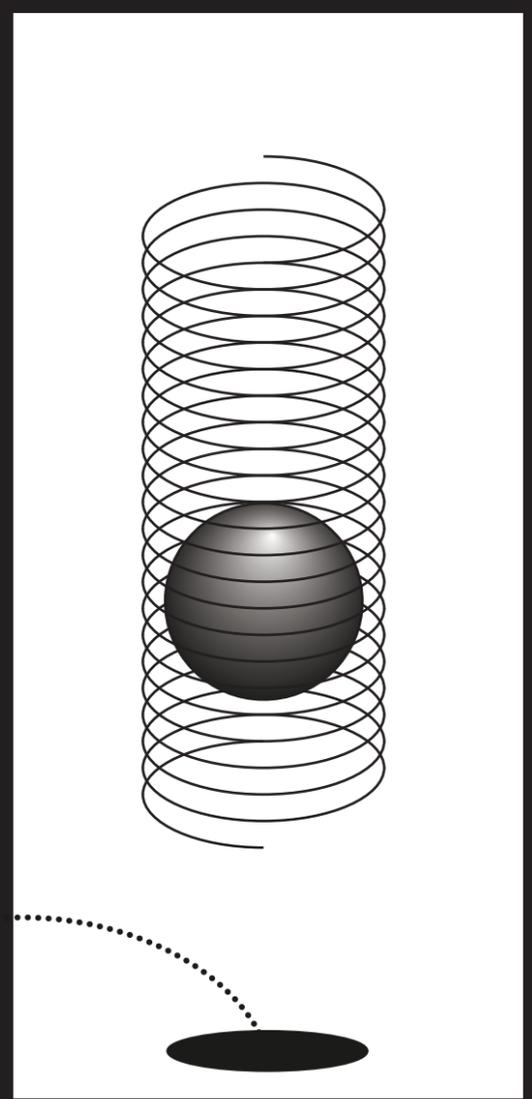


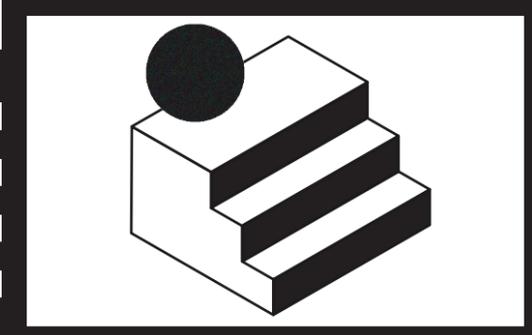
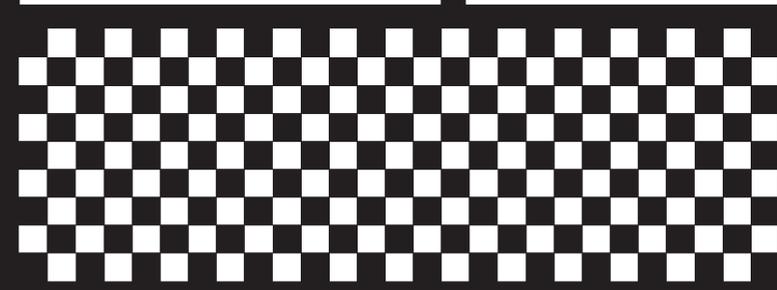
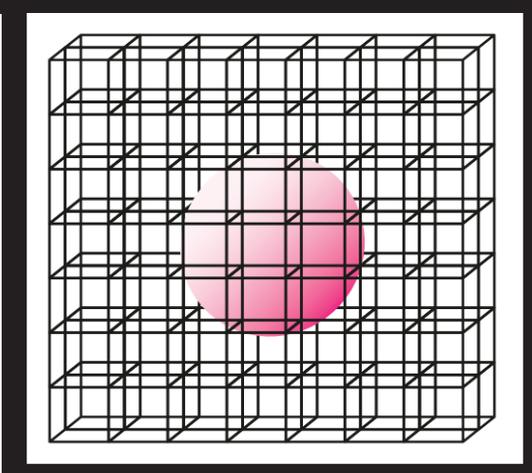
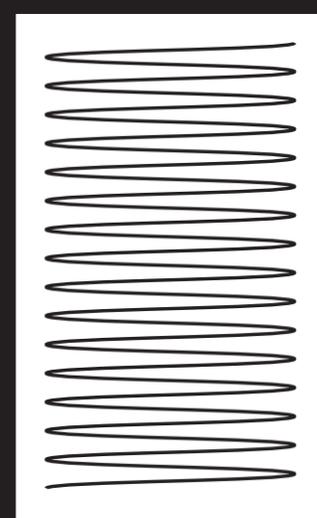
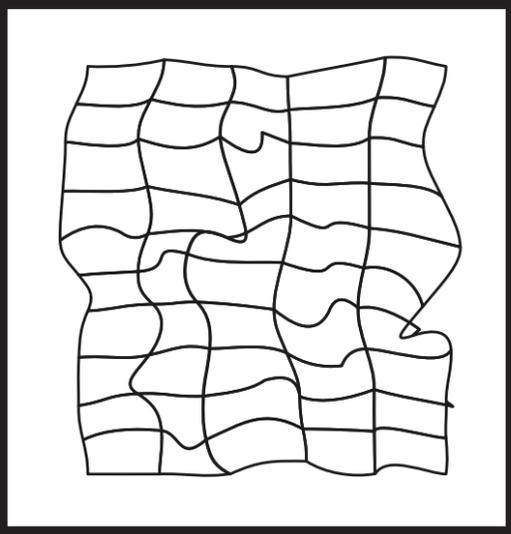
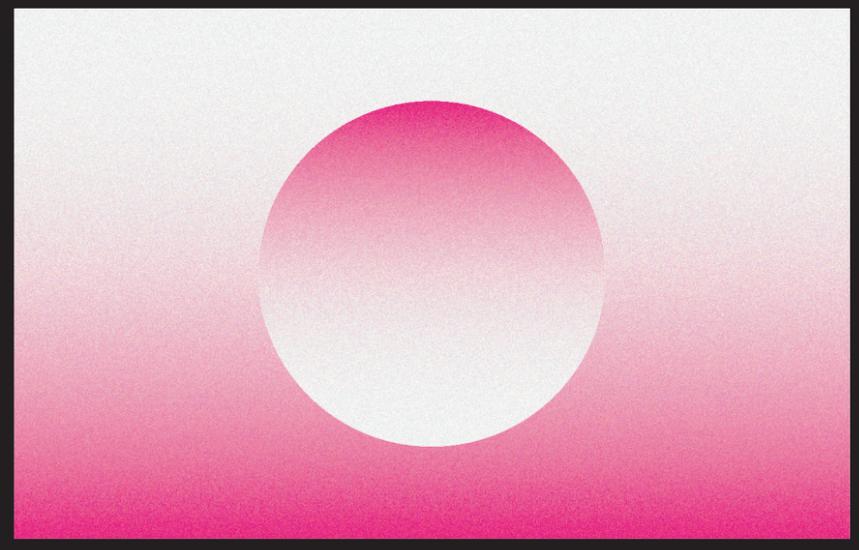
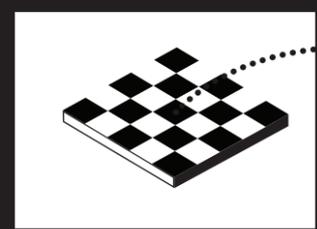
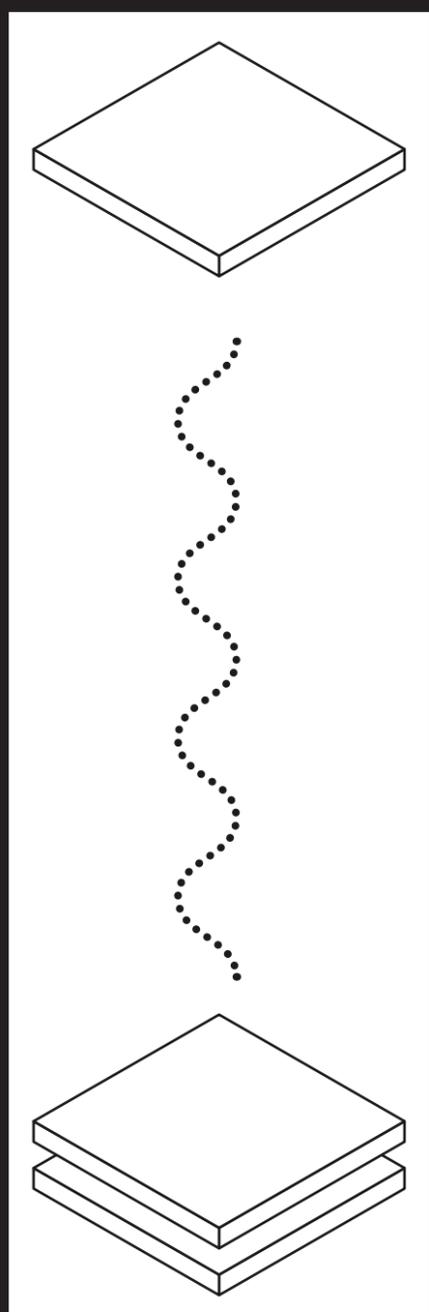
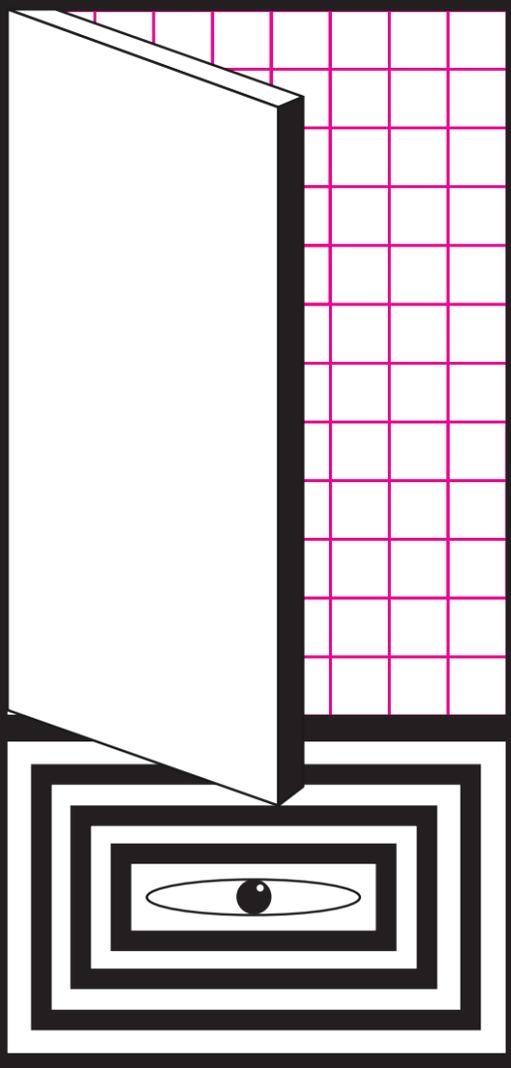
SUNNA FRIDJÓNS AND HER MAGICAL MUSIC • SHOTS FIRED AT MAYOR'S CAR PROVOKE CONVERSATION • HEIMDALLUR, THE BOUNCER OF THE GODS • THE WOOLLY WONDERS OF YRURARÍ • HELEN COVA EXPLORES SELF-CANNIBALISM THROUGH WORDS • SCUBA DIVING IN A REALLY COLD GLACIAL LAKE • STYLIST DIANA BRECKMANN STYLISHLY TALKS STYLE • DRAGON DIM SUM FOR DIM ALL • BUY BITCOIN

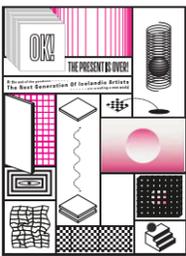


THE PRESENT IS OVER!



At the end of the pandemic → → → → →
The Next Generation Of Icelandic Artists
→ → → → → are creating a new world





COVER ART:
Illustration by
Þórdís Erla Zoëga, one of
the artists featured in
this issue.

Þórdís Erla Zoëga (b.1988)
is a visual artist based
in Reykjavík, Iceland.
She received her BFA
degree from the Audio

Visual department of The
Gerrit Rietveld Academy,
Amsterdam, Netherlands
in 2012 and has since
exhibited widely in
Iceland and abroad, i.e.
Stockholm, Berlin, Basel,
Amsterdam and more.

Visit her website at
thordiserlazoega.is

First



08: VISUAL ARTS SURVIVE

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At The Mayor...**

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EDITORIAL

The Core



When COVID-19 hit, we did not only need to face the deadliest virus the human-kind had seen for a century, we needed to reevaluate our world view. In the slow state of things, we were finally forced to rethink simple ideas, the same ideas the gurus and yoga moms had been pushing for years, annoying our inner state of nihilism; what does really matter? The first answer was quite simple. Our loved ones. Of course. Our state of democracy was there, somewhere on the list. Also our empathy for our neighbours and other members of the society that we didn't even know. Because at the end of the day, complying with disease prevention is nothing less than a compassionate act to protect those that are vulnerable in our community. It's a sacrifice, we understand, but it's not in vain.

But we also found that we needed more. It was not enough to sit at home, with our loved ones and zooming with our friends, complying with our scientists. This was the moment that we realised that culture is vital. Not only to fill our hearts with something essential but to challenge our minds and push our boundaries. In Iceland, surpris-

ingly TV shows with music became a hit, like 'Heima Með Helga Björns'. We revisited old movies we liked and we listened to music to cheer ourselves up. But one of the clearest indications for our need of art, was the unexpected success of art galleries in Iceland in the pandemic. Many of them are seeing record sales of artwork, and it's not only the established artist that is doing well, but young artists, too. The future of visual arts in Iceland is blossoming.

We decided to talk to experts and get a list from them of the most prominent young artists in Iceland right now. Our criteria was simple: they can't be older than 35 years old. And what we found, was that this interest is no fluke. Icelandic visual arts is not only bright, it's quite brilliant as it is diverse. And what we realised in the process, is that art is still the core of us all. It's part of our reevaluation of our existence, and what's more, it inspires us to push forward, change the world, change ourselves, even change everything. I know it sounds dramatic, but it's painfully simple at the same time. You can find our feature about the future of visual artists at [page 8](#). 🍷

Valur Grettisson
Editor-in-chief



John Pearson is a Reykjavík resident who combines writing with professional backgrounds in music, broadcasting, scuba diving, engineering and underwater photography. He loves puns, alliteration and lists that have three things in them.



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.



Polly is a hard-working journalist by day and an enthusiastic ball-catcher by night. A four-year-old dachshund mix with an IQ of a five-year-old human, Polly has been the official Chief Of Morale at the Grapevine for eight months and is a regular contributor to the Grapevine Newscast on YouTube. Woof.



Shruthi Basappa is one of Iceland's most knowledgeable foodies. She's covered local restaurants for years and has also been involved in various food competitions in Iceland, such as Food & Fun and more. By day, she works as an architect at Sei Studio.



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 Reykjavík, 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.



Owen Tyrie is a young journo straight out of Cheshire, England. After studying journalism for three years in Leeds, he has recently moved out to Reykjavík in order to pursue his dream of becoming Icelandic. He's a film fanatic, gaming enthusiast and most of all, ginger. Oh, and he loves tea.



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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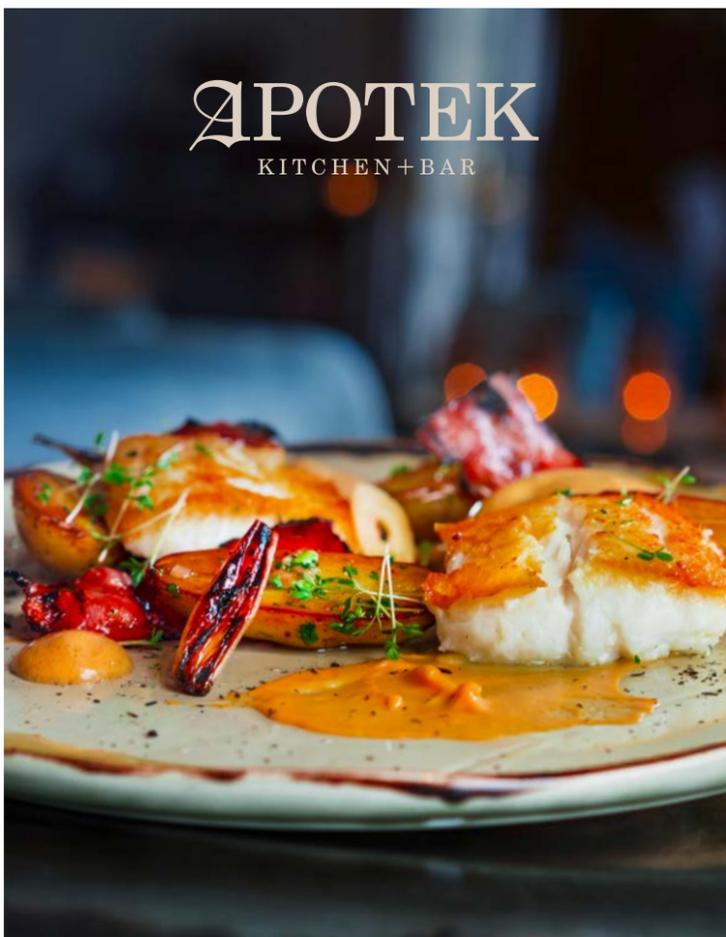


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Lilja Alfreðsdóttir, Minister of Education / Screenshot from RÚV

What Are Icelanders Talking About?

The continuing saga continues

Words: **Andie Sophia Fontaine**

NEWS One of the most talked about stories in the Icelandic press right now is the **shooting of Reykjavík Mayor Dagur B. Eggertsson's car**. Police have apprehended a suspect—who is a former cop himself. The suspect has an even more checkered past, having been convicted of sexual assault and subsequently having his name cleared in a complex process known as “restored honour,” wherein your civic reputation, but not your criminal record, is expunged. The shooting has prompted a wider discussion on political discourse, the implication being that heated discussions can lead to or contribute to acts of violence. That at least was the takeaway of all this that Left-Green MP Kolbeinn Óttarsson Proppé has, telling Parliament earlier this month that he would refrain from “telling people to go f*ck themselves in public”. Good on him.

In lighter news, a **class action lawsuit** is being filed against an **American company** for alleged false advertising. One of their products, **described as “traditional Icelandic skyr,”** is the subject of the suit, as the plaintiffs contend its packaging gives the false impression that this is an Icelandic product. This, they allege, led them to buy a product they would not normally buy, or at least, not

for the price that is charged for it. However, the packaging also states that the product is made in Batavia, New York, so this lawsuit may be quite the battle. Only time will tell.

If there's one thing Reykjavík residents feel strongly about, it's the use of **studded tyres in the winter**. Contrary to what you might think, streets in the greater capital area seldom, if ever, ice over in the winter. However, this doesn't stop a great many Reykjavík area Icelanders from using studded tires on otherwise ice-free roads, which contributes heavily to air pollution in the region. As

such, Reykjavík City Council has asked Parliament for permission to ban studded tyres altogether. This has not been well received by more conservative members of city council, who are proposing instead more frequent street cleanings and parking discounts for those who forego studded tyres. Well, at least they all agree that air pollution in Reykjavík is a problem, right?

Icelanders have been diligently subtitled and voice dubbing cartoons for years now and that includes a lot of Disney feature films. Oddly, though, when one signed up for a **Disney+** account, **none of the Icelandic subs or dubs were available**. Minister of Education and Culture Lilja Alfreðsdóttir hoped to change that, sending a formal request to Disney that they include this material in their streaming services. Happily, Disney accepted her request, allowing Icelanders to enter a whole new world. 🇮🇸



Hatari's favorite tyres



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PHOTOGRAPHY: USA



Dagur B. Eggertsson, who is, according to the spicy right-wing, omnipotent within Reykjavik city limits

In Wake Of Shooting, Icelanders Reflect On Discourse

What we say and how we say it

NEWS

Iceland is not a country known for political violence. Typically, the most heated event to unfold in any political sphere is a well-attended protest. However, the recent shooting of Mayor Dagur B. Eggertsson's family car has had a number of Icelanders concluding that this act did not happen in a vacuum and perhaps political discourse itself contributed to it.

Words: **Andie Sophia Fontaine**

Photo: **Art Bicknick**

Opposition

For context: Dagur hails from the Social Democrats, a party long subject to heated criticism when it comes to city politics, as they are more often than not leading or a part of the Reykjavik City Council majority. This alone does not explain the attack.

However, it was Ólafur Kr. Guðmundsson, a vice councilman for the Independence Party for Reykjavik City Council, who unwittingly got people considering how discourse can contribute to violence when he made a Facebook post shortly after the shooting that essentially blamed Dagur for bringing the shooting on himself. Ólafur would later delete the post and apologise, but the ball was already rolling.

Misinformation

Later, the creator of a video from a group called "Open Downtown," which opposes the closing of Laugavegur and Skólavörðustígur to car traffic, requested that the widely-circulated clip be taken down, as it falsely contended that Dagur had bought three parking spaces from the city. This false claim and the video featuring Dagur's home and environs, the creator believed, was irresponsible.

The language we use

Most recently, Left-Green MP Kolbeinn Óttarsson Proppé brought up in Parliament that heated discourse and the language we use can fan the flames that lead to violence. He pointed out that politicians and journalists alike have reported refraining from discussing certain topics because of the threats they receive, and the chilling effect this has.

While all of this may be true, it does leave open the question of what possible solutions there may be. 🍷

ASK A Scientist
Q: Is It Actually Safe To Drink Water From The Hot Tap?



Travellers often arrive at a new destination harbouring nagging anxieties. Will the taxi drivers try to rip me off? Can I put toilet paper into the toilet? And—the perennial favourite—can I drink the tap water?

In Iceland the answers are no, please do and absolutely, in that order. What comes out of Iceland's cold taps is famously some of the purest water in the world. But what if—for some reason best known to yourself—you decided to drink the infamously eggy-smelling hot water?

We chatted to **Dr. Arna Pálsdóttir**, research project manager at *Orkuveita Reykjavíkur*, the company that supplies Reykjavik's hot water.

"The hot water smells of rotten eggs because it contains hydrogen sulphide. There are basically two hot water systems in the city, one of which gets hot water directly from geothermal wells within the city limits. The water in those wells naturally contains hydrogen sulphide, but not in dangerous levels of concentration.

"We also take cold water from the ground, heat it up with geothermal energy and send it to the city. The cold water doesn't contain hydrogen sulphide, but actually we add hydrogen sulphide to it. The reason we do that is to prevent corrosion in our pipeline and the radiator systems in homes. The hydrogen sulphide reacts with oxygen and provides a natural way to prevent corrosion.

"I'd say that 90% of the time the hot water does fulfil drinking water standards. I mean it's not classified as drinking water, but most of the time it fulfils the standards.

"So there you have it—straight from the scientist's mouth. But if you decide to top your sulphate levels up with a glass of Icelandic aqua from the red tap, be warned that it can reach temperatures of up to 80°C! Maybe blow on it a bit first." 🍷



LOST IN GOOGLE TRANSLATION

Ball-Thirsty Crooks & Briet Is British Now

When we saw what The Google-Mangle™ had done to Visir's report of Briet's triumph at our recent Music Awards, minds at the Grapevine spiralled into feverish

conspiracy mode. The title of the article, "Briet tónlistarmaður ársins hjá Reykjavik Grapevine," translates as "Briet is musician of the year at Reykjavik Grape-

vine." But if you're Google Translate, the decidedly Icelandic Briet is being declared the "British musician of the year at Reykjavik Grapevine." We haven't the foggiest idea what The GoogleBrain™ intended here.

Ignore, if you will, the obvious similarity between the name of our Artist Of The Year and that of Boris Johnson's "newly-indepen-

dent sovereign state." We're convinced that, in the hope of diverting attention from his botched Brexit and his failed attempt to start a new Cod War (this time with the EU), bungling Boris is sneakily attempting to steal ownership of Iceland's finest musical artists.

We see you, Boris, we see you. Hands off our Briet. And don't you even

start thinking about those north-Atlantic fish.

Next up, the GoogleGrinder™ didn't disappoint on January 27th, providing a spectacular English shredding of an Icelandic headline about party-goers breaking alcohol licencing laws.

The phrase "ballþyrstir kærðir fyrir brot á sóttvarnarlögum"

is probably best translated as "thirsty partygoers accused of breaking quarantine laws". But good ol' Google insists that "ball-thirsty accused of breaking anti-trust laws" is actually what the RÚV journalist intended to say.

Now that sounds like the party we wanna be at. After all, who hasn't been ball-thirsty at some point? And

we want to know how antitrust laws were violated. Did some of these ball-thirsters get together and try to fix the open-market price of balls? Was their thirst for balls so great that they would risk everything to keep the price of balls under their control?

We're thirsty for knowledge. And balls. **JP** 🍷

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DEITIES OF ICELAND

Thou art not on the list mate, thou art not coming in

Heimdallur

Ásgarður's security guard

Words: John Pearson

Superpowers: Bionic eyesight and hearing (anyone else remember The Six Million Dollar Man?)

Weaknesses: The wives of cuckold mortals

Modern Analogue: That asshole bouncer with the golden dental grill who never lets you into Club Asgard

If you've been paying attention to our fabulous and informative Gods of Iceland series—and I do hope that you have, 'cos there will be a test—then you'll know that the Norse Gods are a pretty licentious bunch. And most are indiscriminate in the focus of their affections. Family members? Here's looking at you, Njörd. A lovely horse? For shame, Loki, you shape-shifting scallywag.

But Heimdallur, our latest divine example of Nordic naughtiness, is known for always—quite literally—having the horn. Oh, and for tricking us mere mortals into kinky three-in-a-bed romps.

Your name's not down, you're not coming in

Heimdallur's job is to guard Bifröst, the burning rainbow bridge linking Miðgarð, (the realm of men), to Ásgarð, (the home of the gods). To detect the approach of any intruding monsters or dwarves, Heimdallur is blessed with razor-sharp eyesight and super-sensitive hearing, which apparently enables him to hear the wool growing on the backs of sheep.

Heimdallur requires very little sleep—handy when you're a security guard—and anyway, nodding off must be difficult with the racket of distantly-growing wool constantly in your ears. Always close at hand is Heimdallur's horn, which he blows so loud when raising the alarm that it is "heard in all worlds", according to the Prose Edda. At least Heimdallur's resultant tinni-

tus will drown out the sound of those damn woolly-backs.

Of course our hero has other god-like qualities, like gold teeth (bling!), a horse with a golden mane (bling bling!) and some sort of skin condition that renders him luminous. But perhaps most interesting is his parentage. He is said to have been born simultaneously of nine mothers, who were all sisters. Now we at the Grapevine have fertile imaginations, but if you can talk us through the logistics of that process, please do. It sounds like the anxiety dream of an overworked midwife.

Watch your wife, homestead boy

We hate to stereotype, but to be honest you'd be unwise to trust any of the Icelandic gods; most of them are best-described as being of fluid morality. Heimdallur's contribution to this reputation is to make a habit of visiting earth, accepting the hospitality of mortal couples and offering advice in return. But the deal also involves Heimdallur sleeping between man and wife for not one, but three consecutive nights. At the end of which—surprise!—the wife will have fallen pregnant, putting Heimdallur firmly into the category of worst house-guest ever.

So if some glowing guy shows up at your homestead atop a golden-maned horse, blowing his horn and flashing you his gleaming grill as he dispenses unsolicited advice, it's probably best for your marriage if you don't invite him in for a goblet of mead. Trust us. ♡



A love, written in the stars. Kind of.

JUST SAYINGS

“Spá í”

Have you ever predicted that you'd fall in love with someone? Icelanders do it all the time (to mixed results). 'Spá í' is the rather modern saying that one uses when they are thinking about doing something. But it's a little more complicated than that. Spá í translates to "To predict something." The 'í' is key here. It's the difference between predicting you'll go to the shop, for example, or prophesying that a shop exists somewhere in the world.

Now, you can also use 'spá í' when you're in to someone—hence the aforementioned predictions of falling in love. Then, it means like I like this guy/girl/being and I want to see if this could actually work out. In Icelandic, you'd say: Ég er að spá í hann (I'm thinking of dating this man). So if you want to sound like a native when you are hypothetically crushing on someone, here you go. Magic. VG ♡

GRAPEVINE PLAYLIST



ALVIA
- **Pistol Pony**
Notoriously elegant hoe, bubblegum bitch and snow queen Alvia Islandia is finally here with her long-awaited "Pistol Pony". The video, directed by Logi Hilmarrson, is a sexy, smooth, kaleidoscopic UV explosion. Basically, imagine a glitter-obsessed camgirl in space who also sometimes journeys down to Earth to hang with horses—that's the kind of vibe we're getting. The song, produced by HILVL and Glacier Mafia, is equally effortless. A chill, somewhat melancholic, psychedelic track, it'll no doubt be on repeat at every (socially-distanced) party in 2021. HJC

but "Continents" by CeaseTone manages to fill that little melancholic hole with a hint of levity, a touch of blood pumping beats and a dream that though things currently suck, at least they can suck accompanied by cinematic harmonies and sing-along choruses. Basically, imagine the song that plays in an indie movie post-breakup and eviction where the main character begins to go from sad to inspired and "find themselves." It doesn't help that the chorus says "I wish we could run away." Me fucking too, CeaseTone. Give me the vaccination. HJC



Countess Malaise
- **EXCITING**
Countess Malaise offers a brutal sarcastic song about the excitement of becoming a wife. The video, shot by Countess and her subjects, is equally as stunning—if anyone has proved that lockdown should not be an impediment to creativity, it's her. VG



GusGus
- **Stay The Ride**
Just the existence of a new track by GusGus is a beautiful thing, a statement justified by the fact that the track itself is just as gorgeous. "Stay The Ride" finds Biggi and Daniel confidently blending beats and bending genres into a warm, deep, sparse whole. Daniel's vocals share the space with those of Vök's Margrét Rán on the track that showcases the quiet mastery of musical craft that Biggi and Daniel have developed over the last quarter of a century. JP



RAKEL
- **Our Favourite Line**
Soft emotional soundscape pop with some unexpected tonal shifts. Oftentimes it's said that it takes two albums to get away from your influences and this is only RAKEL's second song. That said, you get the underlying sense throughout "Our Favourite Line" that you're listening to someone that knows how to surprise you even in a genre that feels totally overrun by similar acts. "Our Favourite Line" doesn't feel generic and it feels like the first step in a process we can't wait to watch. HJC



CeaseTone
- **Continents**
The light at the end of the vaccinated tunnel still feels so far away.

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KROT & KRASS



"It used to be a fertiliser factory," Elsa explains. "Yes, it's a big space. 1,200 square meters with seven meter ceilings," Loki adds. The pair envisions it having not only studios but also a gallery space, offices and maybe even a music venue—eventually.

"We've always been working with the theory of the-old-meets-the-new," says Elsa. "We work with a lot of stuff from Icelandic art history but translating that into new times, and we're also doing [that] with this house. Taking old materials and collecting things to build with."

The two look at the warehouse as a physical manifestation of this philosophy. It is—quite literally—an old institution that's being revitalised into something that's needed now. And there's something beautiful about the fact that Loki and Elsa used their pandemic time to prepare for a better post-pandemic life for not only them but for the whole community—even when there was no end-date in sight.

"There's a communal structure to the place, which made us interested in buildings and religious architecture in itself," Elsa explains. "What makes a space holy? How can you make your own holy place?"

Building for the future
Above all else, Elsa says that pandemic has forced people to look closer to home, which has promoted sustainability and more conscious consumption. The pair are trying to renovate their warehouse using only salvaged materials and jokingly suggest that they'd like that point to be advertised in this article in case anyone has any extra plywood laying around. Well—here's the advertisement: their website is krotkrass.com

"It's been a safe haven. You go there and you just think about possibilities," Elsa concludes. Loki smiles. "It's not happening now. It's happening when this is all finished," he says, before pausing. "Everything being built there is for the future."



When talking to Björn Loki Björnsson and Elsa Jónsdóttir of art collective Krot & Krass, you'll find they focus almost exclusively on the positive. Both are unflinchingly uplifting, rejoicing in the silver linings of 2020—the most prominent being the regrowth of the Icelandic art scene.

"It's good now in Reykjavik. My friends in the creative industry—many have gotten studios. Housing is freeing up. That's super positive for us," Elsa says. "A year and a half ago, everybody was having problems with studios."

Loki nods. "People were thinking about moving to Athens or abroad to cheaper places, but a lot of people are coming back now," he interjects, smiling. "That's very nice."

For the duo, the pandemic offered a moment of renewal. Known for their work exploring typography and the deeper meaning of words and written language, they were now given space to dive into new hobbies and projects. They painted their van, which they have lived in on their travels and spent time exploring more eclectic interests, from singing with a few close friends to analysing handwriting.

Old meets new
But the biggest change the pandemic brought about for the duo was a new studio space—a large warehouse in Gufunes called FÚSK, which they've been renovating for the past six months. You could say it's their own personal contribution to the aforementioned revitalisation of the Icelandic arts scene—and it's a big one.



THE PRESENT IS OVER: The next generation of Icelandic artists is creating a new world

Words: **Hannah Jane Cohen**
Photos of artists: **Art Bicnick**

ARNGRÍMUR SIGURÐSSON

"Just before COVID, I was reading a lot by William Blake and I was getting interested in the idea of a sort of final struggle between the industrial world and the environment. I had a go at writing a few poems with these apocalyptic themes, a kind of war between the environment and industry, and all these monsters were coming out. So it was something in the air," Arngrímur Sigurðsson explains. "I've always been working with the idea that people are subject to natural forces rather than the other way around."

Arngrímur's work runs the gamut of styles, but he's most well-known for his visceral depictions of fantastical creatures and beings—monsters, mainly. And perhaps it's because Arngrímur spends so much time dealing with such dark subject matter, but he's remarkably pragmatic when he talks about the pandemic. Unlike most others, he doesn't take its effects personally but regards it merely as a part of the life cycle.

"It's a natural catastrophe," he states simply. "It's like predators. Their role in nature is a symbiotic one. The ecosystem is dependent on all these different sorts of factors to keep it in balance. And when you mess with that..." he trails off.

History repeats itself
Arngrímur is more interested in humanity's response to chaos and points to the current worldwide reaction to the pandemic as the ultimate evidence of the phrase "History repeats itself."

"With any sort of monsters, especially in folklore traditions from more extreme climates, they usually manifest as symbolic representations of natural phenomena depicted in a way that fits a certain worldview or moral narrative. People often try to make some character out of it—to

anthropomorphise natural forces," he explains. "This same tendency to cherry pick unrelated events and causally connecting them to fit a certain worldview is something you can also see in COVID."

He points to the rise in conspiracy theories as evidence.

"The internet and social media is full of magical thinking and groups [like] QAnon present an ideology that, like folklore, is both supernatural and superstitious. Their reality has borrowed the classic mythological theme of the battle between good and evil, with Trump as the hero archetype uprooting the evil forces that lurk in the undergrowth," he continues.

"Artificial Intelligence is emerging as the storyteller of our age. Algorithms profile your behaviour online and target you with material you are likely to click. So if your behaviour suggests you are susceptible to conspiracy or superstition, the platforms will encourage you further and further down your personal rabbit hole," he says, adopting a more serious tone. "And this has a lot to do with imagination. We can imagine that the world is this way or that way, depending on our particularities. And maybe these are world views that might not have much to do with reality, but it works for a lot of people."

"So when we think about monsters, or something supernatural or superstitious, we think it's silly, it's not scientific. We know better," he concludes. "But then when the shit hits the fan, there is a catastrophe or a pandemic, the same human tendencies and inclinations as before creep out and manifest in our experience."

And a new monster is born.



ÞÓRDÍS ERLA ZOËGA



"I remember last January—before this whole thing started—looking at my calendar like 'Oh shit, how am I going to do this year?'" Þórdís Erla Zoëga says, somewhat incredulously. "My boyfriend and I were planning on getting married, I had a few exhibitions [planned], and we had also started a design studio. So I actually kind of liked having everything postponed."

Tech-savvy art

Þórdís's works are known for using vivid and exuberant mediums to investigate balance and symmetry. Her most recent exhibition was 'Hyper Cyber' at Þula, which explored the digital age using dichroic films and UV lights. Outside of that, she works as a web developer and graphic designer.

Thanks to her background, Þórdís found herself uniquely qualified to confront the challenges of being an artist in the pandemic. "Yes, I think people that were already working in digital media," she explains, "We were like—oh, this is my turf."

She, therefore, knew how to turn her eyes towards this new consumption model and did so—to great success. "It's been really good for me. It's gotten a lot of interest in my work and I've enjoyed it. It's good if you are quite tech-savvy and can make yourself a good website."

Cyber aesthetic

Regardless of how well Þórdís adapted to digital platforms, the platforms

themselves have limits, which she found in the midst of the aforementioned 'Hyper Cyber'.

"I work a lot on my computer and I liked the aspect of taking all the aesthetic elements out of the computer screens we have in front of us all day and removing the technological aspect except for the lighting," she explains, when asked about the origins of the exhibition. "These works—even though they are really new—they are really retro in how they are set up."

'Hyper Cyber' was rife with digital symbolism, references to the "old days" of the internet, and bright Miami-style shining lights. That said, it was primarily made with plexiglass, which created some unforeseen challenges when Þórdís attempted to show it to the digital world.

"Pictures didn't really do it justice. It was a bit of an art form to document," she laughs.

In the grand scheme though, as cheesy as it sounds, the pandemic has just made Þórdís realise how lucky she was in the pre-pandemic world. It's not something she'll take for granted again, she emphasises. "It's just like, wow, I didn't really value my freedom as much—like going abroad," she concludes. "Or even just to touch every surface possible and then lick my hand!" She pauses, laughing. "It'll be hard to not be constantly aware of everything I'm touching."



As a flicker of light appears at the end of the pandemic tunnel, we sat down with the next generation of Icelandic artists to discuss the future. The conversations were freeform—some focused on the upcoming years, others reflected on realisations from the past months, others still looked with wide-eyes at the future of the scene, which has only grown within the restrictions of the coronavirus.

Presenting, an artistic vision of the future, as told by the future.

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PRINT & FRIENDS

The name Print & Friends is an apt one, Sigurður Atli Sigurðsson and Leifur Ýmir Eyjólfsson explain, because if the pair is about anything, it's printmaking and collaboration.

In fact, both are so passionate about printmaking that talking to them feels like attending a lively discussion at university—to them, printmaking is much more than a means of production or even a medium in itself, it's a topic of study whose ethos can provoke endless discourse.

"Print & Friends is a collective revolving around printmaking, but it's kind of an open playground," Leifur explains when asked to distil it down to its essence. "From the beginning, it's been focused on the collaborative aspect of printmaking, more than necessarily production. It's the dialogue and the community."

The pair have sought to push the established boundaries of the practice, approaching printmaking in a more "nonchalant way." Within the printmaking community, both explain, there are divisions between those that hold fast to conserve old methods and those pushing it forward. "But you need both," Sigurður Atli admits. "Some people conserve the knowledge that is there and some people find new ways of making it. Between is the collaboration of these two that creates something interesting."

Take your time

While the pandemic made in-person collaboration difficult, it gave artists time to breathe, Leifur explains. In both of their views, the build-up to 2020 saw the schedules of many visual artists becoming increasingly rigorous, potentially putting them into pressure-cooker scenarios where they weren't in the position to make their best work. COVID-19 provided a forced break.

"It's very good to take your time," Leifur explains. "It's benefiting artists to have more time to develop their

ideas and deepen their work method. People are taking more time and producing more quality work. There's not this rush because everything has slowed down, so I see that as a plus."

Virtual world

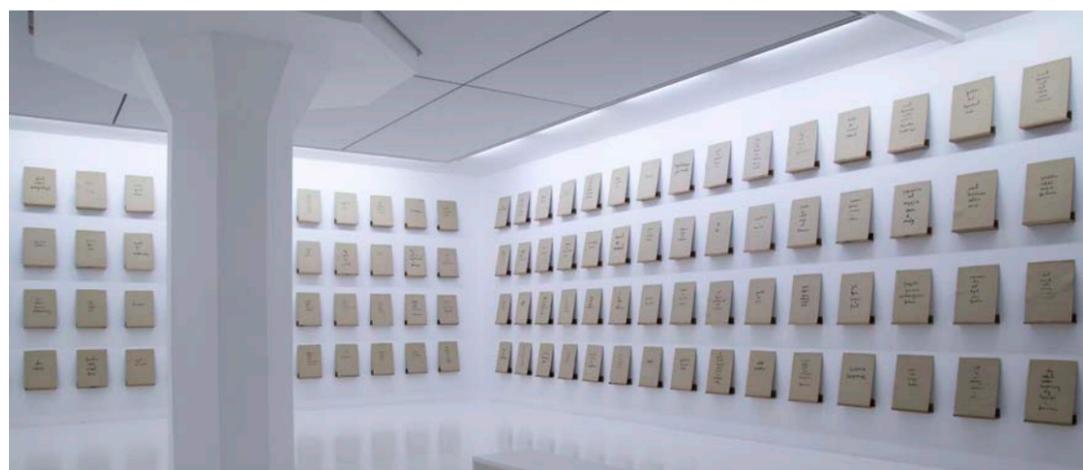
That said, Sigurður Atli sees the downsides of this pandemic in experiences like, well, this interview with the Grapevine, which is conducted via Zoom. "On a larger scale, you take these types of meetings," Sigurður Atli says. "We can get our words across, but there's something missing. And when you're teaching, there's something missing with the students and the students feel it too. You can't do an online lecture like you would in a classroom. The physical link is missing."

But Sigurður Atli thinks that this loss of connection will grow into a greater appreciation of it—and human contact in general—once restrictions abate.

"In situations like this, it's the feeling of a community [that's lost]. People getting together just to see a performance," he continues. "For example, I went to a dance performance yesterday and it was amazing to be there."

For art, the lack of in-person interaction will hopefully cause a mass re-sensitisation to art in general. For Sigurður Atli, it already has.

"This summer, I went to an exhibition and I was just completely overwhelmed. I saw the work and I was besides myself, completely amazed," he smiles. "And my friend, who was working there, said 'Siggi, this is just art.' But I wasn't used to seeing an exhibition in space, in real life, anymore," he concludes. "Hopefully this will lead to people going to an art museum and actually really looking at the work."

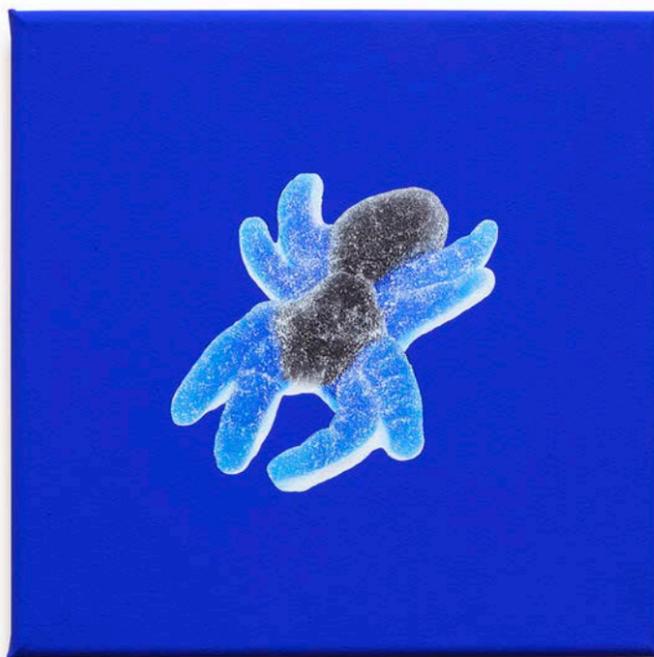




UNA BJÖR



AUÐUNN



HELENA MA



ÖRG MAGNÚSDÓTTIR

"I just think that time slowed down for me, which was kind of positive," Una Björg Magnúsdóttir says of her 2020 experience. "But in general, time just slowed down. There were so many periods of last year so it's weird to look back at March and what we thought then." She pauses, shrugging. "But we judge based on what we know now."

Unconscious reactions
Una's works are potentially the most reliant on in-person interactions of everyone featured. Looking at pieces like her last exhibition at Hafnarhús in early 2020 entitled 'Vanishing Crowd', and it's hard to imagine how she could, or did, transfer such all-encompassing sensual experiences into pandemic-friendly digital platforms—though she did manage to find ways.

"I do sculptures and installations that kind of play with your assumptions, anticipation and disappointment," she explains. "Oftentimes, I like to present something that is quite familiar to viewers so that you almost decide immediately that you know what you're looking at. So there's a phys-

ical reaction—your body reacts before you're conscious of it."

"Like with 'Vanishing Crowd', when people enter, the installation is so simple that you're not even sure it's an exhibition, but then there are small hints that show you that everything is put there intentionally," she continues carefully. "So even though you've decided when you go in there that it's really simple—just a lobby or a waiting room—it's completely constructed. It's fake. Basically you see both sides, like a magic trick."

New specialisations
With art that's so heavily reliant on subjective, small experiences, it's natural to see how Una adopted a role as an observer in the pandemic. While she was, of course, interested in how the art world reformatted itself to fit new platforms, she was, perhaps, more engrossed by the ways the world as a whole did.

"I was quite fascinated all year with things like the people who are, say, recording funerals or something like that," she explains. "I feel like things like that are the things that are going to last or keep

on going." She pauses, acknowledging both the ludicrousness and morbidity of the example.

"You know, you take the clichés of how you record something, like how you record opera that is streamed online. It's not recorded like concerts, it's recorded in a special way by professionals that specialise in recording operas," she continues. "Will there now be a specialised way of recording funerals? Of course, it's awkward if it's badly filmed."

She lets out a stark laugh—and you can't help imagine that yes, it'd be incredibly awkward to watch a funeral filmed by someone who specialises in, say, celebratory wedding videos.

But when asked about the post-pandemic art world, Una is most excited to get back to the fully-fledged in-person museum experience. "It's like going abroad and then coming home. And even though everything is exactly the same—you expect it to be different—but it's the same," she concludes, smiling. "Everything is just a little bit newer."

R LÓA GUÐNADÓTTIR

"I've heard that it takes 20 years to process current events, so maybe in 20 years, we will have a lot to say dissecting this," Auður Lóa Guðnadóttir relays; her voice crackling over Zoom. "I think the future has never been so uncertain and people more unsure of what's going to happen." She smiles as her face freezes for a moment—a perfect pandemic interview moment if ever there was one.

Rise of the introverts

Auður is known for her pint-sized sculptures, which run the gamut from the cute to the absurd. Think of cats in sweaters and relics of Princess Diana—one of Auður's obsessions, who she describes as "the perfect anti-hero"—and you'll get an idea of the kind of spectrum you can expect from Auður.

A self-described introvert, she cheekily admits that she has thrived within the restrictions of the pandemic. "I've heard some people say that they had a hard

time creating inside the vacuum, but I'm not having a problem with that," she explains. "I work mainly with motifs that I source online anyway and COVID has been a really good time for the internet so I've just been surfing the internet and seeing how that's evolving." Currently, she's preparing for an upcoming solo show at Hafnarhús entitled 'Yes/No', opening on March 18th.

TikToks & crowns

That said, Auður has been entertained by the chaos an introverted lifestyle has caused others. "It's been funny to watch other people deal with this situation," Auður says, a small smile lighting up her face. "Making TikToks and writing articles about how to be alone or work alone. That's like all I do!" She laughs. To be clear, her voice is full of care—if there's any schadenfreude, it's a loving kind.

There is no doubt, however, that Auður's sculptures are extroverted beings. "I like people to see them

in real life. It's a different connection," she illustrates. "Because I work on a particular scale—small works and stuff—I feel like people can connect to them on an intimate level when they are in their presence."

But while Auður thrived within the confines of the pandemic, we wonder whether she would have thrived within the confined life of her idol, Princess Diana?

"No, it seems awful," she says seriously. "I don't think I would prosper in that, but I think the spectacle of it really intrigues me." We then dive into a conversation about Diana's life—her fame and her solitude, the latter of which is perhaps not unlike most in the world nowadays. "For her, it must have been a really weird feeling," Auður concludes. "Being so loved but also being so alone."

MARGRÉT JÓNSDÓTTIR



When I spoke with Helena Margrét Jónsdóttir, it's the day before the opening of her first solo exhibition, entitled 'Draugur uppúr öðrum draug' ('A Ghost Of Another

Ghost') at Hverfisgalleri.

"When you see someone who looks really bad, in Icelandic you say they look like a ghost of another ghost," Helena explains. "So I was working with that state of being, like a person who is almost a shadow of herself. She's not really present. She's see-through."

Aesthetically, Helena played with these notions by blurring the lines between flat backgrounds and two-dimensional details—eventually

ending up with a series of large blue-scale works featuring everything from disconnected limbs and Draumur candy bars to shiny spiders on tongues.

"The work I was doing previously was all about longing. I would have these long hands that were tangled. So it was like you're getting in your own way. You're being so complicated about, you know, getting a candy bar," she says, referring back to the aforementioned Draumur candy bars. "This was in a direct line from that, but now, instead of tackling yourself, you're kind of invisible."

Ghosts with the jokes

The exhibition is relatable, fitting within the 2020-21 vibe—everyone has had their fair share of ghost-of-a-ghost moments in lockdown.

But it's Helena's interplay of humour and tragedy that feels particularly poignant. "I have

these dark subjects, these ghosts and spiders that are traditionally connected to horror, but I wanted them to be humorous," she explains. It's this comical look at tragedy that's emblematic of the pandemic zeitgeist.

"Getting through unpleasant or tough moments with humour and seeing the hilarity in them, that's the only way to do it, because what is the other option?" Helena says. And in the face of wide-scale problems like a worldwide pandemic, impending climate change and political unrest, Helena's right. What is the other option?

"These are such big concepts that you can't really do anything about as an individual, so the only thing you can do, instead of despairing and living under your bed for a whole year..." she laughs, before shrugging. "You kind of have to look at the funny side."



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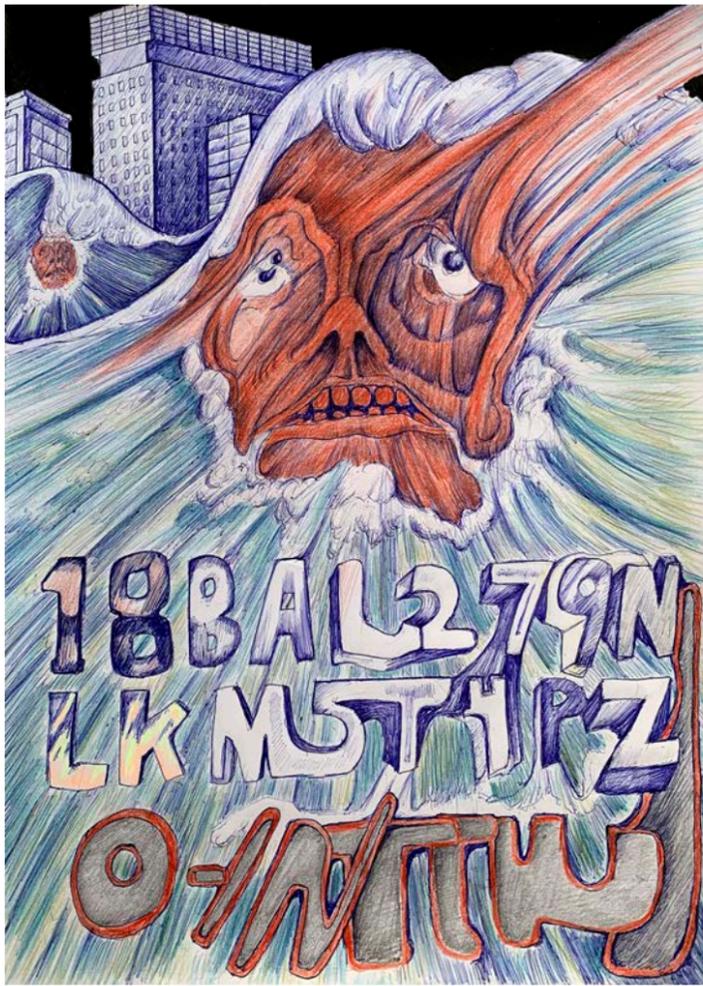
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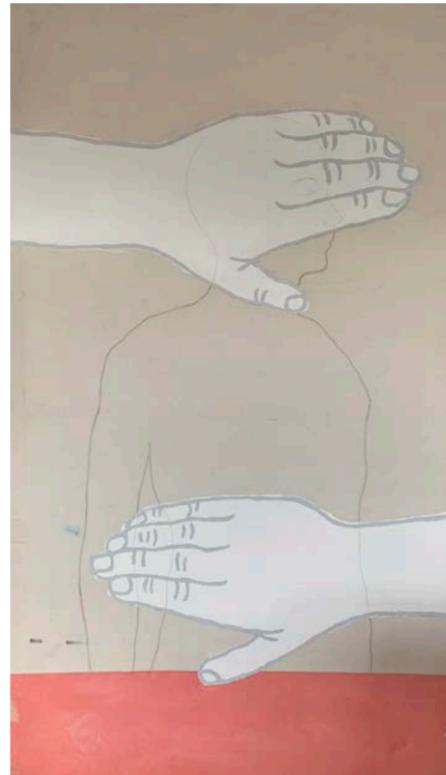
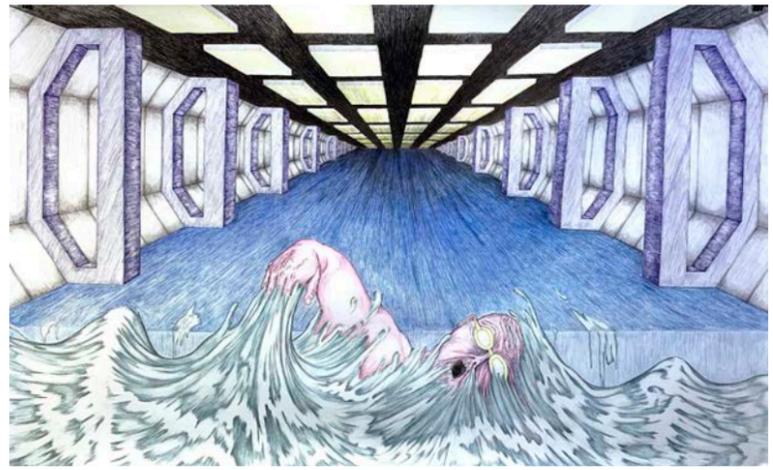
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LOJI HÖSKULDSSON

"It's kind of a word game," Loji Höskuldsson says when asked about the piece he's currently working on. "So here in Iceland, we have this mayonnaise brand. It's kind of a funny company, it's called Gunnars majones ('Gunnar's Mayonnaise'), so first I made a huge bucket of mayonnaise, Gunnar's mayonnaise."

"But then there's also—and it's not related to Gunnar's mayonnaise—a brand called Gunnars kleinhúringir ('Gunnar's Donuts'). Not the same Gunnar," he continues, a big grin lighting up his face. "So this picture is about me going to a guy called Gunnar's house for brunch. And so it's me at Gunnar's house for Gunnar's brunch eating Gunnar's mayonnaise and Gunnar's donuts."

Enter Icelandicana

Loji is known for these sorts of works. In his art, he explores the beauty of the mundane, constantly referencing old school "Icelandicana" and heritage brands in inventive ways that stir up those deep-seated memories

and emotions of times long gone. Basically, he stitches nostalgia.

"I really like things that take you back as a subject. You see them and you say, 'Oh! I remember!'" Loji exclaims. "You're not thinking about them all the time, but when you see them again, it brings you back."

Even his chosen medium—embroidery—is rife with nostalgia. "I think everybody in Iceland has a grandmother who stitched things or memories of some embroidery at their grandparent's house. Every person can relate to it," he says. And based on the reactions he gets to his cosy, heartwarming works—he's right.

Look to the milk cartons

With someone who spends so much time looking back into the ether, it's perhaps natural that Loji hasn't been particularly personally affected by the pandemic. After all, nothing can change the past.

"In this time, in this pandemic, when there's nothing happening really, I'm just trying to explore

more," he shrugs. "I've mostly been trying out new things in my artwork—new stitches and motifs." He pauses, suddenly lost for words. "Wow, maybe I'm the most boring person in the world?"

(Yes, clearly the young artist who just described a fantasy involving two imaginary brand mascots turned into one man eating brunch with him, is the most boring person in the world.)

But bring him back into the past—and the world of Icelandicana—and he's no longer lost for words. Right now, he explains, his favourite nostalgic objects are Icelandic milk cartons from the 90s.

"In Iceland, we only recently had some new companies making milk. We used to have only one company. They changed their milk carton design every 10 years or so, so if you look at pictures and you see milk cartons, you know what year [it's from]," he says gleefully. "This design and that design—they bring you back to an era."

SIGURÐUR ÁMUNDASON

Over the course of the pandemic, Sigurður Ámundason read Miguel de Cervantes' 'Don Quixote'. "It's just this huge gigantic masterpiece," he raves. "But according to the prologue, Cervantes was so excited to write it that he made a few errors. There's a scene with Sancho Panza where he has a donkey, then someone steals it, but then later he's on it again." Sigurður smiles brightly—as if he himself has just seen a windmill in the distance. "I love the idea of a masterpiece being flawed. It doesn't have to be completely perfect to be the first modern novel ever written, as it's called."

Waving to the wrong person

Sigurður's work, he explains, explores the monotonous struggles of mankind. "Bad communication with people, awkwardness, misunderstandings," he lists. "You know, you forget to say hello to someone because you didn't realise it was them. That's a small nightmare and that's what I'm inter-

ested in, so I try to blow them up using heavy imagery to represent the cringey moments of everyday life."

Through the many ups and downs of the pandemic, Sigurður found immense meaning in the worldwide #BlackLivesMatter protests in May and June. At the time, he was working at the National History Museum.

"There were no tours or guests and we were surrounded by this ancient art. Everything was going on in the world but everything was dead here. We were just stuck on this island," he relays.

For Sigurður, the protests spurred on a moment of reflection and empathy.

"It felt like there was nothing you could really do because I didn't know that experience. As a white man, I don't know what that is, but I wanted to," he explains. "I've never experienced the horrors of war or racism but maybe we can relate on some small things. Maybe you have some awkward

communication with someone at the protest and just feel horrible or angry or frustrated because of that and then you're miserable. That's something we can all share. That's the commonality and that's what I want to explore with my art: the mundane horrors that we all have."

Finding commonality Sigurður sees concentrating on these small horrors—and the shared humanity of it all—as the key for those from more privileged groups, who don't have the same experiences as those within marginalised groups, to connect with each other.

"If you see someone that looks like you hurting someone that doesn't look like you, it's easier for people to see [the situation] from the perspective of the [person] they look like," he continues. "But instead of that, try to understand and relate to the struggle of the person that's being harassed. People really need to shift their minds to relate to the pain in others."

ÝMIR GRÖNVOLD

Ýmir Grönvold spent the first six months of the pandemic in Kathmandu, Nepal helping his uncle undergo alternative rehabilitation therapy. "We got locked down there and then we ended up staying," he notes softly; his voice crisp and light. "It was interesting because it's the most polluted city in the world, but after a few days of lockdown, you could see the mountains again."

The problem of ego

Ýmir's works are playful—large scale paintings highly connected to nature in a rather uplifting, innocent way. In Nepal, he became acquainted with thangka, a special breed of Buddhist paintings. "They are usually made by a lot of people. No one person takes credit," he explains. "That was a really big cultural difference. We're so ego-driven in the West. If you're an artist, it's more about you, or at least that's how I sometimes see it, but it was really beautiful to see these collaborative paintings and no one person taking credit..."

Almost fittingly—or perhaps the opposite of fittingly—his next exhibited piece will be an appropriated sculpture for the 'Raw Power' exhibition at Hafnarhús, which puts Erró's work in dialogue with young artists. Ýmir made the piece three years ago, but it's uncanny to hear an artist jump from appropriated to uncredited art in but a few minutes. I suppose they are but opposite approaches to the same problem: ego.

Stay calm

Ýmir is calm. Everything he says seems to come both from the heart and off the cuff while also seeming incredibly well thought out. It's weird to think about him even grappling with the problem of ego. According to Ýmir, 2020 has been a year of personal growth. He wasn't always so centered.

"I can sympathise a lot with people and I understand that some people are having a crisis because of the situation, but when people say like 2020 sucked, it's like 'what

are you talking about? What do you mean?' I think people really think they need to control everything," he says. "And when you are forced to experience yourself—your own thoughts and everything—it's understandable that some people can suffer."

For Ýmir, the cure was mindfulness. "There is a shift that happens in people's consciousness. That's why all these monks are meditating, why people do this stuff because there's a shift that happens in people when their presence becomes the forefront of their life—not the person they think they are, but who they actually are," he explains.

Ýmir hopes the pandemic will push more people down the path of being more present. "My feeling is that more people are more conscious," he explains. "More and more are becoming vegan. There's more sensitivity to other's feelings. But maybe that's just totally my world."



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The Gospel Of Galleries

Art 1:01 GV - Go and inspire yourself downtown, ye plebs.

Words: Hannah Jane Cohen Photos: Art Bicnick

Jesus Christ (a figure you might know from art history), there are a lot of new galleries in Reykjavík right now, huh? It used to be easy to write a gallery guide for the city, but now this article is basically a list with a sentence or two about each. Hey, at least that's better than only having like two live music venues left, right...? Guys...?

Ásmundarsalur

Freyjugata 41

Is Ásmundarsalur really a gallery? No, but considering the fantastic exhibitions and workshops they hold, we'd posit it's basically a gallery that also does other non-gallery things (potentially a long-term piece of performance art). We particularly enjoyed Halldór Eldjárn's plant machine this year, but we love every unexpected thing Ásmundarsalur presents.

The Marshall House

Grandagarður 20

If you haven't heard of Kling og Bang or the Living Art Museum, thank God you're reading this guide as you

clearly have no idea what you're doing with your life and probably don't even know you're in Reykjavík. You are. And there is a place called The Marshall House and inside are two galleries where you should expect something ambitious and unique—from makeshift karaoke rooms to gardens covered in bees.



Hverfisgalleri

Hverfisgata 4

If I had to use just one word to describe Hverfisgallerí, it'd be ambitious. Every artist they represent—from the kaleidoscopic Davíð Örn Halldórsson to the bad stitch himself Loji Höskuldsson—consistently tops themselves. If there were a gallery that “rises and grinds”—40 hours a day—it's this one.



Berg Contemporary

Klapparstígur 16

Berg is the number one go-to stop for those looking to quench their contemporary art thirst. They've very much nailed down how to create that delightful, all-encompassing contemporary art experience, and you always leave feeling somewhat rejuvenated and smarter. Skip the pool. Head to Berg.



FLÆÐI

Vesturgata 17

2020 saw the return of FLÆÐI and many flowing happy tears ensued. If you're looking for up-and-coming, alternative, bourgeoisie-elite-gallery-culture-smashing artists, exhibitions, concerts, events, and more, head to Vesturgata. If you're lucky, there might be some erotic food art on call. ; -)



Gallery Port

Laugavegur 23

We've long referred to Gallery Port as the dive bar of the Icelandic art scene, in that they are extremely cool and in-the-know and you'd just kind of want to hang out with them were they a person. The Laugavegur space serves up gritty, unusual, eclectic art by people who are extremely cool, in-the-know, and you'd just kind of want to hang out inside were they a gallery.



i8

Tryggvagata 16

From 2015 to our most recent award ceremony, i8 has consistently been named the Best Art Gallery at the Grapevine's annual Best Of Reykjavík awards. Expect to see conceptual cutting-edge displays from art superstars at this downtown spot. That said, there's always a sense of fun running through the gallery's roster, so don't be afraid this is some elite art hoity-toity academic institution. #i8ForEvery1



Núllið

Bankastræti 0

Núllið—winner of the Hidden Gem at the BoR awards—has their finger on the underground art pulse of Reykjavík. To be fair, it's probably because they are underground. The gallery focuses on new, evocative and subversive Icelandic artists and showcases many people's first exhibitions. Núllið, pls change your name to Milljónir.



Pula

Hverfisgata 34

This new kid on the block burst onto the scene with—pardon our French—a really fucking good series of exhibitions this year. Seriously, can we hire whoever books for them? And apparently next year they'll be showcasing Sigurður Ámundason, Anna Maggý, Kristín Morthens and more. Jeez, calm down. As if we weren't already fucking impressed. 🍷

BEST OF REYKJAVÍK

Best Place To Start The Night



Veður

Klapparstígur 33

For the second time in a row, Veður has snatched up the Best Place To Start The Night gold medal. And for good reason. This charming, low-key, hole-in-the-wall serves up some great cocktails and a dedicated crowd that grabbed each member of the panel's heart. “There's something casual about Veður in that you feel fine relaxing and chatting but it's still a nice and sophisticated bar,” one panellist explained. “But that said, the first time I went they were playing a new wave punk playlist, so it's not your average quiet cocktail bar.”

Loft

Bankastræti 7

“Loft is perfectly situated between the two areas of downtown and their Happy Hour lasts until 21:00,” one panel member raved. “Their service is also great, and their balcony is fantastic in the summer.” It's no wonder the hostel's cosy bar has a cult following. Go there on weeknights for a plethora of events including karaoke, watercolouring, and speed dating.

Miami

Hverfisgata 33

Miami has a lot going for it—an amazing interior, delicious cocktails, and a relaxed atmosphere early in the night that's very conducive for chill convos and bonding. “It's a good vibe in the early evening,” one panellist raved. “Also, it's a well-done novelty bar. I love that.” 🍷

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In Your Pocket



Reykjavík Map

Places We Like

Best Of Reykjavík

Perfect Day

Dance, jive & have the time of your life



“I go and see some amazing local acts that I’ve never seen before. Something new and undiscovered.”

Words: **Hannah Jane Cohen**
Photo: **Art Bicnick**

CeaseTone

Hafsteinn Þráinsson, also known as **CeaseTone**, creates the type of cinematic indie music that just makes you feel all the feelings at once. He is also—and pardon our French—a damn good singer. CeaseTone just dropped a new track, “Continents,” which you absolutely must check out (after reading the Grapevine, of course). Here’s his perfect day in the city.

First thing in the morning

My perfect day has a lot to do with all the right pieces coming together. I’d first wake up as early as possible and do some work from home until 11:00. Then I’d bike to **Seltjarneslaug**. I live in Vesturbær, by the ocean, so I’d bike to the ocean first and then head to the pool. I don’t have a car, I bike everywhere all year round. But

I’d go to the pool and gym between 11:00 to 12:30.

Mid-day

My studio is in Grandi so I’d bike there after, but I’d stop at **The Cocoo’s Nest** on the way. That’s my hang-out in Grandi. I know a lot of people who work there and it just has the best vibe and the best food. I’d get brunch there if they would serve brunch every day, but right now it’s only on Sundays. So, on my Perfect Day, they’d be selling brunch every day.

I’d get to the studio around 13:00. When I’m working, I prefer to mix a whole track or write a whole song—something complete. I’d try to finish around 17:00 or 18:00. In reality, I’d probably be done way later but this is my Perfect Day, so let’s say 18:00.

Evening

Next I’d head for dinner at **Hi Noodle**. Ramen is my favourite thing in the world.

After that, I’d meet up with some friends at **Skúli Craft Bar** because they have a dart board and nice beer. So I’d have some nice beer, engage in deep conversation with some friends, and throw some darts.

In the heat of the night

If there wasn’t COVID, I’d just see where the night would take me after that. Maybe I’d go to the **old Húrra (RIP)**—on my Perfect Day, it’d still be open. But let’s just say there’s some new music venue opening up and I go and see some amazing local acts that I’ve never seen before. Something new and undiscovered. In such a small place, that’s always the most fun night. 🍷



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Venue Finder

Venues	Museums & Galleries
ART67 Laugavegur 67 F7 Open daily 9-21	The Penis Museum Laugavegur 116 F8 Open daily 10-18
Ásmundarsalur Freyjugata 41 G6 Open Tue-Sun 8-17	Kirsuberjatróð Vesturgata 4 D3 M-F 10-18, Sat-Sun 10-17
Aurora Reykjavík Grandagarður 2 B1 Open 09-21	Kling & Bang Grandagarður 20 A4 W-Sun 14-18, Th 12-21
Ásgrímur Jónsson Museum Bergstaðastr. 74 G4 July 8-Sep 1, Mon-Fri	Listastofan Hringbraut 119 Open Wed-Sat 13-17
Berg Contemporary Klapparstígur 16 E5 Tu-F 11-17, Sat 13-17	Living Art Museum Grandagarður 20 A4 T-Sun 12-18, Th 12-21
The Culture House Hverfisgata 15 E5 Open daily 10-17	Mokka Kaffi Skólavörðustíg. 3A E5 Open daily 9-18:30
The Einar Jónsson Museum Eiríksgrata 05 Open Tue-Sun 10-17	Museum of Design and Applied Art Garðatorg 1 Open Tu-Sun 12-17
Exxistenz Bergstaðast. 25b F4	The National Gallery of Iceland Frikirkjuvegur 7 Open daily 10-17
Galleri List Skipholt 50A H10 M-F 11-18, Sat 11-16	The National Museum Suðurgata 41 Open daily 10-17
Hafnarborg Ströngata 34, 220 Open Wed-Mon 12-17	The Nordic House Sturlugata 5 H2 Thu-Tu 11-17, W 11-20
Hverfisgalleri Hverfisgata 4 D4 Tu-Fri 13-17, Sat 14-17	Hafnarhús Tryggvagata 17 D3 Open 10-17, Thu 10-22
i8 Gallery Tryggvagata 16 D3 Tu-Fri 11-18, Sat 13-17	Kjarvalsstaðir Fókagata 24 H8 Open daily 10-17
Austur Austurstræti 7 D3	Ásmundarsafn Sigtún Open daily 10-17
American Bar Austurstræti 8 D3	Reykjavík City Library Tryggvagata 15 D3 Mon-Thu 10-18, Fri 11-18, Sat-Sun 13-17
Andrými Bergþórugata 20 G6	Árbæjarsafn Kistuhúfur 4 Open daily 13-17
B5 Bankastræti 5 E4	The Settlement Exhibition Baldursgata 12 D3 Open daily 9-18
Bió Paradís Hverfisgata 54 E5	Reykjavík Museum of Photography Tryggvagata 15 D3 Mon-Thu 10-18, Fri 11-18, Sat-Sun 13-18
Bravó Laugavegur 22 E5	Saga Museum Grandagarður 2 B2 Open daily 10-18
Curious Hafnarstræti 4 D3	Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum Laugarnestangi 70 Open Tu-Sat 14-17
Dillon Laugavegur 30 E5	SÍM Hafnarstræti 16 D3 Open Mon-Fri 10-16
Dubliner Naustin 1-3 D3	Tveir Hrafnar Baldursgata 12 G4 Open Fri-Sat 13-16
English Pub Austurstræti 12 D3	Wind & Weather Window Gallery Hverfisgata 37 E5
Gaukurinn Tryggvagata 22 D3	
Hard Rock Café Lækjargata 2a D3	
Hressó Austurstræti 20 D3	
Iðnó Vonarstræti 3 E3	
Kex Hostel	

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 week-days 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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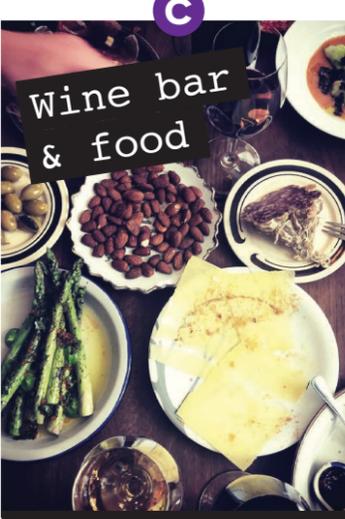
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C

Wine bar
& food



VINSTÚKAN
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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. 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 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.

2. Duck & Rose

Austurstræti 14

Duck & Rose is the hip and happening place that opened across the street from Apótek last May. The new cafe serves light fare influenced by French and Italian cuisine. With neon signs and roses on the walls, the chic cafe is certainly inspired by romance. Try the duck pizza. Their vegan rigatoni is also orgasmic.

3. Fjallkonan

Hafnarstræti 1-3

Named after the female personification of Iceland, Fjallkonan is located smack-bang in the middle of downtown, and caters to locals and tourists alike. For the Icelandic-cuisine-curious, there is a platter of whale, lamb and puffin. For those who are just looking for a great selection of fresh meat, fish and vegetarian options, Fjallkonan does these well, also. The veggie burger, double-cooked fries, and beetroot and feta dish come highly recommended.

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 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. Deig

Vegamótastígur 4

It's hard to make any promises about availability at Deig due to the bakery's love of innovation and surprising flavours. The good news is that you'll rarely see a misstep there as all of their stuff is amazing. Stop by, and Deig'll fix you up with a chocolate cake cruller, crème brûlée doughnut or some other fried delight. But if you get a chance

to taste their glazed, almost cakey, lemon poppy seed doughnut—leap on it like a werewolf..

6. Osushi

Tryggvagata 13

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

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 fried chicken from KORE. 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. Yuzu

Hverfisgata 44

Headed up by the owners of beloved clothing store Húrra Reykjavík, Yuzu is an artisanal burger shop with an Eastern twist. Stop by for their lunch deal, which features a choice of burgers, with fries and spiced mayonnaise for 1,990 ISK. They've also got a kimchi chicken burger—not part of the lunch deal—which sounds deliciously intriguing. Real-talk: Yuzu's condiments converted two previously mayo-averse Grapevine staffers.

10. Hotdog House

Ingólfstorg

Situated in one of two huts on Ingólfstorg, Hotdog House provides one of Iceland's culinary staples at an affordable price, and in many different forms. Whether you're looking for bratwurst, bacon-wrapped, or just a hot dog with everything on it, Hotdog House is a safe bet.

11. The Coooco's Nest

Grandagarður 23

Nestled in a refurbished fishing hut in Grandi, The Coooco's Nest is a cosy and airy cafe, offering California-casual brunch, lunch, and dinner, with an Italian twist. With large windows and light wood throughout, this is perfect for a lazy Saturday get-together or an afternoon 'aperitivo' after work. If you are in that part of town, head over for a warm-up.

Drinking

12. Vinstúkan Tíu Sopar

Laugavegur 27

The charming basement bar focuses on natural wines as well as wines from smaller producers and lesser-known regions. They have twelve bottles open at any one time, and the selection changes daily, so you truly never know what you're going to get.

13. Aldamót Bar

Kirkjutorg 4

Taking over the famed Klaustur place, this cosy spot is the perfect mix of classy and relaxed. It's become a favourite of our Culture Editor in the past months with socially distance-safe tables and table service. This place has got a bright and boozy future.

14. Bravó

Laugavegur 22

IT'S OPEN! Yup, Bravó is your regular run-of-the-mill bar that serves decent drinks and doesn't try to be anything that it's not. The bar plays good music at a comfortable volume that allows for conversation, and provides good seating options even during late nights, when most bars have removed their tables to make room for a dancefloor. No, people at Bravó don't dance. They compare Berghain club experiences.

15. Apótek

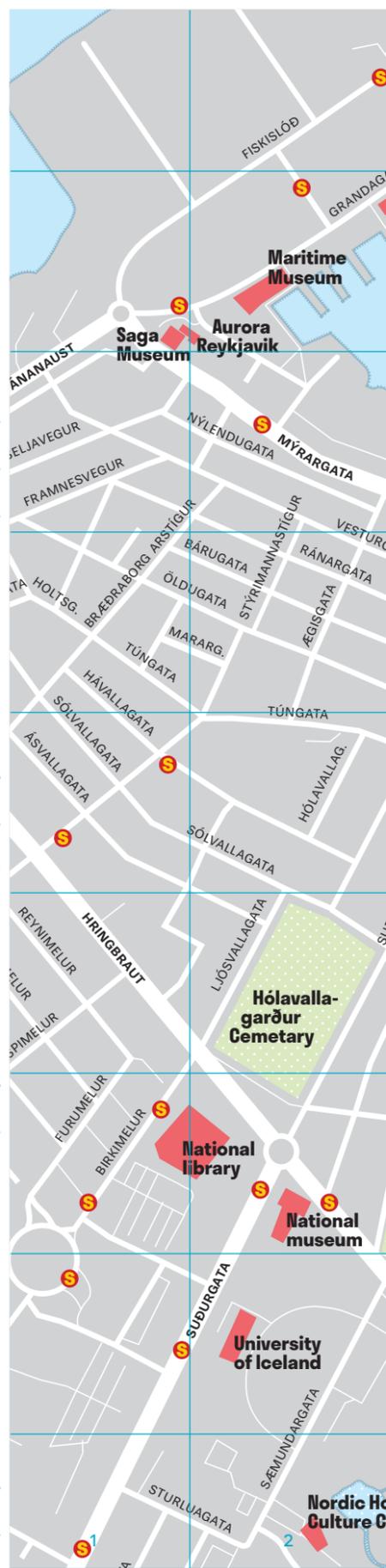
Austurstræti 16

Apótek is a spacious, upscale restaurant whose cocktail creations have picked up a bundle of local awards. The building's pharmacological past lives on in its name—Apótek means pharmacy—and the cocktail list, which is divided up into categories like "painkillers" or "stimulants," exemplifies this. We'd recommend the Black Death Negroni and the Stranger Tides.

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

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. Go for an after work drink. That's when this place thrives.

18. Kaldi Bar

Laugavegur 20b

IT'S OPEN! Yup, a small, stylish drinking hole popular with the after-work business crowd, Kaldi is a great place

E

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New In Town ☆



Mutt Gallery
Laugavegur 48

A new gallery? In MY visual arts issue? What are the chances? Yes, taking over the old KronKron store is Mutt Gallery, run by visual arts devotee Júlía Marinósdóttir. The gallery takes its name from the famous Duchamp urinal work—which was signed R. Mutt—and is currently presenting an exhibition by Úlfur Karlsson entitled '2+2=5'. Their next exhibition (which will open on February 26th) will be by Shu Yi, whose artwork explores moments in time. We say, what a moment in time for art in Reykjavík. **HJC**

to feel a little classier and drink with dignity. The beer selection is top-notch, and the handcrafted interior tips the scales of upscale rustic charm. You can be certain that conversation will rule, not loud music. You also might meet important people, fall in love, and move to Seltjarnarnes.

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

Laugavegur 7

Hildur's got a fresh new boutique on Laugavegur. As well as selling her own designs—womenswear characterised by flowing shapes with colourful, distinctive, busy prints—Hildur Yeoman's boutique also features sunglasses by Le Specs, jewellery 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 Reykjavík 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. Aftur

Laugavegur 39

Aftur is a mecca for Iceland's stylish gothy fashionistas. Whilst most of the young Reykjavík crowd is wearing baseball caps and 90s throwback pieces, the older ones are often seen

in flowing black capes and dresses. If you are into this particular 101 RVK look, this place is gold.

23. Lucky Records

Rauðarárstígur 10

Lucky Records is the punky, underground horse of the Reykjavík 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. Pastel Flower Studio

Baldurgata 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.

25. 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.



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AUSTURSTRÆTI 8 • REYKJAVÍK



Wild boys

The Surreal Life Of Sturle Dagsland

...is now available on his self-titled effort

Words: Hannah Jane Cohen Photos: Eirik Heggen

Album

Check out 'Sturle Dagsland' on all streaming platforms. Pick up an LP at sturledagsland.bandcamp.com.

"When I was 10 years old, I got the Aqua 'Aquarium' album for Christmas from my Grandmother," Sturle Dagsland explains, when asked where his love for music began. "Then there was a contest at school and I planned to perform 'Barbie Girl' of course. I was supposed to perform with my friend—I would be Barbie and he was Ken—but he dropped out the day of the show. So me and my Mother had to make a doll that was Ken."

Sturle says all this as if making a doll to replace his friend would be the most natural solution to the problem. It's clear that, even then, he was a natural performer. For, as any performer knows, the show must go on.

"So I borrowed my Mother's bra and mini skirt and made myself up like a Barbie. I filled the bra with lots of candy, which I called my silicone, and I performed 'Barbie Girl'. I was simulating sex with the doll on stage and just having a really fun show," he continues, grinning. "At the end I threw out all the candy from the bra!"

The question of course remains—did he win the contest?

"Yeah!" he says casually. "And I got booked to do the same thing in a church!"

At this, his brother and band-mate Sjur grins. "That was your first paying gig."

Surreal escapism

To call Sturle's music theatrical feels derivative. Transformative might be more fitting. His works are escapist in a way you might have never experienced before. Instead of transporting you to the fantastical dreamy places you keep in the back of your mind,

they pull you sharply into surreal worlds you couldn't possibly imagine. Worlds where any boundaries between genres, tones, vibes and structures are erased. Now, after years of relentless touring, he's here with his debut self-titled effort.

"It's a very expressive, explorative and dynamic album," Sturle explains. "We use lots of different instruments from all over the world—harps, waterphones, African instruments, Nordic instruments like nyckelharpa, which is sort of a fiddle. We even have a custom-made billy goat horn that an old man in the north of Norway made for us."

He smiles. "Then we mix them with electronics, and I use lots of different vocal techniques, throat singing, pop—you know, it's a mix of lots of different things..." he says, trailing off.

I can't help but grin. Only Sturle would put throat singing, waterphones, a custom-made billy goat horn and pop singing into the same sentence and say it so nonchalantly. It's a testament to his creativity and love of music—for Sturle, these instruments are only the beginning.

Kiwis & churches

The brothers are known for their energetic live performances—they were supposed to perform at this year's Secret Solstice festival and will hopefully appear at the next if it happens and they've travelled the world together, appearing everywhere from Shanghai city squares to small villages in Greenland.

"We played a show in an old church in Greenland. There was no electricity in the church and it was -30°C. I had to wear all my clothes just to perform," Sturle remembers. "But it's like, now we really miss doing that show."

It's easy to see how they'd thrive onstage and when asked

about their approach to bringing such extravagant music into a live setting, the two reference a review they once had where Sturle was compared to GG Allin.

"It said, 'I always wanted to experience something like GG Allin, but never thought I would experience it from a guy walking onstage in pantaloons and tights eating a kiwi,'" he says, smiling. "But then, the year later, the same people compared him to Charles Manson," his brother adds. The

two then burst out in laughter.

Granted, the pandemic was rough on them. They had around 80 shows cancelled, including tours in Europe, South America and Asia. However, as you'd expect, both are remarkably jovial about their time spent at home—even if it wasn't ideal.

"Every morning in lockdown, Sjur's neighbour woke him up by playing the 'Seinfeld' theme song on bass guitar. So every morning we'd say, 'Okay, it couldn't get

worse than this!' But then the next day he'd get woken by it again." Sturle laughs before mimicking the famous bass-line.

"Of course, it's not the ideal time to release an album. It's probably harder to release an album right now," he concludes. "But, you know, you can't just sit on the album because you have to, right?"

No—the show must go on. 🍻

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Event Picks



French Film Festival ★

Until February 14th - Bió Paradís

French people are alleged to be fantastic lovers, so we assumed they would have prolonged the affection past Valentine's Day. Ah, well, the French are also known for

confusing philosophy. Anyway, come celebrate the country known for barricades, ballet and Emmy-award nominée 'Emily In Paris' at Bió Paradís' French Film Days,

which are presented in collaboration with the French embassy, the Alliance Française de Reykjavík and the Institut Français. The program is, *absolument fantastique*, but we'd particularly recommend 'Les Parapluies de Cherbourg', a musical about an umbrella store owner who falls in love with a guy named Guy, gets pregnant, marries a rich dude and... you know. BTW, France has fantastic musicals—for reference, check out "Le temps des cathédrales" from Notre-Dame de Paris. That key change tho. **HJC**



Vikingur: Debussy & Rameau ★

March 5th, 7th & 9th - 20:00 - Harpa - 4,900-9,900 ISK

The Grapevine swears here and now: If this concert is once again postponed, we will do something very bad. By that, we mean we might listen to another album that puts legendary composers Debussy and Rameau in dialogue. Oh wait, there isn't one. We <3 u Vikingur. **HJC**



Páll Óskar: 50 Years! ★

March 4th, 5th & 6th - 20:00 - Háskólabíó - 9,900-11,900 ISK

The Grapevine also swears here and now: If this concert is once again postponed, we will do something very bad. By that, we mean we will throw out our glittery jumpsuit and wear boring clothing and only listen to quiet indie music. Jk. **HJC**



MUSIC NEWS Grapevine cover star Anna Þorvaldsdóttir recently

premiered her newest orchestra work 'CATAMORPHOSIS' with the Berliner Philharmoniker and conductor Kirill Petrenko. The concert was COVID-friendly, streamed online via the orchestras online platform Digital Concert Hall. The inspiration for the piece revolved around the fragile relationship humanity has with the Earth. There's a sense of urgency throughout—though it's unclear just what must be done to heal or repair said fragile relationship. As we are a paper that relies on (hopefully sustainable) tree farming to be created, we also have a fragile relationship with the Earth. Thank you for bringing it to life, Anna. **HJC**

Our dog Pollý (along with the gathering ban) ate our music listings page



Not pictured: Sunna's cauldron

Sunna Friðjóns & Her Spells

Forage through a dewy forest for some magical music

Words: Hannah Jane Cohen Photo: Art Bicnick

Album

Check out 'Let the Light in' by Sunna Friðjóns on all streaming platforms.

When Sunna Friðjónsdóttir, who performs under Sunna Friðjóns, approached making her newest effort 'Let the Light in', she says she wanted it to sound big. "I wanted to put some power in it, some epic-ness to the foundation and to not be afraid to mix that with the piano," she explains. "I wanted to make it plugged in but still cinematic, flowy, vulnerable and mystical."

But while you won't hear dramatic choirs or towering percussion in Sunna's songs, she no doubt achieved this goal. Her songs are evocative. Full of dancing, delicate, swaying piano and light, smooth, tinkling vocals, each verse brings forth delightful visions of won-

drous worlds. Her album is one to daydream to. In fact, it's hard to listen to 'Let the Light in' without being sucked into a fairytale or medieval fable full of fairies, sprites, heroes and the monsters that lurk in the shadows.

A wake-up call

Sunna's background is primarily in flute. While she studied both piano and flute formally as a child, by the time she was a teenager, she chose to stick with the woodwind and eventually went to university for it.

"I had a wake-up call at university where I realised that that wasn't what I wanted. I never fit in the classical music industry. Everything had to be done a certain way," Sunna explains. "Many people thrive in that and that's really cool but I didn't see a way I could be totally me and go that

route."

That said, she loved playing and had been singing and making songs all her life, so it felt natural to shift her musical passion into songwriting. "There was more ease, more joy—more fun there," she says.

She explains that due to this new outlook on performance, she began to really connect to the piano again, which led to the development of the Sunna Friðjóns project.

"There is just a lot of music that wants to come out of me," she says softly. "I love to do something different, write a different song, just do whatever is fun at the moment. Follow whatever intrigues me and inspires me."

The witch & her potion

As you might expect from her music, a lot of Sunna's inspirations come from fantasies. In fact, the first time we played the album at the Grapevine office, it sparked a debate on which universe her album existed in. I chose 'The Lady of Shalott.'

"Some people are really good at painting a picture with words,

but it's hard to do that with your own music, you're so far in it," she notes. "But what people always tell me is that they have these visions of forests and mystical natural vibes."

These visions are particularly poignant in "Inni í skugganum," a flowing, earthy track, which became an early favourite upon first listen. The first three minutes feel straight out of a poem—I imagined a solemn sorceress tip-toeing through a dewy forest foraging ingredients for her next spell; mushrooms from the creek, herbs from under a willow, a single fallen feather from a dove.

But then, at three minutes, it's time to brew the potion, whose magical reaction grows bigger and bigger until it bursts forth into a larger-than-life unremittingly beautiful piano breakdown. It's a spine-tingling uncharacteristically harsh moment from Sunna that actually spurred on one of those rare times where I re-started a song mid-listen to hear it again. A sacrilegious move, but one that felt necessary. Of course, by the end, the intensity of the spell has abated into the flowing breeze of the beginning. The effects of the reaction remain unknown—only the witch knows.

"I remember, there came so much power at that moment and I thought, well, it's kind of like piano rock," Sunna says. "It was experimental. We were knocking on the wood of the instruments, plucking. There were effects on the bass and distortion. It was so fun," She smiles; her eyes crinkling at the edges.

'Let the Light in' ends with "Melt," a song whose last calming minute slowly brings you out of Sunna's fantasy and into the real world. Amazingly, it's not a jarring shift—you'd expect leaving somewhere so lovely would be. No, instead, you can't help but feel a bit giddy as the sounds fade away—a tad lighter, a bit more innocent. And as it fades to silence, I can't help but think that perhaps that's the spell the witch cast. **HJC**



Ya fav Icelandic musical hero Daði Freyr will be releasing his Eurovision 2021 song on March 13th. Daði, as you know, was a shoe-in for the winner last year and it was only due to the COVID virus—which we can only assume was made by Israel to destroy Iceland's chances of splendour after Hatari showed them up on live television—that his glory was foiled. Thankfully, he agreed to represent Iceland this year as well and while "Think About Things" was totally great, we know he will have something even more spectacular this year. Of course, this premier does raise some very important questions: What will phase three of the matching gagnamað outfit trilogy look like? Will there be choreography? How will we celebrate our inevitable win? How will Iceland host Eurovision 2022? Who from the Grapevine office will take the press pass? Cue the chaos. **HJC**



Kaleo really pushed socially-distanced concerts to their breaking point in a new live music video for "Break My Baby" filmed at Vestmannaeyjar's Þrídrangar lighthouse. The lighthouse is set on a 120 foot nearly vertical cliff face, so it's safe to say it was a rather isolated set. Here's a fun historical tidbit: construction of the lighthouse was completed on July 5th, 1942, and Kaleo's performance was filmed exactly 78 years later, so it's a fitting tribute to the Icelandic men and women who risked their lives to build the it, which would be absolutely terrifying if you had a fear of heights. Notably, the video was shot by Eik Studios with Grapevine Music Award winning filmmakers Rough Cult, who we love. It is truly an extremely impressive production. Thank God for drones. **HJC**

4 February - 3 April 2021

ANDREAS ERIKSSON

Art



Cool as a cucumber (hands not actual cucumbers)

Hot Dogs, Dongs and Woolly Tongues

Ýrúrarí's quest to create a better sweater

Words: **John Pearson** Photos: **Art Bicnick**

Workshop

Check it out at the Museum of Design and Applied Art until May 25th

Ýrúrarí certainly has a fascination with the squishier, more interesting parts of the human body.

The textile designer first piqued the interest of many last year with her striking, tongue-adorned knitted face masks—her creative response to the suddenly omnipresent anti-pandemic measures. But even before that, Ýrúrarí—the artist-name of Ýr Jóhannsdóttir—was notable for her signature lippy, mouthy, woolly sweaters. Not to mention her beautiful phallic scarf and vulval purses which, of course, must be mentioned.

"Body parts have become a big theme. I'm not sure why!" she laughs. "But it just happened. It's a difficult question to answer; I am still looking for the answer myself."

This was not supposed to be a thing

Ýrúrarí's unnerving face masks thrust her into the international spotlight. Each one produced in the series was snapped up by a museum, looking to record this weird period of human history via a slice of creative zeitgeist.

"I was not expecting this many people to react to the masks, because they were not supposed to be anything," Ýrúrarí says. "It was meant to be just a small series of sculptures on how face masks could be. But it was fun to wear them. And they were also implying that people should stay away from you!"

But long before her cunning lingual creations captured our imaginations, Ýrúrarí was

knitting together two Icelandic icons—the woolly sweater and the humble hot dog. The name of that project, Peysa Með Öllu, (Sweater With Everything), toys with the Icelandic phrase "pyslu með öllu", which is how you order a hot dog with all the sauces and trimmings.

For that project, Ýrúrarí took sweaters which had been donated to the Red Cross but were rejected as unsuitable for sale—many due to overenthusiastic pylsu consumption. "The name of the project comes from the fact that lots of the sweaters had stains on the front, after



someone had eaten a hot dog and spilled the sauce," she explains.

Ýrúrarí's imagination was sparked as to how these "unusable" sweaters might be resuscitated and turned into valuable items, leading her to create patches and decorations to cover the holes and stains. She focused on the hot dog theme—sausages and buns, mustard and ketchup—and of course, mouths to eat it all.

"I like to make something both funny and practical," she explains. "Like a mouth-pocket that you can drag inside out, and it becomes a tongue!"

Everything for everybody

The success of Peysa Með Öllu—helped by public love for her pimped sweaters from high-profile fans such as Erykah Badu—gave rise to Ýrúrarí's current project, a residency at Iceland's Museum of Design and Applied Art.

The project, entitled Peysa Með Öllu Fyrir Alla, (Sweater With Everything For Everybody), takes her sweater-rescue work out into the community.

"I have so many sweaters, and I will never be able to fix all of them! They're still piling up at the Red Cross," says Ýrúrarí.

"So I will have workshops where people can mend a sweater then keep it, use it and make it last," she continues. "The idea is that everyone can join in and be part of the design process. I have some good mending books here, so they can browse and find an interesting technique that works for their sweater. Then they can sit here with me and be part of my studio."

And Ýrúrarí harbours ambitions to make her sweater rescue activities international.

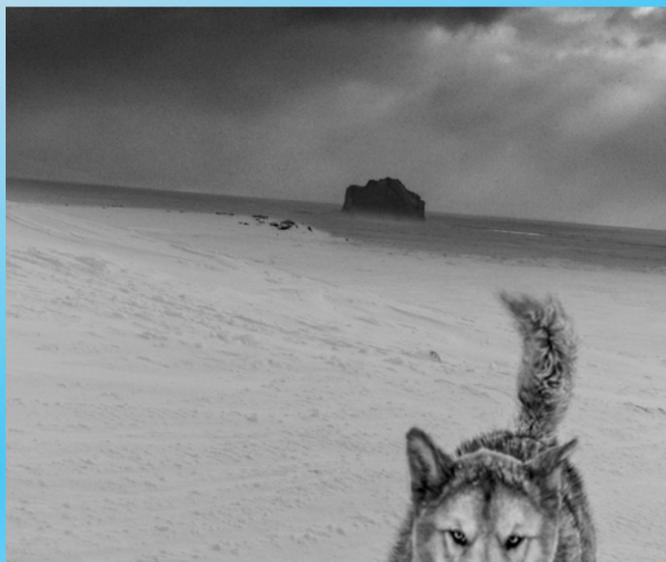
"I'm hoping to take it further in the future," she says. "Maybe I could even go abroad. There's probably ruined sweaters everywhere, I will just have to figure out where to get them in each place."

So get your woolly on, spill some messy food down the front and think which squishy body part you'd most like to cover the stains. Ýrúrarí is on her way to help you pimp your saucy sweater. 🍌

30.01.–09.05.2021

Ragnar Axelsson

Where the World is Melting



HAFAENHUS
REYKJAVÍKUR
LISTASAFEN
HAFNARHUS
ART MUSEUM

Our Picks

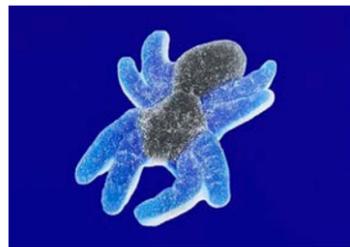


★ American Dreams

Until February 20th - Gallery Port

Remember America? That country with a relatively undramatic gov-

ernment that we rarely hear about in the news? Well, photographer Snorri Sturluson documented that obscure land from 2001 until 2017, doing his best to capture the heart of the United States and the psychological reality of those who live there. This is Snorri's first photographic exhibition in Reykjavik, though he's done shows in New York and Los Angeles—towns on the coasts of America, if you haven't heard of them—so at least we know the locals accepted him. Expect to see things like high school football teams, old school diners, towering skyscrapers next to bodegas and those other things that make America the "land of the free" as well as the "a place with private prisons." We pledge allegiance. **HJC**



★ Ghost Of A Ghost

Until March 13th - Hverfisgalleri

You read our feature, right? Well one its stars, Helena Margrét Jónsdóttir, just opened her exhibition, 'Ghost Of A Ghost', at

Hverfisgalleri. It's inspired by those times where you see someone who is just a shadow of themselves or not really present—acting like a ghost, one might say. **HJC**



★ Raw Power

Feb. 18th-May 30th - Hafnarhús

Established stunner Erró is joining forces with a number of up-and-coming Icelandic artists to create a dialogue between himself

and the newbies. A large number of the subjects of this issue's feature are to be included. By the way, this Erró guy looks promising. we anticipate he'll be big someday. **HJC**



★ Apertures

Until February 27th - Berg Contemporary

For one piece in 'Apertures', Haraldur Jónsson visited a paint store, cut his finger and got the colour diagnosed. He

subsequently bought five litres of said colour and used it all to paint an opening for the gallery. That's all we need to know to visit. We'll be cosplaying as sex icon Lady Macbeth. **HJC**

February 12th-March 11th

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 MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY

The Silent But Noble Art

Sigurhans Vignir (1894-1975) left the museum an archive of around 40,000 photographs. Many of these document everyday Icelandic society just after the creation of the Republic of Iceland in 1944—a christening, labourers at work, people skating, the occupation of Iceland during World War II by British troops, a beauty pageant, a birthday party, a wigmaker... and so on.

- Opens on March 6th, 2021
- Runs until September 9th, 2021

The Arctic Circus

For one and a half years, photographers Haakon Sand and Gudmund Sand followed the everyday life of Sirkus Íslands. So, you could perhaps say... they ran away and joined (photographed) the circus.

- Opens on March 4th, 2021
- Runs until May 30th, 2021

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - HAFNARHÚS

Raw Power

Wait, another Erró exhibition? You bet! This one places Erró's works from different periods in the context of contemporary Icelandic art. It's a diverse selection that, as always, contain the numerous media reference the artist has become known for.

- Opens on February 18th, 2021
- Runs until May 25th, 2021

Ongoing

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ICELAND

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

Barren Land

In 2004, landscape painter Georg Guðni bought a plot of land and built a studio, which he entitled Berangur ('Barren Land'). This name could really be applied to all his works he created there—they are all touched with a rugged sensibility of the craggy weather-beaten barren land on which they were made. Check out a selection here.

- Runs until April 25th, 2021

HELLO UNIVERSE

It's 2021 and we're over Earth. Enter

Finnur Jónsson. The avant-garde art of Finnur—the first Icelandic artist to address outer space in his works, in the first half of the 20th century—presents the artist's unfettered interpretation of the marvels of the celestial bodies, which are the theme of this exhibition. Always remember: We are but matter experiencing itself on a pale blue dot.

- Runs until January 9th, 2022

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

Press Photographs Of The Year 2020

Ever heard of press photographs? The Grapevine has a lot of them. Anyway, here are the top picks from 2020 by the Icelandic Press Photography Association. Do we have any? NO! OUR PHOTOGRAPHER DID NOT SEND ANY THIS YEAR! WE REGRET THIS!

- Runs until February 28th, 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

Peysa Með Öllu Fyrir Alla

You'd be a little taken aback if your doctor turned up with green lips, vampire fangs and dental braces or a giant tongue covered in a dozen tiny tongues—although maybe not in these strange times—but these are just the sort of surreal realities that Ýr Jóhannsdóttir—artist name Ýrurari—creates. Now she's in the

Museum of Design & Applied Art, in a studio project that will see her make her tongue-filled projects using only discarded sweaters from the Red Cross.

- Runs until May 29th, 2021

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - HAFNARHÚS

Ragnar Axelsson:

Where The World Is Melting

Grapevine-favourite Ragnar Axelsson presents a not-to-miss exhibition with selections from his 'Faces of the North', 'Glacier', and 'Heroes Of The North' series. Ragnar has been documenting the Arctic for over 40 years, and in stark black-and-white images, he captures the elemental, human experience of nature at the edge of the liveable world.

- Runs until May 9th, 2021

Hulda Rós Guðnadóttir: WERK – Labor Move

Hulda Rós Guðnadóttir's installation in the lobby of the museum consists of a three-channel filmic work, sculptures, and a video recording of the assembly of said sculptures. It's an exploration of the multi-layered global economy—featuring dockworkers mimicking their own work in repeated choreography. Ooph, that really puts our work into perspective, right?

- Runs until May 9th, 2021

D42 Klængur Gunnarsson: Crooked

Klængur Gunnarsson blends documentary and fiction to create a skewed view of everyday life and activities in this exhibition. The goal? Make you question the importance of taking a break. Just saying: We at the Grapevine love breaks. It's why we haven't yet developed a space program.

- Runs until March 14th, 2021

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 March 14th, 2021

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.

- Runs until March 14th, 2021

GERÐARSAFN KÓPAVOGUR ART MUSEUM

SCULPTURE / SCULPTURE

Presenting: two solo exhibitions by artists Ólöf Helga Helgadóttir and Magnús Helgason. The aim of the series is to explore contemporary sculpture and the development within three-dimensional art, not only as an important part of art history, but also as a living visual language within contemporary art. The series is intended to honor the sculptor Gerður Helgadóttir (1928-1975), who Gerðarsafn museum is named after.

- Runs until February 28th, 2021

GERÐUR

As the first Icelandic artist to use iron in her artwork, Gerður Helgadóttir was a pioneer of three-dimensional abstract art in Iceland. Gerður's creativity and experimental nature is a motif within the museum and reflects its unique position of being the only museum founded in honour of a female artist. Using iron plates or steel wires, the artist created delicate compositions in space, often with a cosmic reference.

- Runs until April 4th, 2021

HAFNARBORG

Hafnarfjörður:

Works from the collection

The exhibition is a selection of works from the Hafnarborg collection that all showcase Hafnarfjörður in a unique way. Few towns in Iceland are as picturesque as Hafnarfjörður and the nature surrounding it also offers spectacular points of view. And we're not just saying that because our editor is from there. That said, he is from there.

- Runs until March 7th, 2021

LIVING ART MUSEUM

IS THE SPIRIT AWARE OF THE MATTER?

Is the spirit aware of the matter? Woah! Big question. Explore that query here with works by Ragnheiður Gestsdóttir, Sigrún Hrólfsdóttir and Sindri Leifsson in an exhibition that explores the systems that mankind has created for itself throughout history. Think social, economic, political, cultural and very serious stuff.

- Runs until February 28th, 2021

MUTT GALLERY

Úlfur Karlsson - 2+2=5

Úlfur's works explore the mindset of those that grew up surrounded by cartoons with only vague news about far away wars and tragedies. It's a mix of pop culture and satire that underlines how entertainment is both a refuge—and a distraction—from reality.

- Runs until February 19th, 2021

PULA GALLERY

Undirlög

Here, Sunneva Ása Weisschappel displays the art of the process. "My subjects in painting are the subject of living moments and the external and internal state of the human being," she explains. "I work with the fusion of mind and body and use life as a research platform."

- Runs until February 28th, 2021

FLÆÐI

A ROOM FOR RENT IN 101

Presenting the first exhibition by Alda Ægisdóttir, where the artist uses different media to dive into an inner dimension that mirrors the harrassment of modern society.

- Runs until February 21st, 2021

MUSEUM OF DESIGN AND APPLIED ART HÖNNUNARSAFN ÍSLANDS

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- 100% Wool**
Closing January 31
- Designer in Residence - Ýrurari**
Opening January 21
- Icelandic Ceramics 1930 - 1970**
Opening February 13

Film



Space, man

Half-Sheep, Half-Baby, A Message from the Future & Love In Vain

2021 in Icelandic cinema

Words: Valur Grettisson Photo: Still from 'Last and First Men'

Films

'Last And First Men' is screening sporadically in Bió Paradís, other films TBA.

After the incredible and, to be fair, unexpected success of the Icelandic film industry last year, it seems the prognosis for 2021 is strong. This year, we'll be blessed by everything from the final production of late legendary composer Jóhann Jóhannsson to a very exciting adaptation of one of Iceland's best novels in the last 20 years. Here is what to expect from the Icelandic cinema in 2021.

Fantastic actors & love in vain

The novel 'A Reply to Helga's Letter' has a warm place in every Icelander's heart. Written by Bergsveinn Birgisson in 2010, it tells an emotional tale of love in vain. Former Grapevine cover star Ása Helga Hjörleifsdóttir will direct the romantic picture, which we expect will be a domestic success—just as a theatrical version was a huge success a few years ago.

But what's truly exciting here are the lead actors, Þorvaldur Davíð Kristjánsson, or Thor Kristjánsson as he's known in Hollywood (we understand, pronouncing 'Þorvaldur' is borderline impossible for non-Icelanders), and Hera Hilmars. Thor also acted in Ása Helga's debut feature film 'The Swan', but international readers might recognise him from 'Dracula Untold' or the fantastic Netflix series 'White Lines'. Hera, meanwhile, is no stranger to big productions. She played the lead in the adaptation of Philip Reeve's fantasy novel 'Mortal Engines'. Seeing them together will be quite the treat for Icelandic moviegoers—as well as the rest of the world.

A lamb & a child

Now, this next one is interesting for a few reasons. First off, Sjón wrote the script in collaboration with director Valdimar Jóhannsson. The film is called 'Dýrið' in Icelandic ('The Animal') or 'Lamb

in English. For those that don't know Sjón, he's a smashing poet that wrote many lyrics for Björk.

But wait, there's more. He is also currently writing a script with Robert Eggers—the highly anticipated 'The Northman'. Starring in that film are Noomi Rapace, who needs no introduction, and beloved Icelandic actor Hilmar Snær Guðnason. The plot is, well, quite different. It's about a couple who adopt a newborn child that is half-sheep, half-human. Need we say more?

Jóhann's last film

Last but not least, the aforementioned final work of Jóhann Jóhannsson. The famed composer directed this film, called 'Last And First Men', and it's hitting cinemas as we speak. Narrated by none other than Tilda Swinton, the film is based on a book, more of philosophical thoughts about the future rather than a regular novel, written by author and philosopher Olaf Stapledon, which is a message from the future to present humankind.

Jóhann Jóhannsson was one of Iceland's brightest stars, writing legendary scores such as his Golden Globe-winning effort in 'The Theory of Everything.' He died tragically in 2018 at only 49 years old.

But when it comes to Jóhann, you know to expect something different—something otherworldly. We couldn't be more excited to see what he's cooked up and to honour his legacy. ♡

THE SWEETEST CENTURY

Since opening our bakery in 1920, we have constantly pushed the boundaries of traditional Icelandic baking methods. Find us in the heart of Reykjavík serving piping hot, fresh pastries made from scratch, every morning from seven-thirty AM.

Not a sweet tooth? That's OK. Come by for a savory brunch or taste one of our homemade sodas or craft beers.

EST. 1920

SANDHOLT

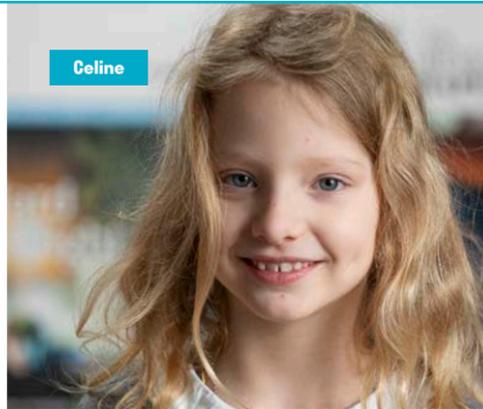
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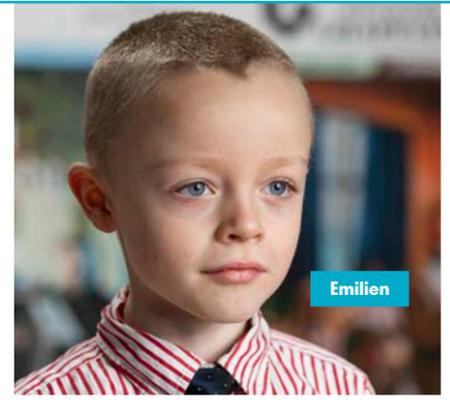
Astrid



Celine



Dylan



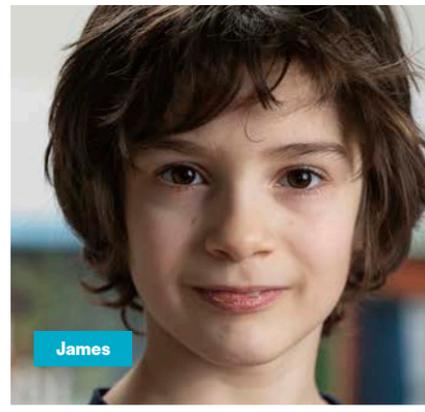
Emilien



Henning



Henry



James



Korallia



Perla



Sana



Spoorthi



Thomas

Landakotsskóli Students Tell Us What's Up

Who cares about adults? It's time to see what the children have to say.

Words: Valur Grettisson
Photos: Art Bicnick

We at the Grapevine have often covered the difficulties of immigrating to Iceland, but we have never asked the children how they feel. We therefore decided to join up in association with the wonderful parents, teachers, and children of Landakotsskóli and ask them what they thought about moving to Iceland. How is it for them to grow up in this cold island paradise?

What do you like the most about Icelandic nature?

Spoorthi (3rd grade, India): I like the snow in Iceland because I saw snow for the first time in Iceland and I feel happy about it so I like snow.

Sana (2nd grade, India): I like the cool breeze because it cools me down.

Emilen (3rd grade, Belgium): Everyone thinks waterfalls are awesome and people travel from miles away to see waterfalls in Iceland. I think they're boring. I hate them because it's just water falling without ever stopping. The biggest waterfall is the only one that's fun for me, so if you want to go to a waterfall, choose Dettifoss.

Perla (3rd grade, Iceland & Venezu-

ela): I love to go fishing because I go fishing with my dad a lot.

What is it that you don't like?

Henry (2nd grade, UK & Czech Republic): I don't like mountains, they are just there, and they don't do anything.

Spoorthi (3rd grade, India): I hate volcanoes in Iceland, especially because they are very dangerous when they erupt and they might hurt and destroy people's houses so I hate them!

James (3rd grade, USA): Flash floods, they are so dangerous

Henning (2nd grade, USA): I don't like it when hot lava falls, you can't even get close to it.

Have you ever bathed in a geothermal hot pool? How was it?

Dylan (2nd grade, USA): I went to the Blue Lagoon because my mom wanted to try it out. I liked it because it was warm and you could chase the cold currents.

Perla (3rd grade, Iceland & Venezuela): I went to the Blue Lagoon and it was really fun because you get a face mask and a drink in the pool.

Celine (3rd grade, Germany): I loved it, it was so fun.

What do you think about the brightness over the summer? Is it hard to go to sleep?

Celine (3rd grade, Germany): I think it's ok but it's very bright when you sleep so I think when you're trying to sleep it's quite annoying.

Dylan (2nd grade, USA): I like it because you never have to go to bed.

Astrid (2nd grade, Iceland & USA): I like it in the mornings because it's easy to get out of bed and I'm very afraid of the dark because there are monsters.

Sana (2nd grade, India): I don't like it because it's hard to sleep because the sun is too bright and my little baby sister might cry when it's light.

What's your favourite animal in Iceland and why?

Sana (2nd grade, India): I like the whales because they can go underwater and I wish I could breathe underwater and see them

Dylan (2nd grade, USA): My favourite animal is the arctic fox because it's cool and can blend into the snow.

Spoorthi (3rd grade, India): My favourite animal is a sheep, I also liked them in India, I missed the sheep when I came here but after a few days I saw there were sheep here too and they were cuter than Indian sheep so now I only love Icelandic sheep.

Korallia (2nd grade, Greece & Sweden): My favourite animal in Iceland is a cat because cats are adorable and I have one.

How do you find the wind and coldness?

Dylan (2nd grade, USA): Fun, because one time I almost flew and one time I could lean back into the wind without falling down.

Spoorthi (3rd grade, India): I actually don't like it when it's windy and cold and I feel like every part of my body is freezing. Because of the wind, I might fall down and get hurt.

Sana (2nd grade, India): Sometimes it's very cold when I go outside for recess, I don't like it.

James (3rd grade, USA): I think it's totally boring when it's cold but there's no snow. There's nothing to do except freeze to death.

Perla (3rd grade, Iceland & Venezuela): I like when it blows you away.

If you could rule Iceland for a day, what would you do?

Thomas (3rd grade, UK): I would ban fish and replace it with chicken nuggets.

Sana (2nd grade, India): I would help everyone and be kind to them.

Emilien (3rd grade, Belgium): I would ban waterfalls.

Celine (3rd grade, Germany): I would make airplanes and cars that didn't pollute the world.

Henry (2nd grade, UK and Czech Republic): I would make banks illegal so I would get all the money and be rich, rich, rich! I would give some money to poor people.

Thank you so much to the parents and teachers of Landakotsskóli for opening their hearts to us!

You can find more of the childrens' answers on Grapevine.is.

sushi
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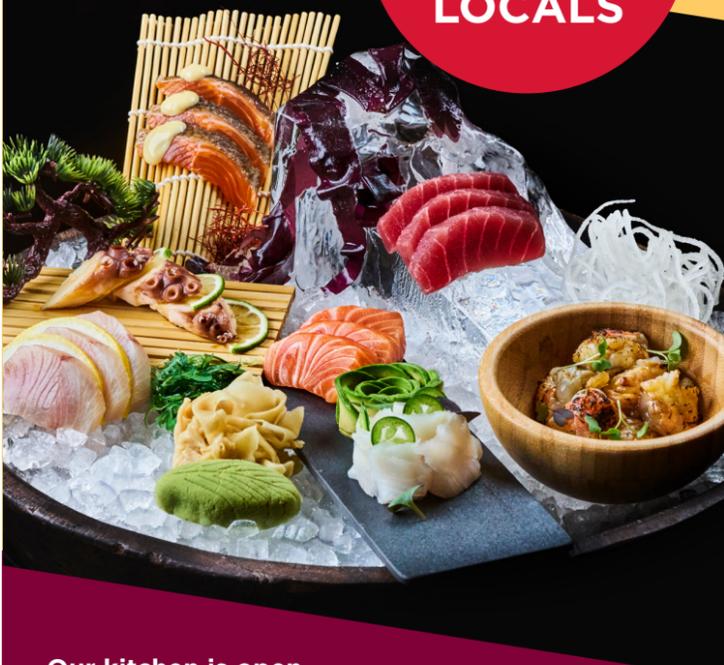
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Daniel is here to write symphonies and kick ass and he's all out of sheet music

Occurrence: Iceland Symphony Orchestra Project, Vol. 3

Conductor and composer Daniel Bjarnason talks through the new album track by track

Words: **Hannah Jane Cohen** Photos: **Timothée Lambrecq**

Track By Track

Pick up 'Occurrence' at shop.grapevine.is or check it out on all streaming platforms.

The finale in the trio of albums from the Iceland Symphony Orchestra in collaboration with Sono Luminus, 'Occurrence' presents works by five contemporary Icelandic composers: Daniel Bjarnason, Veronique Vaka, Haukur Tómasson, Þuríður Jónsdóttir and Magnús Blöndal Jóhannsson. The effort follows 2019's 'Concurrence'—which is currently nominated for a Grammy Award in the Best Orchestra Performance Category—and 2017's 'Recurrence' in showcasing the brightest of Icelandic composition.

We sat down with the album's conductor and composer of one of its tracks, Daniel Bjarnason, to talk about how he approached bringing each song to life.

Violin Concerto

Composed by Daniel Bjarnason and featuring violin soloist Pekka Kuusisto

I wrote this concerto for my friend, violinist Pekka Kuusisto, who I have known for many years and always wanted to do something with. It was actually supposed to be premiered at the Reykjavík Festival in LA in April 2017, but it was postponed because I was finishing my opera 'Brothers', which was taking up all my time and energy. Coming out of that and into this was kind of a relief. It was fun to go into a piece that was completely different from the opera—light-

hearted and playful. The piece focuses on Pekka as a narrator and protagonist. I see him as a somewhat devilish figure seducing the orchestra and leading it on, even astray. He gets to play around a lot and improvise in this piece, which he does wonderfully, so in the end, it's really a celebration of Pekka.

Lendh

Composed by Veronique Vaka

I've known Veronique for a few years and have become well-acquainted with her process and how she writes, structures and maps out her pieces visually before she starts composing. She's interested in topography and often uses landscape as an inspiration, so getting into that mindset helped me approach this piece. It's slow-moving but there's a lot of detail involved.

The challenge of conducting this work was bringing out the topography but also making sure that the details come alive as well.

In Seventh Heaven

Composed by Haukur Tómasson

Vibrant and rhythmic like most of Haukur's music, this piece is also very bright and energetic. It's a playful, celebratory work made

for the opening of Harpa. I've conducted a lot of Haukur's music and it's always really challenging for the orchestra, but at the same time rewarding to play. I think this piece is a good snapshot or showcase of what Haukur can do with an orchestra in seven minutes.

Flutter

Composed by Þuríður Jónsdóttir and featuring flute soloist Mario Caroli

"Flutter" is unique. It has the flute as the main voice and it's a tricky piece for the flautist. Working with Mario was really amazing, as he had done the piece before and knew it well, so he brought an authority into the performance and, by extension, the recording session, which was wonderful. It's a little bit similar to Veronique's piece as it has a lot of detail, but you need to be able to zoom out and see the larger picture as well. As a conductor, it's about bringing out these wonderful colours and textures in the orchestra and making space for Mario to do his thing.

Adagio

Composed by Magnús Blöndal Jóhannsson

We decided to end the trilogy with this adagio, even though Magnús Blöndal Jóhannsson is slightly outside the category of most of the composers on these three albums. He's from an older generation, but we just felt it would be so good to have a new recording of this piece. Magnús was one of the pioneers of modernism in Icelandic music and had a troubled life and career as a composer. This is a nod to him and the composers of his generation who paved the way for my generation, and the generations before and after mine, that are making the music we've been recording for these albums.

"Veronique is interested in topography and often uses land as an inspiration, so getting into that mindset helped me approach this piece."

eration, but we just felt it would be so good to have a new recording of this piece. Magnús was one of the pioneers of modernism in Icelandic music and had a troubled life and career as a composer. This is a nod to him and the composers of his generation who paved the way for my generation, and the generations before and after mine, that are making the music we've been recording for these albums.

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Kids, don't try this at home

Autocannibalism For Beginners

Helen Cova deals with her dark past

Words: Valur Grettisson Photo: Sigurður Grétar Jökulsson

Book

'AUTOSARCOPHAGY, to eat oneself' is available in bookstores and at helencova.com and shop.grapevine.is

Here's the odd thing: eating oneself, literally, is not technically illegal in Iceland. Nor is it anywhere else—if you insist on being precise about it. But if you dive into the concept from a poetic standpoint, things get more complicated.

Therapeutic soul destroying

Venezuelan/Icelandic writer Helen Cova recently published a short story collection 'AUTOSARCOPHAGY, to eat oneself' under the umbrella of the fantastic Ós Pressan. First off, don't worry—it's safe to say that the book is not literally about self-cannibalism. Rather, it explores the darker forces that can eat one's soul and mind.

Helen's style resides somewhere in between the endless snowy darkness of the Westfjords and the mild atmosphere of Venezuela. Out of this comes the collection, presenting a reckoning with the writer's violent upbringing, framed within the framework of magical realism.

"The origin of autosarcophagy is to eat the dead parts of your body," Helen explains. Writing the book was therapeutic, she explains. "It has a lot of myself in it and my experience and also a lot of my childhood. That was something I needed to address," she says. "I was mistreated as a child, all of these things were a weight on my shoulders."

Although it can be hard to distill these magical realistic stories as solely a showdown between a grownup and their violent childhood, there is a distinct lack of mercy in them. One tells the story of a woman in love who needs to kill her lover. Another is

about a child who ate hair and is beaten for it. Yet another describes the wall between a set of neighbours and their verbal sparring through it. Each short prose has a dark tone that adds up to a confrontation with Helen's own past.

Tackling taboos

"I'm trying to talk about these things and trying to just put it out there and say that they exist," Helen says. "There is a lot of violence and there is a lot of anger in the book—and this is also part of life. I think it's important to be able to talk about it. There are many taboos, one of them is a mother or a father, or a family, just harming a child," she explains.

"This is something that we don't want to talk about, but I wanted to present this reality in the book," she continues. "These stories are not in any sense autobiographical, but they do reach the subject."

'AUTOSARCOPHAGY, to eat oneself' is more than Helen's gripping prose—it also features the absolutely gorgeous illustrations by Rubén Chumillas.

"We met at the Blue Bank [Blái Bankinn] and I was so lucky to meet him. He is from Spain and he used to work with the biggest publishers when he lived there," Helen explains. Rubén's works truly elevate the book, setting the stage and tone for Helen to tell her story. His drawings connect strongly with Iceland, but at the same time, are true to the book's South American atmosphere.

At the end of the world

Helen came to Iceland five years ago and, like many others who settle here, she found an Icelandic partner. Now she lives in one of the darkest, most rural places in the country: Píngeyri.

"Well, the winter is better this year than the last," she laughs when asked about her perception of her new home. "This is different. You can see happy children running around with no jackets in the snow, loving mothers following them with the parkas, and it's just very intriguing," she concludes softly.

"And I would pay just to be able to go back in time, and live as a child here, perhaps not forever, because I love Caracas also, but..." she trails off. "Perhaps just for a moment."

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

Diana Breckmann

Words:
Hannah Jane
Cohen

Photo:
Art Bicnick



Diana Breckmann (21) is a stylist and also works at Spúútnik.

Wearing:

- Dress from Aftur. I got it as a present from my friends because they know how much I love dragons and Asian-aesthetic clothing.
- Dragon shoes from LÉO Official. I just got them a couple of weeks ago. It's my first time wearing them.
- Second hand earrings
- Choker from Junya Watanabe

Describe your style in 5 words:

This is hard! First off, **punk**. I'm very into hardcore punk fashion, so I choose pieces that remind me of that time. For example, the choker. Next, **Asian-street-style-inspired**. I have always been into Harajuku street style, but now also Korean and Chinese street style so that's something I've been researching. It's kind of like playing with my heritage—exploring where I'm from. Then, I'd say **colours**. I always play with colour but I wouldn't say my style is colourful. No, I love a colour-pop. There always has to be one detail that pops. Fourth would be **disconnected**. I like to do disconnected looks where the shoes and the top match but the trousers are completely different. That's something I work with a lot in my styling. Fifth would be a hint of **goth**. I play with the gothic style a lot, but I wouldn't call myself a goth. I just like to take the emo/gothic vibe and make it more fashionable—more my style. I should also add that I really like to mix vintage garments with new things. It's good for the environment and you can find unique pieces.

Favourite stores in Reykjavik:

One of my favourites is Spúútnik. I have been working there since I was 16. I also adore Aftur. She uses vintage clothes to make completely new designs so it's very sustainable—that's why it's called Aftur ('Again'). I have a lot of garments from there.

Favourite piece:

I just got this black medium bag from Telfar. They are a Black-owned business and I've been dreaming of this bag for forever. I also have these Tabi boots that I love. They are blue and green and kind of look like the Northern Lights but also underground punk? I really have a lot of pieces though so it's hard to choose a favourite!

Something I would never wear:

Those oversized gothic pants. They are really cool for some people but for my aesthetic and style, I think it's something I would never consider wearing. I think they would never fit me properly. I really love gothic fashion but these are not my kind of pants.

Lusting after:

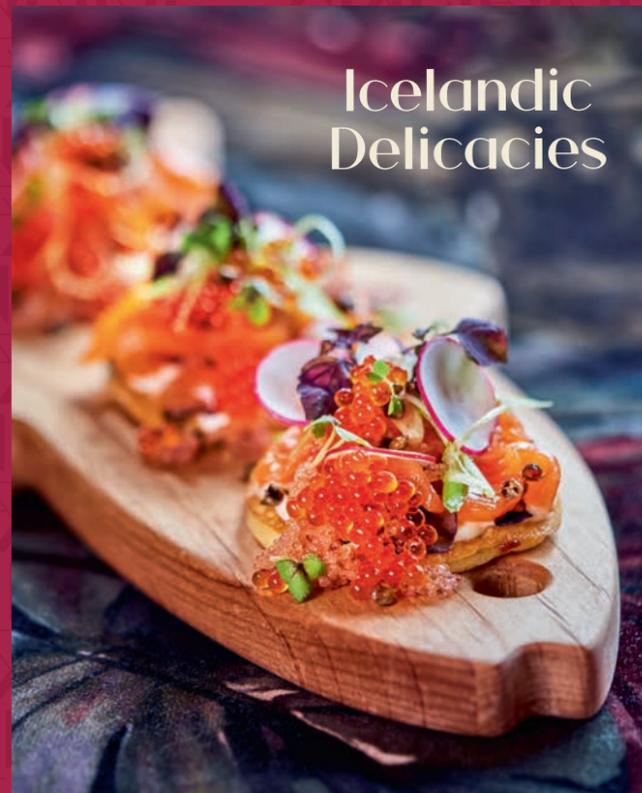
Not really anything right now. Maybe another Telfar bag in another colour. Maybe pink? But at the moment, I'm not sure what I want next. I always plan what I want to buy and then I save up for it. At the moment though, there's nothing. 🐉

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Food



Crazy good dumplings and killer font game, Dragon Dim Sum has it all

Dreaming Dim Sum

Handmade dumplings are reality at Reykjavik's
only dumpling house

Words: Shruthi Basappa Photos: Art Bicnick

Restaurant

Visit the restaurant at [Bergstaðastræti 4](#). Make reservations at [facebook.com/dimsumdragon](#)

"If we did something well at school when I was a kid, we would get a dumpling," Kunsang pauses as he reminisces. "So dumplings for me, have always been in my life."

Chef owners of Makake and Ramen Momo Kunsang Tsering Dhondupsson and Erna Pétursdóttir, and Hrafnkell Sigurðsson and Eggert Gíslason Þorsteins-son from Mat Bar joined forces for what was meant to be an experimental pop-up that has since become Reykjavik's first dumpling house.

For those of us longing for dim sum in Reykjavik, cravings have often had to be satisfied with daydreams of visits past to dim sum houses of Chinatowns abroad, yearning for broader choice at restaurants like Fine and Fönix

who still make their own—a pinning especially pronounced when confronted by frozen dumplings and spring rolls that continue to be peddled surreptitiously in local 'Asian inspired' restaurants. Support groups for those lamenting this vacuum as we pleated shoddy dumplings at home didn't seem an exaggeration given that the numbers of the dumpling deprived seemed to be a growing reality.

Makake alleviated some of that withdrawal with its weekly 'Dumpling nights' but it was obvious that Reykjavik hungered for a more permanent fixture (if

you were a guest at the Kaiseki pop-up by Ramen Momo at Mat Bar, that was a definite foreshadowing).

Hrafnkell echoes that sentiment. "When I worked in London for a year as a chef,

it was a weekend tradition to go to dumpling bars," he says. "Just the enjoyment of that scenario—eating dumplings and having a few drinks, was something I missed a lot. I sort

of carried that idea to Iceland after my stint abroad and wanted to see if there was room for that [here]."

Dim Sum vs Yum Cha

While dim sum is enjoyed all over the world today, it refers to a large selection of small Chinese dishes typically served for breakfast late into lunch. Yum Cha, on the other hand, is Cantonese high tea with dim sum dishes.

It is believed that Cantonese dim sum culture has its origin in late 19th century tea rooms in the port city Guangzhou, capital of Guangdong, after opium dens were banned in the country. Silk Route travellers and traders would take breaks and enjoy meals in these dim sum joints and took the tradition with them as they travelled, resulting in rapidly spreading popularity in the region. Today, it can include dishes and traditions from outside of China, although the culinary form largely remains the same. "It is always about meeting people, chatting and eating," Kunsang explains.

For him, however, this food isn't token inspiration drawn from a fortnight's travel in the region. "I grew up making dumplings; they are the connection between family members," he explains, "We meet, work the dough, cut the meat, shape the dumplings, steam them, then eat them together," he explains, offering us a glimpse of family gatherings.

Nordic dumplings

"Every country has given its own touch to dumpling culture," Kun-

"I grew up making dumplings; they are the connection between family members."



Don't dump on these 'lings

sang adds, “flour, meat, green onions are the main ingredients and the filling varies; in China, it is usually pork mince, in India and Nepal it is goat and beef, in Tibet it is lamb and yak. The way we shape them and cook them can vary from country to country.”

Then of course, there is the dumpling skin itself, from snowy, slightly chewy bread like bao giving way to generous fillings of slow braised meat to the jewel-like iridescence of har gow indicative of the mixture inside.

Dumplings are definedly rooted to place—from Turkish manti and the universe of Chinese dumplings to their unfilled namesakes of North America and Germany. So how does the dumpling translate to Iceland?

“Dragon [Dim Sum] is the perfect marriage between Icelandic ingredients and labouring of Asian dim sum passion,” offers Kunsang.

“My background (in fine dining) lends itself to focusing on locally sourcing and playing with ingredients that I have on hand rather than [only] referring to classical ingredients or classical flavours of any particular cuisine,” Hrafnkell chimes in. “It also gives me the freedom of creativity to play with whatever is local and not confining me with the constraints of cuisine—dim sum, in this case.”

Dim sum for today

Hrafnkell makes a case long echoed even by those considered the gatekeepers of Cantonese dim sum cul-

ture. That dim sum chefs should experiment and be creative, and apply traditional techniques to conceptualise well balanced dishes that honour the old and the new. Ultimately dim sum is typically small and exquisite. Often seasonal and a showcase of the chef's precision skills and techniques, dumplings are more than parcels of filling—a delicate interplay of textures, flavours and beauty.

The dumplings at Dragon aren't strictly traditional and the nomenclature does ruffle feathers if you are familiar with dim sum. The xiao long bao are more bao than soup dumplings, albeit dangerously addictive once you get past the name (this dish has been through several iterations and the current braised beef is their best one yet) and the chiu chao are shorn of their signature crystal wrappers, although the beet and walnut filling is as Nordic as it gets. The shao mai are packed with flavour, a lighter counterpart to the deeply savoury ones at Fine. The sauces and presentation, however, do set them specifically apart from their traditional counterparts. “It is definitely a nod to the Icelanders' love for sauces,” the owners confirm.

Textures may be monotone with the dumplings (they are all steamed), but the spunky sides add variety; I am particularly partial to their slaw—punchy and fresh. I secretly do long for classic dim sum fare like lo mai gai (sticky rice in

lotus leaf), lo bak go (crispy radish cakes) and divisive but delicious braised chicken feet, and fervently hope they will all make their way to Dragon.

Handmade morsels

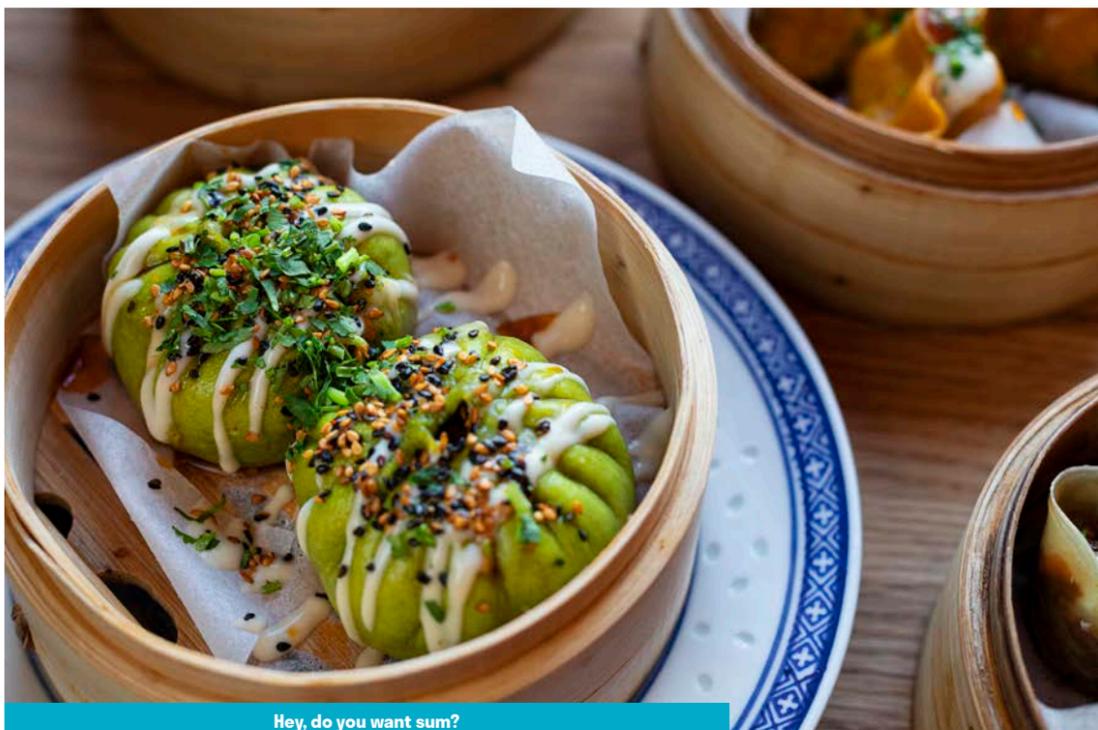
Kunsang stresses the importance of the process. “I make sure the dough is on-point and we shape every single dumpling by hand,” he shares, “Hrafnkell and Eggert oversee all the fillings and sauces.” Hrafnkell chuckles. “We're a team of six and it is always all hands on deck—we barely manage to pull it off,” he says.

Having watched Kunsang expertly pleat each dumpling, I can personally attest that he is speedier than a machine, folding anywhere from four to eight dumplings per minute depending on the type!

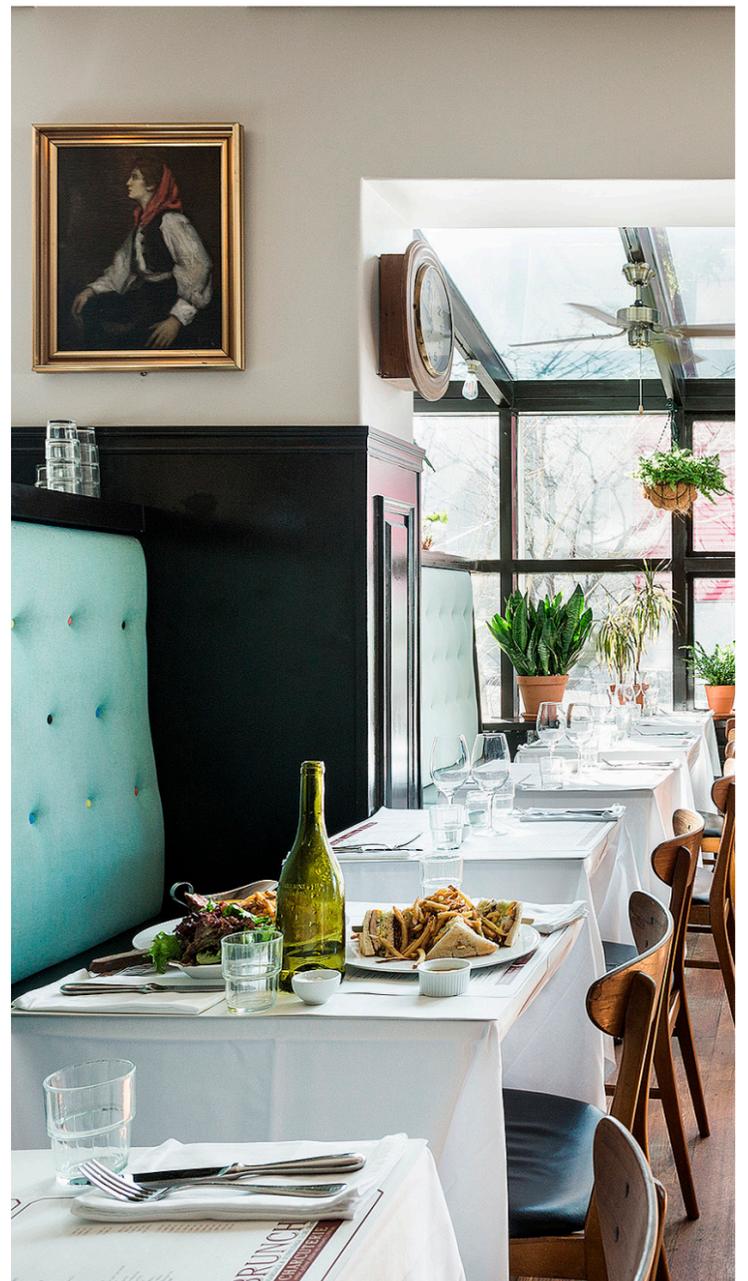
Labour-intensive food is often indicative of time, patronage and a slow culinary evolution. To savour something handmade, in a fast-paced world where ready-to-eat convenience of ‘Asian foods’ belies the sheer effort and skills involved, is an experience worth seeking out. At Dragon Dim Sum, we are invited to share this joy.

“I love dumplings and make them for myself even if I'm eating alone. There's nothing quite like it,” Kunsang sighs contently. We couldn't agree more. 🍵

“It is definitely a nod to the Icelanders love for sauces.”



Hey, do you want sum?



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An Underwater Cathedral of Ice, Rock and Light

Slipping into the hidden glacial waters of Daviðsgjá

Words: John Pearson Photos: Clarence Voon & Art Bienick



Travel distance from Reykjavik: 66 km

Tour provided by: dive.is

Car provided by: gocarrental.is

As the frigid water swirls around and envelopes you, it's not unusual to experience a sharp involuntary intake of breath. And as you slip below the surface, the peace you crave washes over you, delivering you from the turbulent world above.

Of course, you're breathing life-supporting air from a tank and you're snugly squeezed into special clothing to keep most of you warm and dry underwater (well, warm-ish and dry-ish). It's all designed to allow the serenity of the underwater world to wash over you in safety and comfort.

Welcome to the wonderful world of cold-water scuba diving.

The liquid glacier

Pingvellir National Park has a crisp chill to it on the February morning that we arrive. The visitor centre is closed, its empty car park a reminder that Iceland has achieved yet another day of tourist-free status. However the park and its lake—Þingvallavatn—never close. And today we have come to slip beneath the surface of the lake, seeking a different kind of covid isolation.

Langjökull, the glacier some 50km to the northeast, provides most of the water for Þingvallavatn. Ice melts and the run-off water spends years seeping

through subterranean lava fields towards the lake, but this process makes it no warmer. Þingvallavatn remains a reliably chilly 3°C year-round.

At the north end of the lake lies Silfra, the world-famous site beloved of divers and snorkelers who come for its magnificent underwater fissure—a crack in the crust of the earth. But as beautiful as Silfra is, our mission today is to investigate her darker, more mysterious sibling, Daviðsgjá—a dive site hidden five kilometres away, on Þingvallavatn's eastern shore.

We meet our dive guide Clarence and after a brief run through of what we are about to do, we get into our gear. Once wrapped in suits to keep us warm and dry and strapped into the scuba gear that allows us to breathe underwater, we slide off the rocky bank and into the lake. After that involuntary sharp intake of breath—the suits don't cover your head, or your hands—we descend into the cold alone. There is not another diver in sight.

A crack in the Earth

The landscape underwater is as breathtaking as the temperature shock. As we drop into the clearest water imaginable—no hint of cloudiness to reduce the visibility—huge angular boulders

loom on either side of us, placed there by millennia of seismic sculpting to form a channel. Above the lake, the absence of wind creates a mirror-like surface, the underside of which reflects our watery chasm to make it appear twice as tall. The low, wintery afternoon sun glances on the lake, reluctantly illuminating the greys and blues of our rock and water cathedral.

No signs of life

The fissure is only six metres deep at this point; it drops to 21 metres further south, in parts inaccessible today due to the icy surface. But even in this relatively shallow water, the feeling of expansive space is striking, as is the sense of peace and solitude. The only evidence of life that Clarence and I see is each other. The only thing to break the silence is our breathing through the scuba equipment. And the only communications to distract us from our thoughts are the occasional hand signals that divers flash to check in with each other.

As we move slowly through our private aquatic canyon, we eventually reach the edge of the ice above. The sunlight hits it and filters through, causing flashes and sparkles that catch a diver's eye and tempt them further under the thick, solid surface. As we shallow up to take a closer look, our exhaled bubbles congregate under the ice, forming little trapped quicksilver pools that flow and dance. They're attempting to find the edge of the ice so that they can escape upwards into the air; quite the opposite to us.

Eventually with our air supplies getting low—and our core body temperatures to match—we emerge reluctantly from our watery realm of ice, rock and light, and get stuck into the flask of hot chocolate thoughtfully provided by Clarence.

When Þingvellir's visitor centre is open again and the crowds have returned to Silfra, remember Daviðsgjá tucked away further around the lake. If it's post-covid isolation you're looking for, we may have found you the perfect spot. 🍵

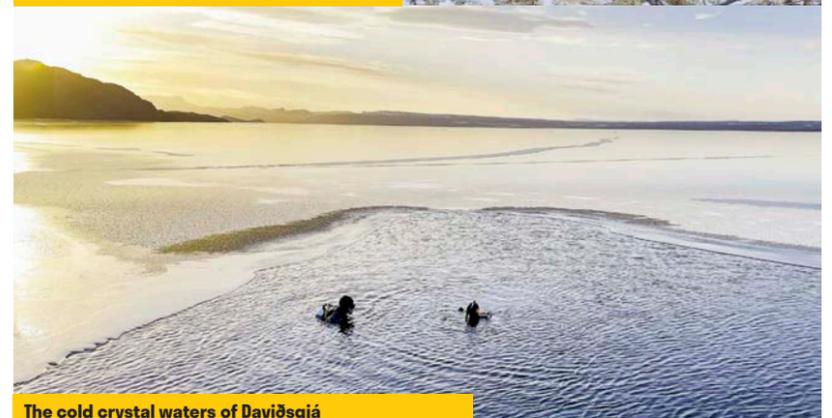
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View this QR code in your phone camera to visit our tour booking site



Excuse me while I touch this ice



The journey begins



The cold crystal waters of Daviðsgjá

HORROR-SCOPES

Making Love To My Chemical Romance

Words: **Hannah Jane Cohen, Astrologer/Emo Kid**

The Grapevine's team of amateur astrologists know all. How? Not only do we talk to the tarot, but we also start each morning with a cup of coffee (black) and a plethora of meme-related Facebook groups.



Aries

Aries, there is nothing wrong with making love to My Chemical Romance. And if your partner dislikes it, well that's "not ok" and they can take their "cool old person rock music" and go shove it. Because what's the worst thing we can say? You're just ~quirky~. Scare the shit out of those teenagers, you rawr-ing legend.



Taurus

Wow! 35 days and you haven't stopped tracking your meals on MyFitnessPal! Congrats Taurus! Of all the signs, you are the only one who has kept up your bodybuilding-macro-resolution. Now you just need to get that gym membership. Then it's over for those other hos.



Gemini

Telling your new boss about the time you got a Q-Tip stuck in your ear may not have been the best avenue for a good first impression, but it was definitely a good avenue for a... first impression. How to proceed? Just adopt this as your new "brand" and own it. You're the Q-Tip guy.



Cancer

We didn't want to say it, but you won't be spending Valentine's Day alone. The constellations assure us that there is someone in the mist in front of you. Whether it's a serial killer or the love of your life, we don't know for sure.



Leo

We didn't want to say it, but you won't be spending Valentine's Day alone either, Leo. Whether that's because you're a serial killer or hopeless romantic, we can't say. It all depends on whether you'd choose 'American Pie' or 'Ameri-

can Psycho'. Make your decision, and don't lie.



Virgo

Just chill. For all our sakes. And get out of my room, Mom!



Libra

Oh Libra, you've got the path laid out in front of you. That said, remember that Frodo had a path in front of him, too, and it led him straight to Shelob. If you haven't got a Sam to save you, consider staying in the Shire.



Scorpio

Almost two months into 2021 and you haven't used your powers of manipulation on anyone but that waitress that tried to charge you for extra guacamole. But she deserved having all her childhood traumas brought up and thrown right back at her in public, right? The fact that she cried just showed her personal weakness, which you, Scorpio, obviously don't have.



Sagittarius

Keep on thriving, Sagittarius. But maybe dust your room a 'lil bit. Just saying.



Capricorn

Capricorn, you saucy dog. Unlink your smartwatch from your smartphone. You don't want anybody to see those texts you're sending... or maybe you do.



Aquarius

Using the first months of 2021 to rewatch 'Lost' is totally a good decision, Aquarius. There's absolutely no way you'll be disappointed again. No possible way. In fact, you'll be HAPPY that Michael and Walt aren't in the Church at the end. That's a natural progression of events.



Pisces

Stop shooting at the political parties headquarters with airguns, Pisces. You know who you are. It's uncomfortable and spooky and not in a cool Unabomber way. 🍷



WELL, YOU ASKED



Investment Idiocy

Words: **John Pearson**

You asked. We answered. You ignored.

I'd love to move to Iceland! I hear that the position of US Ambassador has just become available. Any application tips, please?

We at The Grapevine have zero experience as career guidance counsellors. But since that doesn't seem to matter, here goes: If you've never visited Iceland in your life, that's a good start. And if you have no previous experience of international diplomacy, so much the better. An ability to demonstrate long, inexplicable absences from work in a previous position would be helpful, as would an aptitude for blithely mislabelling lethal pandemics using ethno-prejudiced misnomers. A desire to surround yourself with beefy local bodyguards and ride gangsta in a bullet-proof whip would certainly enhance your application. Just be sure to detail your mafia boss fantasies clearly on your application form. You'll be a shoo-in!

I just got locked out of Robinhood to stop me trading Gamestop stock. What investment advice can you offer while I wait to get back in?

Grapevine suggests going long on pork bellies. Or perhaps that should be longing for pork on short bellies. We're not sure, but either way you should cover your position—and your pork belly, if you have one—against a short squeeze. Do feel free to give your own pork belly a short squeeze, though, if that causes your stock to rise. Don't lose your shirt, don't lose your shit and remember that Robin Hood, the first dealer in kleptocurrency, robbed the poor to give to the rich. And we know all about that. Back in the mid-noughties, we put all our pocket money in Icesave. D'oh. 🍷



CITY SHOT by Art Bicnick

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