been

having conversations about with many of my colleagues abroad.”

So how exactly can Iceland’s environment play a part in finding life on other planets such as Mars? Apparently, the answer is in our lava caves.

“On the one hand, [we’re working] in the desert sands of the Highlands and on the other hand, in lava caves,” Oddur says. “Astrobiology is connected to this, as the environment in Iceland, especially in the Highlands, is well suited in many ways as an analog for a planet, especially Mars. The caves are also quite exciting in this context, because one of the things that prevents Mars from being friendly for life is radiation, because Mars has no magnetic field. So if there had at one point been life on Mars, as many believe was the case billions of years ago, the best chance of finding signs of it would be underground. So we’re working on researching how microorganisms live in these caves here in Iceland, examine what chemical processes to look for, and wonder how that could apply to the conditions on Mars.”

That certainly is intriguing, but the question of implementation falls upon one primary factor: money.

“As with so many other things in life, this research depends a great deal on access to funding; to be able to hire scientists and buy the equipment necessary,” Oddur says. “Being a part of the ESA would increase our access to such funding, especially from Europe.”

Iceland’s first satellite?

Closer to home, Thor points out that “only 10% of [the space sector] is actually exploring space. Most of it is understanding the Earth, and furthering our knowledge of humankind.” In fact, he says, we rely on space every day.

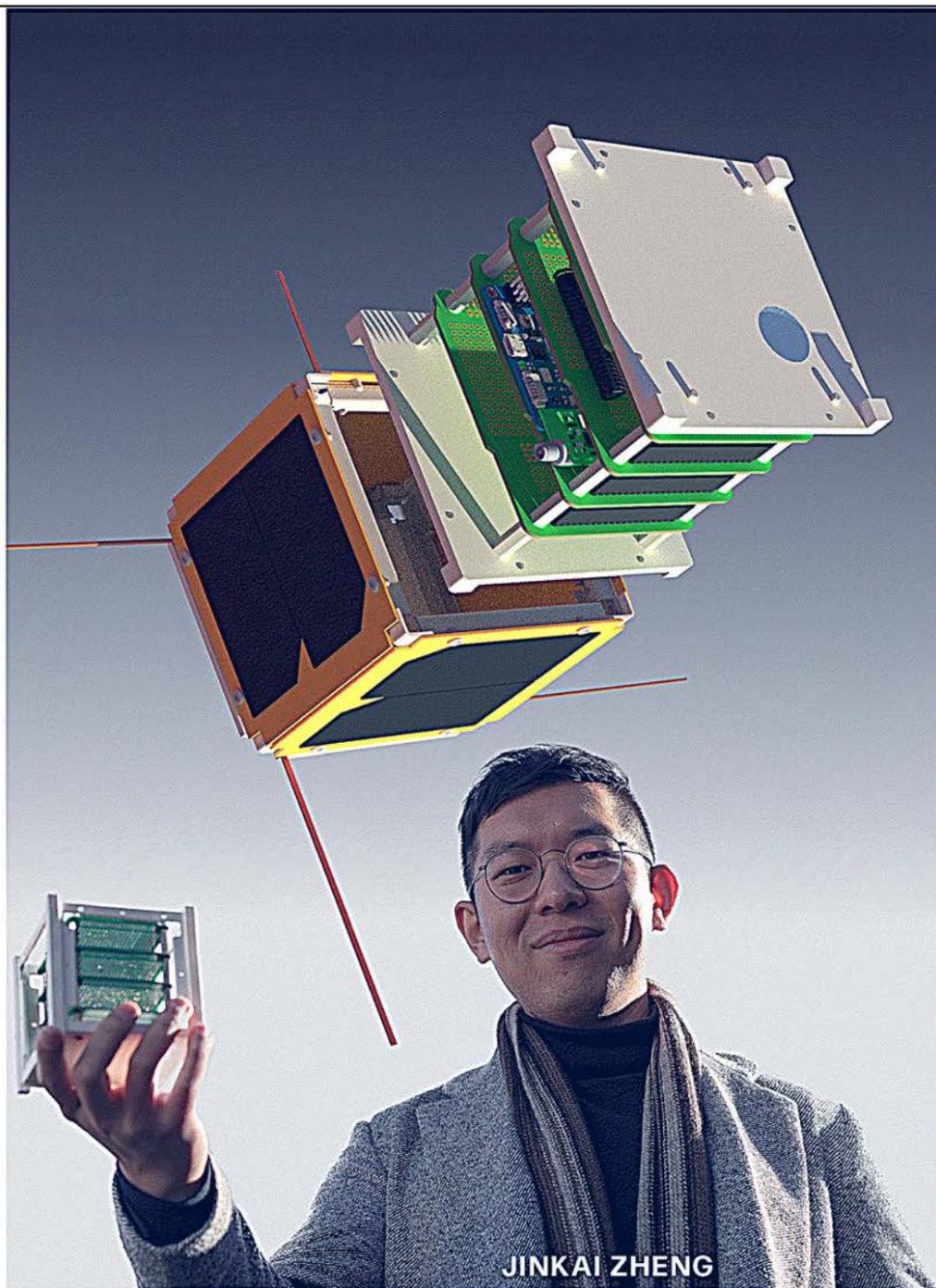
“Tinder is space technology,” he says. “It uses GPS and satellite clusters to locate you and find you a partner. I sincerely doubt that these couples are thinking ‘Thank God for the space sector, or we would have never found each other.’”

While Iceland does not, as yet, have a satellite of its own, Jinkai Zheng, a researcher for Space Iceland, is hoping to change that. He is currently designing a prototype for Iceland’s first satellite.

“It’s not for just one purpose; this satellite could be used in multiple ways, providing different services at different times,” he says. “It could be commercial communication or scientific research, conducted by organisations or the universities. But what we need to figure out right now is who will provide the biggest sponsorship and who will be a client for such a project. But for what I’ve seen in Iceland, this satellite could be used for the global navigation system, which could be a part of the Galileo navigation system,

“WE DO PARTICIPATE IN SPACE; THE ONLY QUESTION WE’RE FACING NOW IS DO WE WANT TO DO IT ON OUR TERMS?”

“TINDER IS A SPACE TECHNOLOGY BUT I SINCERELY DOUBT THAT THESE COUPLES ARE THINKING ‘THANK GOD FOR THE SPACE SECTOR, OR WE WOULD HAVE NEVER FOUND EACH OTHER.’”



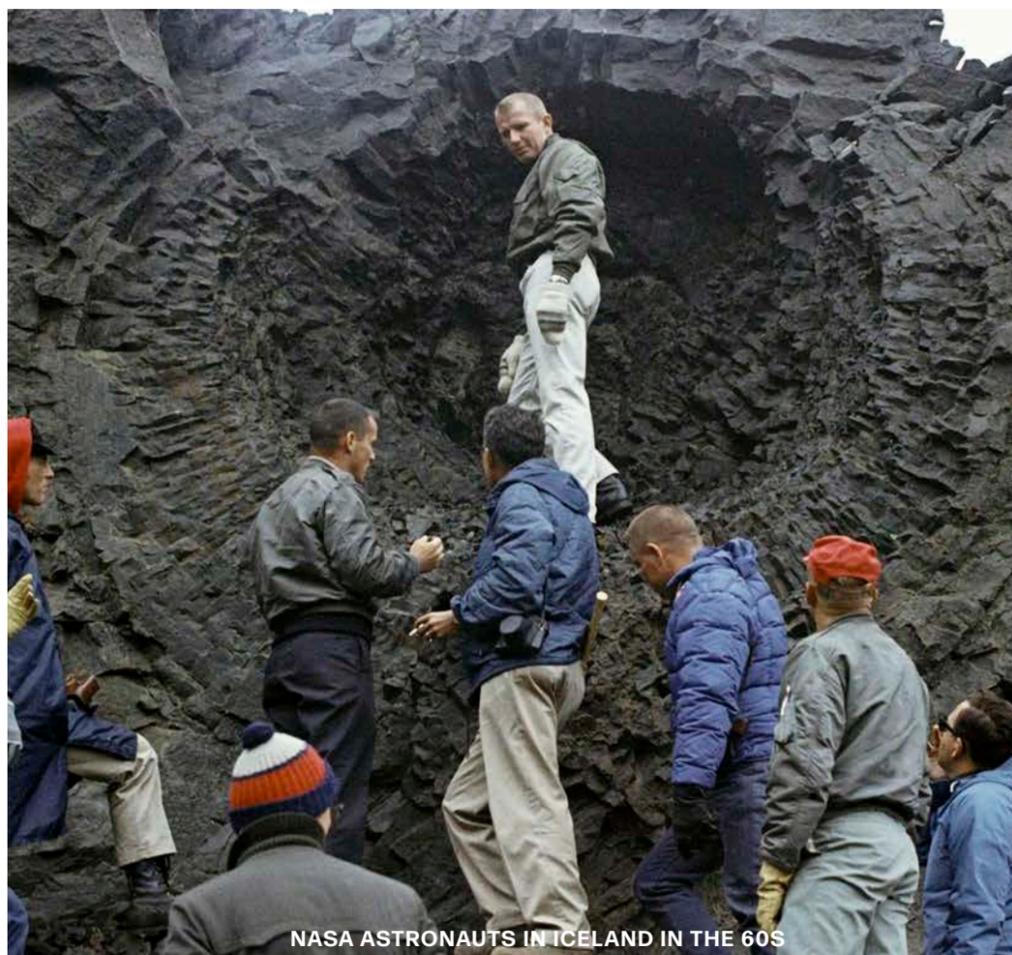
JINKAI ZHENG



THOR FANNDAL



ODDUR VILHELMSSON



NASA ASTRONAUTS IN ICELAND IN THE 60S

or it can be used for remote sensing of volcanic activity. This could be really helpful for Icelandic scientific research, in terms of having a faster response to an impending eruption, and building a database for future research."

Space junk

The subject of building more satellites has been cause for concern, amongst astronomers in particular. Astronomer James Blake of the University of Warwick recently pointed out that "orbital debris posing a threat to operational satellites is not being monitored closely enough, as they publish a new survey finding that over 75% of the orbital debris they detected could not be matched to known objects in public satellite catalogues."

Thor is less concerned about the amount of satellites in orbit around Earth, saying, "When it comes to people who talk about 'space junk', we should have in mind that there are thousands of ships in the ocean right now and they very rarely see each other. So multiply that space by hundreds of thousands. The amount of space up there is enormous. Space debris is an issue, but it's not because we're running out of space."

For his part, Jinkai sees a great deal of potential in an Icelandic satellite program and says interest is growing.

"Currently, I'm just working in the office, doing research and writing reports, so I don't have direct contact with the Icelandic government," he says. "But from what I've been doing, I think Iceland has a lot of potential interest in this subject, because Icelanders have relatively good telecommunications. The interest in the space program has been increasing in recent years, too. From what I've seen, it's quite possible for Iceland to have such a satellite project; I'm quite positive about this."

Not just satellites

"Iceland has a really good background in the space industry through history," Jinkai says, adding that Iceland is also a good model for how a colony on the moon or Mars could thrive. "Iceland has very similar environments [to these places] and really good energy policy in terms of renewable energy. And that's what we need for developing humanity in outer space."

Even Iceland's geothermal and hydropower energy have a role to play in space exploration, he believes.

"There's a lot of possibilities," he says. "Iceland has been growing in the field of software engineering, so it could be a control base for the future of space exploration, for example by developing software for the rocket navigational system, or designing simulations for the challenges we'll face in space exploration. At the same time, we can use Iceland for testing and construction for future spacecraft, because we have a very positive renewable energy policy."

Government "aggressively absent"

Thor characterises the Icelandic government's participation in space as "aggressively absent," pointing out that there are some things that only the government can do.

"The government is in no way in our way; they're not working against us or something like that," he emphasises. "But the problem with developing a

space sector is that it is a bit different than opening a gift shop. There's a lot of planning, there's a lot of international contracts involved and so there's this need for the government to be involved on a policy level."

Part of the reason for the current situation can be attributed to the fact that Iceland has no Ministry of Space. It doesn't have an Icelandic Space Agency, either. All the different factors that play into how Iceland participates in space fall under many different ministries.

"What we're trying to convince the government of is that we need a ministry that is willing to sign the papers and coordinate with other ministries," Thor says. Their projects could fall under the ministries of the Environment, Innovation, Education, Science and Culture, Transportation, and sometimes Foreign Affairs. "We need all of them to be aware and review what happens under their auspices."

That said, Space Iceland has reportedly had very positive contact with the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture. "I think it's fair to say that the minister who has shown the most interest and who has been the most welcoming is Lilja [Alfredsdóttir]," Thor says. "It's important to note that we've had a very positive communication with all of them, but I think the Ministry of Education, Science and Culture has put the most time into reviewing this and trying to make it fit."

Space is "a world without borders"

We reached out to Lilja for comment on this matter and she confirmed her interest in space is many-fold.

"Space research and science is appealing for many reasons, both educational and practical," she told the Grapevine. "It helps us grapple with the fundamental questions about our place in the universe, the history of the solar system, and future opportunities. Space is a world without borders, it encourages international cooperation and, hopefully, peace in the long term. The practical applications of space have made our lives easier, created job opportunities, and orbital satellites have certainly been used in one of the biggest challenges faced by our planet: the effects of climate change."

While Lilja admits that establishing an Icelandic Space Agency "has not been discussed" within the government, she points out that Iceland joining the ESA "has been encouraged by Parliament," although Iceland's entry has yet to become a reality.

"Iceland will obviously not play a huge role in the field of space science, but we could offer assistance or expertise that can be used in a greater context," she says. "At the same time, we must be careful, as space research and science are foreign to the government and to the general public. But they are exciting and we should not close our doors in this area."

Thor agrees and believes Iceland must act quickly. Whether in geology, biology, software engineering or even the crafting of our first satellite, the time for Iceland's participation in space is now.

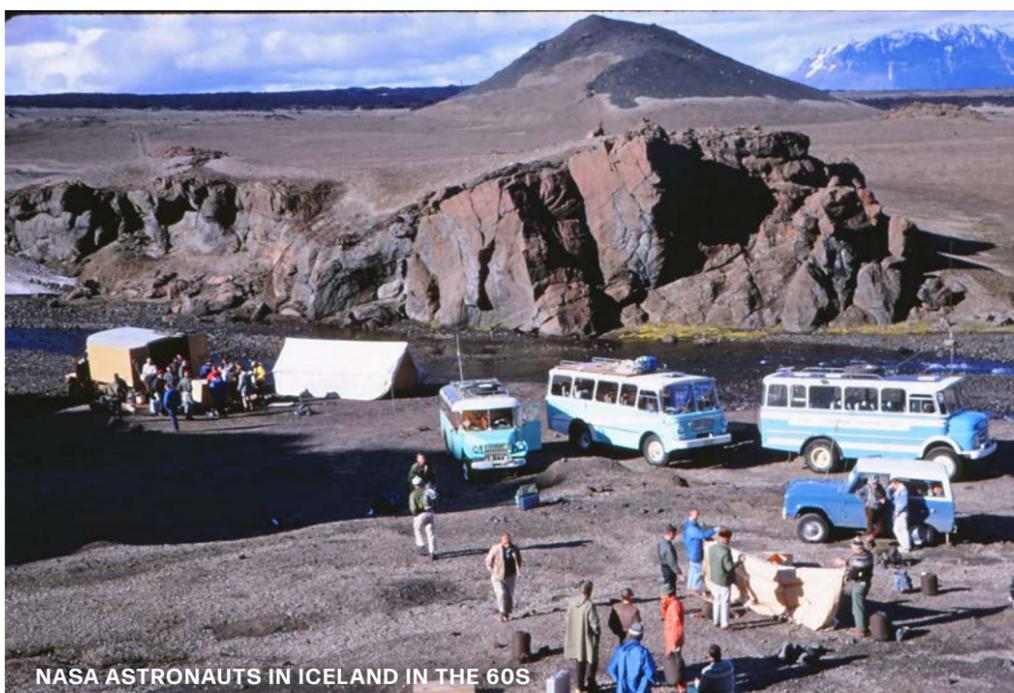
"The opportunity is now and the window will soon close," he says. "We're going to Mars within the next couple of decades." While Icelanders will never be indispensable, he says, "what we can do is be amazingly focused and organised and get as much long term value as possible."



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Eat My...

Carnal Appetite

Until October 14th - FLÆDI

Culinary artist Elin Margot is known for making lollipops in the shape of fingers and cakes that resemble vaginas—literal food porn. At this exhibitionist exhibition, she presents a dinner ritual in order to promote not only healthy nutrition but also a healthy sexual appetite. To keep everyone safe, there will be a 6-person limit, with hand sanitizer readily available. Masks are recommended, as is not licking the plate. :) **HJC**



You Say It's Your Bday!

Imagine Peace Tower Relight

October 9th - 20:00 - Everywhere!

Yoko Ono's Imagine Peace Tower on Viðey Island can't be visited due to COVID-19. But you can watch it light up for the first time this winter on October 9th from the comfort and warmth of your own home. What's the occasion? John Lennon's would-be 80th birthday. Celebrate the late, great icon, unite in the glow of the light as it shoots skywards and just imagine ALL the people. Best enjoyed whilst sitting in bed, with some classic Lennon tunes quietly playing in the background. The light will be lit every night until November 29th. **JC**



We Love U, Mads

'Another Round' Special Preview Screening

October 10th - 20:00 - Bió Paradís - 1,690 ISK

If you like Danes, getting drunk, Mads Mikkelsen, and the incredible Thomas Winterberg, you are in for a treat with 'Another Round' (or 'Druk' in Danish.) Bió Paradís, the only cinema in Iceland that doesn't give a shit about superheroes, will have a special preview screening of the movie on Saturday, October 10th. Of course, every precaution will be taken when it comes to COVID-19—including showing it on two screens to maximise social distancing. **VG**

CULTURE NEWS



Iceland's queer community is a broad umbrella

Info

The lecture will be held at 17:00 on October 13th, and the stream can be watched on the Nordic House website.

A Queer Utopia?

Examining the gap between the law and the people

Words:
Andie Sophia Fontaine

Photo:
Art Bicnick

Iceland has a reputation, in many ways well-deserved, as a good place for queer people to live. While the country has definitely made great strides—especially when it comes to gay people—to ensure equal rights and fair treatment for queer Icelanders, there is still much to be done. In many ways, Icelandic people show more acceptance of and greater progressive attitudes about queer people than the law might reflect.

For this reason, the National Queer Organisation of Iceland and the Nordic House are hosting an event called, "A Queer Utopia? The Dissonance Between Legal Rights and Societal Acceptance in Iceland," an online discussion on October 13th about what our country can do better for its queer population.

The turn-of-the-century shift

"There's been such a shift in attitude over the last 20 years or so," says Felix Bergsson, an actor and broadcaster who came out as gay in 1992 and who will be moderating the event. "This means that the possibility to live your queer life in Iceland is there. Before the 90s, people moved away, they had to leave the country. It was a very homophobic place. But I think the biggest change was in 1996 when we got the registered partnership laws [a precursor to same-sex marriage]. Things

started really changing after that. With the broadening of the fight, taking in trans rights and queer issues in general, new things have been put on the map that need to be fought for and need to be discussed."

Things have definitely been good for many queer people in Iceland, for the most part, which Felix underlines.

"In my experience, Iceland is pretty open and friendly to queer people," he says. "I think it's a pretty safe place for queer people to live. It's pretty boring at times, but that's what comes with living in a small society. In a European perspective, I think Iceland is a good place to live for queer people."

There's more to queer than just being gay

That said, there is much more to the queer community than its gay citizens. The discussion will also examine trans rights, nonbinary issues and the status of queer asylum seekers. Felix readily admits that he's not an expert on this topic, but is very eager to learn.

"We'll be going over what's wrong with the law and what needs to be improved," he says. "That's something that will certainly be a learning process for me and hopefully also for those who want to take part in the seminar. I really want to know where we are still lacking."

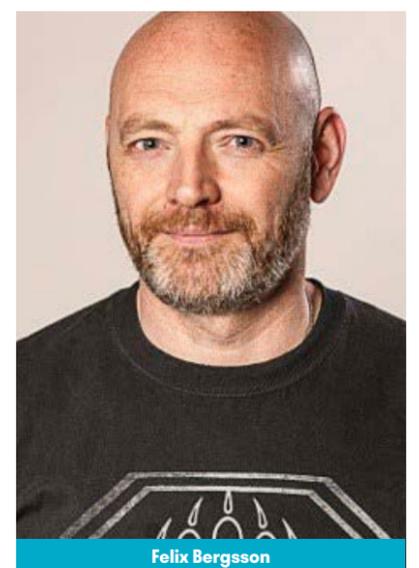
All are welcome

Felix has nothing but praise for the Nordic Council, who have for years now been detailing where countries are doing well and where they can improve in queer rights.

"The Nordic Council is really putting so many things on the map through these meetings, in each and every country, with so many countries looking at where they're doing well and where they should be doing better," he says.

It bears mentioning that even those who are cis and straights are not only welcome, but encouraged to listen in.

"I think it's going to be fun, I think it's going to be a very interesting afternoon, and I think that anyone who's interested in queer rights, and human rights in general and a better society should definitely tune in," Felix says. **VG**



Felix Bergsson



YOU HAVE TO

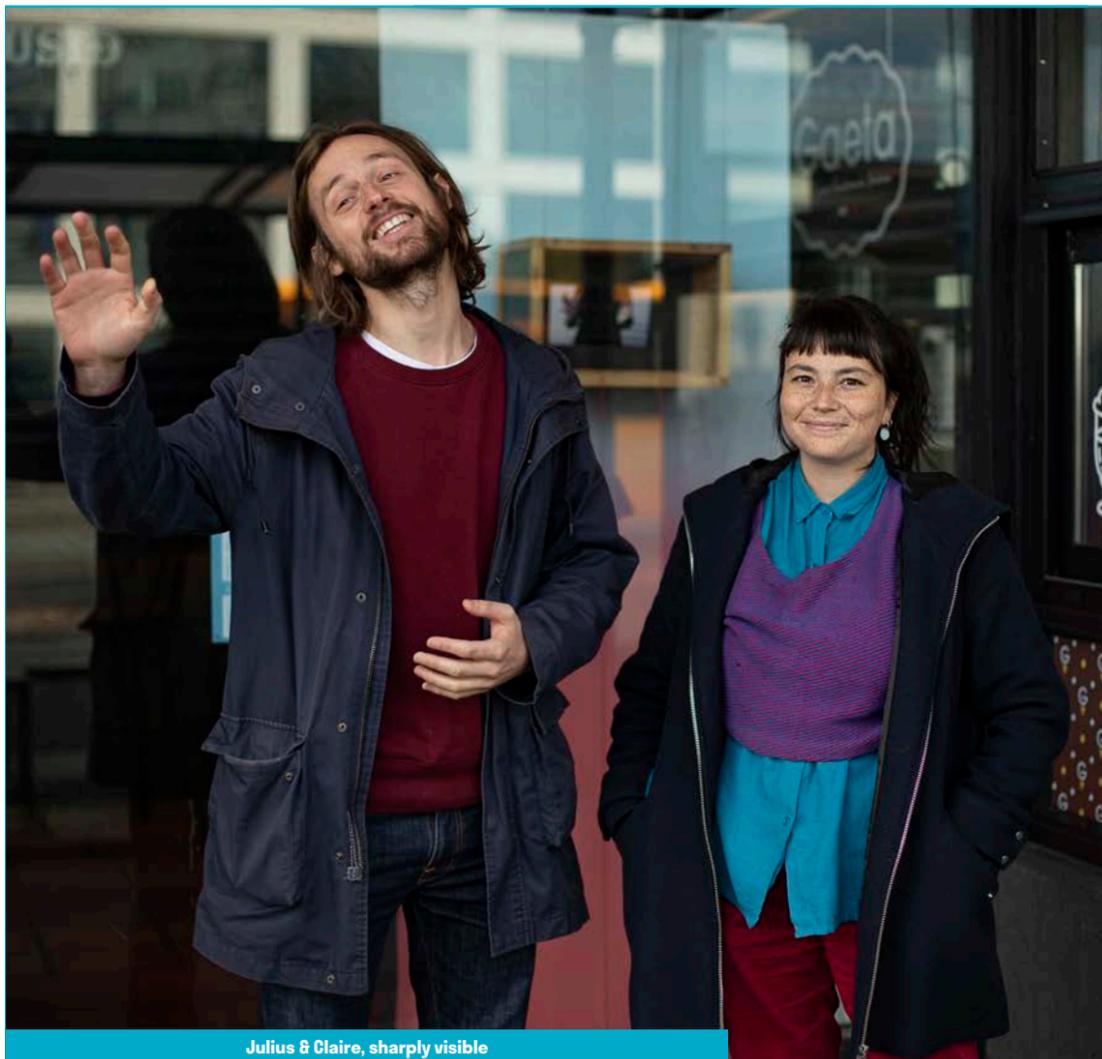
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Julius & Claire, sharply visible

Creating Visibility With Sound

Julius Rothlaender and Claire Paugam present an audio-visual exhibition on immigration

Words: Catherine Magnúsdóttir Photos: Art Bicnick & Claire Paugam

Music/Art

Check out the 'Vestur í bláinn' album on Bandcamp. All proceeds will go to No Borders Iceland.

Seemingly random, in front of wood paneling and amid shelves of books, an odd looking, torn, bright yellow dress hung in the Gerðuberg Library this month; almost like a phantom apparition. Made from stitched together rubber gloves, Ewa Marcinek's art piece, 'Second Skin,' was accompanied by a music piece featuring voice recordings of a Polish woman named Anna who came to Iceland. But 'Second Skin' was not alone. In fact, Reykjavik has been peppered with similarly-themed public installations over the past month as part of the exhibition 'Vestur í bláinn,' which aimed to tell the story of immigrants in Iceland through the lens of both foreign and Icelandic artists.

Coming together

The initial idea for the project came from the mind of musician Julius Rothlaender, known for his work in bands like BSÍ, Laura Secord and Vil. He was looking for an opportunity to develop his compositions while also tackling a topic that had been on his mind for a while: Immigration.

"[Vestur í bláinn] started as an experiment to bring together music I had written over the past year and spoken word," Julius says. "More specifically, it would focus on the topic of immigration, which has been something I've personally been thinking about."

Along with putting his own ex-

periences into the budding project, the musician aimed to create a space for other voices to be heard, both musically and visually. Cue the arrival of French artist Claire Paugam, a board member of the Living Art Museum and the winner of the 2020 Icelandic Art Prize's Motivational Award. Julius contacted her, she explains, and the idea for the project immediately resonated—particularly its emphasis on diversity.

"Those voices you hear in this music are not [often] heard in the Icelandic media, so we thought it would be cool to have them be present in public locations," Claire explains. "So, that's also how the concept of the exhibition came up. How can we have these voices accessible to everyone? Then later the idea came up to give sound pieces to local artists which they could then base their work on."

The exhibition features works of such artists as Eva Bjarnadóttir, Hugo Llanes, Melanie Ubaldo and Bára Bjarnadóttir.

Shared experiences

Julius' sound pieces have now been compiled into a 'Vestur í bláinn' album. "The musician moulded his compositions around conversations he heard in different languages, ultimately creating a musical response to the everyday dialogue you might hear in Hlemmur or Vesturbæjarlaug.

"This thing we're all longing for is having someone to hear us and to connect with us. That's what makes us human."

"I thought a lot about letting people talk in their own language. People won't understand the words maybe, but I relate to the sound of the human voice and language. It's a connecting element," he says.

"Do you hear me?"

Claire emphasises that the project was built on a foundation of empa-

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thy. After Julius finished the musical tracks, they were then given to the visual artists, whose job was to interpret the voices, find some creative and personal relationship to them and create the final product.

“There’s this art piece at Hlemmur by the artist ÚaVon who describes this very well,” she recalls. “In the music piece she worked with, you hear a bus driver. At one point, he asks ‘Do you hear me?’ That sentence really resonated with her ... she says that the thing we all long for is to have someone to hear us and to connect with us. That’s what makes us human.”

What onlookers and listeners take away from the pieces is up to them. With the project exhibiting in public spaces, Julius likes the idea that people might just stumble upon the artwork without looking for it. He particularly hopes that people who maybe don’t often go to art galleries and venues get to experience the exhibition.

Into the blue

The namesake of the project is the 1975 RÚV documentary ‘Vestur í bláinn’. In fact, Julius’ track “Salomé & Björn,” and its connected art piece “Driftwood” directly reference the subject matter of the original documentary.

The film documents the late 19th century emigration of Icelanders, when almost a quarter of the nation resettled mostly in North America in search of a better life and hoping to escape the poverty and hunger that marked the time. The documentary featured interviews with people who had been part of the emigration wave, like the aforementioned Salomé and Björn, who discuss the journey and the difficulties of starting a new life in a new land. The interviews greatly influenced Julius’ work and the emotions behind it.

“There’s this poem by a man writing to his friend, who’s leaving Iceland and he more or less asks him, ‘Are you leaving, my friend, out into the west, into the blue?’” he recalls. “I just think that no matter which country we’re talking about, there’s always a story of people, then and now, moving to other countries looking for a better life and ... I felt including the Icelandic perspective could give a little twist on how we look at things from here and at the people coming here.”

Opening doors

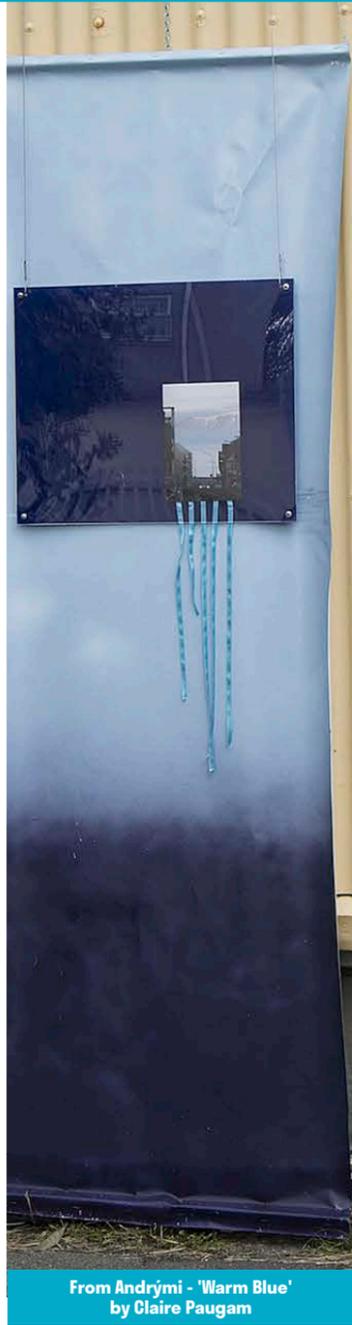
Claire adds that with the testimonies of Icelandic immigrants as well, there’s an incitement to think about the cycle of migration.

“Talking to other artists, we thought about how plants migrate, how objects can migrate, how everything is constantly moving. It’s really good to be reminded of that. Sometimes it’s too easy to be stuck in a state of things that you think will be true forever,” she points out.

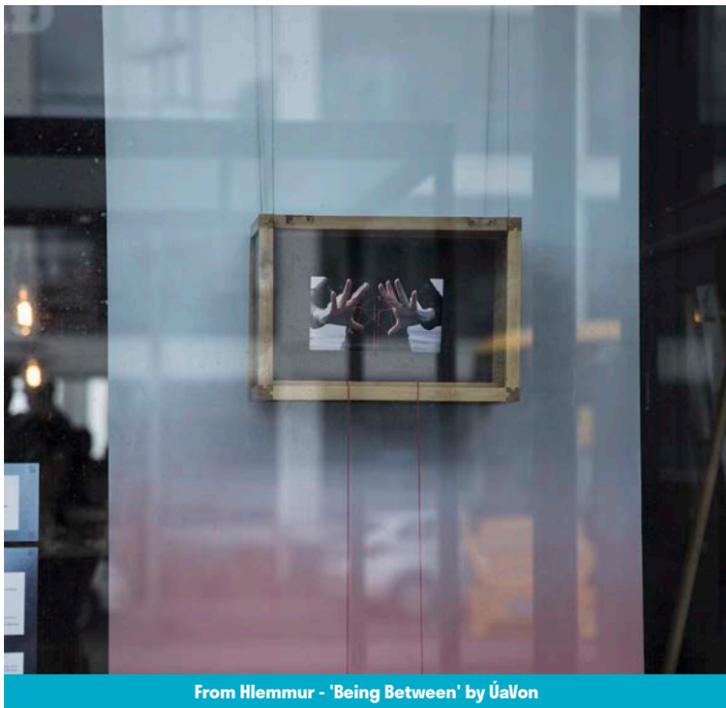
But ‘Vestur í bláinn’ is not there to make any specific point about immigration, Claire and Julius emphasise. Instead, the exhibition aims to open doors and provoke conversation and introspection by presenting real narratives of people who live in Iceland. The take-away, the two collaborators conclude, can be as personal as each individual feels it to be. ♡



From Berðuberg - ‘Second Skin’ by Ewa Marcinek



From Andrymi - ‘Warm Blue’ by Claire Paugam



From Hlemmur - ‘Being Between’ by ÚaVon



From Kaffi Laugalækur - ‘Driftwood’ by Ewa Marcinek

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9/10 dentists recommend Local for loneliness

Eat, Pray, Quarantine

The best takeaway for your time alone

Words: Iona Rangeley-Wilson & Valur Grettisson Photos: Art Bicnick

It's evening, you've just started 'Succession' and the prospect of any kind of human contact is at least 6 days away, or maybe even 14. So how does one quell their sadness in the light of such solitude? That's right! It's time to eat your lonely, lonely feelings. Of course, you'll need to do so through delivery places or kind friends and family members who will bring the food (safely) to your door. Please, don't risk the safety of others just to satisfy a craving.

And remember: Your lonesome tears will add a nice salty seasoning to every meal.



Ramen Momo

Tryggvagata 16

Start off your inside time by ordering some ramen from Momo. The beloved hole-in-the-wall ramen bar

was the first in Iceland and also gives a discount for bringing your own container. (Not that you can! You're in quarantine, remember?) Although most of their ingredients are made in Iceland, that Japanese taste means that if you close your eyes and concentrate very hard, you might be able to convince yourself—just for a moment—that you're somewhere far, far away from here. But you're not. So try the Gyoza. **IRW**



Local Salad

Various locations

It's been a whole day now. Is that enough time to suddenly start questioning your life choices, have a minor breakdown and resolve it by swearing off carbs for the REST OF YOUR LIFE? Of course, it is. This won't last, but while it does, try a Local Salad. Do some yoga, taste the vitamins and dream absent-mindedly of your childhood, when everything was simpler. Along with veggie and vegan options, they even have keto-specials, for those who won't let quarantine ruin their gains. **IRW**



Flatey Pizza

Grandagarður 11 & Hlemmur Mathöll

Okay. 24 healthy hours was a pretty good stint, but who are you kidding? This is quarantine. You wouldn't be doing it right without eating an entire pizza, drinking a bottle of wine and passing out in front of an episode of 'Friends' you've seen ten times already. But if you're going to ruin your diet, at least make it classy: Flatey Pizza boasts a killer sourdough base and they even have pizzas to match the seasons. Does it get any classier? We'd recommend the Tartufo, which features mozzarella, ricotta, potatoes, and truffle oil, but that said, if you wanna go nuts, you can always opt for the Nutella pizza. But please have some self-respect whilst eating it. On sec-

ond thought, that would be... perfection. **IRW**



Kore

Various locations

There are two kinds of people in the world: The one who eats "Asian food" and the one who understands that continents are composed of more than one country (ignoring Australia, obviously). Luckily, Kore is for both. The food there is not only sublime, but the head chef has put a lot of thought and research into the menu. Which basically means that now Icelanders can buy the Kimchi (it's insane) or the crispy Tteokbokki—which is incredibly fun for me to order over the phone with my accent. Kore is the best when it comes to Korean food in Iceland and is highly recommended when one is hungover or just fed up by the winter darkness. **VG**



Dirty Burger and Ribs

Austurstræti 18

It's a sad fact that some people go their entire life without being truly honest to themselves. But the monotony of quarantine calls for some brutal soul-searching; it's an opportunity to finally accept yourself fully. Start with this honest fact—Dirty Burger & Ribs is as real as it gets when it comes to greasy food. They have the best homemade buffalo sauce, smoke their own bacon, serve up wings that are nothing less than perfection and slow cook their pulled pork with nothing short of love. Dirty is the place you call when you admit to yourself that you're done with green juice and want a real barbecue feast. It's also not a bad option when you want to cry into your pillow and wonder why you are so disgusting. Either way, it works. **VG**

BEST OF REYKJAVÍK

Best Place For Aurora Spotting



Gróttá

Seltjarnarnes,
170 Seltjarnarnes

Gróttá is something of a hidden gem. At the end of the Seltjarnarnes peninsula, not far from the centre of Reykjavík, there's a lonely, windblown, red-topped lighthouse, with a walkable causeway that's only accessible at certain times, depending on the tide. There's a black beach, a miniature hot pot, and a nature reserve. Now, to find the Northern Lights, it's rather complicated. Basically, you stand on this picturesque beach, open your eyes, and look up. There you go. Pure happiness. Note: Be aware of the tides if you're gonna cross over and check out the lighthouse. You could get stuck overnight.

RUNNERS UP

Landakotstún

Hávallagata 14-16,
101 Reykjavík

This spot is a sneaky one. It's smack downtown, but yet there's magically enough darkness there to spot the aurora if it's burning up above the city. Where is it, you ask? Find the Catholic Church—there's only one—and walk to the bench behind it. That's it. Now, pull out your flask and enjoy the green fire in the sky.

Sæbraut

Sólfarið, Sæbraut,
101 Reykjavík

Reykjavík's coastline path features a gorgeous sculpture called Sólfar The Sun Voyager"). There, take a seat and soak up the dark ocean as you enjoy the dancing lights above you. It's a simple spot that can be surprisingly secluded. **👉**

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October 9th—November 5th

In Your Pocket



Reykjavík Map

Places We Like

Best Of Reykjavík

Perfect Day

Dance, jive & have the time of your life



“As we leave, the rabbits greet us fearlessly.”

Words: **Jess Distill**
Photo: **Art Bienick**

Seth Sharp

Seth Sharp is a DJ, producer, singer and vocal coach originally from the US. His perfect day? A perfect mix of fitness, food, family and friends.

Morning

I stare out of the 6th floor window of the luxury hotel, the scent of the crisp air wafting through the room like fresh morning rúgbrauð. Though many years have passed, I still recall stepping off the flight from JFK and experiencing the aroma for the first time. It was pure and unfamiliar, and in that moment I knew this land would become my home. As I look out onto Mt. Esja, the blissful city remains forever my muse. Throughout the suite, my friends—brought together by music, art and creativity—rest peacefully, sleeping off the paradisiacal night.

I tiptoe past them, to the street, where a bright yellow scooter whisks me off to Öskjuhlíð, one of the most

tranquil places in Reykjavík. Nature embraces me amongst the cool, soft wind and the sharp, pleasant crack of branches beneath my feet. Here, I meditate. Here, I find bliss.

I head to the running trail for a long, contemplative run. I achieve my fastest time and somehow experience no chafing. My family surprises me with a visit from the States and I take everyone on an epicurean journey to **Ogólúgo**, the African restaurant on Laugavegur.

Afternoon

My gym bros and I take a limo to the gym. It's Chest Day—the best day! My family meets us at **Laugardalslaug**. We take over a hot pot, then go down the slide an inordinate amount of times to the delight of my four-year-old nephew and his preteen sister, who forgoes her adolescent angst to enjoy being a kid again.

Evening

Dinner's at **Kröst**, where I introduce my family to the scrumptious veg-an burger. Strolling to **Gaeta Gelato** for gelato, the kind staff reward my loyalty (I eat there every day), presenting me with delicious passion fruit sorbet. DJ Karel and I head to the club for a DJ set, ecstaticing the crowd with three hours of tech house music.

In The Heat Of The Night

Leaving the club, we take everyone to **Öskjuhlíð** for one of our infamous raves under the midnight sun. With our freshly stamped city permit and full support from the police, the rave uplifts and inspires. Everyone cleans up the forest afterwards, their singing echoing the night passed. As we leave, the rabbits greet us fearlessly. Back at the hotel I instantly fall asleep, gratefully exhausted.

In the immortal words of the poet Ice Cube, “Today was a good day.”



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Thursdays
10h00–22h00

Venue Finder

Venues	Museums & Galleries
Austur Austurstræti 7 D3	ART67 Laugavegur 67 F7 Open daily 9-21
American Bar Austurstræti 8 D3	Ámundarsalur Freyjugata 41 G6 Open Tue-Sun 8-17
Andrými Bergþórugata 20 G6	Aurora Reykjavík Grandagarður 2 B1 Open 09-21
B5 Bankastræti 5 E4	Ásgrímur Jónsson Museum Bergstaðastr. 74 G4 July 8-Sep 1, Mon-Fri
Bió Paradís Hverfisgata 54 E5	Berg Contemporary Klappartígur 16 E5 Tu-F 11-17, Sat 13-17
Bravó Laugavegur 22 E5	The Culture House Hverfisgata 15 E5 Open daily 10-17
Curious Hafnarstræti 4 D3	The Einar Jónsson Museum Eiríksgata G5 Open Tue-Sun 10-17
Dillon Laugavegur 30 E5	Exxistenz Bergstaðast. 25b F4
Gauririnn Tryggvagata 22 D3	Galleri List Skipholt 50A H10 M-F 11-18, Sat 11-16
Hard Rock Café Lækjargata 2a D3	Hafnarborg Strandgata 34, 220 Open Wed-Mon 12-17
Hressó Austurstræti 20 D3	Hverfisgalleri Hverfisgata 4 D4 Tu-Fri 13-17, Sat 14-17
Iðnó Vonarstræti 3 E3	i8 Gallery Tryggvagata 16 D3 Tu-Fri 11-18, Sat 13-17
Kex Hostel Skúlagata 28 E7	The Penis Museum Laugavegur 116 F8 Open daily 10-17
	Kirsuberjatréð Vesturgata 4 D3 M-F 10-18, Sat-Sun 10-17
	Kling & Bang Grandagarður 20 A4 W-Sun 14-18, Th 12-21
	Listastofan Hringbraut 119 Open Wed-Sat 13-17
	Living Art Museum Grandagarður 20 A4 T-Sun 12-18, Th 12-21
	Mokka Kaffi Skólavörðustig. 3A E5 Open daily 9-18:30
	Museum of Design and Applied Art Garðatorg 1 Open Tu-Sun 12-17
	The National Gallery of Iceland Frikirkjuvegur 7 Open daily 10-17
	The National Museum Suðurgata 41 Open daily 10-17
	The Nordic House Sturlugata 5 H2 Thu-Tu 11-17, W 11-20
	Hafnarhús Tryggvagata 17 D3 Open 10-17, Thu 10-22
	Kjarvalsstaðir Fókagata 24 H8 Open daily 10-17
	Ámundarsafn Sigtún Open daily 10-17
	Reykjavík City Library Tryggvagata 15 D3 Mon-Thu 10-18, Fri 11-18, Sat-Sun 13-17
	Árbæjarsafn Kistuhylur 4 Open daily 13-17
	The Settlement Exhibition Aðalstræti 16 Open daily 9-18
	Reykjavík Museum of Photography Tryggvagata 15 D3 Mon-Thu 10-18, Fri 11-18, Sat-Sun 13-18
	Saga Museum Grandagarður 2 B2 Open daily 10-18
	Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum Laugarnestangi 70 Open Tu-Sun 14-17
	SÍM Hafnarstræti 16 D3 Open Mon-Fri 10-16
	Tveir Hrafnar Baldursgata 12 G4 Open Fri-Sat 13-16
	Wind & Weather Window Gallery Hverfisgata 37 E5

Vital Info

Useful Numbers

Emergency: 112
On-call doctors: 1770
Dental emergency: 575 0505
Taxi: Hreyfill: 588 5522 - BSR: 561 0000

Post Office

The downtown post office has moved to Hagatorgi 1, open Mon-Fri, 09:00–17:00.

Pharmacies

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

Opening Hours - Bars & Clubs

Bars can stay open until 23:00 on weekdays and weekends until further notice.

Opening Hours - Shops & Banks

Most shops: Mon-Fri 10-18, Sat 10-16, Sun closed. Banks: Mon-Fri 09-16

Swimming Pools

Sundhöllin, the downtown pool at Barónsstígur, is an indoor swimming pool with hot tubs and a diving board. More pools: gpv.is/swim
Open: Mon-Thu from 06:30–22. Fri from 06:30–20. Sat from 08–16. Sun from 10–18.

Public Toilets

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

Public Transport

Most buses run every 20–30 minutes
Fare: 480 ISK adults, 240 ISK children.
Buses run from 07–24:00, and 10–04:30 on weekends. More info: www.bus.is.

A



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C

Wine bar & food



VÍNSTÚKAN
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The Map

Get the bigger, more detailed version of The Reykjavík Grapevine City Map at your nearest hotel or guesthouse, with selections from our Best-Of awards, vital info, downtown bus stops and a wider view of the city.

Dining

1. Austur-Indíafjélagið

Hverfisgata 56

Still going strong 20 years on, Austur-Indíafjélagið is an institution. Make a meal out of the delicate salmon pollichathu, kozhi mappas and kulchas and share it family style. Keep your eyes peeled for the vegetarian and vegan dishes as well.

2. Gaeta Gelato

Aðalstræti 6 + Hlemmur Mathöll

Gaeta Gelato is owned by recently-arrived Italian transplants with nearly 25 years of experience as gelatai. Their artisanal and authentic flavours, from blueberry to Piedmontese hazelnut, are made with fresh and well-sourced Icelandic ingredients. Though only recently opened, Gaeta Gelato has already won over a crowd of committed regulars.

3. Sæta Svinið

Hafnarstræti 1-3

With big portions and a tasty menu, this hip restaurant offers everything you might desire, from crispy broccoli and big bowls of mussels to a great leg of lamb and a taste of lobster. Try and get a seat upstairs: it'll be like dining under a starry sky in the most romantic, dim-lit set-up.

4. Valdís

Grandagarður 21 & Frakkastígur 10

This beloved ice cream parlour—which has a Grandi and downtown location—makes everything in-house each morning, and you can tell. If you like liquorice, try Tyrkisk Peber. While it looks like liquid cement, it tastes more heavenly. The spot doesn't have a large seating area, so take your cone on a stroll along the harbourside or enjoy it in a parked car, Icelandic style.

5. Bastard Brew & Food

Vegamótastígur 4

This downtown drinking hole is something of a beer and bar-food palace. It's an English pub style environment, without the sense of history—everything from the tables to the plush leather seating are catalogue-fresh—but with eleven beers on tap, a great happy hour, and the phenomenally good 'Fat Bastard' burger on offer, it's a firm Grapevine favourite. Their tacos are pretty notable too.

6. Noodle Station

Laugavegur 103

Billowing clouds of coriander scent are a mouth-watering introduction to Noodle Station. Choose beef, vegetable or chicken, and add an extra spice or flaky chilli sauce until your nose runs, your tongue throbs and your gums howl. It's bar-style stool seating and cheaper prices (for Reykjavík) attract prudent solo travellers.

7. Grandi Mathöll

Grandagarður 16

Grandi Mathöll has an immediately comfortable feel, with various stools, benches and couches scattered through the space. There are nine concessions and a bustling, social feel as people meander between the vendors, who shout out names as their orders are ready. Our tip: Vegan food from Spes and friend chicken from KÖRE. Everyone's happy!

8. Vitabar

Bergþórugata 21

This old-school burger 'n' beer joint is right downtown—near Sundhöllin—but feels like a real neighbourhood bar. Its unassuming exterior hides a cosy, no-frills dining room, where you'll mostly be surrounded by locals. For once.

9. Salka Valka

Skólavörðustígur 23

For a piece of good ol' Icelandic fish, there's no better spot than Salka Valka. The restaurant serves up a steamed fillet in their Fish Of The Day meal, with the fish options depending on what is the freshest available. They also have potentially the best plockfiskur in the city, some stellar soups, and—quite recently—a pizza menu.

10. Bæjarins Beztu

Tryggvagata 1

Icelanders have a weird obsession with hot dogs—trust us, you won't understand until you've been here. It's universally agreed though that the tiny stand Bæjarins Beztu serves the best one. Pro-Tip: When they ask what toppings you want, say "All." This is the only way to eat it.

11. Mama

Laugavegur 2

Nothing tastes better than ethics, which is why we love to try the rainbow salad and "nicecream" bowls at Mama, a plant-based restaurant with big dreams. The company is

proudly environmentalist—they hope to use their profits to invest into land so that the kitchen can become self-sufficient. The restaurant also doubles as a wellness space offering a whole host of yoga sessions and breathing workshops. Have your plant-based prayers been answered?

Drinking

12. Röntgen

Hverfisgata 12

Röntgen is a party bar in the purest sense, with a rowdy dance floor, delicious cocktails and a fanbase that's just growing and growing. Run by the legends behind Húrra (RIP), Röntgen unexpectedly grabbed the runner-up for the Best Goddamn Bar category at the 2020 Best Of Reykjavík awards. We stan.

13. Lebowski Bar

Laugavegur 20a

This fully carpeted bar honouring the "Lebowski" Lebowski (not The Dude, man), is a nice place that offers two vibes: start the night nice and cosy with an artisanal White Russian, and end it on one of the rowdiest and most underrated dance floors in the city. Yup, Lebowski is a great place to hang at, but that could just be, like, our opinion man.

14. Jungle Cocktail Bar

Austurstræti 9

The verdant Jungle Cocktail Bar came in like a tropical storm this winter. Devoted to the elevation of all things cocktail culture, some of Jungle's stranger offerings over the past months have included a kale cocktail, but there's no shortage of level-headed concoctions like the signature "The Bombshell" (tequila, rhubarb & vermouth) along with any classic you can name.

15. Port 9

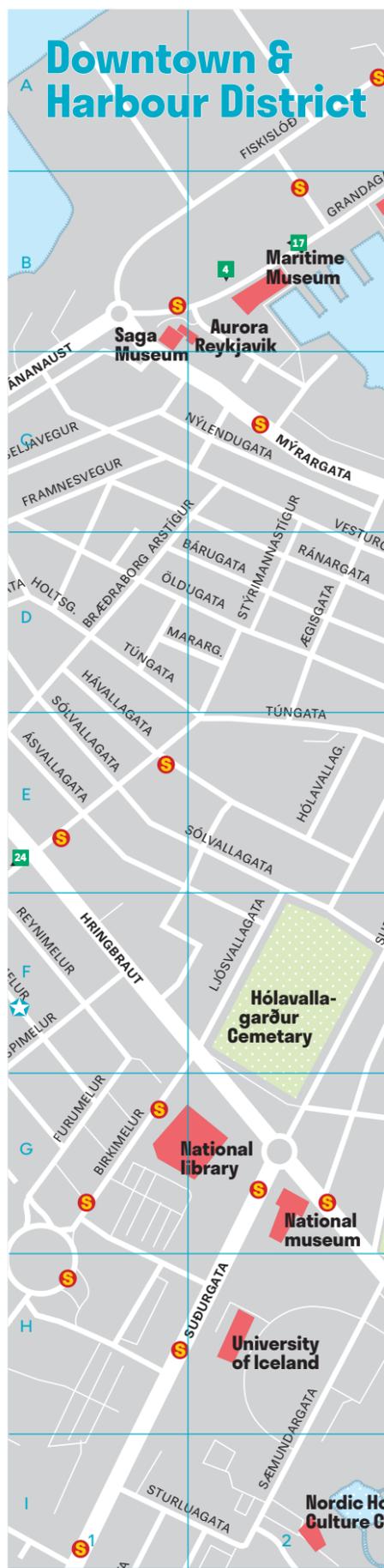
Veghúsastígur 9

Cosy and tucked away with a secretive vibe, Port 9 is a true hidden gem, hosting a delicious wine list as well as potentially the most intimate atmosphere in Reykjavík. It also has a nice balcony—the ideal locale for sipping some Pino in the summer sun.

16. Mengi

Óðinsgata 2

Mengi's concert room is more white cube than dive bar. The programme encourages new collaborations and experimental performances, so even if you know and love the work of the musicians you're seeing, you might be treated to something brand new on any given night.



17. Luna Flórens

Grandagarður 25

Luna Flórens is Iceland's only "gypsy bar." Part flower-child, part spiritual and with a whole lot of whimsy thrown into the mix, this cosy and hand-crafted bar is so intimate it makes you wanna spend the day musing about geodes, lunar cycles and tarot card readings. You can do all this and more while sipping on their excellent house cocktails and an excellent slice of vegan cake.

18. RVK Brewing Company

Skipholt 31

Yes, there is a bar on Skipholt, and yes, it is one that you need to check out. The RVK Brewing Company has slid

E

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New In Town ☆



Plútó Pizza
Hagamelur 67, 107 Reykjavík

Love pizzas, but don't think they're quite big enough? Why not dive into an 18 inch pie from Vesturbær's newest haunt, Plútó Pizza? Or, if that sounds a bit much, opt for their slice and drink deal; and when we say "slice", we're still talking about a quarter of a pizza here—you won't go hungry. With the dough made fresh each morning and aspirations for fresh pasta on the horizon, we can't get enough of this taste of New York. **IOW**

under the radar since it opened, but now, we're here to bring it out of the shadows. The brewery and beer hall offers a varied list of brews, most of which they make themselves locally. Come and experience your new beer addiction.

19. English Pub

Austurstræti 12

True to its name, the English Pub offers many different kinds of lager on tap and a whiff of that genuine UK feel. Try the famous "wheel of fortune" where one can win up to a metre of beer with a single spin while a steady team of troubadours engage the crowd in classic sing-alongs every night. The only thing missing is the salt & vinegar crisps.

Shopping

20. Hildur Yeoman

Skólavörðustígur 22b

As well as selling her own designs—womenswear characterised by flowing shapes made from fine fabrics with colourful, distinctive, busy prints—Hildur Yeoman's boutique also features sunglasses by Le Specs, jewelry by Vanessa Mooney, French tea, and other interesting trinkets.

21. nomad.

Frakkastígur 8f

A relative newbie to the Laugavegur

scene, nomad. was a surprise runner-up for the Best Design Store at the 2020 Best of Reykjavik awards. They have a fantastically curated selection of books, lamps, candles and more. Plus, the owner is a photographer and often has exhibitions on the lower floor.

22. Wasteland Reykjavik

Ingólfsstræti 5

For super á la mode downtown Reykjavik looks—i.e. cheerleader uniforms, Guy Fieri t-shirts, and astronaut-esque jumpsuits—this second-hand store is the go-to.

23. Lucky Records

Rauðarárstígur 10

Lucky Records is the punky, underground horse of the Reykjavik record scene. It's one of those shops that is easy to get lost in—expect to easily spend an entire afternoon perusing their selection.

24. Melabúðin

Hagamel 39, 107

For foodies looking for artisanal deli meats, fresh figs, rare cheeses and all sorts of unexpected, hard-to-find treats, Vesturbær's beloved Melabúðin should satiate your desires.

25. Pastel Flower Studio

Baldursgata 36

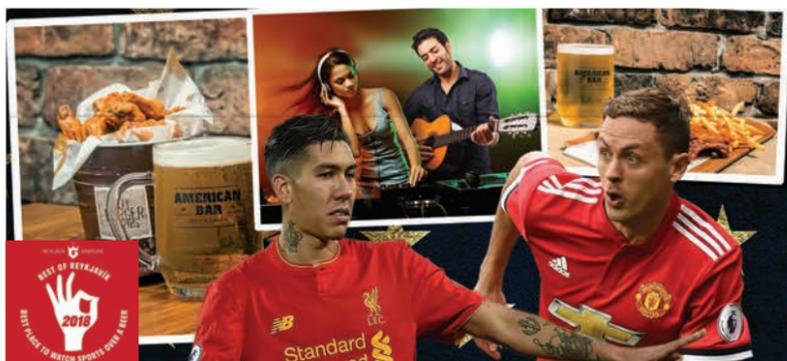
Pastel Flower Studio is only open on

Fridays and Saturdays from 13:00 to 18:00—so plan accordingly. The studio uses cut, dried, and fresh flowers to create unique arrangements that reference classic Icelandic nature in an unexpected and innovative way. Trust us: You won't find a florist in the city that's in any way comparable.

26. Street Rats Tattoo

Hverfisgata 37

Kristófer, a.k.a. Sleepofer Tattoo, has proven himself to be a fresh, experimental artist whose works have become a somewhat coveted symbol in the city. So if you're looking to get your travel tattoo, go there. It's way more interesting than a Vegvisir.



F
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MSEA, pictured in her home

“I often have images in mind when writing. It could be as simple as rain or ice. Even a smell or a tactile impression.”

But MSEA's creations go far beyond the audible. Every song conjures up such a vivid sense of colour and texture that they become completely immersive; the sort of music that should be listened to lying down, eyes shut, so that one can fully appreciate all it has to offer. “I often have images in mind when writing,” she reveals. “It could be as simple as rain or ice. Even a smell or a tactile impression, like the feeling of slime. Visuals are very much part of the music, but I think it’s also important for people to hear the music without them to give them the chance to visualise something of their own. The music videos help people jump into the sound world.” Dreamy, otherworldly and hypnotising—the music videos are a stunning addition to the album.

So what about the launch show? “It’ll be solo. Me, a computer, some pedals,” MSEA explains. “I’ll have other bodies on stage, dancing or moving. If I don’t have visuals for my shows it feels like something is missing, so I’m hoping for projections and some set design.”

“I wanted a pretty big theatrical show and then COVID happened,” she laments, diving into her vision of a larger, higher-production release concert. But while 2020 has made such a show impossible, hopefully 2021 will bring MSEA’s fantasy to life. Until then, we’ll just stream the album and dream. 🍷

A Feast For The Ears, The Eyes And The Soul

A look at MSEA's latest and most intimate album yet

Words: **Jess Distill** Photo: **Art Bionick**

Album

Pre-order ‘I Turned Into A Familiar Shape’ on [Bandcamp](#).

“It’ll be my first gig of 2020!” MSEA—real name Maria-Carmela Raso—says of her album launch concert, which is slated for October 16th at Mengi. The album, ‘I Turned Into a Familiar Shape,’ will drop the same day, but it’s been ready since early this year. “We started recording in December and finished at the end of February,” she explains. But then the pandemic started and the world stood still. “I’d anticipated touring this year and wanted to release it in April,” she shrugs. Unfortunately, 2020 had other plans.

The inspiration behind the album

Released on the Myrkfælmi label, ‘I Turned Into a Familiar Shape’ was, as the artist explains, written during an abusive relationship. The emotions the artist felt during the relationship and the effect it’s had on her become clearer with every listen of the album. Her soft, gentle vocals battle against striking and dissonant electronic sounds to create a feeling of vulnerability and confusion, while short, repetitive musical phrases with lyrics like, “I still feel you in my body” and “I’ll breathe you into life” become something of a mantra that pulls the listener directly into the singer’s brain.



Your hands are cold...

Despite not being a conscious decision to use the relationship as inspiration for her work, it was clearly an intrinsic part of the album’s creation. “[It] was written throughout that time, but I wasn’t thinking, ‘I’m going to write an album about this,’” she

says. “When the relationship was over I wrote more and noticed the songs were all definitely from that period, from that state of mind.”

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- Minke Whale with cranberry & malt sauce

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LATE NIGHT DINING

Our kitchen is open until 23:30 on weekdays and 01:00 on weekends



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Our Picks



ÆVI ★

Oct. 13th & 21st - 20:30 - Borgarleikhúsið - 1,900-2,900 ISK

A solo dance show means that choreographer and dancer Inga Maren

Rúnarsdóttir's new piece 'ÆVI' is COVID-safe for the production team and as audience

members are sitting seats away from each other, safe for them, too! Meaning 'lifetime,' 'ÆVI' is a one-hour journey through the life-cycle of a human—from birth to childhood to teenage years, adulthood and death. Adda soundtrack by Ólafur Arnalds and a set and costume by Júlíanna Lára Steingrimsdóttir, and you've got a decadent performance that'll make you cherish your own ÆVI all the more. Note: Relish in the part where Inga dances in complete silence. Also, make sure your phone is on silent. Eeek. **HJC**



Iceland Symphony Orchestra: Bjarni Conducts AIÖN ★

Oct. 22nd - 20:00 - Harpa - 2,600-8,100 ISK

Anna Porvaldsdóttir. Carl Nielsen. Bohuslav Martinu. Wait, did we mention Anna Porvaldsdóttir? Former Grapevine cover star Anna Porvaldsdóttir? The dark chaotic queen of the eerie orchestral scene Anna Porvaldsdóttir? Pls don't let this be pandemic-cancelled. **HJC**



Little Shop Of Horrors: Halloween Party! ★

Oct. 30th - 20:00 - Bió Paradís - 1,690 ISK

We don't know what Halloween will bring this year. We don't even know if there will be a Halloween! So what do we know? Well, flowers can be blood-thirsty and horror musicals can be fun. If only the plant had been wearing a mask. Checkmate, death. **HJC**



MUSIC NEWS

Jónsi has finally dropped his long-awaited new album 'Shiver'. The ethereal release features collaborations with dreamy chanteuse Elizabeth Fraser as well as pop icon Robyn. This is Jónsi's first solo album in a decade. "Shiver" plumbs the depths of the human experience and our connection to the natural world," reads a statement to the press. "It pits the organic and dreamlike qualities of Jónsi against A. G. Cook's synthetic, sometimes abrasive, and avant-garde experimentalism. On paper, their collaboration is surprising, but Shiver only continues Jónsi's quest to push the boundaries of not just what we consider art, but how we experience it." Keep pushing, Jónsi. **HJC**

October 9th—November 5th

Concerts & Nightlife

Events listed are all live performances, shows and DJs. Venues are listed by day. For complete listings and detailed information on venues visit grapevine.is/happening.

Send your listings to: listings@grapevine.is.

Note: Due to COVID-19, at the time of writing there are gathering bans and event limitations until October 19th. If you are reading after that day, check covid.is for the latest information.



BrewDog is the wind beneath my wings

Friday October 9th

★ COVID-19 Restrictions Apply ★

★ Imagine Peace Tower Relighting:

John Lennon's 80th Birthday

20:00 Everywhere!

Múlinn Jazz Club: Sigurður Flosason Quartet

20:00 Harpa

Saturday October 10th

★ COVID-19 Restrictions Apply ★

★ 'Another Round' Screening!

20:00 Bió Paradís

Sunday October 11th

★ COVID-19 Restrictions Apply ★

Monday October 12th

★ COVID-19 Restrictions Apply ★

Tuesday October 13th

★ COVID-19 Restrictions Apply ★

★ ÆVI

20:30 Borgarleikhúsið

A Queer Utopia? The Dissonance Between Legal Rights and Societal Acceptance in Iceland Lecture

17:00 Nordic House & Livestreamed!

Wednesday October 14th

★ COVID-19 Restrictions Apply ★

Múlinn Jazz Club: Gammar

20:00 Harpa

All You Can Eat Wings Wednesday

All Day, BrewDog Reykjavík

Thursday October 15th

★ COVID-19 Restrictions Apply ★

Dumpling Night!

17:00 Makake Restaurant

Meet the Author: Hanne Højgaard

Viemose and Kristin Eiríksdóttir

19:30 Nordic House & Livestreamed!

Friday October 16th

★ COVID-19 Restrictions Apply ★

MSEA x Holdgerular Release Concert

20:30 Mengi

Thursday October 17th

★ COVID-19 Restrictions Apply ★

Sunday October 18th

★ COVID-19 Restrictions Apply ★

Monday October 19th

★ COVID-19 Restrictions Apply ★

Wednesday October 21st

★ ÆVI

20:30 Borgarleikhúsið

Múlinn Jazz Club: Andrés Þór Quintet

20:00 Harpa

Classics In The Moorland:

Þórir Jóhannsson & Ingunn Hildur

Hauksdóttir

20:00 Nordic House

All You Can Eat Wings Wednesday

All Day, BrewDog Reykjavík

Thursday October 22nd

Iceland Symphony Orchestra:

Bjarni Conducts AIÖN

20:00 Harpa

Duo Ultima: Guido Bäumer &

Aladár Rácz

19:30 Harpa

Dumplings Night!

17:00 Makake Restaurant

Friday October 23rd

'Mamma Mia: Here We Go Again!':

Friday Screening Party!

20:00 Bió Paradís

Saturday October 24th

Tumi Árnason & Magnús Trygvason

19:00, 21:00 Mengi

All My Sons: Live British National

Theatre Screening

14:30 Bió Paradís

Iceland Symphony Orchestra:

Maximus Musicus Visits The

Orchestra

14:00 Harpa

Sunday October 25th

Black Sundays: 'Veronika Voss'

Screening

20:00 Bió Paradís

Monday October 26th

'All My Sons': Live British National

Theatre Screening

20:00 Bió Paradís

Wednesday October 28th

Múlinn Jazz Club: Gammar

20:00 Harpa

Iceland Symphony Orchestra:

Stuart Skelton Sings Wagner

20:00 Harpa

All You Can Eat Wings Wednesday

All Day, BrewDog Reykjavík

Thursday October 29th

Dumplings Night!

17:00 Makake Restaurant

Museum Free Thursdays

17:00 Reykjavík

Friday October 30th

★ 'Little Shop Of Horrors': Friday

Halloween Screening Party!

20:00 Bió Paradís

Skonrokk

21:00 Harpa

Saturday October 31st

ABBA Tribute Show

19:30 Harpa

Sunday November 1st

Black Sundays: 'The Omen' Screening

20:00 Bió Paradís

Wednesday November 4th

All You Can Eat Wings Wednesday

All Day, BrewDog Reykjavík

Thursday November 5th

Iceland Symphony Orchestra:

Four Horns & A Flute Concerto

20:00 Harpa

Dumplings Night!

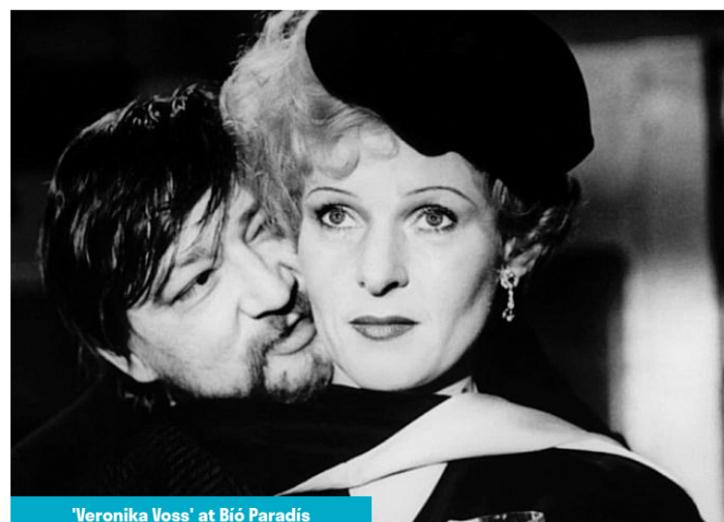
17:00 Makake Restaurant



Ya fav nature boi David Attenborough finally spilt the beans on what it was like working with ya fav elf girl Björk back in the early 2010s, calling her "a very original person" with "strange music but [very] original music." In an interview with NME about David's new Netflix documentary 'A Life On Our Planet', ya boi praised ya girl's intellect and kindness. "She's very up to the mark and very concerned with the relationship between human beings and the natural world," D-money explained. "I don't know whether that's a prominent characteristic of the Icelandic character, but I suspect, having been in Iceland, she has a relationship with the natural world which some of us urban dwellers of the South don't have." It's definitely part of the Icelandic character, A-man. That's why Icelandic politicians keep campaigning to dam up all the rivers, obvs. **HJC**



Daði Freyr. Remember him? That giant, skinny legend who sings like a soulful Frank Sinatra? Well it appears that Iceland loves him so much that they are seriously considering not even having a competition of who to send to Eurovision 2021, and are, as rumours state, seriously considering sending Daði straight for that trophy. (There's a trophy in Eurovision, right?) Anyway, the Icelandic national broadcast (RÚV) said in an interview with Visir.is that they were considering that possibility but that no decision has been made yet. Of course, Daði would be a great bet. He kind of won the last competition... which was cancelled due to COVID. Yeah...that's how we win things now. **VG**



'Veronika Voss' at Bió Paradís

i8

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Just an everyday object gazing into the lens

The Meaning Of Everyday Objects

Guðlaug Mía Eypórsdóttir blurs the line between functionality and decoration

Words: Iona Rangeley-Wilson Photo: Art Bicnick

Exhibition

Check out 'Milli Hluta' at the Mosfellsbær Library.

The neat stacks of the Mosfellsbær Library don't stop abruptly at the door of the exhibition that lies hidden behind it; rather, they seem to continue on inside. The first piece, hung from crisp white walls, looks rather like a stack of shelves, or perhaps some sort of play shelf. After all, it's made of fabric—hardly something the librarians can arrange their books on. Beyond this, a metal frame forms the shape of a chair. From a distance, it appears three dimensional, but a closer inspection shows it flattened against the wall, as unfit for function as the “shelves” that came before it. Together, these objects form the entrance to Guðlaug Mía Eypórsdóttir's new exhibition 'Milli Hluta.'

Leave it at that

“It's a reference to an Icelandic saying that we have,” Guðlaug says, explaining the origins of the exhibition's name. “‘Liggur á milli hluta,’ which means ‘lies between objects.’ It's a bit like, ‘leave it at that’, so it's a play with words. I could say that the meaning of the exhibition itself is lying between the objects.”

While this might sound a bit like the English phrase “to read between the lines”, there's no true

direct translation of the Icelandic saying.

“It makes more sense in Icelandic,” Guðlaug laughs. “When you read between the lines the meaning is still there, but with ‘liggur á milli hluta’ you cast the meaning aside. You just leave it at that, you don't read into it. Is there a meaning or simply none at all?”

Familiar yet unfamiliar

Like the title, the exhibition repeatedly teases the viewer with meaning and then with its absence. Each object is familiar yet unfamiliar: almost recognisable as an everyday object, but never quite. Is that a cabinet? Well, sort of, but certainly not one you could keep anything in. Moreover, there are no titles or placards to help the viewer out. Instead, each piece stands anonymously, spaced evenly around the white room, silently begging questions but answering none.

“You construct the meaning with your presence in the space,” Guðlaug answers. “My starting point is the forms that surround us everyday: a texture, a form, a material. And I take those forms and I reshuffle them—try out different colours or scales. You could come here and see what looks like

a cabinet and then what looks like a shelf and you decide that it's an office space. You develop your own meaning out of the familiar objects that surround you.”

Figure it out!

Though Guðlaug takes her inspiration from everyday objects, she concedes that her ideas often start more abstractly: with an atmosphere or space. This particular exhibition started with the idea of a library, the very one she's exhibiting in. Guðlaug's early idea suggested a series of objects—a shelf, drawers—and once placed in the exhibition space, those objects would construct their own new meaning in relation to one another. One viewer, she explains, might look at them and see a library; another, a bedroom. That's why Guðlaug doesn't, or perhaps can't, explain where each piece of inspiration came from, even as she walks around the exhibition: it's more fun for the viewer to have to figure it out for themselves.

Fundamentally, what fascinates Guðlaug, she emphasises, is forms. She quotes the Danish art historian Rudolf Broby-Johansen: “Things live longer than people and forms live much longer than the objects themselves.” It's a sentiment that's easy to view when confronted with her work.

Guðlaug's forms are at once familiar yet bewilderingly unfamiliar, representative of everyday objects, but never fully taking those objects' shapes. In 'Milli Hluta,' she abandons the objects' limitations and retreats to the platonic form: form that retains beauty, but exists without function. ✨

“The meaning of the exhibition itself is lying between the objects.”

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Our Picks



★ Ókei, Au pair

Until October 24th - Hverfisgallerí

Arranged on stark white walls, Davíð Örn Halldórsson's latest Hverfisgallerí exhibition "Ókei, Au pair" is a blur of poisonous, neon colours that wind themselves into symbols, splashes and dizzying designs. Davíð's paintings tell a story of the labyrinthine way each painting is made. Each detail of each piece—and there are many, many details—viscerally carries you to the physical action that forged it. But where does the au pair come in? To whom are we saying "ok"? "I've never heard someone describe an au pair as 'ok.' They are either horrible or awesome," Davíð told the Grapevine. "I'm sort of demanding that you find the paintings good or bad, not just ok." **HJC**



★ Vegetation

Until October 31st - BERG Contemporary

Katrín Elvarsdóttir, Lilja Birgisdóttir and Nina Zurier join forces for this exhibition, for which the artist text is so incredibly eccentric and bizarre that we don't even know what to expect. Apparently assertive plants, healing herbs, banana-leaf refuges, and this exhibition, through this world through this delicate exploration of roots and



★ The Wildflower

Until November 8th - Hafnarborg

Flowers? Ever heard of them? Explore the fragility of our climate and world through this delicate exploration of roots and flora. Imagine the exhibition space as a "field" in a northern landscape and allow yourself to feel the innocence, colonisation, gentleness, and force of nature. **HJC**



★ Distance and Intimacy.

Until January 10th - Reykjavík Museum Of Photography

What happens when you look at a photo for a really long time? How much more do you see? This exhibition invites viewers to find out, with a selection of contemporary photos that walk the line between social media and high art. **JD**

October 9th-November 5th

Art Listings

Events are listed by venue. For complete listings and detailed information on venues, visit grapevine.is/happening.

Send your listings to: listings@grapevine.is

Opening

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - KJARVALSSTAÐIR

Sigurður Árni Sigurðsson: Expanse
In this mid-career retrospective, Sigurður Árni Sigurðsson presents a series of paintings which dissect just how we view the world around us. Sigurður's works are known for exploring the limits of our field of vision and how that forms the basis of our worldview.
• Opens on October 17th, 2020
• Runs until January 24th, 2021



Ongoing

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ICELAND

Solastalgia
In this immersive installation, explore a mix of augmented reality with contemporary art, multisensory effects and cutting edge sound design. Enter a mysterious future in a post-human Earth where only a mysterious digital cloud has survived. Do you still have faith in technology? (No.)
• Runs until January 10th, 2021

Treasures Of A Nation
A selection of over 80 works chosen from the national gallery's collection displays the evolution of art since the 19th century.
• Runs until February 14th, 2021

High Plane VI

Katrín Sigurðardóttir has for some years been exploring the effects of perception in her installations and works. Here, she dismantles a classic theme of Icelandic paintings: mountains, the blue of distant vistas, and the obsession with Icelandic nature.
• Runs until January 3rd, 2021

Threads Of Art

Celebrate the centenary of the birth of textile artist Ásgerður Búadóttir. If you thought there wasn't a rich contemporary textile scene, you have no idea just how experimental this medium can be.

• Runs until January 24th, 2021

Electromagnetic Objects

The "Electromagnetic Objects" are a collection of works by Woody Vasulka and the audio artist Brian O'Reilly. According to O'Reilly, "the works use sources excavated directly from the output of the Electromagnetic Objects, as well as further manipulations using Tom Demeyer's ImX software, developed with input from Steina." Sounds complicated, but we still stan.
• Runs until December 31st, 2020

EINAR JÓNSSON MUSEUM

Permanent Exhibition

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

REYKJAVÍK CITY MUSEUM

Settlement Exhibition

As Viking ruins meet digital technology, this exhibition provides insight into Reykjavík's farms at the time of the first settlers.

REYKJAVÍK MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY

Forest / Glaciers By Takashi Nakagawa

In this exhibition, award-winning photographer Takashi Nakagawa concentrates on the relationship between Icelandic forests and glaciers. Around the time of human settlement in Iceland more than a thousand years ago, nearly 40% of the country was covered by forest. That number quickly dropped to less than 1% because of deforestation. Reforestation began around 100 years ago, but still forests only cover around 2% of the land. What impact does this have?
• Runs until November 15th, 2020



Distance and Intimacy. Contemporary Icelandic Photography.

What happens when you look at a photo for a really long time? How

much more do you see? This exhibition invites viewers to find out, with a selection of contemporary photos that walk the line between social media and high art.
• Runs until January 10th, 2021

REYKJAVÍK MARITIME MUSEUM

Fish & Folk

Name a better duo than fish and Iceland. You can't. So come learn about the history of Icelandic fisheries from row boats to monstrous trawlers.

Melckmeyt 1659

Melckmeyt was a Dutch merchant ship that crashed near Flatey Island in 1659. Explore the wreck here, with two images of different origins against each other.

MUSEUM OF DESIGN AND APPLIED ART

100% Wool

Wool is a classic, used by everyone from Anna Wintour to the ancient Icelandic famers. In this exhibition, see the infinite possibilities this fabric possesses with examples of products made of Icelandic wool that designers and craftsmen are dealing with today. No word on if the ancient farmers will be there though.
• Runs until November 15th, 2020

Bird Artist In Residence

Well, really all the info here is in the title. Sigurbjörn Helgason makes birds. Big birds. Small birds. Birds made of wood. Birds made out of reindeer horns. Lots of birds. Now you can watch him do it live in the museum shop at the Design museum.
• Runs until December 30th, 2020

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - HAFNARHÚS

Erró: Cyborg

This series of the great Erró was inspired by technology, science and the combination of the human and the mechanic. In particular, it examines how technology invades the body and how the human body adapts to the machine. The images offer questions concerning the borderlines between human beings and technology.
• Runs until December 31st, 2020

Gilbert & George: The Great Exhibition

Perhaps two of the most influential contemporary artists of the last five decades, Gilbert & George are known for their pioneering performance pieces, bold photo-based graphics and anti-elitist "Art for All" ethos. At this special exhibition, come challenge the prevailing bourgeois ideas of taste and decorum while empowering gays and other minority groups. What else could you want?
• Runs until January 3rd, 2021

BERG CONTEMPORARY

Vegetation

Katrín Elvarsdóttir, Lilja Birgisdóttir and Nina Zurier join forces for this exhibition, for which the artist text is so incredibly eccentric and bizarre that we don't even know what to expect. Apparently assertive plants, healing herbs, banana-leaf refuges and emotions. Call us vegetated by surprise.
• Until October 31st, 2020

WIND & WEATHER WINDOW GALLERY

Hljóðakletta

The window gallery connects art in Reykjavík's urban setting with the people on the street, exhibiting local art, this time by Arngunnur Ýr, who likens painting to geology. Things get added, taken away and sometimes create happy accidents.
• Runs until October 27th, 2020

LIVING ART MUSEUM

Listaháskóli Íslands MA Graduation Festival 2020

Celebrate those doing their masters in fine art at the Icelandic Art Academy at their graduation exhibit. Then, in the future, you can say you "knew them before they were famous" and not be lying.
• Runs until October 25th, 2020

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - KJARVALSSTAÐIR

Jóhannes S. Kjarval: At Home

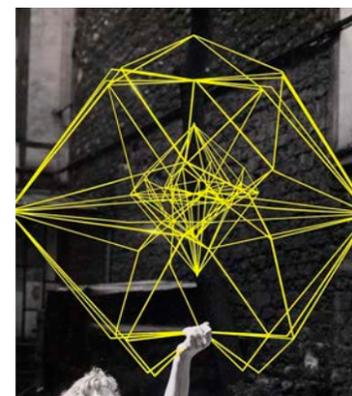
Jóhannes Sveinsson Kjarval (1885-1972) was one of the pioneers of Icelandic art (the museum is literally named after him) and is one of the country's most beloved artists. His connection to, and interpretation of Iceland's natural environment is thought to have taught Icelanders to appreciate it anew, and to have encouraged pride in the country's uniqueness and the world of adventure to be discovered within it.
• Runs until December 31st, 2020

uniqueness and the world of adventure to be discovered within it.
• Runs until December 31st, 2020

GERÐARSAFN KÓPAVOGUR ART MUSEUM

Gerður Helgadóttir | GERÐUR

The exhibition focuses on Gerður Helgadóttir's iron sculptures from the 1950s. As the first Icelandic artist to use iron in her artwork, Gerður was a pioneer of three-dimensional abstract art in the country. In fact, you might recognise Gerður's name from the name of the museum. Using iron plates or steel wires, the artist created delicate compositions in space, often with a cosmic reference.
• Runs until June 21st, 2020



HAFNARBORG

The Wildflower

Flowers? Ever heard of them? Explore the fragility of our climate and world through this delicate exploration of roots and flora. Imagine the exhibition space as a "field" in a northern landscape and allow yourself to feel the innocence, colonisation, gentleness and force of nature.
• Until November 8th, 2020

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Film

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"Saying farewell is a part of life and we should all hope for a send-off like this."

Just an elf with their cat (right)

A Half-Elvish Film Festival

The Skjaldborg Film Festival, ageing communism and the history of humanity told from Neptune

Words: Valur Gunnarsson Photo: Still From 'Hálfur álfur'

One might be forgiven for thinking that some sort of elven curse was placed upon this year's Skjaldborg Film Festival. For the past 13 years, the festival has showcased new Icelandic documentaries at the local cinema of Patreksfjörður. Usually held in May, this year it was initially moved to the first weekend of August due to COVID-19. As it happened, there was then a COVID surge in August, so the festival was once-again moved to mid-September and relocated to Reykjavik's newly reopened Bíó Paradís.

As volunteers worked hard to get the renovations done in time for the festival, another COVID surge began and it seemed the festival might have to be postponed again. However, things went forward and Skjaldborg's first edition in the big city can be deemed a success.

Ageing Communism

As usual, Skjaldborg's programme introduced us to hidden worlds in our midst. In this iteration, we got ageing communists, the clientele at a second-hand shop and even

a circus. While the opening film, 'Aftur heim?' was about giving birth at home, if there was an overarching theme this year, it was of saying goodbye. Perhaps this focus was a hidden sign of an ageing society or just very 2020.

A double bill on Saturday afternoon started with 'MÍR: Byltingin lengi lifi,' about the MÍR Cultural Centre. The Centre has been showing Russian films in Iceland since 1950—outliving the Soviet Union by almost 30 years now—and is still run by the ageing idealists that founded it. The film was followed by 'Ökukveðja 010006621,' a heart-rending story about a woman learning to let go of driving as her body deteriorates. The day closed with 'Er ást,' which is about the widow of beloved artist Þorvaldur Þorsteinsson and their last days together in Antwerpen in 2013.

A history of humanity

The festival closed on Sunday with the much anticipated 'Last and First Men' by renowned film score composer Jóhann Jóhannsson, who died suddenly two years ago

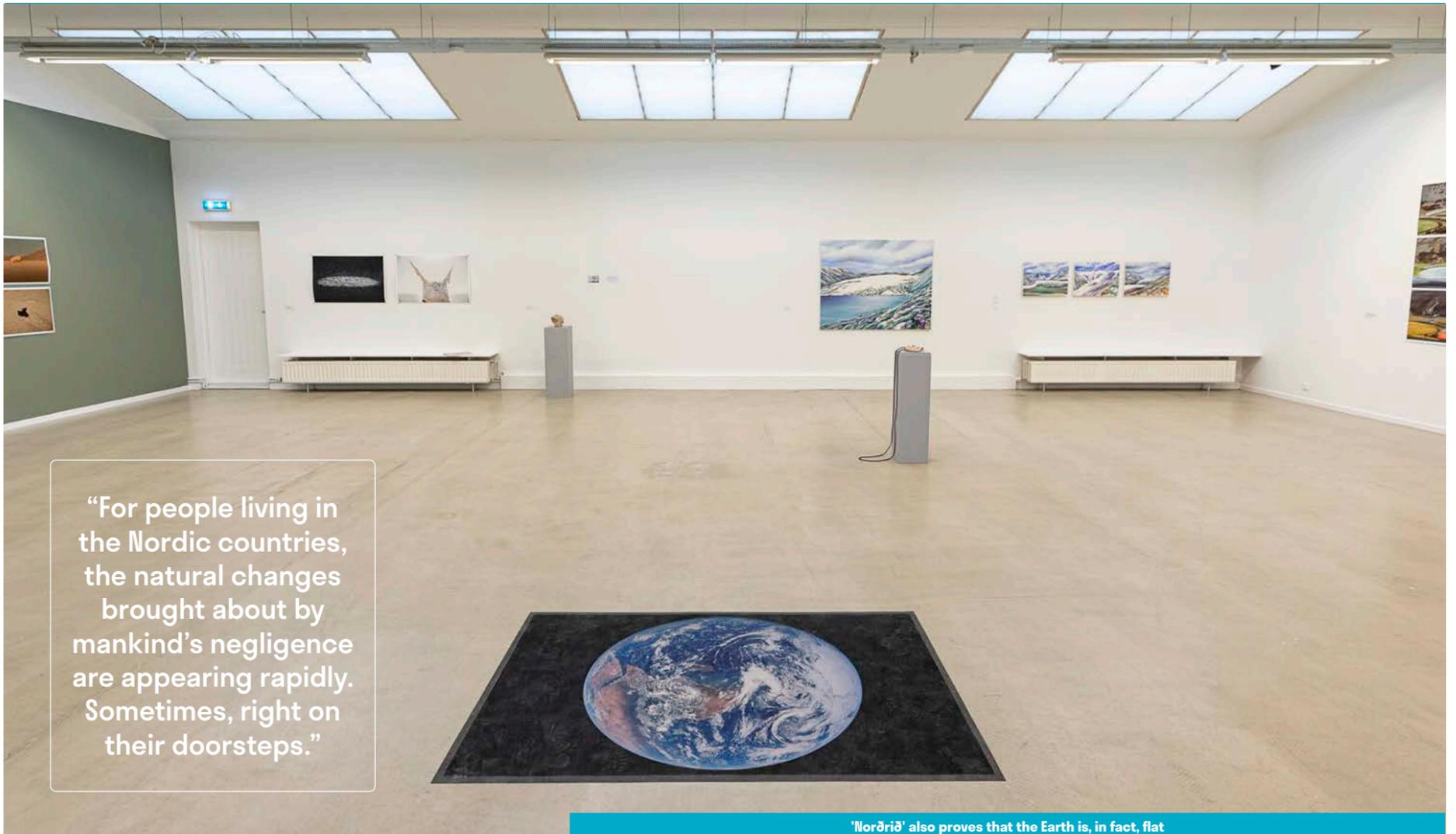
and would have turned 51 during this year's festival. A future history based on a 1930 novel by Olaf Stapledon, it tells the history of humanity and its successor species for the next two billion years, largely from its base on Neptune.

While one might think the film would be prohibitively expensive to make, instead it's composed of actress Tilda Swinton reading from an abridged final chapter of the book as the screen is filled with images of World War II monuments from the former Yugoslavia, themselves part of a communist world that no longer exists and that stand in rather well for large scale science fiction sets. What at first seems like yet another dystopia is actually surprisingly optimistic and is lent extra pathos coming, as it is, from beyond the grave. It is our world still; it's not too late to save it.

Half elf

But the jewel in the crown of this year's festival was 'Hálfur álfur,' which won the Grand Jury Prize. Here, filmmaker Jón Bjarki Magnússon documents the final days of his grandfather, leading from his 100-year birthday to his death. The film is touching but never overly sentimental—even very funny in parts. Saying farewell is a part of life and we should all hope for a send-off like this. The title is a reference to the fact that the grandfather believed himself to be a half-elf.

It seems the elves came through for Skjaldborg after all. 🧝



“For people living in the Nordic countries, the natural changes brought about by mankind’s negligence are appearing rapidly. Sometimes, right on their doorsteps.”

‘Norðrið’ also proves that the Earth is, in fact, flat

Art In The Shadow Of Climate Change

‘Norðrið’ shines light on a bleak future

Exhibition

Check out ‘Norðrið’ at the LÁ Art Museum in Hveragerði until December 20th, 2020. An accompanying podcast, ‘North’, is on Spotify now.

Words:
Jess Distill

Photos:
Art Bicnick

Climate change is a world-wide tragedy, the fallout of which will be experienced by everybody in the near future. But, despite the enormity of the situation, many people still choose to believe that climate change won’t tangibly affect them or their everyday lives. That said, for people living in the Nordic countries, the natural changes brought about by mankind’s negligence are appearing rapidly. Sometimes, right on their doorsteps.

Piecing together a larger picture

‘Norðrið’ (‘North’) is a group exhibition featuring artists from Iceland, Finland and Sweden. Running until December 20th at Hveragerði’s LÁ Art Museum. The exhibition shines a light on how the environments of the Nordic countries are adapting to climate change and also explores how artists themselves are reacting to the changes in nature. It’s an illumination on nature’s fragility and how it’s represented in artwork.

“The works in this show, the texts, the [accompanying] podcast and all of the information we’ve brought together, helps point out some specific detailed little changes in our environments here in the Nordic countries,” exhibition curator Daría Sól Andrews explains. “Maybe you don’t realise that these changes are happening until you’re brought face to face with them then it can be kind of a shock.”

Disappearing before our eyes

Through paint, video, sculpture and photography, Arngunnur Ýr, Erna Skúladóttir, Ingibjörg Friðriksdóttir, Nestori Syrjälä, Pétur Thomsen and Ulrika Sparre magnify tiny, often overlooked aspects of climate change that they witness in their homelands on a daily basis, piecing them together to create one large, foreboding picture of the future of our landscape.

Pétur Thomsen’s work ‘Ingólfsfjall’ exemplifies this concept beautifully through a series of photos documenting the mining of Ingólfsfjall mountain in Iceland. Pétur took one photo a day, from the same spot overlooking the mine, showcasing the changing seasons and the mountain which, due to the industry, slowly disappears before the viewers’ eyes. The piece will be added to daily until the wall is full of photos of the vanishing landscape. “This is a practice that happens all across the world and mountains are disappearing because of [it],” Daría explains. But I don’t think I’ve ever seen it happening face-to-face like you can see here. So when you see this mountain literally disappearing every time you drive by, it’s quite jarring.”

Inevitable evolution

Another theme that runs throughout the exhibition is that of the inevitability of changes in nature. Regardless of human intervention, nature will always be changing around us and we should embrace and welcome this evolution—without speeding up the process.

A large scale installation by Erna Skúladóttir illustrates this, with a

number of castings of the ground in Solheimajökull and Langjökull. “She pours this casting over the earth and in many cases it’s earth that—because the glacier is receding and melting away—is kind of new earth that is just being uncovered,” Daría explains. “But it’s actually quite ancient earth that’s been under this glacier for thousands

of years, so this is a direct print of the earth. She also makes paint from the clay and dirt and that’s where this rich, earthy colour comes from. It’s sad, because the reason you’re seeing [this earth] is climate change and the glaciers melting, but uncovering untouched land and the way the landscape has changed is still really interesting.”

A true sense of sadness and helplessness for a situation that is rapidly spiralling out of control runs throughout the works; visitors to the gallery would be hard pressed to come away from it unmoved. From paintings of barren glaciers against bright landscapes to sculptures depicting a world without resources, the exhibition serves as a stark reminder of what our near future is likely to look like if we don’t act now. ♡



Curator Daría Sól Andrews



A stark reminder of what our near future is likely to look like if we don’t act now

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A masked Queen? Mighty Bear was way ahead of their time

Sombre Sparkle & Ghostly Glamour

Mighty Bear on their extravagant new EP and the masked fantasy

Words: **Catherine Magnúsdóttir** Photos: **Birta Rán**

EP

[Listen to Mighty Bear's new EP 'Tveir' on all streaming platforms.](#)



One of the most ethereal faces of Iceland's electronic music scene ironically hardly shows his face at all. That enigmatic figure, Mighty Bear a.k.a. Magnús Bjarni Gröndal, embodies both eerie darkness and sparkling glamor through extravagant cloaks and intricate masks, all underscored by ethereal beats and lyrics. All of this shines through in his newest EP 'Tveir'.

Once upon a dream

Over five tracks, Mighty Bear takes his listeners on an emotional, dreamlike—and at times nightmarish—journey. A spiritual release with the flair of a personal dramatic soundtrack, 'Tveir' walks the line between comforting and uneasy. That said, there's still something about the sound that's universally accessible.

Adorned with a magnificently large set of sunglasses, Mighty Bear basks as he divulges the origins of the edgy and emotional EP. "For me, music is expressing myself, so I try to create a sound that only I can create," the artist says. "Especially with the new EP. It's very personal lyric-wise and I spent months creating these synth

layers so that they emotionally come through as well as the lyrics and the vocals."

The track "Yfir" is emblematic of this. The song pulls at your heartstrings with harrowing vocals and dramatic beats to simultaneously create a feeling of longing and a sense of inner strength.

"I started the EP when I was in the middle of a heartbreak, so that definitely shows through. I have always found comfort in sombre and melancholic things, so it was definitely a way for me to kind of get through the relationship and figure out who I was again," Mighty Bear explains.

Behind the mask

A self-described fantasy and sci-fi fan, Mighty admits he finds deep inspiration—both consciously and subliminally—in those genres. Upon further inspection, the

touch of artists like David Bowie are hard to miss. It's not difficult to envision Mighty Bear as a side character in 'Labyrinth'.

Mighty Bear built his aesthetic with the help of Iceland's rising drag scene, which gave him the opportunity and encouragement to explore his glamorous side, with glittering gowns, full scale gold crowns and other ornate pieces. Starting out at drag shows, he was able, "to create the fantasy mythical character that is Mighty Bear."

Later, Mighty Bear made intricate masks—a gentler alternative to drag make-up—his trademark symbol, furthering his mysterious and mystical persona. His fringy style and ever-growing collection of masks create an interplay between the visual and the audio. A mask, he emphasises, makes one focus on the sound, but his otherworldly appearance intertwines with the music, adding another dimension to it. As Mighty Bear, the artist says he had the opportunity to create something uniquely his own, without compromise and with the freedom to express every aspect of his personality—both his masculine and feminine sides.

"Fantasy fits [me] very well, because then I can be something that's not male and not female," he concludes. "I'm just being the purest expression of myself." 🐻



Mask4Mask

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Every day from
15:00 to 18:00.
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Wine 990 ISK.

BASTARD BREW
Every day from
16:00 to 19:00.
Beer 500 ISK,
Wine 700 ISK.

BEER GARDEN
Every day from
15:00 to 19:00.
Beer 500 ISK off
draft beer!

BRAVÓ
Every day from
11:00 to 20:00.
Beer 700 ISK,
Wine 900 ISK.

CAFÉ BABALÚ
Every day from
19:00 to 21:00.
Beer 690 ISK,
Wine 795 ISK.

DILLON
Every day from
14:00 to 19:00.
Beer 600 ISK,
Wine 850 ISK.

FJALLKONAN
Every day from
15:00 to 17:00.
Beer 890 ISK,
Wine 990 ISK.

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

ÍSLENSKI BARINN
Every day from
16:00 to 18:00.
Beer 700 ISK,
Wine 700 ISK.

IDA ZIMSEN
Every day from
8:00 to 10:00.
Coffee 400 ISK.

ÍSAFOLD
Every day from
16:00 to 18:00.
Beer 600 ISK,
Wine 900 ISK.

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BAR**
Every day from

17:00 to 20:00.
Beer 800 ISK,
Wine 1,000 ISK,
Cocktails 1,500
ISK.

KAFFIBARINN
Every day from
15:00 to 20:00.
Beer 750 ISK,
Wine (On Wed.)
800 ISK.

KAFFIBRENNSLAN
Every day from
16:00 to 20:00.
Beer 550 ISK,
Wine 750 ISK.

KALDI
Every day from
16:00 to 19:00.
Beer 850 ISK,
Wine 850 ISK.

KEX HOSTEL
Every day from
15:00 to 19:00.
Beer 750 ISK,
Wine 750 ISK.

LAUNDROMAT
Every day from
20:00 to 22:00.
Beer 650 ISK,
Wine 1,000 ISK.

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

MIAMI
Every day from
15:00 to 19:00.
Beer 700 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK,
Cocktails 1,200
ISK.

**PAPAKU
REYKJAVÍK**
Every day from
16:00 to 22:00.
Beer 690 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK.

PRIKIÐ
Every day from
16:00 to 20:00.
Beer 600 ISK.

PUBLIC HOUSE
Every day from
15:00 to 18:00 &
23:00 to 1:00.
Beer 890 ISK,
Wine 890 ISK.

PUNK
Every day from
16:00 to 18:00.
Beer 890 ISK,

Cocktails 1,500
ISK.

PETERSEN SVÍTAN
Every day from
16:00 to 20:00.
Beer 800 ISK,
Wine 1,000 ISK,
Cocktails 1,500
ISK.

ROSENBERG
Every day from
16:00 to 18:00.
Beer 750 ISK,
Wine 950 ISK.

RÖNTGEN
Every day from
15:00 to 20:00.
Beer 800 ISK,
Wine 1,000 ISK.

SÆTA SVÍNID
Every day from
16:00 to 18:00.
Beer 890 ISK,
Wine 990 ISK,
Cocktails 1,500
ISK.

SECRET CELLAR
Every day from
19:00 to 21:00.
Beer 800 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK.

**SESSION CRAFT
BAR**
Every day from
12:00 to 19:00.
Beer 790 ISK,
Wine 900 ISK.

SKÚLI CRAFT BAR
Every day from
12:00 to 19:00.
Beer 900 ISK,
Wine 900 ISK.

SLIPPBARINN
Every day from
15:00 to 18:00.
Beer 500 ISK,
Wine 750 ISK,
Cocktails 1,200
ISK

SPÁNSKI BARINN
Every day from
14:00 to 20:00.
Beer 650 ISK,
Wine 850 ISK.

SÓLON
Everyday from
15:00 to 18:00.
Beer 800 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK.

SUSHI SOCIAL
Every day from
17:00 to 18:00.
Beer 645 ISK,
Wine 745 ISK,
Half-priced
cocktails.

TAPAS BARINN
Every day from
17:00 to 18:00.
Beer 645 ISK,
Wine 745 ISK.

VEÐUR
Every day from
12:00 to 19:35.
Beer 800 ISK,
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adult meals

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A typical Icelander on Christmas day

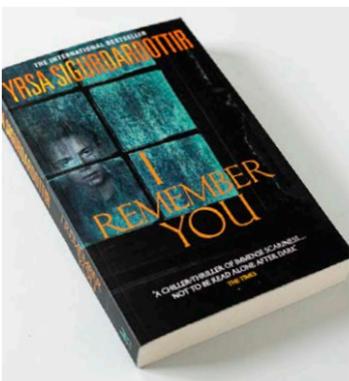
The Christmas Bloodbath

Do you really want to hang out with people that think about killing other people their whole life? ...yes

Words: Valur Grettisson Photo: AdobeStock

There is, on average, one murder committed each year in Iceland. But, surprisingly, every Christmas brings a complete bloodbath to the bookstores. During the holiday season, Icelandic writers compete to kill their literary characters in as brutal a way as they can imagine. This, naturally, then draws out a flawed, depressed, down-on-their-luck investigator with a broken relationship with their only adult child, who has to, against all odds, solve the heinous crime. Welcome to the Scandinavian crime novel.

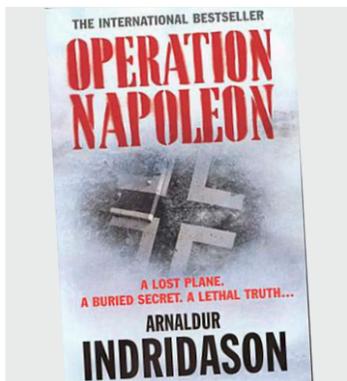
Although many have tried to write these dark stories, surprisingly few succeed. Still, while Iceland once boasted just two brilliant crime writers, now we have a ton.



The Queen Of Horror

Yrsa Sigurðardóttir

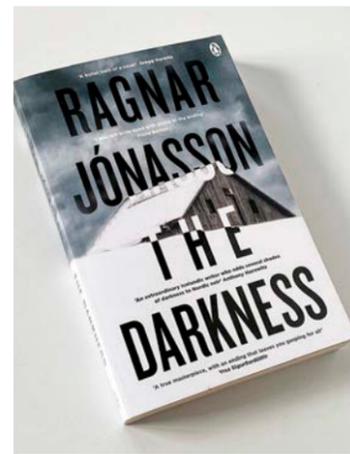
The Reykjavik Grapevine often mentions Yrsa Sigurðardóttir and for good reason. Yrsa is the queen of horror and Icelandic crime. She's also an engineer, which makes her murder stories creepily methodical and detailed. If that's not enough, Yrsa was also once held in police custody on suspicion of being involved with the drug import trade, so she knows the shady details of crime better than anyone else on this list. To be clear, she wasn't involved in drugs, but it's still a cool backstory. Yrsa's best work, in my opinion, is 'My Soul To Take', with our favourite heroine, Þóra Guðmundsdóttir. But you can't go wrong with any of her books.



The King Of Killings

Arnaldur Indriðason

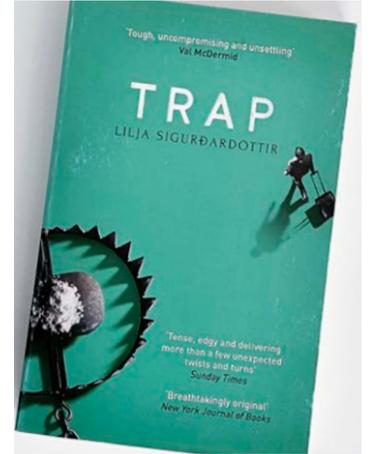
When talking about Icelandic crime literature, you must bow down to the literature crime king himself, Arnaldur Indriðason. In the late 90s, Arnaldur lost his job as a journalist and decided to try his hand as a crime writer—something that was more or less frowned upon at the time. But the author proved with his slick style and sharp focus that crime stories were more than just light reading. Now, he's the father of modern Icelandic mysteries, an international household name and a yearly murderer that we can't get enough of. Best books? Well, all of them, but you can start at 'Jar City' and afterwards check out the film version directed by Baltasar Kormákur—the one that directed 'Everest'.



The Prinz of Germany

Ragnar Jónsson

When Ragnar Jónsson first emerged with his Agatha Christie-esque crime novels in 2009, he didn't get raving reviews in the Icelandic media. His first book 'False Note' was said to be "slick but hollow," but Ragnar, who is a corporate lawyer by day, writer by night, kept going, publishing one novel per year until he topped the German bestseller list and literature list at Amazon with 'The Mist'. This incredibly skilled author has earned every bit of his success and could possibly stand up as the most successful Icelandic international crime writer. But where to start? 'The Darkness' would be a good choice. If that's not enough, the Icelandic TV show 'Trapped'—also with Baltasar Kormákur at the helm—is based on Ragnar's books.



The Duchess Of Inner Demons

Lilja Sigurðardóttir

Lilja Sigurðardóttir is perhaps not the most well-known name in this category, but she has the most diverse writing style. Lilja jumps from being an award-winning playwright to a fantastic crime fiction writer as seamlessly and effortlessly as George R. R. Martin kills off beloved characters. Her characters are also more diverse than most of the other crime writers in Iceland. For example, her women are often queer—such as in the well-executed 'Snare.' Unlike other writers, Lilja is not obsessed with murder mysteries, but rather with character-driven drama that surrounds a crime. Not to say that there are no plot twists or schemes in her works, because she is excellent when it comes to that too. So start with 'Snare,' and then just keep going. 🍷



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7.990 kr.



FANCIES is where we talk to Reykjavík's most fashion-forward figures about style

Lovísa Tómasdóttir

Words: Hannah Jane Cohen
Photo: Art Bicnick



Lovísa Tómasdóttir (28) is a fashion designer and tailor. You can check out her work at lovisatomas.is

Wearing:

- Pants, turtleneck and jacket are all made by myself
- Tank top from a market in Budapest
- Nameless black shoes
- Earrings from a market in Serbia

Describe your style in 5 words:

I always say that I don't really have one style because I want to get into all styles, but if I had to pick 5 words it would be 70s, rock, glamour, weird, and eye-catching. I never want to be too clean or simple—I like bigger things with patterns and sequins and want to mix things together. Maybe I'll pair something 70s with something that's 80s or 90s. I always love when someone sees something and says, "Oh my god, that's so you!" and it's just the ugliest, weirdest thing. I love when people connect me with something weird.

Favourite stores in Reykjavík:

Definitely Rokk og Rómantik for rock-themed accessories like chain belts and stuff. I sometimes shop second-hand, but I don't buy a lot of clothes. Most of the stuff I wear day-to-day I made myself.

Favourite piece:

I went to Greece with my friends once and bought a floor-length mint green shiny leather jacket with white fur. It's so ugly that it's beautiful. I love it.

Something you would never wear:

I love patterns but I don't think I'd ever wear zebra print. Is that random?

Lusting after:

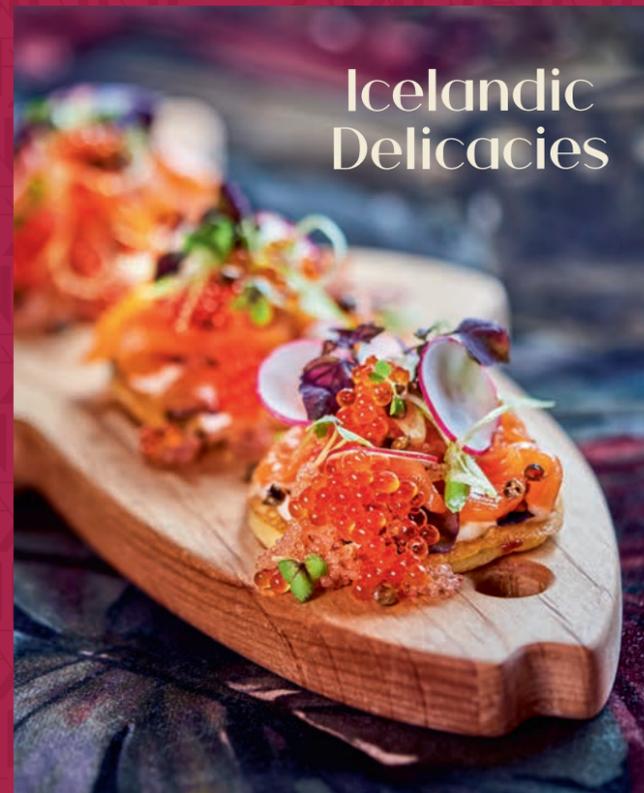
There's no pieces that I've been eyeing but I'm going to make myself a red pleather coat with fake fur soon. 🐾

FJALLKONAN

KRÁ & KRÆSINGAR

Fjallkonan is a new lively restaurant & pub in the heart of Reykjavík offering a selection of Icelandic and international dishes from local ingredients.

Casual and cosy atmosphere yet still fun and festive. Stop by for snacks & drinks, lunch or dinner.



Icelandic Delicacies



Must try dishes

LAMB & FLATBREAD

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ARCTIC CHARR & BLINI

Lightly cured arctic charr, chickpea blini, horseradish sauce, roe, crispy lentils, yuzu-elderflower dressing

ICELANDIC PLATTER

- > Puffin, crowberry gel
- > Minke whale, malt glaze
- > Lamb tartar, chive mayo

THE LAMB BURGER

Bacon, mushroom & date duxelle, pickled red onions, pickled cucumber, rucola, smoked cheese, fries

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Food



Garðabær's finest!

More Is More

Garðabær's Sjaland shows off fine dining beyond
the downtown scene

Words: Shruthi Basappa Photos: Art Bicnick

There has long existed a firm divide between Reykjavik and the greater Reykjavik area. For some of us, the distinctions between local municipalities blur into, well, Reykjavik. For others, 101 is full of downtown rats, 107 is for hipster snobs, the suburbs of Grafarholt don't exist and Garðabær and Hafnarfjörður are seldom top the list of anyone's favourite dining destinations. Stereotypes within our small city aside, I have to admit, I rarely go to Garðabær myself.

So when rumours swirled about a brand new restaurant poised to open right by the bay in Arnanesvogur, once home to Garðabær's docks, I was curious. The larch clad building steadily rose and as the pandemic crept up on us, it seemed like the restaurant wouldn't open after all.

But curiously, the pandemic has only spurred the team on. Open since May, Sjaland is likely one of the busiest restaurants in town today. They're open for lunch, dinner and corporate events seven days a week, in addition to weekend brunches and champagne happy hours.

pletely new," he continues, sweeping his arms across the vast dining space, "and you have someone like Stefán [Magnússon] and he buys your ideas and brings on people like Rúnar [Pierre Herivaux] and Víðir [Erlingsson], it's a great set up. Goes very smoothly." Rúnar has previously worked at Grillið and is a Chef of the Year silver medallist, while Víðir has worked at KOKS and Reykjavik Meat. Together, they form the core of Sjaland.

Stefán is the restaurateur behind Reykjavik Meat, Mathús Garðabær and Sjaland and it's hard to miss his influence on the interiors. The building too has received a lot of attention recently. Designed by Zepelin Architects, the building is modest on the outside, favouring an integration of the outdoors and indoors with sweeping views of the bay and a terraced roof, perfect for summer al fresco dining. Inside, the dark, smoked wood interiors, plush seating and Moooi Meshmatics chandelier create a decadent atmosphere. (Enough to make one forget the draughty lobby bar.)

The restaurant seats 90 and the banquet hall an additional 180. There are also plans for a smaller private dining experience for "more focussed menus," Ólafur says.

Elevated comfort food

"We want to do comfort food, maybe a bit elevated," says Ólafur. "We

want people to be able to enjoy a 'fine dining' experience," he continues, making air quotes, "without all the fuss. We wanted a relaxed atmosphere, big bold flavours and simple food." He also admits he's never worked solely for this clientele.

"But you have to learn a new rhythm. And you learn very soon that diners here are far more demanding and forthright than say in Reykjavik". Rúnar confirms, "they are unafraid to speak their mind, which has been very refreshing," he says.

The menu, which has undergone several changes in its short life, certainly reflects that vibe now. "It is kinda seasonal and kinda how we feel," Ólafur confirms. There are wood fired pizzas with various toppings (an anchovy potato pizza sounds enticing), a selection of various proteins and as many desserts as main courses. The pizzas are available for lunch and dinner. And if you've been lamenting the loss of Hverfisgata 12, well you're in luck as the pizzas here certainly echo those pies. "It's his baby," Rúnar says pointing to Ólafur, "he's all about the pizzas."

Modern Icelandic

The kitchen sends out an assortment of starters—beautifully composed plates of smoked trout with candied fennel and preserved lemons, a steaming seafood soup with startlingly well cooked local shrimp and scallops, and a bloody beet and fig carpaccio punctuated with savoury thimbles of foie-gras crumbles. "I think it's the only dish that has stayed," Rúnar says of the

"We wanted a relaxed atmosphere, big bold flavours and simple food."

Sjaland 210

I'm greeted by chef Ólafur Ágústsson, once at the helm of Systir, Dill's sister restaurant, and Kex Portland. Now the executive chef at Sjaland, he says, "it's been easy," the transition. "When you walk into something like this and it's com-



carpaccio, “except for the pizzas.”

The menu and the wine list plays it safe and don’t veer towards staples favoured and I suspect, strongly dictated by the neighbourhood (plans are underway for a contemporary wine menu that will change shortly). It is a conflict that plays out on your plate and belies the kitchen’s fine dining roots.

The food however tries to balance what I’ve come to identify as distinctly Icelandic dining expectations with modern flourishes. A beautifully cooked lightly salted cod, is served with roasted cauliflower that is sneakily pickled as well. The halibut, from Nora Seafoods is doused in a mysa-fermented cabbage sauce. The vegan dish of grilled broccolini, pak choy and dukkah like seeds is all bite and grit and I really enjoy the smokiness the grill lends them.

Working out the kinks

While in their previous avatars these chef’s pared down the focus into distilled flavours, here “more is more” is really the mantra. The ribeye is expectantly fatty and juicy, but the mashed potatoes alongside also have brisket in them. The lamb is excellent and the pickled mustard jús carries the acidity that I’d been longing for to cut through the richness of the other dishes. Alarmingly, almost every single dish is served with a herb oil, the presence of which I discover to be the handiwork of a young chef with an enthusiastic trigger finger on the squeeze bottle, although I question its presence entirely. Given a little more time, I think these kinks will be worked out eventually as they hit that stride between crowd favourites and their own signatures.

I marvel at the portion sizes which are more than generous and the continued bonhomie in the dining room is an indicator of the diner’s happiness and the attentive sprightly service.

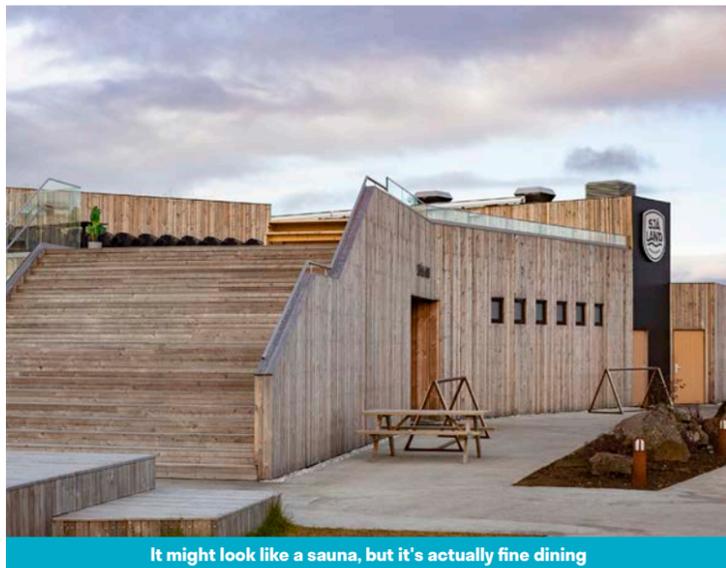
I sit back and wonder how curiously full the restaurant is, how much the locals have embraced their neighbourhood restaurant

and ask myself if I’d leave the confines and comforts of Reykjavík dining for a meal here again. As if he’d read my mind, chef Rúnar appears with a dessert that has, I admit, changed my mind. “You can’t leave without desserts,” teases Rúnar. He carefully pours what seems like a gallon of cream into an expectant mound of skyr ganache sprinkled with frozen blueberries, rose petals, and homemade granola. “It is for all the ammas,” Rúnar says and as if to

confirm simply how good it is, my 7-year old upended the entire bowl to catch every last drop. 🍴

Sjáland is located at Ránargrund 4 in Garðabær.

The head chefs at Sjáland are Rúnar Pierre Herivaux, Víðir Erlingsson and Ólafur Ágústsson. Front of house team; Almar Ingvi Garðarsson, restaurant manager Styrmir Örn and Sigurður Borgar Ólafsson.



It might look like a sauna, but it’s actually fine dining



See? Fine dining!



SNAPS

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WELL, YOU ASKED



White Collar Tax Fraud

Words: Iona Rangeley-Wilson

Got a burning question? In desperate need of advice? We at the Grapevine are here to help.

How do I move out of home?

Get arrested. It's time to get real, Millennials and Gen Z-ers. You are never going to own your own home. Not unless you become the sole inheritor of an estranged aunt's vast fortune or seduce Leonardo DiCaprio. What better way to get out of your parents' house than to have the country's law enforcement services expressly forbid you from spending further time in it? Be creative: commit some cheeky yet charming white-collar tax fraud, murder your least favourite politician, or allow your ex-partner-in-crime to emotionally blackmail you into helping him heist a casino. And once you're in prison? I've heard rent's paid for by the state, and you'll never get Mum telling you off for not making your bed again. I mean Jesus, you're not twelve.

My fish died. I didn't feed them. Am I a murderer?

Yes. You're a cold-blooded killer. And on a subliminal, subconscious level, you did this on purpose. Was it a twisted way of getting back at your primary school lunch lady for forcing you to finish your fish fingers? Or perhaps the dark impulse of a repressed vegetarian? Well, you're too far gone now. There's no way back. Either hand yourself in to the police right away, or be bold and become a career assassin. Just make sure you remember your roots. 🍷

HORROR-SCOPES

The Autumn Fog Reveals Your Fate

Please don't dress up as "Slutty Coronavirus" for Halloween...

Words: Catherine Magnúsdóttir & Hannah Jane Cohen

In *Horror-Scopes*, the Grapevine's dedicated team of amateur astrologists give you their mystical visions on the dark fate that lies before you. The tea leaves have spoken!

Aries The spirits demand their offering, Aries. An oath made in blood weighs as much as a delicate click of "I have read and agree with the terms and conditions." Don't challenge their wrath. Updating your iOS won't end well.

Taurus No, Taurus, it is absolutely NOT too early to be wearing that Halloween sweater. Mix it with a witch's hat while you're at it, why don't you? We called alleged

Grapevine fan Tim Burton and he agreed.

Gemini The cold autumn fog hides many things, Gemini, but not that unfinished assignment nor your fraught relationship with your father.

Cancer Byronic poetry is best enjoyed at a graveyard, don't you think? Just make sure you get all your longing out before sunrise and don't accidentally carry home some graveyard dirt under your pointy, leather, gothic shoes. It might invite some restless soul to follow you and your sleep paralysis monster doesn't need more com-

pany. Unless it's a fellow Cradle of Filth fan.

Leo I don't care what they say, Leo, you go and enjoy that pumpkin spiced latte! This year has been harsh enough, so just go ahead and embrace everything that would have made you a basic bitch before. Pop in that Notebook DVD or go listen to the Chainsmokers #goodvibes #missingcoachella

Virgo Scrolling through aesthetic blogs on tumblr might not be the best coping mechanisms on a long-term scale, but reblogging some of those 'Hocus Pocus' gifsets can't hurt.

Libra There's nothing wrong with caring so little about Halloween that you once again opt for the sexy cat look this year. Just kidding—we know your ambitions for Samhain grandeur journey far beyond the feline. We foresee a unanimous win at this year's costume contest if you go big and rent some tigers for a sexy Carole Baskin look. For full authenticity, (allegedly) kill your husband.

Scorpio Make like a ghost and grab some boo-ze. Maybe it'll warm your dead Scorpio heart.

(We hate Scorpios. Sue us.)

Sagittarius We love new seasons—both weather and 'The Bachelorette'! Let's hope Clare (or Tayshia?) finds love this time around. If you're reading this, Crawley, let the falling leaves remind you that it's ok to let go.

Capricorn It's time for a girls niiiight! Create a group chat for all your gal pals, get some firewood and just go apeshit in the forest. Satanic chanting can be an excellent bonding experience, we hear, as is dancing naked in the woods! Just make sure none of your friends are called Abigail Williams, Elizabeth Proctor, or something equally... dangerous.

Aquarius The only things following you into the grave will be worms. You'll be alone forever, you aquatic loser.

Pisces It's not too late to book a cabin for the autumn days ahead. Fulfill your dream of being the hermit of the highlands, Pisces! Vanish mysteriously into the mist, go pick some berries and knit yourself an awesome cloak. Be the folklore figure you were born to be. 🍷



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Travel

Bubble, Bubble, Toil, Trouble And Eggs

The dream of steam is alive and well in Hveragerði

Words: Catherine Magnúsdóttir & Jess Distill Photos: Art Bicnick



Travel distance from Reykjavik: 45 km

Just 45 kilometres from the capital, beyond an otherworldly lava field landscape and up and down a mountain, lies the small town of Hveragerði. Often clouded—both in mystery and steam—the countryside destination offers a plethora of interesting pandemic-safe possibilities.

The quintessential Icelandic town

After a week of working from home, a trip—even just a small day trip out of the house and into the fresh air—sounded very good to a pair of Reykjavik Grapevine interns. The legends of the hot ground beneath Hveragerði only served to intrigue us further. Whispers of hot springs, home grown bananas and basement saunas captured our minds, luring us to the little town that could so easily be overlooked on the road to the more high-profile Gullfoss or Geysir.

If you were to ask any foreigner what they imagined Iceland to look like, chances are that they would describe a town very similar to Hveragerði. Small, quaint houses of brightly painted wood and corrugated iron sit nestled between steaming pipes and hotpots, taking full advantage of the geothermal environment. Although, to our disappointment, it turned out that the houses don't have saunas in their basements. In fact, they don't have basements at all be-

cause the ground is simply too hot. The idyllic river Varmá runs through the town, with waterfalls providing peaceful picnic spots. All in all, Hveragerði is the quintessential Icelandic village.

Sitting on a hotbed

Hveragerði's surrounding area lies over the volcano Hengill—hence the high level of geothermal activity. All over town, steam rises up through cracks in the ground or boils up into large pipes and pumps.

And the locals sure know how to harness that resource. One of Hveragerði's highlights is its abundance of geothermally-heated greenhouses, where exotic plants flourish despite the harsh Icelandic climate. Even bananas thrive in the Hveragerði greenhouses. In fact, Hveragerði is the world's northernmost producer of the fruit.

The ground also allows for some culinary creativity. By simply burying your lunch for a few hours, you'll be rewarded with a hot meal. There is, of course, also the option of visiting one of the local establishments that pride themselves on their geothermal cuisine. Sadly, when we arrived, the quiet little town was not expecting visitors—a not unexpected downside of the pandemic—and most places were shut. In the name of safety, we would find food elsewhere.

Intrepid Interns

Along with its geothermal prowess, Hveragerði is also a well-known hiking destination. Most famous is a steep, slightly challenging 40-minute hike to the Reykjadalur Thermal River. Here, wonder at Djúpagilsfoss waterfall, take in the breathtaking beauty of the Reykjadalur valley and don your swimming trunks for a soak in the hot river. Although the river can get busy—particularly in the summer—it's long and fairly easy to find a secluded spot in.

That said, we decided we weren't feeling particularly intrepid on the day of our visit, so we skipped the full Reykjadalur hike and instead me-



Making our own bloody eggs!

andered through the less-steep surrounding trails. Before starting off, we headed to the local Bónus to grab some food. For some reason, we were craving eggs... and some stockings.

Witches around a cauldron

Our hike reminded us we were alive and mobile, even after so many days spent at home. From the outskirts of town, the views go on for kilometres across unspoiled and ancient lava fields. The red clay lends the landscape an almost alien atmosphere—how one would imagine the surface of Mars to look. Barren but majestic, Iceland's landscapes really are like no other. We could have stopped and stared for hours.

But then it was time to eat. We grabbed our six-pack of eggs and two pairs of nylon stockings, desperate to fulfill our dream of naturally boiling eggs in the earth. But where to find a good boiling station? To our dismay, the geothermal park—which offers a special egg-boiling hot pool—was closed on the day of our trip, so we opted to look on our hike for a natural, off-the-beaten-track hot puddle to serve our needs.

And yet, like the ever eluding fata morgana of the desert, no matter how close we came to a steam column, it

would always turn out to remain unreachable, cooped in by either a fence or pipes or pumps.

So, we hiked for a while longer and after examining the area for about two hours, we finally found a suitable place just outside of town. The grey, steaming, bubbling sludge in a hole was the perfect place to prepare our snack. Gently loading our new stockings up with eggs, we crouched, like witches around a cauldron and tentatively lowered them into the hotpot. It's sweaty work, cooking eggs like this, but we embraced the heat, figuring that the steam would definitely be beneficial for our skin, despite the condensation clinging to our eyelashes and woolly hats.

After about ten minutes we removed the eggs, cooled them down in the river and began cracking them open. Having no idea what to expect—we're journalists, not chefs—we were surprised to find that the eggs were still very soft boiled. Slowly taking our first bites, we couldn't decide if it was the sulphuric nature of the water or the fact that we'd worked hard to earn our food, but we agreed that these eggs were particularly delicious. All they needed was a pinch of salt and toast for dipping and these Hveragerði delights would have made an eggcellent meal. 🍷

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Street food: Hveragerði style

