



COVER ART:

Photo by Art Bienick.

On the cover: Six of the new faces running for Parliament later this month

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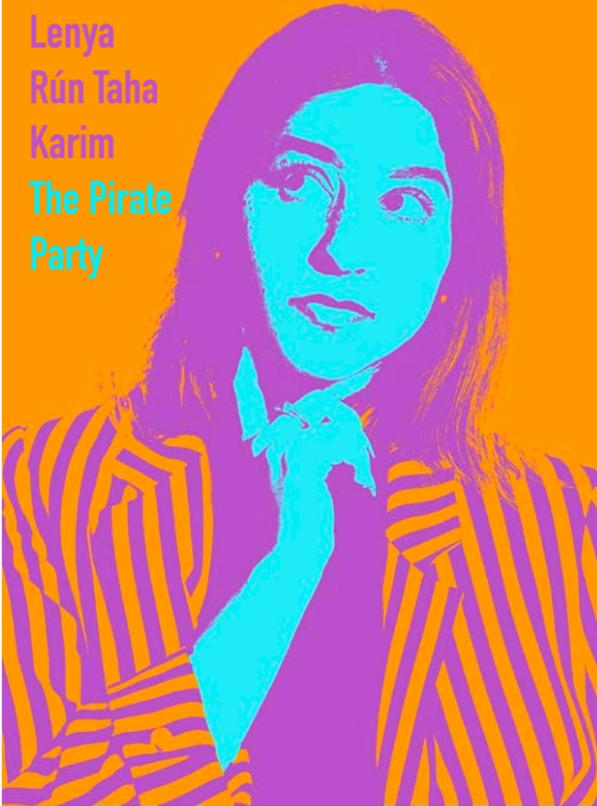


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EDITORIAL

Lenya Rún Taha Karim
The Pirate Party



Immigrants Are Breaking Through In Icelandic Politics

We've been noticing something important about Icelandic politics here at the Reykjavik Grapevine. It's no small thing, though it's not been reported on by bigger media outlets. Immigrants, or second-generation immigrants, are becoming much more visible in Icelandic politics than just 10 years ago.

Now, this is important for numerous reasons. First of all, immigrants make up 15.2% of Iceland's population, according to the 2020 figures from Statistics Iceland. This means that there are just shy of 60,000 immigrants in Iceland with various backgrounds and needs—that's roughly half the population of Reykjavik or the entire populations of Iceland's 2nd and the 3rd biggest towns combined. Still, there are few, if any, giving a voice to this massive group in our democracy.

This seems to be changing rapidly. We saw a sharp increase in immigrant candidates in the last municipal elections, as we covered in 2018. Although we were worried at the time it was just a fluke, the trend has materialised again among candidates for Iceland's parliamentary elections, which will be held on September 25th—read all about it in our elections feature on page 8.

Now, to be clear, this is not a big win for diversity. Most of the candidates that are not born in Iceland, or from Icelandic families, are not high enough on their respective parties' lists to win a seat in Alþingi. But there is one exception: Lenya Rún Taha Karim, who is the third on the Pirate Party's list for the Reykjavik North district. The Pirates have three

elected in that district now, so there seems to be a fairly good chance that a candidate of Kurdish descent could be elected to the Icelandic parliament for the first time.

Immigrants in Iceland have the same needs as any Icelander. They rely on health care, the education system and they are active participants in the Icelandic economy. But most immigrants face many more obstacles than Icelanders, everything from racism to language barriers, to just plain selectiveness when it comes to company owners hiring Iceland-born applicants over immigrants. Of course, this list is not exhaustive.

There's no doubt in our minds that these voices need to be heard. But keep in mind, immigrants need to take the stage and grab that microphone to be heard—it's not like anyone in the ruling coalition is going to give it up easily. And immigrants have the power to take it with those strong numbers. Now is the time.. ♡

Valur Grettilsson
Editor-in-chief



John Pearson is a Reykjavik resident who combines journalism 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.



Desirai Thompson is an American graduate who made her second home in Sweden before picking up and moving to Iceland. Having studied psychology and human rights, she's now flexing her journalistic muscle at the Grapevine. She spends her spare time secretly watching reality TV and dreaming of getting a dog.



Catharine Fulton is a writer and editor who has been involved with the Grapevine for many years, from being our online news editor to staff journalist. She is now our beloved copywriter. Outside of dealing with our writers turning in work late, she also has two extremely cute kids.



Erik Pomrenke collects graduate degrees and is currently studying literature and historical linguistics at HI. His MA thesis is probably going to be about law and memory, but it changes every week. In his spare time, he likes to memorize inflection paradigms and chill to death industrial and harsh noise.



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.



Reetta Huhta is a Finnish student who moved to Iceland to become an au pair, and decided to never fully leave the country. She aspires to become a journalist, and what would be a better place to start than Grapevine? You can probably spot her at Kaffi Vest, where she spends most of her free time.



Valur Grettilsson 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' on RÚV. Valur is not to be confused with the dreadful football club that bears the same name.

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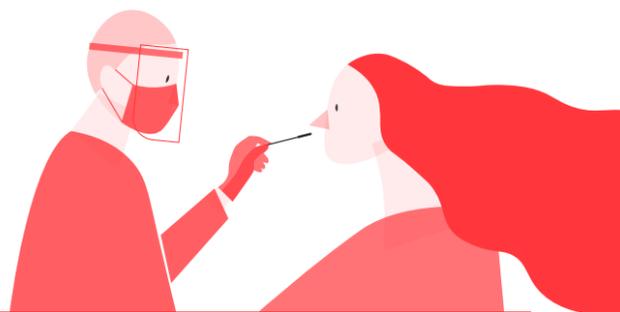


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The mental health ward of Landspítali

What Are Icelanders Talking About?

Some news is bad news

Words: **Andie Sophia Fontaine** Photos: **Landspítali & Art Bicnick**

NEWS The top story on Icelanders' minds right now concerns **the Icelandic Football Association (KSÍ)**, which we go into more detail about on Page 6. In a nutshell: it came to light that six or seven footballers reportedly committed sexual assaults in recent years. Guðni Bergsson, the KSÍ director at the time, denied ever hearing about the incidents, but testimony from one survivor and a leaked email proved this false. He would later resign and, after a lackluster apology and pressure from sponsors, the KSÍ board

resigned, too. Missing in all of this is a statement from any Icelandic footballer condemning sexual violence. The silence is deafening.

In a rare turn of events, **police shot a man in northeast Iceland**. The injured person was reportedly firing at least one rifle at a house's windows—fortunately no one was home at the time. He continued shooting once police arrived on the scene. When told to drop his weapon, he shot at police, who returned fire. He is currently recovering from his injuries and

faces a battery of charges. The motive for his shootings has not been made public.

Tragedy struck the mental health ward of Landspítali hospital when **a patient died after choking on food that a nurse was forcing them to eat**. The immediate question of why a trained nurse failed to save the choking patient was superseded by questions regarding the use of force when it comes to people struggling with their mental health. The matter is being investigated by the police as a possible criminal act, and Málfríður Hrund Einarsdóttir, the director of Mindpower, an NGO focused on mental health care in Iceland, told reporters that the health care system needs a drastic change in policy when it comes to when and whether to use force.

Iceland's **Delta-driven spike in COVID-19 cases** has been accompanied by more COVID patient deaths. Iceland had not experienced a single coronavirus death since May, in large part due to a successful vaccination drive, when **three COVID-related deaths** occurred within the span of a week in late August. While it has not been disclosed if any of the deceased were vaccinated, we do know they were all middle-aged or older and at least one had underlying health conditions which may have made them especially vulnerable to the virus. A tragedy either way.



Police shootings are rare



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KSÍ is feeling the heat

Icelandic Football Association Under Fire

A series of sexual assaults, a cover-up and resignations

Words: Andie Sophia Fontaine
Photo: Art Bicnick

The Icelandic Football Association (KSÍ) has effectively collapsed within the span of a week. It began with Þórhildur Gyða Arnarsdóttir, a woman who bravely came forward and recounted for RÚV the 2017 sexual assault she was subjected

to by a member of the national team. Þórhildur said she had been asked to sign a non-disclosure agreement about the matter—a request she refused. She told reporters that her father had subsequently contacted KSÍ about the matter, but then-director Guðni Bergs-

son responded to press inquiries by saying that he was never made aware of any players committing sexual assaults.

This turned out to be a huge mistake, because it was demonstrably false.

The light of day

The press was then provided with a copy of an email Þórhildur's father had sent to several members of KSÍ following his daughter's assault, including to Guðni and KSÍ managing director Klara Bjartmarz. Caught in a lie, Guðni resigned and KSÍ issued a lukewarm apology.

Their statement ended up having the opposite of its intended effect, especially as Klara doubled-down with reporters in repeating that the board was never made aware of sexual assaults committed by players, despite the aforementioned email suggesting otherwise.

The pressure pays off

After activist groups Öfgar and Bleiki Fillinn, various sports groups and sponsors such as Coca-Cola and Icelandair began expressing their great disappointment with KSÍ's handling of the matter, the board of KSÍ announced their collective resignation.

It remains to be seen what, if anything, KSÍ will do to change its club's culture and prevent further violence being committed by athletes who are supposed to be role models.

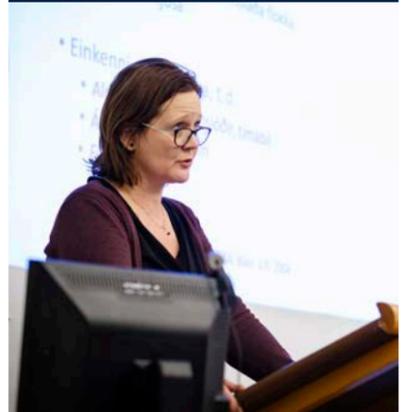
ASK AN

Expert

Q: Why Are There So Few Immigrants In Parliament?

Words: **Andie Sophia Fontaine** & **Eva H. Önnudóttir**

Photo: **Kristinn Ingvarsson**



Iceland's immigrant population—which includes those who are now citizens, capable of voting in parliamentary elections—is over 15%, but this is not reflected in the number of immigrants currently in Parliament. How do we account for this? We asked Eva H. Önnudóttir, a professor in political science at the University of Iceland, for her take:

"There's definitely not one simple answer to why there are so few immigrants in Parliament. But one thing that comes to mind is how recently it's been since we've begun receiving a large amount of immigrants in Iceland. We're talking about this starting around 1994 or '95, when immigrants began to really arrive here. It's my understanding that it's often the second generation of immigrants who get into politics; that is, the children of people born abroad. So maybe there's a time factor. There may also be certain obstacles or restrictions in the system, where there's either nothing encouraging immigrants to run for office, or maybe they're not as connected with Icelandic society and politics as those who were born here. It could also be that immigrants, especially first generation immigrants, are paying more attention to politics in their home countries than in Iceland. So there's really no one simple answer. But we are seeing more and more immigrants on the candidates lists of certain political parties, which is of course a good thing. It could also be that immigrants are rather participating more in municipal elections, or that political parties are not trying to reach people who aren't yet citizens and therefore cannot yet vote in parliamentary elections."

LOST IN GOOGLE TRANSLATION

Dude, Where's My Carp?

Imagine you're laid out, soaking up some rays in the lovely green area of Elliðaárdalur, living your absolute best life when, out of nowhere, the skies darken. You squint through your extended hand to see a large dark mass travelling across the sky—and it's coming straight for you. That's it. You're about to punch your last card. And with all that's going on in the news these days, admit it, you're not even surprised the world is about to end.

Just when you're about to start begging for forgiveness for all those times you swore you'd be a better person but, you know, never got around to it, you're surrounded by a distinct and potent earthy smell. Within mere moments, the sky brightens and your outstretched hand has inadvertently

caught the flying object. It lands with determination and force like Thor summoning the mighty Mjöllnir.

When you collect yourself enough to identify what's happened, it turns out

you're holding no less than six pounds of high grade marijuana. Delivered straight from the skies above. It's like the opening scene to a supernatural 90's stoner flick.

At least that's what your mind would conjure up if you had the pleasure of reading a recent Google Translate snafu on RÚV which confusingly read, "Caught six pounds of marijuana in the sun", instead of the original Icelandic title, "Veiddi sex punda mariulaxinn í sólinni".

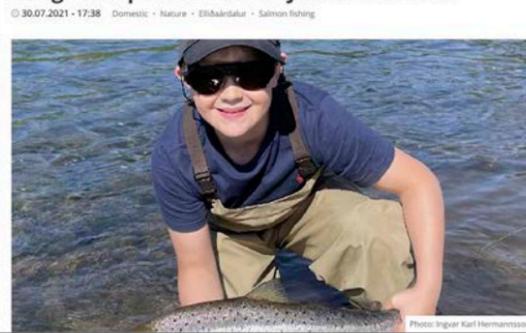
The confusion likely came from, well, no one has a clue. Interestingly, mariulaxinn is just the term for the very first salmon a person has ever caught, in some strange nod to the Virgin Mary.

Other than mariu sounding somewhat like mariju, there is no linguistic basis for this blunder. So it seems to be just another example of Google Translate taking a puff and mellowing out too hard to give a damn on this one.

Veiddi sex punda mariulaxinn í sólinni



Caught six pounds of marijuana in the sun



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GODS OF ICELAND



Gods Of Iceland: Elli, The Sexy Wrestling Grandma

Throw away that eye cream, old is the new young

Words: Hannah Jane Cohen
Photo: Adobe Stock Creation

Botox. Retinoids. Push-up bras. Women do a lot of things to hide their rotations around the sun, spurred on by a society that deifies the young and relegates the old to silent corners. C'mon, you never saw any online counters anxiously tallying down the seconds to Meryl Streep's 65th birthday—only the Olsen twins' 18th.

That said, ladies need not be ashamed of your mortality anymore. For if there's anyone that shows us that age is but a number—and that one can always be a bad sexy, bitch—it's the Norse giantess Elli.

“Stricken with age”

Elli's known as the Norse personification of old age—the Crone, one might

say. In fact, one could easily make the point that Elli being old is really her only defining characteristic, like Sif having blonde hair or Víðarr wearing one shoe. In the 'Gylfaginning'—Elli's only Edda appearance—she's described as being “stricken with age” and really, all other online or scholarly resources on the Norse Pantheon always begin by harshly illustrating her wrinkles, frail appearance and other such elderly epithets. Totally a three-dimensional female character. Yas Queen!

But her presence in the Nine Worlds is a rather meaningful one. Old age has, of course, oft been a recurring enemy in bedtime stories and parables across time. From The Epic of Gilgamesh to Lord Voldemort—humans have been afraid of hip replacements for thou-

sands of years. So where does Elli fit into this?

Momoa vs. White

Picture this: Tough heartthrob Þór was not having a particularly spectacular day. He had just been defeated in a drinking challenge—a devastating blow to his masculinity, for sure—and needed to prove, once and for all, that he was a totally macho dude. Obviously, he decided to do this—as many a drunk white dude has done—by fighting someone.

So Þór searched for a competitor and Loki, iconic trickster he is, decided to “help out” by picking Þór's adversary, ultimately deciding on a competitor he was sure to beat—an old fucking woman.

Yes, Þór challenged Elli—our wrinkly, elderly protagonist—to a wrestling match. For comparison, imagine Jason Momoa going on Celebrity Boxing to TKO Betty White. You'd be kind of weirded out right? Jesus, talk about toxic masculinity.

That said, Elli, like Harry Potter, had powers to which the Norse God was not privy. She, bad bitch of the eons, totally pwned Þór like a 13-year-old on Call of Duty, pinning him down on one knee and probably yelling something like, “Where's your hammer now, bitch?!”

So, to simplify, no one—not even a Norse god—beats old age. Unless you make a Horcrux or something. But that's another article. ✂

Superpowers:
Old age.

Weaknesses:
Wrinkly. Society's perpetual underestimation of the elderly.

Modern Analogy:
Your grandma when someone turns off 'M.A.S.H.'



The Beach 2.0

JUST SAYINGS

„Að finna einhvern í fjöru”

Tired of uttering the same old threats? Feeling like your old ultimatums have lost their power? It's a tale as old as time, but luckily Iceland has the solution. In Icelandic, when you really want to intimidate someone, say you will “find someone at the beach” (“Að finna einhvern í fjöru”)—an ominous invitation sure to bring a cold sweat to anyone's brow.

The saying basically implies that you will find said enemy again in the future and possibly beat them up then—similar to “we'll meet again.” The origin of this saying is rather ancient, referring to surf-side trials for thieves which would potentially conclude with the thief being drowned for their offences. Threatening stuff. VG ✂

GRAPEVINE PLAYLIST



Rebekka Blöndal, Matthias Hemstock, Sigmar Matthiasson & Asgeir Asgeirsson - “If”

Lena Horne made for the modern day is what you're signing up for when checking out “If” by Rebekka Blöndal. This is the song your grandparents fell in love to, swaying to the tune in sepia tone. Her honey-laden voice sounds how drinking a warm cup of tea feels — delightful, comforting and, in a way, curative. Is it too soon to start a petition to remake La La Land with Rebekka in the lead role? DT

emotions of that process. Musically, washes of synth and a minor-key feel suggest the sense of hazy numbness that can accompany the loss of a loved one. And, in a nod to the musical motif of Margrét's recent work with electro-legends GusGus, stabbing synths evoke arpeggiated visions of the early 80s. JP



Kælan Mikla - Stormurinn

Imagine standing barefoot watching the clouds roll in when suddenly, you're whipped up into an ethereal, synth-laden whirlwind. That's the experience of pressing play on the aptly named “Stormurinn” (“The Storm”) by Kælan Mikla. The moment a gentle voice breaks through the thunder, you know you're going to be okay. The song itself recharges you. With drum beats Siouxsie Sioux would bop along to, this song is the perfect weekend tune for anyone who's hoping for a female-led post punk revival with a twist. DT



Supersport! - Lag í partyi

My gods, how good is this song? On the scale of good and goddamn, I-feel-like-I'm-floating-in-space, -created-by-Picasso-and-Monet, -and-the-stars-are-made-of-edible-chocolate-good. Well, it's the latter. Wonderful song, from the best indie band in Iceland, and possibly in the world. VG



Two Toucans - “Frozen Bones”

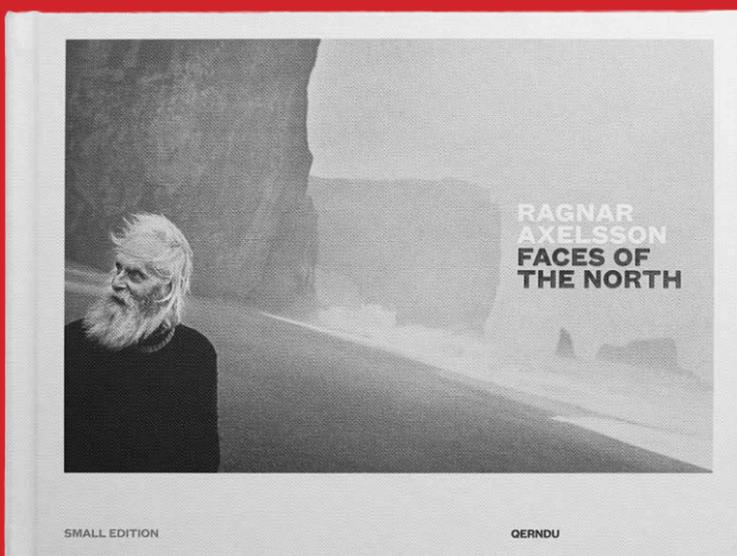
With a beat that's just lively enough to keep your head nodding along and subdued vocals that allow you to sit back and vibe the whole way through, this is exactly the song you want playing in the cab on the way home from the club. This sibling duo harmonises these two aspects in the way only people who sprung from the same gene pool can. They're like the Billie and Finneas Eilish of Iceland, but make it hip hop — and even dreamier. DT



Vök - “No Coffee At The Funeral”

If you understand the importance of coffee in the fabric of Icelandic culture, then the title of this song will make sense as a metaphor for the painful absence of something essential. Grieving loss is an experience common to all shades of humanity, and here singer Margrét Rán gives a strong yet fragile voice to the

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CROWDED HOUSE: PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS IN THE PANDEMIC

Iceland faces a very unusual election season

Words: **Andie Sophia Fontaine** Photos: **Art Bienick**

Nearly four years ago, in the wake of snap elections held after the collapse of the previous government, Iceland's current coalition government was formed. It was a tumultuous process, involving negotiations between eight different parties over a span of weeks. In the end, it was three parties—the Left-Green Movement, who ostensibly lead the government, the Progressive Party and the Independence Party—who managed to have the most combined seats for a stable majority, and who were able to hammer out a power- and platforming-sharing agreement between them.

This time around, nine parties—including the new Socialist Party—are polling high enough (or in some cases, almost high enough) to win seats in Parliament. Meanwhile, the parties comprising the ruling coalition are on a knife's edge between holding and falling. On top of all this, the coronavirus pandemic has been dominating local headlines, and the government's management of the situation and other parties' proposed approaches to COVID-19, will likely be key influences on people's ballot-box decisions—not to mention the influence it's had on campaigning, which has barely even begun just a few weeks before election day on September 25th, or the effect it may have on voting itself. It's a very unusual election season for Iceland.

In this feature, we spoke to six candidates from as many parties, spanning from the left to the right, whose names have not been very prominent in the media. We also spoke with two political scientists for further analysis. Here, you can learn what makes this election special, what Iceland's next government needs to take care of first, where the different parties stand, and why there are so few immigrants in Parliament—despite the fact that Iceland's immigrants comprise over 15% of the population.

For a more detailed overview of the platforms of all the parties running, visit tinyurl.com/icepar2021.

More parties, more problems

"What's very special about this election is how many parties are running," Hulda Þórisdóttir, Ph.D., an associate professor at the Department of Political Science of the University of Iceland, told us. "Not only that, but how many parties are running that have a very viable possibility of getting representatives elected. This is a trend that started after the economic crisis. It's almost stabilised, and now we have so many parties that are polling at around 10%.

"What makes this really interesting is what comes after the elections," she continues. "How is the government going to be

formed? That's probably going to be a very difficult process, because a lot of negotiations have to take place. There used to be four or five parties, larger parties that were a bigger umbrella for a wider variety of opinions. But now with more parties, they become somewhat narrower. You as a voter can elect a party that's closer to your opinions than you could maybe 15 years ago, when you may not have found as close of a match with your values. In many ways, this unique situation is a referendum on the last four years of a government spanning the left to the right."

Eva H. Önnudóttir, a political science professor at the University of Iceland, also noted the number of parties running, but also how the pandemic and this government's handling of it distinguishes these elections.

"What makes this election special, in my opinion, are the circumstances in which it's taking place," she said. "And by that I mean the pandemic, which has been going on for more than a year and a half now. While typical left-right politics have been disconnected via the pandemic, which makes the circumstances of this election special, the main campaign issues will probably be typical important issues such as the healthcare, welfare, the economy and the environment. The government has had to deal with the

pandemic, so there hasn't been the usual campaign points, such as about how far to go when it comes to being socially minded or individual minded and such."

The big three

"There's no one [issue] that dominates everything," Hulda said. "But if I had to pick one issue that's going to be on the mind of most voters, that would be the healthcare system. People on the left are worried that it's underfunded, people on the right are worried about too much centralisation in the healthcare system and how it's run. This would be followed by one issue that's always big—the economy, and how to get it going strong after COVID—and then environmental issues; what parties will be offering credible and viable solutions, and not just greenwashing."

"The campaign is only now just starting, so we're still not yet seeing what are going to be the major issues in this campaign," Eva cautions. "But we can assume that we'll be seeing the usual big issues: the economy, health care and welfare, and some parties are also emphasising environmentalism. I think it's probably not unlikely that amongst the first things Parliament addresses is how we deal with the pandemic going forward."

Hulda agrees, believing that the pandemic is inextricably woven into the issue of health care in Iceland.

"This has been a very popular government," she told us. "It is a 'rally around the flag' effect that we've been seeing, because we've been fighting a common enemy. The government was politically savvy enough to think the best way through this was to give a lot of power to the scientists in these matters, with health care officials not making this political.

"In terms of addressing the other issues, if there is one issue in Iceland that crystallises the difference between being on the left and being on the right in economic issues, it's attitudes towards the healthcare system. There's really no disagreement over how to fund health care. But there is disagreement over who should provide the services; whether that should solely be the government, or if private organisations should be allowed to do that, too.

"That's been a big tension within the current government, but the Ministry [of Health] has been with the Left-Greens, so there has been more of the politics of that party that have been implemented in the healthcare system. People on the right have voiced their disapproval of this. So it's hard to say whether people are happy with this, it really depends on whether you're on the left or the right."

Our selection of candidates

In choosing who to reach out to, we had some basic criteria. We chose little-known to unknown candidates from parties running in the greater Reykjavik area with a realistic chance of getting into Parliament, who had people of foreign extraction at least 10th on their list, and who were not openly bigoted. This is why, despite the record of the Independence Party in their leadership position over some of the worst offenses of the Directorate of Immigration, it is more or less certain that they will be a part of the next ruling coalition; they can't exactly be ignored. And this is also why, despite the Centre Party featuring at least two immigrants on their lists, they were not featured; their dangerous anti-asylum seeker and anti-queer rhetoric is a matter of public record, and does not need to be platformed further. This same goes for the People's Party, in having no people of foreign extraction on their lists, having one of Iceland's most notorious racists, Magnús Þór Hafsteinsson, on their staff and for barely polling high enough to gain a seat. And the Reform Party is a special case, having one person of foreign extraction on their Reykjavik area lists, Rhea Juarez, but at the 11th seat.

Here's what the candidates who made the cut had to say:

1. Briefly introduce yourself by summing up who you are in one or two sentences.
2. Why run for your party? Relatedly, why should they get someone's vote instead of another party?
3. What are the top three things Parliament absolutely needs to address after the elections?
4. Are there any parties you would refuse to form a government with?
5. Iceland's immigrant population—which includes those who are now citizens, capable of voting in parliamentary elections—is over 15%, but this is not reflected in the number of immigrants currently in Parliament. How would you account for this? What do you hope your party can do to change this for the better?



Guy Stewart, 8th on the list in the Reykjavik South district for the Leftist-Green Party

1. I've worn several hats: actor, graphic designer and teacher, in Canada and in Iceland. What I enjoy most is reading aloud to children and making things – mostly drawing, painting and calligraphy – and nagging people about the hydrogen economy.

2. The world is calling in our debt: in terms of climate change, it's time to pay the piper. With the time I've got left, I want to unburden our children of that debt as much as possible. I think the most effective way is to invest that time in the Left-Green Movement under the leadership of Katrín Jakobsdóttir. Economics, migrant issues, innovation, welfare—every major issue must take account of climate change. In Iceland, no other political force is so invested in that battle, and frankly no one else is united enough to engage in it effectively.

3. In my opinion, after climate change, the most immediate crisis facing everybody is the threat COVID presents to the health care system. I hate to think of where we would be if not for Svandís Svavarsdóttir in our corner. A strong vote for the Left-Greens is a clear mandate to support health care workers and improve service.

Secondly, I look forward to the completion of initiatives started by the Left-Greens this term, such as the constitutional changes proposed by Katrín, and the Miðhálandisþjóðgarður. After a long list of solid accomplishments, these are a legislative priority.

The third issue isn't legislative but cultural. Polarization and talking past each other is one of the great challenges of our time, and Katrín is exemplary in actual engagement! Parliamentarians have to be able to talk to each other if they're going to accomplish anything.

4. Of course I have my own predispositions. My lefty trajectory is from the Arts & Crafts Movement—beauty, nature, honour, chivalry. So when chivalry's rampant steed is appropriated as a logo by the enemies of chivalrous ideals, it rubs me the wrong way. But I hope I can transcend my own limitations and work with people who are prepared to sacrifice in order to work with the Left-Green team. It's a matter of character. I know Katrín steers by the star of our environmental and social ideals, and nobody does it better. The government she negotiates will be the swiftest possible way to our goals. It's not as if we have all the time in the world.

5. Of course we want people to be represented, and to have a voice. Time is a factor. In my case it took several years living here—and the 2008 crash—to see myself as being invested enough to seek citizenship. I was brought up to view citizenship as a duty to participate actively in democracy. Not everyone has that sense of agency, or feels welcomed with open arms. Then there's the challenge of language. Aside from free language lessons, we must actively encourage self-efficacy. One interesting sign of agency is the appearance of Kópur, a labour union addressing the needs of workers of foreign extraction. Many such workers endure criminal exploitation.



Viktor Ingi Lorange, 10th on the list in the Reykjavik North district for the Independence Party

1. My name is Viktor Lorange, I'm 27 years old. Originally I'm from the Grafarvogur suburb, but currently living downtown. I work as a digital consultant, am gay and have a cat named Abba. I am also a candidate for Parliament for the Independence Party in Reykjavik Constituency North.

2. Because it is my conviction that by trusting individuals with the freedom to make their own choices and allowing them to prosper on their own terms, we build a stronger, more diverse and thriving society. This belief has been the core of the Independence Party's manifesto since its foundation. It is my hope that voters can see that this approach has made Iceland a prosperous country — from being one of the poorest in Europe to one of the richest. We want people to be able to live up to their potential, which in return benefits society as a whole. To achieve this, we need to create an environment for entrepreneurship, competition and knowledge, based on a foundation of a robust welfare and education system where everyone is on equal footing. This is what we offer to the voters and what we can deliver with their support.

3. Healthcare, the climate crisis and to make Iceland more open to people who want to come here and live.

4. No. We will work with any party that is willing to work with us towards our goals.

5. Iceland's demographics have changed very drastically and rapidly in the last decades, which is why I think the immigrant population isn't properly represented and hopefully, it is just a matter of time until this will change for the better. As a society we need to do more to make it easier for immigrants to take full part in our society, e.g. with better access to language courses and more social mobility. I hope my party will both work towards enacting such changes through parliament and do more to empower these new and important members of our society within our party.



Brynja Dan, 2nd on the list in the Reykjavik North district for the Progressive Party

1. I'm 36-years old and own a small company in Smáralind called Extraloppan. I sit on the board of Barnaheill and Icelandic Adoptions and am very passionate about issues related to children.
2. The Progressive Party has done great things during this last term. Minister of Social and Children's Affairs Ásmundur Einar [Daðason] has served during the greatest improvements to the social welfare system in decades. This work has only just begun, and it is extremely important that he gets to continue his work. We also emphasize green infrastructure, small and medium sized companies, and elderly persons issues.
3. Children's issues, preventative measures where we invest in people, climate change and our health care system are the issues we most need to deal with.
4. The Progressive Party is a party of cooperation. We do not rule out working with anyone ahead of time.
5. This is true, and something we need to improve, as Parliament should best reflect the composition of the nation. The Progressive Party is responding to this by, for example, having an immigrant in third on the list for the southwest district, and the Social Minister appointed a person of foreign origin to the directorship of a government office. This is unfortunately uncommon. The Progressives want a diverse society and this is of course a part of it.



Donata H. Bukowska, 7th on the list for the Southwest district for the Social Democratic Alliance

1. I came to Iceland 20 years ago but I was born and raised in south Poland. I am a mother of two young children, and a primary school teacher educated in, amongst other things, teaching Icelandic as a second language, biology and Polish. I have also been a teaching consultant for students with Icelandic as a second language in Kópavogur primary schools but in the spring I began working as an expert in school development for the Ministry of Culture and Education.
2. All of the work of the Social Democrats is based on a policy of equality, which I am deeply fond of. The values, ideology and emphasis of the party and its platform mesh very well with my own personal values and political opinions. That's why there's no question in my mind about participating in the party. The Social Democrats are the one party in Iceland with a realistic and ambitious platform based on equal opportunities for everyone.
3. Health care, education, and the new constitution.
4. I would never form a government with the Centre Party, the Independence Party, or the Icelandic National Front [a far right party not polling anywhere high enough to win a seat in Parliament].
5. I am certain that, with time, we will see more immigrants win seats in Parliament. This active participation takes time, both for society and for immigrants themselves. It still doesn't happen automatically, so we need to work purposefully to create a more open society that accepts immigrants with an open mind and celebrates their backgrounds, strengths, knowledge and efforts regardless of whether they speak Icelandic with an accent, use poor grammar or can't trace their ancestry back to the Settlement times. To get immigrants to take an active part in politics, we also need to build real trust with them, and the feeling that they can make a difference, and that their voices are just as important as the voices of in-born Icelanders. In the Social Democrats, there is a great deal of will to support the active participation of immigrants in society and politics. As my experience shows, all are welcome in the party to work with us, or just to pop by and chat. I am certain my party will continue to work purposefully to increase the participation and inclusion of immigration in Icelandic democracy.



Lenya Rún Taha Karim, 3rd on the list for the Reykjavik North district for the Pirate Party.

1. My name is Lenya Rún Taha Karim, a 21-year old law student who is running for Parliament for the Pirate Party in the Reykjavik North constituency. I am of Kurdish origin and the daughter of an immigrant and a refugee.
2. I chose the Pirate Party for numerous reasons. Not only do I agree with their policies, but I also thought it would be a perfect fit for someone like me—I'm a person of colour and I wouldn't be subjected to tokenism there. The Pirate Party focuses on human rights issues just as much as economical issues, which shows you can facilitate a progressive economy while advocating for human rights issues at the same time.

The answer to why the Pirate Party should get someone's vote instead of another party is quite broad. Firstly, the Pirate Party requires transparency when it comes to decision making—that is a very important quality for a political party to have. Secondly, the Pirate Party has a very strong and capable grassroots, which shows how important real democracy is to them. Thirdly, the Pirate party submits proposals and legislations that are important to address as soon as possible. A clear example of this was during the 2021 Israel-Palestine crisis, when the Pirate Party submitted a parliamentary resolution as soon as they could to take some sort of action. To sum this up, the Pirate Party is an honest, democratic and diplomatic party. I think we could do great things if we were to form a government with parties whose policies align with ours.

3. The climate crisis, decriminalization of drugs and immigrant/refugee matters.
4. Yes, the Centre Party and Independence Party. I would love to see a government formed without the Independence Party—they are intertwined with some of the biggest lobby groups in Iceland and we will never see radical change when that's the case. As for the Centre Party, I think their ideas and policies could be downright dangerous to the public.
5. I think that there is definitely a lack of immigrant representation in Parliament. I didn't have any role models when I started out in politics, nor did I grow up with any representation. The lack of representation and role models could lead to other immigrants being hesitant when it comes to running for Parliament. I hope to be the role model and representation for others that I lacked when I was starting out in politics.
As for the Pirate Party, I truly believe they will be as welcoming to other immigrants or people of foreign origin as they were to me. Inclusion is very important. Our society desperately needs to welcome more diversity and it needs to be reflected in positions of power.



Kristbjörg Eva Andersen Ramos, 7th on the list for the Reykjavik North district for the Socialist Party.

1. My name is Kristbjörg Eva and I am running for the Socialist Party.
2. I am running for the Socialist Party because it is the only party representing the lower class. The party's values are ones which every society should strive for: freedom, equality, humanity and compassion. These goals will only be reached by bringing power to the citizens of the country. The Socialist Party of Iceland is the party of wage earners and all those who suffer from want, invisibility and abjection. The opponents of the Socialist Party of Iceland are the capitalist class and its functionaries. The terrain of the Socialist Party of Iceland is a broad class struggle that rejects compromise and false dialogue. And that is why it is important that people vote what's best for our society and that's why they should put X to J.
3. Healthcare. The issues concerning the hospital are a disgrace to our people. There have to be revolutionary changes to turn things around for the better, including the care of the health care workers. Environmental issues—this is a no-brainer. It is time we have a strong leader to lead the community to a better world. It is only when the leaders of our country take action against big corporate companies that we will see change. Our tax system and reconstruction of the tax system, with an eye on making the wealthy pay an adequate share in common expenditures but alleviating the burden of others.
4. Yes, the Independence Party.
5. In my opinion it is unacceptable that there is no representation for such a big community. Iceland takes pride in being known for their successful battle for equality but the reality is that a big portion of people, mostly immigrants, have been forgotten. That is why it is important that this group is well represented in parliament and their voices are heard. In the socialist party we have many great people that know their experiences and want to represent them so their community will be seen and heard. ♥

Happening

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in Iceland!
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listings app - APPENING
on the Apple and
Android stores



The Queen Is Back

Sep. 24th, Háskólabíó, 4.990 ISK

Pop queen of Iceland GDRN is back and holding court at Háskólabíó. GDRN broke out in 2018 with her monster hit "Hvað Ef" and has since been collecting more or less every Icelandic music award out there while simultaneously nailing her dramatic debut on the Netflix show, *Katla*. She dropped her latest album in February 2020, but COVID prevented a proper release party. So, feel free to go nuts. **VG**



South American Fusion

Andervel + Strings

Sep. 12th - 20:00 - Hús máls og menningar - 1.500 ISK

Andervel is the music project of singer-songwriter, multi-instrumentalist and composer José Luis Anderson. Anderson currently lives in Iceland but Andervel serves as an homage to his familial roots in Mexico, his classical singing background, and his maturation in the Icelandic arts scene. In his latest production, Andervel is accompanied by a string quartet and pianist/organist Kristján Hrannar. Plus, hip-hop hero JóiPé and folk star Elin Hall will also appear with him. **VG**



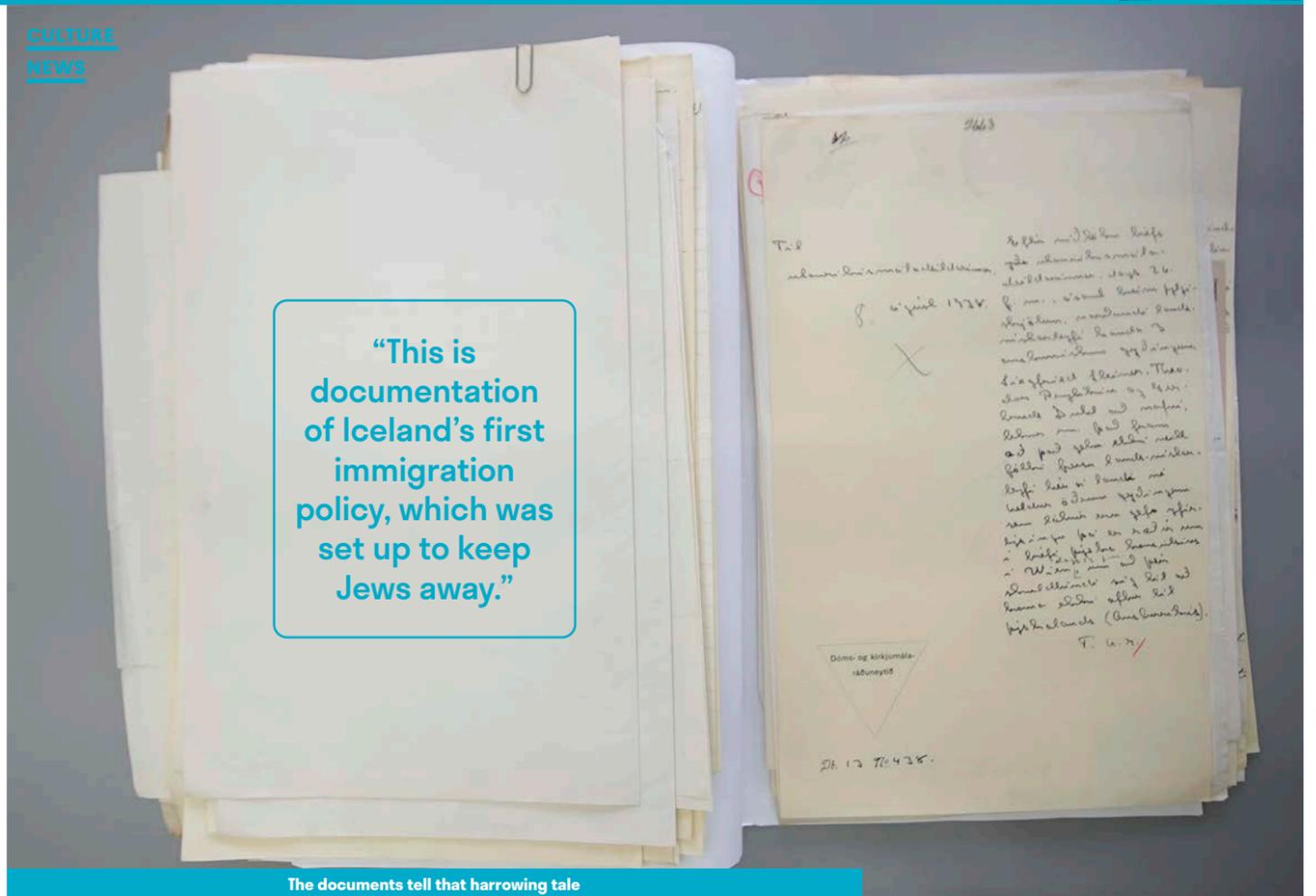
Briet Makes A Splash

Briet, Rubin Pollock and Þorleifur Gaukur with DJ Margeir

Sep. 7th 20:00 - Sky Lagoon, Kópavogur - 9,990 to 13,900 ISK

Have you ever longed for the experience of exfoliating with rock salt and fresh lime, while taking in the smooth sounds of one of Iceland's brightest talents and helping chronically ill children at the same time? Well, long no longer. Briet takes over the Sky Lagoon—Kópavogur's posh new uber spa—to stage a benefit for the charity Fjársjóður Barna. It's unclear whether punters will be luxuriating in the geothermal waters or shivering on dry land during the concert. Please be careful with that salt and lime combination on the more sensitive areas of your body, though. It could sting, we hear, if not applied with caution. Not that the Grapevine staff have any personal experience of that. **JP**

CULTURE NEWS



"This is documentation of Iceland's first immigration policy, which was set up to keep Jews away."

The documents tell that harrowing tale

Iceland's Failure In The Holocaust, Remembered

Erik DeLuca brings to light Iceland's denial of Jews and in doing so, tells the story of his people

Words: **Hannah Jane Cohen** Photos: **Erik DeLuca**

December 10th, 1938: The Ministry of Justice receives a letter from 27-year-old Telmar and Paula Toller and their four-week old son Denny. Jews from Berlin, they plead for a residence and work permit to Iceland. Telmar was an engineer, electrician and baker. One month later, the application was denied. Telmar, Paula and Denny died at a later, unknown date at the Auschwitz concentration camp.

August 19th, 1939: Leo Berger writes asking for a one-year residence permit for him, his wife Gertrud and their eight-year-old child, Herbert. They had already been granted entry into the U.S., but had to find a place to stay until he could emigrate, due to the many people in line before them. Leo notes that he does not intend to seek work in Iceland and is ready to finance his stay. A Jew, he merely wants to enter Iceland so he can survive. Blue text written on the document by the Icelandic government says one word: Deny. According to the Czechoslovakian Holocaust database, Leo, Gertrud, and Herbert were killed in the Lodz Ghetto.

Edwin Brandes, 26, a dental technician, denied, died January 29th, 1944 in Auschwitz. Else Kurzbart and her brothers, denied, died before 1945 in the Minsk Ghetto. Josef Gelles, denied, died on May 30th, 1940 in Sachsenhausen. Wilhelm Tichauer, denied, was killed in Bechenwald. Hundreds more—all rejected by Iceland in their time of need.

Their letters and documents—thousands of them—had, until now, remained unseen, hidden away in the National Archives. But they have been brought to light by Erik DeLuca at Kling og Bang's new installation 'Unheard Of'.

Ignoring the past

Erik is the grandson of a Holocaust survivor, his grandma, who unfortunately died when he was quite young. "I never really knew about her journey and that's something that I struggle with," he explains. After reading Hannah Arendt's work on the politics of forgetting, he discovered a quote by Audre Lorde—"By ignoring the past, we are encouraged to repeat its mistakes."—that inspired him to dive deeper into the subject

"I'm an artist and I've been dealing with the politics of forgetting related to my own identity and having questions for my grandmother. I worked in Iceland from 2016 to 2018 at the art school and I became interested in the relationship between Iceland and the Holocaust," he explains. "I knew there had to have been Jews that were living in Iceland or came to Iceland to find asylum and so I just went to the National Archives and asked them if they had any information about people fleeing the Holocaust. Days later, they wheeled out this cart full of these documents called the 'Surveillance of Foreigners.'"

Many might not know this, but the current Directorate of Immigration was originally founded as the Surveillance of Foreigners. It was headed by Agnar Kofoed-Hansen, who actually went to Germany in 1939 at the personal invitation of Heinrich Himmler for a course in immigration organized by the SS. "This archive," Erik continues, "This is documentation of Iceland's first immigration policy, which was set up to keep Jews away."

The archive is not just comprised of letters from Jews or applications, it's just filled with every document even marginally related to foreigners at the time—thousands of them that range from the mundane to the horrifying.

A 1939 invoice for 29.90 ISK from Björn Bjarnason, who gathered information about foreigners in Mosfellshreppur. A 1938 invoice for 357.10 ISK from the Police Department for the reimbursement of costs incurred in the deportation of the Rottberger family, one of whom was born in Iceland. This follows a 1937 letter sent by Atli Ólafsson, demanding the deportation of the Jewish family due to the

success of Rottberger's leather business.

And it goes on and on, but Erik carefully combed through it all, documenting and witnessing history.

"Dealing with these letters, it's hard, difficult and intense. I didn't feel good—sitting and touching these stories, like physically touching their handwriting," he says. "But you have to sit with it."

The lucky ones

The exhibition begins with a video wall, which flips through Erik's photos of the archives, accompanied by narration. Along with that, there's a big triangle, which was the logo of the Ministry of Justice at the time—a representation of how much of this story was just the mental process of bureaucracy. The exhibition also features a poem by Melitta Urbanacic, one of the few lucky Jews allowed to enter Iceland due to her non-Jewish husband Victor taking a job conducting the Iceland Symphony Orchestra—purely to save his wife.

"The poem is about assimilation and home and trauma and also the guilt of being one of the lucky ones," he explains. Melitta's great-granddaughter, Kate, translated it to English for the show.

Lime grass grows on the floor of the exhibition. "Lime grass sucks up nitrogen from the air and brings it to the soil," Erik explains. "It rejuvenates damaged soil."

Help as many as you can

The exhibition and Erik's research makes one thing abundantly clear: Iceland failed the Jews during their time of need. They have blood on their hands—though many Icelanders today don't even know it.

That said, Iceland has a rare moment of redemption here as the debate regarding Afghan refugees goes on. Here are people, once again, looking death in the eyes and asking for help—will Iceland give them it? Or will more boxes be filled with papers marked "Deny"?

"You must help as many human beings as you can," Erik states. "We're human beings. It's simple. If you have the means, help." **👉**

Info: 'Unheard Of' will be at Kling & Bang until October 3rd, 2021.



You can't see the artist for the trees. Almost.

“Our human nature is that we will always be full of contradictions. We need to embrace that, but we also need to make clear guidelines on where we are a danger to ourselves.”

Witness Life, And The Loss Of It

Anna Rún Tryggvadóttir takes on the confrontation between humanity and the natural world

Words: **Hannah Jane Cohen** Photos: **John Pearson**

Six trees rotate slowly in a dimly lit room, outlined only by the remains of their ever-fading leaves and branches, which litter the floor around you, crunching under your feet as you walk. Only months earlier, the trees were vibrant, hydrated and healthy—their stalks flexible and swaying as they spun lazily on their axis.

But, of course, they were as dead then as they are now. Six trees slowly exiting the world—an autopsy in front of your eyes, allowing you to witness, in real time, the degradation of what was once life.

Enter ‘Hringfarar’ the newest installation by artist Anna Rún Tryggvadóttir.

The prose of death

The aforementioned trees, Anna explains, were sourced from local forest brushers. “They take out trees that either don’t need to be there or shouldn’t be there, so these are trees that were not determined to end their lives through me, but through another agency, and now I’ve brought them into this situation,” she says softly, sitting back in a side-room of Hafnarhús. “I am bringing them into a situation where they are slowly becoming their own shrine and going through the process of leaving their earthly existence. These are trees that have been alive for decades, so there is a lot of accumulated life that is vanishing. These are the processes that living creatures go through when exiting. It’s almost like prose or a poem.”

Anna sees this act—this slow witnessing of natural death—as a

confrontation for humanity.

“I am interested in what happens when you are faced with this sort of setting because we make decisions like these on an everyday basis. All the decisions that we make within our lives have some consequence on our environment. All of them,” she says. “I’m sort of obsessed with the bluff that we need to maintain and the bluff that is necessary to do this, but at the same time, there’s a necessity to allow ourselves to feel the connection, to witness and to be present for something outside of ourselves. It’s a fundamental element of human nature and it’s really easy to go without it, to not allow yourself to think about it. It’s easy to only be faced with something that is man, or man-touched, or manmade. And I think there is great danger in that.”

Changing the hierarchy

Anna’s installation is part of the ‘Íðavöllur: Icelandic Art In The 21st Century’ exhibition, which saw 14 artists take over the entirety of Hafnarhús to showcase the work of a generation. While there were no specific guidelines for the creators, the loose overarching concept was to explore the massive changes this generation has seen since their coming of age, be that social, political or ecological.

Anna’s piece fits in well. It attacks the topic dead on, forcing the viewer back into the natural world that humanity has, especially within our lifetimes, pushed to the brink. It brings into focus the hierarchies that we have become natu-

rally accustomed to—those that deem the Earth to be the servant of man and nature a commodity. In light of our current climate catastrophe, those hierarchies are now indisputable—unconscious tenets of a civilization where it’s cheaper to buy new resources than repair old ones. Anna hopes, though, that we can soon move beyond these beliefs and redesign our own universal beliefs.

“We need to re-contextualise these ideologies, these translations of our relationship to and with and within the natural world,”

she says. “Not only in how we talk about things and how our system of definitions have been laid down, but in how we measure value. What is our value system?”

But Anna’s questions go deeper—getting to the heart of our core beliefs. “This is much more than climate change. This has to do with how we treat one another. It’s on a very basic and primitive level about interdependencies and inter-relation,” she states. “Our human nature is that we will always be full of contradictions. We need to embrace that, but we also need to make clear guidelines on where we are a danger to ourselves and the sustainability of us as a species—no less the sustainability of the entire planet. This comes down, in some form, to ethics.”

A brutal contemplation

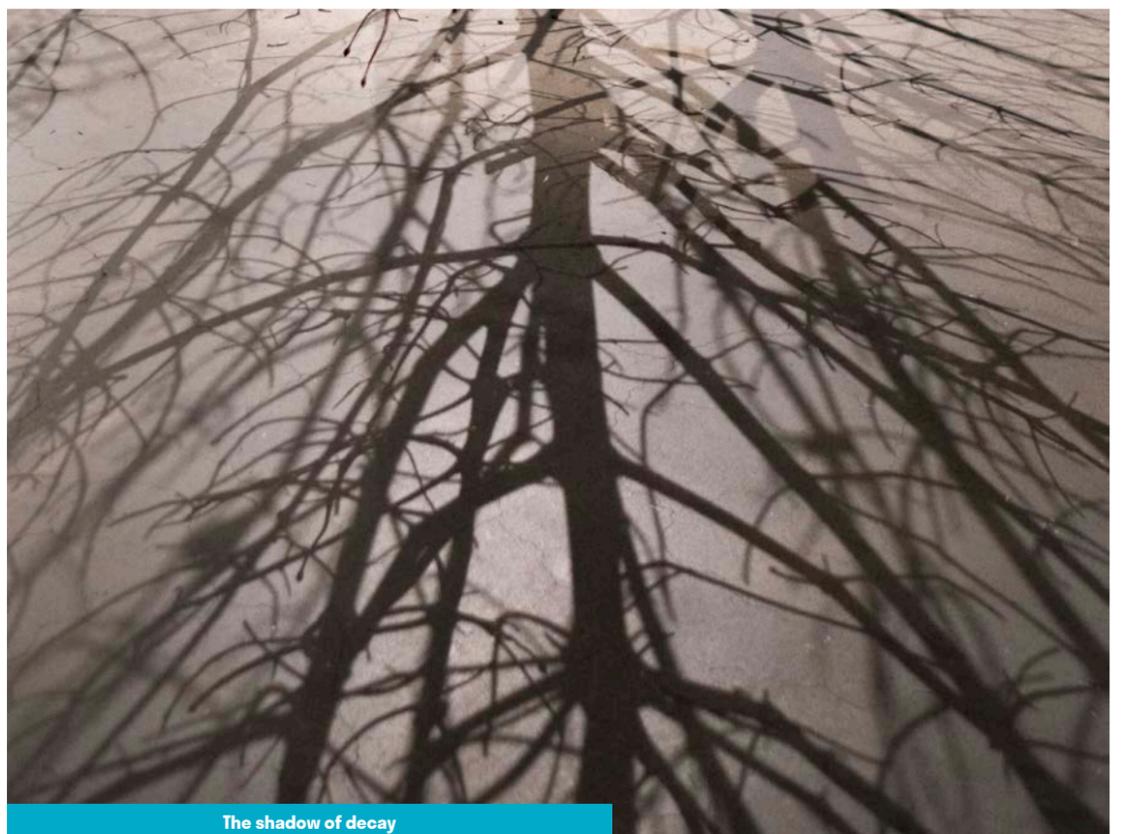
Anna intentionally presents no prescribed solutions to these problems—in fact, part of her confrontation is that there are no prescribed solutions, for if there were, we wouldn’t be in this situation.

“I’m a visual artist. I’m not a scientist or an engineer,” she smiles. “My work is not to produce solutions; my work is to produce contemplations and I think that’s just as necessary for the human spirit.”

Walk through the installation and you can’t help but be ambushed by the brutality of time. A live presentation of death, it’s a play in its most primal form—no embalming, no shroud and no tomb. Just a room with a rotating machine presenting the thread that connects us all: mortality.

“There are six bodies in this space, six bodies rotating and changing and dying,” Anna concludes. “I think no matter who you are or how you think about things, your body is affected by witnessing this.”

‘Íðavöllur: Icelandic Art in the 21st Century’ will be at Reykjavík Art Museum Hafnarhús until October 17th, 2021.



The shadow of decay

Farmers Market

ICELAND



OUR STORES IN REYKJAVÍK: FARMERS & FRIENDS

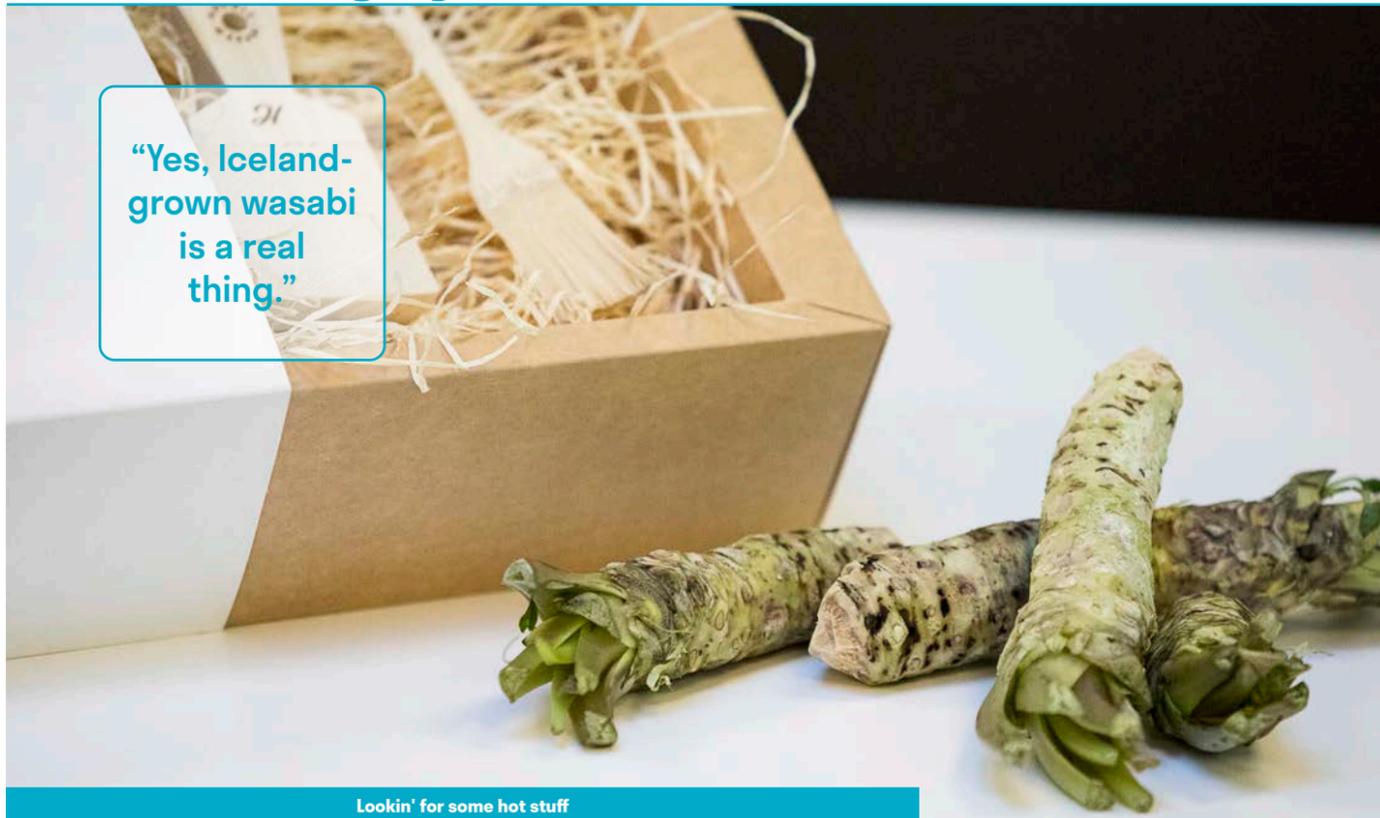


Laugavegur 37



Hólmaslóð 2 / Grandi

WWW.FARMERSMARKET.IS



Lookin' for some hot stuff



For you salty readers, sustainability is what it's all about at Norður & Co. Utilising geothermal energy, the team creates award-winning **arctic sea salt flakes** and other organic products that leave no environmental impact. Produced on Karlsey island in the Westfjords, they deliver products as multifaceted as Iceland itself. If you're new to town, add a pinch of the **Liquorice Sea Salt** to any dessert and impress all your newfound Icelandic friends while you're at it.

One of the pillars of Icelandic sustainability, Sólheimar has been practicing what they preach for over 90 years. Located in the countryside near Selfoss, this sustainable community was a forerunner of organic farming in the Nordics. You can pick up **one-of-a-kind handicrafts** or take a trip out to the farm and purchase all manner of fresh produce and other **organic products**. You can even stay the night at one of their guest houses. Either way—you're keeping your carbon footprint small.

Conscious Consumption

Locally-made products to satiate all your desires

Words: **The Grapevine Local Lovers** Photo: **Art Bicnick**

With the latest reports on climate change painting a grim picture, it's past time to take action. One of the best ways an individual can take a stand is by being a conscious consumer. While it is obviously impossible for everything you use to be sourced and made locally, that doesn't mean there aren't a few star products or businesses that you can feel good about consuming.

[Note: We of course know that impetus should be on corporations and governments to implement wide scale change and regulations to combat climate change and that personal responsibility on an individual is not the answer, that said, we can all do our part.]

arctic thyme, sweet cicely and Icelandic moss, Urta offers unique tea blends to suit all your needs. They also produce versatile syrups, salt blends, jams and other products from herbs and berries that thrive in Icelandic nature.

On the alcohol front, Eimverk Distillery has been producing Iceland's first and only whiskey, **Flóki**, since 2009. Using 100% home-grown barley, this family-run distillery harnesses tradition to produce spirits that are in a league of their own — and purely Icelandic. Be sure to try their sheep-dung smoked reserves for a new take on a long-held custom. If gin is what you're after, they also have small batch gins infused with native botanicals like juniper, rhubarb, kelp and birch. Of course they also produce a line of **Brennivín**, Iceland's signature spirit.

uct from Jurt Hydroponics, brings fresh, authentic wasabi to dinner tables across Iceland and Europe. Yes, Iceland-grown wasabi is a real thing. And trust us, this is nothing like the globs of western wasabi (which is mostly horseradish and food colouring) you find alongside your supermarket sushi, this fresh wasabi is delivered to your door within 48 hours of harvest for you to grate into a paste yourself. For a product that's intended to stimulate your palate, why would you settle for anything less?



Lotion, salt, produce & wool

Sóley is an organic skincare company made in Iceland, using fresh spring water and all the best natural ingredients the island has to offer. Wild herbs are harvested every summer from Southern Iceland and transformed into the shampoos, balms, masks and other self-care necessities their customers adore. We'd particularly recommend their **GRÆDIR healing balm** and **VARMI shampoo**. If you want to elevate your environmental efforts, hold on to your spent bottles to have them refilled with Sóley goodness at **Vonarstræti** on Laugavegur.



But, of course, you can't talk about locally-made products without mentioning Icelandic wool. Iceland is well known for its **lopapeysa**—those famous wool sweaters—but you'd probably be surprised to know that many companies don't produce their sweaters in Iceland, and some don't even use Icelandic wool. That said, you can always trust the Handknitting Association Of Iceland. Every single piece they offer is made using 100% Icelandic wool, knitted by hand in the country. They are also cosy, gorgeous and the perfect thing to show off to your fast-fashion-obsessed friends back home to prove that local production is the way to go. 🇮🇸



Tea, whiskey and... wasabi?

If you're looking to warm up with a cup of tea on a grey day, Hafnarfjörður's **Urta Islandica** has you covered. Using local, native herbs like



But what if you're looking for a unique gift? Well, adorning the dishes of restaurants all over town, **Nordic Wasabi**, the flagship prod-

Get Grapevine Merch!



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September 3rd — October 7th

In Your Pocket



Reykjavík Map

Places We Like

Best Of Reykjavík

Perfect Day

Dance, jive & have the time of your life



Words: Desirai Thompson
Photo: Art Bicnick

Dr. Bryony Mathew

Dr. Bryony Mathew is the U.K.'s newest (and first female!) Ambassador to Iceland. She holds a PhD in Neuroscience from University College, London and has served under Her Majesty's Diplomatic Service since 2005. Having just arrived in Reykjavík a few weeks ago, she's still discovering all the charming little things that make Iceland so distinctly...Icelandic—and loving every second of it.

Rising refreshed

I think the absolute ideal is waking up early but feeling like you've had a great night's sleep. I always start my day with coffee and maybe, if I'm lucky, I can see the sunrise. Then I would get changed into running gear and probably head out to the waterfront to get some fresh air and exercise. I love running there—really fresh air, the smell of the sea and seeing the mountains. I love having these fabulous views as I run. You re-

ally feel like you're in Icelandic nature, despite being right in the city. On my way back, I'd stop by a bakery to get some sourdough and snúður and head home for brunch with my family.

Discovering Iceland's adventures

Then I would love to head out on some kind of adventure. Just get in the car, drive somewhere and try something new. I'd really love to try ice kayaking. Or do some kind of hiking, maybe trail biking or even stand up paddle boarding. I'd love to do that in Iceland. I think that would be fabulous. From there, I would go to some summer house in the middle of beautiful nature with stunning views — just somewhere really Icelandic. Being in nature for some part of this perfect day is really important.

Learn a little something

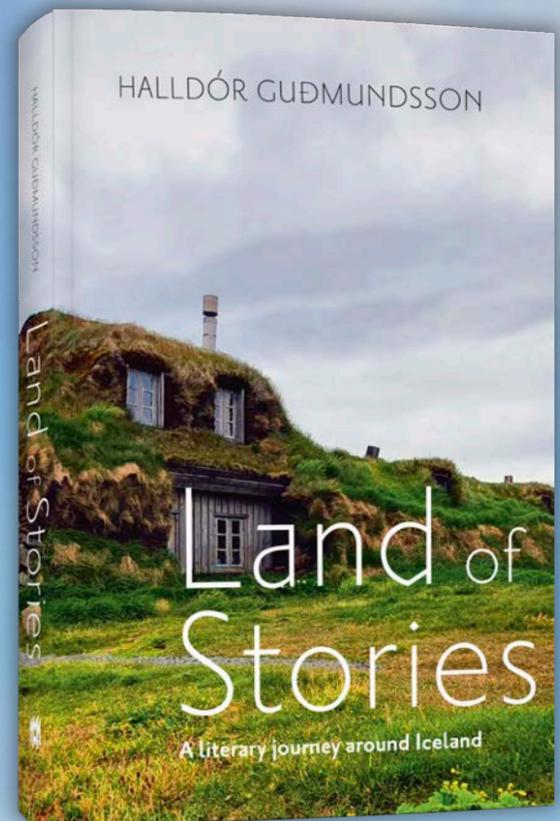
Once there, it'll be time to relax because I think we've done quite a lot of

activity. I would sit down with another nice, big coffee. Something really important for me is to learn something every day. It doesn't matter what it is. It could be reading a detailed article about a topic I don't know about. It could be learning some Icelandic. I would like to feel like I've achieved something in a day. So a bit of time just reading and relaxing and looking at the beautiful view.

Martinis and making memories

Now it's getting into the early evening so I'd say it's time for a cocktail. My husband is, amongst many other things, a fantastic cocktail bartender, so he would mix the drinks. Then, a really lovely evening for me would be to have lots of friends and family come over to barbecue — kids running everywhere, people just relaxing, having fun and chatting late into the evening. Finally, when everyone's tired and collapsed, I would love to fall asleep to the sound of rain on the roof, just knowing you're in nature. 🇮🇸

A LITERARY TOUR AROUND ICELAND



Storytelling is probably the most important cultural tradition in Iceland and a lot of its places have enthralling tales to tell.

This book is a round trip around the country, with thirty stops at such places along the way.

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 Hagatorg 1, open Mon-Fri, 09:00-17:00.

Pharmacies

Lyf og heilsa, Fiskislóð 1, tel: 561 4600
Lyfja, Hafnarstræti 19, tel: 552 4045

Opening Hours - Bars & Clubs

Bars can stay open until 1:00 on weekdays and weekends until 4:30.

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 outdoor swimming pool with hot tubs and a diving board. More pools: gpv.is/swim
Open: Mon-Thu from 06:30-22. 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: 490 ISK adults, 245 ISK children.
Buses run from 06-24:00, and 7-04:30 on weekends. More info: www.bus.is.



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A



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B

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C

Wine bar & food



VÍNSTÚKAN TÍU SOPAR

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. Blackbox Pizza

Borgartún 26

Blackbox is a solid competitor for best pizza pie in the city. Thin crust, inventive toppings, delivery—what else could you ask for? We'd particularly recommend the Parma Rucola, which serves up all the parma ham goodness you could wish for. For those journeying outside the city, they've also got a location in Akureyri.

2. Chikin

Ingólfsstræti 2

This ain't your mama's KFC. No, Chikin—Reykjavík's first dedicated hot chicken and bao joint—manages to be at once both totally sophisticated foodie cuisine and also food that'll definitely fill the hole in your soul you usually quench with a spicy Twister. So grab some chicken with pickled daikon, shiitake mushrooms, miso mayo and lots of other delicacies.

3. Hosiló

Hverfisgata 12

A newcomer on the block who has certainly made a big stir! Hosiló is a small spot—seating around 30 patrons at full capacity—that offers an eclectic rotating menu of local fresh food. The offerings feature meals from around the world, from French cuisine to Northern Africa goodness, and much more.

4. Kaffi Laugalækur

Laugarnesvegur 74a

For many a young parent, the cafe stop at the end of a long stroll is the proverbial pot of gold. Kaffi Lækur is especially popular with new parents, with a special kids' corner for crawlers and drawers. The generously topped chicken and pesto 'litla gula hænán' and the 'shawaramabake' are our top lunch picks. Also, if you're keto, don't miss 'em,

5. Brauð & Co

Frakkastígur 16

First off—don't miss Brauð & Co's pretzel croissants unless you really don't want to have a spiritual experience. We also swear by their "snuður"—cinnamon bread rolls smothered with a sugary glaze. They take it a step further and stuff the classics with blueberries and whatnot, eliciting inappropriate satisfied moans. Get there early to snatch a warm one.

6. Snaps

Pórgata 1

Year after year, regardless of how many restaurants open and close, Snaps remains a timeless classic. Be it lunch, date-night dinner, lazy weekend brunches or a boisterous Christmas work party, Snaps is the perfect venue for a boatload of memories. Steady standbys include the deeply savoury onion soup (with a union of its own we suspect), the house-made fries with crispy rosemary that begs to be a meal on its own, and a textbook crème brûlée topped with an envious snap.

7. Hlemmur Mathöll

Hlemmur

Once a bus station and now a bustling food hall—we love a repurposed space. Hlemmur Mathöll is a classic in the Reykjavík dining scene, with everything from Vietnamese street food to delicious gelato to old school Italian pizza present. Yum.

8. Dragon Dim Sum

Bergstaðastræti 4

For those of us longing for dim sum in Reykjavík, cravings have often had to be satisfied with daydreams of visits past to dim sum houses of Chinatowns abroad. But then Dragon Dim Sum arrived with their fare, which is the perfect marriage between Icelandic ingredients and labouring of Asian dim sum passion. Don't miss their bao or shao mai, and don't worry, their carrot vegan dumplings are also sublime.

9. Lamb Street Food

Grandagarður 7

Pure Icelandic lamb with a middle eastern twist—that's what you'll get at this juicy local eatery where pure kebab is served up with no processed meat. For all you vegans though, never fear, the fresh made salads and hummus are equally wowing. This ain't your regular kebab spot.

10. Laundromat

Austurstræti 9

Have you ever wanted to have lunch and do your laundry in a public place? You're in luck. The Laundromat Cafe on Austurstræti is open (again) for business. Whether you want brunch, a sandwich, or a burger, they have a quality selection of food made to order. Their brunch ain't nothing to scoff at either,

11. Nauthóll

Nauthólsvegur 106

Just behind the University of Reykjavík overlooking the Nauthólsvík geothermal beach is Nauthóll, the definition of a hidden summertime gem. The restaurant is one of those places that downtown Reykjavík rats might call "too far away," but with the advent of public scooters, you can arrive there in style in but 15 minutes. Without hyperbole, there probably isn't a better outdoor view in the city than this place—and their Scandinavian fare is good too.

Drinking

12. Prikíð

Bankastræti 12

Prikíð is the bar version of the "I'm going to bed early tonight vs. me at 3 a.m." meme. At 22:00 you'll have a bunch of regulars relaxing at the bar sipping brews, but arrive at 3:00 and it's Project X. Their outdoor smoking area should be applauded too. Hang out long enough and you'll be sure to buddy up and find an afterparty.

13. Röntgen

Hverfisgata 12

If the cancellation of literally everything is damping your glamorous rock and roll style, Röntgen at Hverfisgata 12 will cure what ails you. This place—a relative newcomer—is already a stalwart in the bar scene, with a stellar atmosphere, great drinks and a lineup of the best DJs in Iceland. Just remember to raise a glass to the good doctor Wilhelm Röntgen (who discovered x-rays) while sipping your tipples.

14. Húrra

Tryggvagata 22

Húrra is BACK! ARE YOU SERIOUS? YES, WE ARE! After a despairing absence from the local scene, the beloved favourite has returned with a vengeance. Seriously—in the few weeks they've been open, the bar/venue has already had shows from heavyweights like Skrattar, Skóffinn and Mannveira. Stop by for vibes, alcohol and other fun things like that you know. Also, their bathroom renovation is pretty crazy.

15. Veður

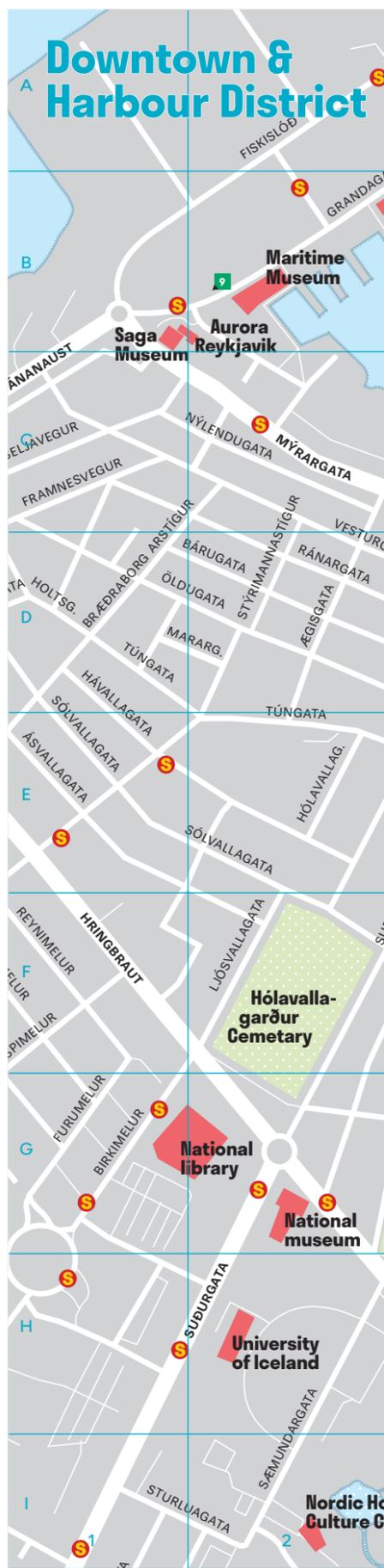
Klapparstígur 33

This charming, low-key, hole-in-the-wall serves up some great cocktails and a dedicated crowd that has grabbed the heart of the Grapevine, even though we are a magazine and not humans. If you feel fine relaxing and chatting, it's still a nice and sophisticated bar, but they've also got an edge. Sometimes they play punk music. \m/

16. Íslenski Barinn

Ingólfsstræti 1a

Of the many nation-themed drinking



establishments in Reykjavík, The Icelandic Bar is the only one that is also a restaurant. Go there at night and maybe you'll meet an elf or Björk or something—that's all people know about Iceland anyway.

17. Mál og Menning

Laugavegur 18b

Wait, a new bar/music venue? Yup! And you thought the pandemic had destroyed all culture in this town. But never fear—Bókabúðir Mál og Menningar is here. There's live music most nights, from DJs to jazz, and during the day, the legendary Bókin is operating from the basement. Seriously—we anticipate this place will be a game-changer in the local cultural scene. Takk fyrir.

E

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New In Town ☆



The Grumpy Whale

Skólavörðustígur 3a

If you're up for a sweet adventure, look no further. The Grumpy Whale have opened shop at Skólavörðustígur 3a, serving up the best hot chocolate in town. For now it's a store where you can stock up on hot chocolate and fun items before visiting the volcano, but it will also soon open up a coffee/hot chocolate house. The Reykjavik Grapevine fell in love with this chocolate a long time ago and we've sold it in our store. Now you can visit them and enjoy the magic yourself. **VG**

18. Dillon

Laugavegur 30

A mix between grunge and classy, Dillon Whiskey Bar dominates their little stretch of Laugavegur. Crammed most nights with rockers, metalheads, and tourists looking for a place to mumble AC/DC songs into their beer, Dillon boasts a wide selection of over 100 whiskies and hosts some of Iceland's best hard rock bands on the weekends.

19. Petersen svítan

Austurstræti 12

The sun is finally out, which means it's time for your annual pilgrimage to Petersen svítan. Never been? Well, make sure to bring your sunglasses

because this place has one of the best views in Reykjavik and also very fashionable clientele. Look over the city and have a beer in almost entirely direct sunlight (!!!!!!!!).

Shopping

20. Íslenska Húðflúrstofan

Ingólfsstræti 3

This classic shop caters to all styles, with a roster of artists that serve up everything from realism to neo-school and more. We'd particularly recommend the hand-poked pieces by Habba (@habbanerotattoo). Not only are they gorgeously ornate in that straight-out-of-800-AD-way, but they might save you from spirits.

21. Nielsen Sérverzlun

Bankastræti 4

Way more than your average design store, Nielsen is filled to the brim with knick-knacks from all over, from gorgeous diaries to cosy towels and all the candles you could desire. Stop by, grab something for a gift and don't forget a little something for yourself.

22. Fótógrafi

Skólavörðustígur 22

Fótógrafi claims to have been one of the first photo galleries in town. While its interior is tiny, there's a surprising number of photos to be found inside. The pictures on display are mainly shot in Reykjavik or

elsewhere in Iceland and all of them have a slightly different, edgy take on the island, instead of adding to the abundance of touristy subjects.

23. Stefánsbúð/p3

Laugavegur 7

Stefánsbúð showcases local designers and second-hand high-fashion finds (hello 1990's Gucci!) as well as accessories from quirky international brands. Fun and zany, you don't know what you're going to find but you know it'll be exciting.

24. Lucky Records

Rauðarárstígur 10

Lucky Records is probably the biggest record shop in Iceland, with

shelves upon shelves of new and used vinyl and CDs on offer. If that's not enough, they're notorious for their expert staff whose knowledge goes far beyond the latest Björk or Sigur Rós offerings. In fact, it's best if you just let them take the lead.

25. Húrra Reykjavík

Hverfisgata 18A

This minimalist streetwear/athleisure store serves up a mixed selection of classic items and trendy cuts. They were massively hyped when they opened a few years ago and have stayed hyped because they know what they are doing and are damn good at it.



F
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“Who else would make songs about gay sex and cum?”

Nicki Minaj, whose real name is Onika Tanya Maraj-Petty. Bassi's obsessed with her, and her influence is clear in his verses—many of which, translated into English, could easily be Minaj lines.

While, perhaps, the nuances of his lyrics might be lost on the non-Icelandic-speaking crowd, we've done our best to translate them in a poetic way:

*It's not hard for me to attract semen
I'm not a housewife even though I'm baked
I'm grilling motherfuckers so they call me steak
I don't fuck with you 'cause you're fake
I'm Bassi Maraj*

What's the stunt?

Bassi's currently working on his first EP, which should be released sometime soon. As you'd expect, he's planning on dropping it with a bang.

“It's five songs. I want to do something crazy before I release it so I was thinking, what stunt can I do?” he says, smirking. “Then I thought maybe I'll just write the release date in poop on Alþingi.” Then he bursts out laughing. “No, I won't.”

But even if he did, don't pretend to be surprised. As he said, he's nasty and classy. 🍑

gpv.is/music
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Nasty & Classy

He's Bassi Maraj... what else can you say?

Words: **Hannah Jane Cohen** Photos: **Supplied by artist**

“Nasty-tude... and class mixed together. Cla-nast-itude,” rapper and reality star Bassi Maraj says coyly, when asked to describe himself in a few words. The current darling of Iceland, Bassi is, to put it bluntly, a force of nature. If you need examples, just know that in only the past months, among other things, he's gotten into Twitter beef with Bjarni Ben and recorded the official 2021 Reykjavik Pride song. Who else can compare?

“I'm nasty and classy,” he laughs. “That's it.”

A born performer

The 22-year old burst onto the scene as a member of 'Æði'—Iceland's first genuine reality TV show—which stars Bassi and his friends Patrekur Jaime and Binni as they navigate life in this fair country. Think the Kardashians, but more gay, likeable and with better drama.

But then Bassi changed gears, releasing a single “Álit” which was followed by his namesake “Bassi Maraj”. The song blew up, creating a level of hype not seen since “B.o.B.a.” or “Joey Cypher”.

One typically expects a reality or social media star's entry into music to be rather terrible—

we've all seen Addison Rae's “Obsessed,” literally anything by Dixie D'Amelio and, of course, Jake Paul—but Bassi wowed everyone by being fucking fantastic. His music quickly overshadowed his reality TV career and he's now a respected rapper in the scene, working with big name producers like DJ Nazareth and BNGRBOY, and performing at big live shows. So don't be surprised if his TV presence quickly becomes a small note in his Wikipedia page. We wouldn't be. The guy's a born performer.

Surprise! Not trash!

“Everyone was like, ‘Yeah, I expected it to be trash!’ And then they heard it and said, ‘No, you didn't write that. Who's writing your songs?’” Bassi laughs, remembering the days before his first release. In person, he's exactly the same lovely over-the-top character you see on 'Æði'—absolutely nothing is played up for the camera. “And I was like, um, nobody—who else would make songs about gay sex and cum?”

No one in Iceland, for sure.

Minaj/Maraj

His artist name is a reference to

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Event Picks



Reykjavik International Literary Festival 2021 ★

Sep. 8th-11th - Various places - free admission

Feel like you're not reading enough? Do we have the event for you! The Reykjavik International Literary

Festival is crawling with bookworms, writers and even commissioning editors from HarperCollins in Holland,

showcasing the best literature in Europe. This year will be nothing less than spectacular, with writers from our First Lady Eliza Reid to Monika Fagerholm, who won the Nordic Council Literature Prize in 2020. RILF has established itself as the most exciting literary event in Iceland and it's guaranteed that you will not only meet your favourite Icelandic authors, you might also have a beer or two with them while debating your postmodern take on Einar Áskell. This festival is not only fun, it's free. **VG**



Daydreams ★

Sep. 4th and 11th - 15:00 - Borgarleikhúsið - 3,300 ISK

A dance performance for children from the age of two with the Icelandic Dance Company. A girl travels the Earth's wonders, through the woods and across the sea, where she meets animals whose properties she deeply desires. We're sold! The piece is 40-minutes long, followed by a small dance workshop for those interested. **VG**



Nordic Affect, Rafið Og Huldán ★

Sep. 4th - 21:00 - Mengi - 2,500 ISK

If you're wondering what the musical genius Bára Gísladóttir has been up to during the pandemic, look no further. Nordic Affect will perform at Mengi with Mikeal Lind and Lilja María Ásmundsdóttir, and Bára will perform a live electronic soundscape... whatever that means. This is cutting edge, hyper artsy activity that will connect you straight with another dimension. **VG**



MUSIC NEWS

It's always an event when Iceland's most interesting director, Þorleifur Örn Arnarson, puts on a play in Iceland. German-speakers can see his older work in Germany, Austria or Switzerland. But for those that don't understand Icelandic, don't worry, we got you. Þorleifur has compiled Iceland's best musicians—everyone from Briet to Sturla Atlas to Cyber—in his production of Shakespeare's classic, Romeo and Juliet. The play is already making waves and the music is already topping the charts. **VG**

September 3rd — September 30th

Concerts & Nightlife

Events are listed by day, and are all live performances or DJ sets. For complete listings and detailed information on venues visit grapevine.is/happening

Send your listings to: listings@grapevine.is

Friday September 3rd

Reykjavik Jazz Festival: Óskar Guðjónsson
12:00 Fríkirkjan
Reykjavik Jazz Festival: Tómas R. Einarsson & Ragnhildur Gísladóttir
17:00 & 20:00 Harpa
Our Classics: Iceland Symphony Orchestra
20:00 Harpa

Tuesday September 7th

Karaoke
20:00 Gaukurinn

Wednesday September 8th

Starri & Salamandra
20:00 Gaukurinn
Folk Music Session
17:00 Kex Hostel



Saturday September 4th

Sólstafir & Kontinuum
20:00 Gaukurinn
Reykjavik Jazz Festival: Svaneborg Kardyb & Kadi Vija Key Project
16:30 Harpa
Reykjavik Jazz Festival: Phil Doyle's PolyHarmonic Ensemble & Melissa Aldana Quartet
20:00 Harpa
Reykjavik Jazz Festival: Los Bomboneros Y Sus Bombasticos
22:30 Harpa
Böss
20:00 Skuggabaldur

Sunday September 5th

Roots Over the Sea: Classical Magic of Eastern Europe
16:00 Harpa

Thursday September 9th

Karma Brigade
20:00 Gaukurinn
Bertrand de Billy conducts Brahms: Iceland Symphony Orchestra
19:30 Harpa
Quiz
21:00 Lebowski Bar
Sycamore Tree
20:30 Mál og Menning

Friday September 10th

Nexion Release Show with Nyrst & Múr Nexion
20:00 Gaukurinn
Rögnvaldur Borgþórsson Quartet
20:00 Skuggabaldur

Saturday September 11th

Blóðmör, Aragrúi & Mersier
20:00 Gaukurinn

Sunday September 12th

Andervel & Strings 20:00
20:00 Mál og Menning
Silva Þórðardóttir & Steingrímur Teague
20:00 Skuggabaldur

Monday September 13th

Mæðraveldið
20:00 Mál og Menning

Tuesday September 14th

Karaoke
20:00 Gaukurinn

Wednesday September 15th

Fógetarnir
20:00 Gaukurinn

Thursday September 16th

Bucking Fastards
20:00 Gaukurinn
Beethoven's Ninth Symphony: Iceland Symphony Orchestra
19:30 Harpa
Quiz
21:00 Lebowski Bar

Friday September 17th

Party Karaoke
20:00 Gaukurinn
Nlykur
21:00 Harpa

Sunday September 19th

Singer Songwriter Night
20:00 Gaukurinn

Tuesday September 21st

Karaoke
20:00 Gaukurinn

Wednesday September 22nd

Apocalypstick Drag Show
20:00 Gaukurinn



Elisabeth Plank
19:30 Harpa

Thursday September 23rd

Ultra Magnús
20:00 Gaukurinn
Quiz
21:00 Lebowski Bar

Friday September 24th

Kingkiller 20:00
20:00 Gaukurinn
GDRN
20:00 Háskólabíó

Saturday September 25th

Dynfari Release Show
20:00 Gaukurinn
Stjörnu-Sævari and the Iceland Symphony Orchestra 14:00
20:00 Harpa

Sunday September 26th

Sibelius - the Young Orchestra of the Iceland Symphony Orchestra
17:00 Harpa

Tuesday September 28th

Karaoke
20:00 Gaukurinn

Thursday September 30th

Jónas Sig and band
20:00 Bæjarbíó
Mæðraveldið
20:00 Gaukurinn
Dvorák Cello Concerto - Iceland Symphony Orchestra
19:30 Harpa
Quiz
21:00 Lebowski Bar
Sigurður Guðmundsson
20:30 Salurinn



You've never heard of KK? What have you been doing with your life? KK is Iceland's best blues musician, a legendary songwriter and he's been part of the Icelandic national soul since the early '90s. Finally, someone noticed this wonderful musician outside of Iceland—or, rather, a trio of people: former Pearl Jam frontman Eddie Vedder, actor and director Sean Penn, and Cat Power, another wonderful musician in her own right. Cat Power covered KK's beautiful song "I think of angels", and Eddie Vedder used it in Sean Penn's movie, Flag Day, so obviously the movie's going to be a masterpiece. **VG**



Composer Hildur Guðnadóttir, best known for her work in both television and film, has now brought her talent to a new medium: video games! No, not Fortnite, come on! The award-winning composer is making music for Battlefield 2042. The first-person shooter will be released on PC, Playstation and Xbox on October 22nd, and Hildur's score for the game will be released around that time on vinyl and streaming services. But what makes this even more interesting is that Hildur's collaborator in the project is her husband, Sam Slater. **VG**

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Elisions

9 September - 30 October 2021

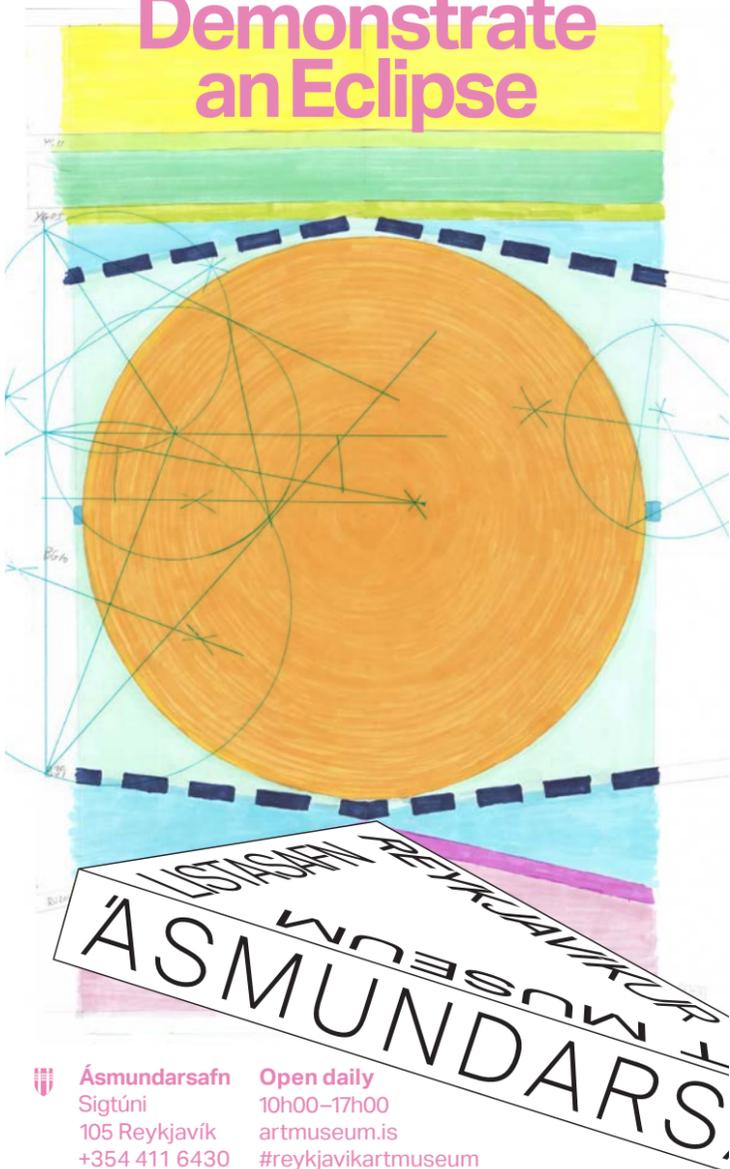
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Art

So get off your ath, let's do some math, math math math math math

Bridging Mathematics and Art

At 'Slembilukka', math is for everybody

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

Info:

The 'Slembilukka' workshop will be Ásmundarsalur until September 23rd, when it will move into the main exhibition hall. The exhibition will be called 'Fullkomið Firðrúm' and will last until October 3rd, 2021.

"There's a lot of creative thinking in math. It's playful and exploratory," visual artist Jóhanna Ásgeirsdóttir explains, sitting in front of a chalkboard covered with geometric shapes and equations. "Math doesn't need to be visual to have a connection with how art works or how artists think. They are the same thing—both are having an interest in the world, looking at them closely, and trying to understand them."

Jóhanna is joined by fellow artist Daníel Magnússon, who, along with artist Anna Hrunn Músdóttir, just opened up a workshop at Ásmundarsalur entitled 'Slembilukka.'

Math is art

"We're calling it a lab or workshop, but we will be here thinking about math. We're all visual artists so we will be thinking about math as an art or philosophy," she continues. "But it's open—we don't know where it's going to go."

The trio will eventually move their lab to the main exhibition hall in Ásmundarsalur, presenting an exhibit entitled 'Fullkomið Firðrúm'. But for now, they spend their days diving into all facets of mathematics—from probability to higher dimensions to discrete structures—looking at them from the perspective of fine artists.

Lessons from Euler

The group recently tackled mathematician Leonhard Euler and the Seven Bridges of Königsberg, a problem that laid the foundations for graph theory.

The gist of the experiment is whether it was possible for one to cross all seven bridges in the Prussian city of Königsberg in one walk without double crossing one bridge. This deceptively simple problem had baffled many, until Euler changed the game. Instead of focusing on the location of each bridge, he zeroed in on the number, creating a diagram of the city that put a "point" on each area of the town and "lines" connecting them. Of course, you might know these symbols as other things: vertices and edges. Yes, Euler had made what we now call a graph, putting into motion future studies on how spaces interact with each other.

"It seems like a simple puzzle that would have no consequences for anything else, but it describes how systems with multiple points and connections work, which is now used in transmitting information on the internet or putting pipes in a house," Jóhanna explains.

The group also explored Euler's polyhedron formula, which describes how, if you are in three

dimensions, you can take the vertices of a polyhedron, subtract the edges and add the faces, and you will always get two.

"I thought these were disconnected ideas—the polyhedrons and the bridges—but you can transform a polyhedron into a two-dimensional network and the rules apply, so they are intimately connected. This is simple math, addition and subtraction, but they have large systematic consequences," she continues. "I've been thinking about the geometry of that while Daníel was thinking about the systems. But it's the same thing."

It's the basis of shapes—the basis of art.

A place for experiments

The workshop aims to reach a much broader audience than just the three of them and their own discoveries. The lab is for everyone, so 'Slembilukka' is opened to the masses on Thursdays. Students can bring their math homework if

they need help, or just come sit and discuss any special mathematical interests they have.

"It's a place for experiments," Jóhanna says. "People can come in and talk about these connections between art and math." She's also quick to note that while the official office hours are there

on Thursday, the group are there nearly all the time, so feel free to stop in any day, if your Thursdays are already booked.

"We are all interested in changing the idea that math is only for scholars and educated people," Daníel concludes. "Math is for everybody and everybody can learn math." 🍷

"[Art and math] are the same thing—both are having an interest in the world, looking at it closely, and trying to understand it."

Art Picks



★ 30x30

Sep. 4th-30th - Gallery Port,
Laugavegur 23b - Free admission

We can't emphasize the brilliance of Gallery Port enough. Guess you need to pay them a visit then, right? This exhibition is as versatile as it is interesting. In it, you can find everyone from the heavyweight writer and visual artist, Hallgrímur Helgason, to Loji Höskuldsson, Pórdís Erla Zoëga and the legendary bohemian couple, Hulda Hákon and Jón Óskar. This group exhibition is truly a unique opportunity to see the creme de la creme of all genres and generations of artists in Iceland in one place. Gallery Port is an artist-run gallery that has quickly become one of the best in Iceland. **VG**



★ Private Beach Party for Two

Sep. 2nd - 6th, Núllið, Bankastræti -
1,000 ISK book in advance

If you crave sun and summer vibes but did not manage your annual escape to Spain, this is your chance. Núllið is the most exciting grassroots gallery in the city these days. If you want to soak in the artistic sun, you have to book it in advance at privatebeachpartyfortwo@gmail.com, and be quick, it's almost sold out. **VG**



★ Community of Sentient Beings

Until Oct. 31st, Hafnarborg,
Strandgata 34

This year's autumn exhibition at Hafnarborg is Community of Sentient Beings, curated by Wiola Ujazdowska and Hubert Gromny. They have invited various professionals to participate in the exhibition in the aim to create a space for multiple voices to come together, while reflecting on different ways of voicing, hearing and sensing. Makes sense, right? **VG**



★ Debatable Lands: Dialogues from Shared Worlds

Sep. 11th - Oct. 1st - Gerðarsafn,
Kópavogur

A mid-career retrospective of the 20-year collaboration between artists Bryndís Snæbjörnsdóttir and Mark Wilson. Snæbjörnsdóttir and Wilson approach their collective art partnership with an ecological and pluralistic view. In a research-based practice, they prompt discussion and thought about our changing world, and our own human role in those changes. **VG**

September 3rd — September 30th

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

18

Elisions

This new show gathers together pieces by American artists N. Dash, K.R.M. Mooney, B. Ingrid Olson, and Carrie Yamaoka, who use painterly, photographic and sculptural methods to explore the concept of 'Elision'. This word conveys the sense of something missing, truncated, compressed, or contracted. To quote the promotional material supporting this launch: "Removal is additive, just quietly so." Quite so.
• Opens on September 9th, 2021
• Runs until October 30th, 2021

HVERFISGALLERÍ

Below / Beyond

Although Hverfisgallerí have announced this show by British-born artist Perry Roberts, details have yet to emerge of what's in store. But given that in the past he has deftly turned his hand to drawing, painting, architectural inventions and even furniture—and knowing Hverfisgallerí—anything is possible.
• Opens on September 25th, 2021
• Runs until November 6th, 2021

Ongoing

NATIONAL GALLERY OF ICELAND

Of The North

'Of the North' (2001) is created from Steina Vasulka's archive of video recordings, mostly of Icelandic nature—either the surface or microscopic views: microbes, as well as crashing waves and melting ice, landslips and an array of natural phenomena relating to the formation and destruction of our planet.
• Runs until January 9th, 2022

HELLO UNIVERSE

It's 2021 and we're over Earth. Enter Finnur Jónsson. The avant-garde artist 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

Death Is Elsewhere

Ragnar Kjartansson's opus "Death is

Elsewhere" made its debut in 2019 at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. Now, it's back in the artists hometown for a summer long residency at the National Gallery. Featuring ya fav musician twins GYÐA, Kristin Anna, and (randomly) those two brothers from the National, the seven-channel video installation sees a single song played without end in a continuous loop. Filmed around the summer solstice in southern Iceland, "Death Is Elsewhere" is a referential work that turns romantic clichés on their head with irony, nihilism and absurdity to spare
• Runs until September 19th, 2021

EINAR JÓNSSON MUSEUM

Permanent Exhibition

In 1909 Einar Jónsson—described on the museum's website as "Iceland's first sculptor"—offered all of his works as a gift to the Icelandic people, on the condition that a museum be built to house them. The resulting edifice, constructed just over the road from Hallgrímskirkja, now contains close to 300 artworks. There is also a beautiful garden with 26 bronze casts of the artist's sculptures to enjoy.

REYKJAVÍK CITY MUSEUM

Settlement Exhibition

This exhibition—where Viking ruins meet digital technology—provides insight into Reykjavik's farms at the time of the first settlers.
• Closed on September 3rd and 4th for conservation work

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.
• Runs until September 19th, 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

Kristín Porkelsdóttir

You've probably seen Kristín Porkelsdóttir's work before, though you might not know it. She's designed the packaging of countless foods as well as Icelandic banknotes and other famous items. Come trace her progression as an artist.
• Runs until January 30th, 2022

Behind the Scenes — Natural Dyes: A Modern Perspective

Where do textile colours come from? Nowadays many are chemical, but this project shows the wide range of colours one can produce naturally in Iceland.
• Runs until September 12th, 2021

Miniatures
Modelmaker Sveinbjörn Gunnarsson takes up residence at the Design Museum. Come watch the exemplary artist transform ordinary materials into the extraordinary right in front of your eyes.
• Runs until September 19th, 2021

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - KJARVALSSTAÐIR

Eternal Recurrence

Jóhannes S. Kjarval—after whom the museum is named—is put in dialogue with a number of prominent contemporary Iceland artists including Ólafur Elíasson, Ragnar Kjartansson, Steina and Eggert Pétursson. Now that's a lineup.
• Runs until September 19th, 2021

ÁSMUNDARSALUR

Marble

The title of this new show by Jóhannes Atli Hinriksson is "Mar-mari", which translates to "marble" in English. However, the assigned English title appears to be "Must Be Some Kind Of Marble". We're not really sure why the English title qualifies for word-play when the Icelandic one doesn't, but as the artist himself says: "Abstract sculpting is at its best a play on words, and in the worst case it a joke. An object is always objective. It's very literal, you know!" Anyway, for this show, Jóhannes Atli has chosen to sculpt his objective objects in marble; the material of choice when a young artist finally sails gracefully into sensible middle-age.
• Runs until September 12th, 2021

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - ÁSMUNDARSAFN

Sirra Sigrún Sigurðardóttir & Ásmundur Sveinsson: As If To Demonstrate An Eclipse

Sirra's work is cosmic in nature, often connected to speculation about our position within the inner workings of nature, physics and the forces that drive the world. Her works often display our position as individuals, our significance and insignificance. As an existentialist paper, who ruminated on our own obscurity, we can't agree more.
• Runs until October 3rd, 2021

Design for Sculptor Ásmundur Sveinsson
Five product designers take over the museum shop at Ásmundarsafn with objects inspired by Ásmundur Sveinsson's world and heritage.
• Runs until October 3rd, 2021

NÝLÓ

AVANSOWI / AIANSWYB

This exhibition came about when Icelandic-based artists Klävs Liepiņš, Raimonda Sereikaitė-Kiziria and Renāte Feizaka answered a call by Nýló for artists who feel under-represented in the Icelandic scene to come forward. Their resulting soil-based installation/performance piece serves as a symbol of the fabrication and absurdity of nationalism. This show rejoices in the full title of "As You Are Now So Once Was I / As I Am Now So Will You Be", but to be honest—as respectful as The Grapevine is of artistic intent—that was always going to get shrunk in the journalistic wash.
• Runs until October 3rd, 2021

NORDIC HOUSE

Rockscramblers

Rockscramblers is inspired by the illustrated poetry of poet Mats Söderlund and illustrator Kathrina

Skarðsá. On view are the illustrations and poetry in their original forms and one can also interact with a mysterious recording of Söderlund himself, a cave where young visitors can have a cozy time and (!!!) a new climbing wall.
• Runs until September 5th, 2021

REYKJAVÍK ART MUSEUM - HAFNARHÚS

Iðavöllur: Icelandic Art in the 21st Century

In 2021, Reykjavik Art Museum focuses on the microenvironment, with an aim of displaying the growth of the Icelandic art scene. The whole of Hafnarhús becomes the setting for a powerful exhibition of new works by young artists considered to be leading for their generation, and assumptions can also be made about the larger context of Icelandic and international contemporary art.
• Runs until October 17th, 2021

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF ICELAND

Kristján Magnússon

Backyards, sheds, clothes-lines and, now and then, a cat. Photographer Kristján Magnússon trains his lens exclusively on a narrow, enclosed swath of the urban environment: the back-lots of residential areas in the older parts of Reykjavik.
• Runs until September 12th, 2021

Spessi 1990-2020
Spessi, a.k.a. Sigurpór Hallbjörnsson, has forged a unique style within the field of fine-art photography. His work presents cold hard reality, unvarnished and uncensored. Hidden pockets of society are prominent in his work, interspersed with cultural life. His choice and handling of material is provocative, yet also imbued with humanity and humour.
• Runs until September 12th, 2021

MUSEUM OF DESIGN AND APPLIED ART GARDATORG 1
210 GARDABÆR

EXHIBITIONS

KRISTÍN ÞORKELSDÓTTIR

UNTIL 30.12.

BEHIND THE SCENES

NATURAL DYES: A

MODERN PERSPECTIVE

UNTIL 12.09.

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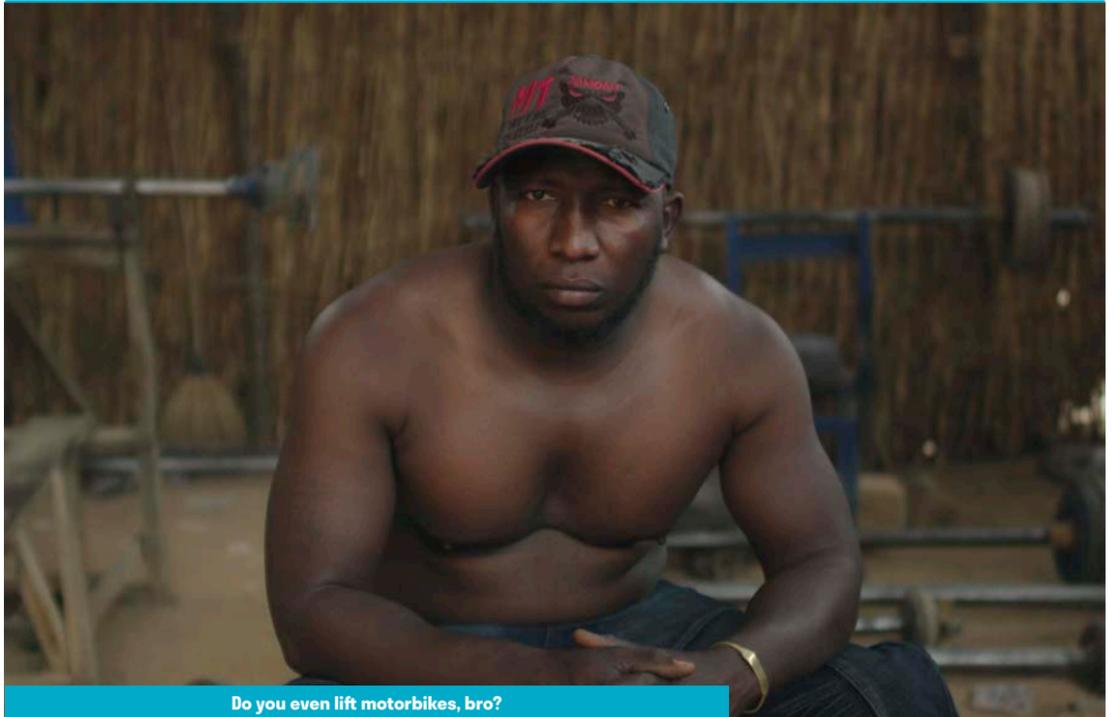
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Film



Do you even lift motorbikes, bro?

Return Of The RIFF

The Reykjavík International Film Festival
bounces back

Words: **John Pearson** Photo: **Supplied by RIFF**

This September sees the return of Iceland's leading celebration of cinema to its more familiar format, following a year of pandemic-enforced suspended animation.

In 2020, the Reykjavík International Film Festival (RIFF) rode out the viral waves by taking to the streets—and to the digital streams—to reach an Icelandic public unable to gather in cinemas. The RIFF Bus roved the land, carrying its programme of children's films and independent flicks to communities beyond the capital, and allowing regional audiences to experience the safely isolated delights of a drive-in cinema.

Meanwhile RIFF Home, the festival's online offering, allowed viewers to take it all in from their couch: a particularly attractive proposition given that you can make your own popcorn, and pause that Belgian art house classic while you nip out to the loo.

Back to the bió

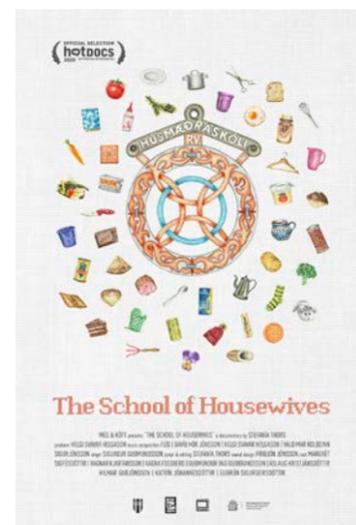
However now that the festival can return to physical venues, it will be bringing this year's offerings—which will have a focus on Dutch cinema and film music—to such locations as Bió Paradís and The Nordic House. But the bolstered online element will remain, and there will be special events in Reykjavík and beyond, including screenings in a cave and the return of the RIFF drive-in cinema experience.

Since its inception in 2004, RIFF has not only brought fine cinema to the masses; it has also developed a purpose as patron of the cinematic creative community. Alongside Industry Days, (RIFF's networking and learning events for cinema professionals), the festival runs The Talent Lab, a programme for emerging film creatives who are just starting their journey. Participants have the chance for

their short film to feature in the festival's official program, and to be in the running for RIFF's prized Golden Egg award. And then there's RIFF4Future, the festival's innovative three-day workshop for young Nordic filmmakers.

Three to see

Over its eleven-day run, RIFF 2021 will screen more than 180 films from around the world. To help you choose from this cinematic cornucopia, The Grapevine has picked three favourites from the festivities.



The School Of Housewives
Year: 2020
Director: **Stefanía Thors**

This gentle and fascinating documentary made a splash at last year's festival, going on to represent Iceland at this year's BBC LongShots international film competition. Although technically not a part of RIFF 2021, its insights into Icelandic culture make it compulsory viewing for anyone who missed it last year.

The story is about a school in Reykjavík that has taught traditional domestic crafts to aspiring

housewives since 1942. The school has moved with the times and now accepts male pupils—artist Ragnar Kjartansson is a high-profile alumnus—but its future is never secure, as Icelandic social fashions ebb and flow around it.



Zinder
Year: 2021
Director: **Aicha Macky**

The director shines a light on her hometown of Zinder in Niger, where "Palais"—gangs feared by the local community—hold sway. But some of these young men are trying to break free from the trap of jobless violence. Macky's film peels back their bravado, often revealing desperate but hopeful youths in search of dignity.



Sisters With Transistors
Year: 2020
Director: **Lisa Rovner**

The role played by female innovators in the field of electronic music often lies underexplored, other than when BBC-based titans Daphne Oram and Delia Derbyshire are (quite rightly) pushed to the front.

This engaging documentary spreads the electronic net much wider, bringing to the fore other women who pushed the boundaries as composers, musicians and engineers to shape the soundscapes we take for granted today. 🎧



“I want them to know this is still the Taliban from the 1990’s, it’s no modern version like they say. They’re still killing innocent people. They’re destroying homes. They’re burning houses. They’re still doing all the same things.”

From Afghanistan to Iceland

An activist seeks to help his homeland

Words: Desirai Thompson
Photos: Art Bicnick

On the morning of August 19th, Sayed Khanoghli, an Afghan refugee and Chairman of the Youth at Amnesty International, watched a video from Afghanistan. It showed a young girl of only thirteen in abject terror as she is being pried out of the arms of her mother by a Taliban fighter. The child is screaming to be left alone as she is violently pulled away and forced out of frame. This is the Taliban they claim has changed.

The Taliban has been establishing its rule over enormous swaths of Afghanistan for months. Starting in the countryside, district after district fell to the terrorist group until the capital of Kabul was finally captured on August 15th, signifying the toppling of the civilian government. At first, people spoke of a strange calmness in Kabul, no doubt due to the presence of countless members of the international media on the ground. It was ultimately the scenes of chaos at the Hamid Karzai Airport—where people were so desperate to flee that they clung to the sides of departing planes—that finally caught the attention of the world.

A family in peril

After journeying through numerous countries and spending months in an Icelandic refugee shelter, Sayed is now settled in Reykjavik and pursuing film studies. His family, however, remain in Taliban-controlled Afghanistan, where they face imminent danger of retaliation and death, as do untold numbers of other Afghan families.

“Since 2001, my entire family has been involved in the government. I grew up in a very politically minded family that always stood up for what was right—and that really cost us,” he says. Detailing his personal losses,

Sayed continues, “I have a brother who’s almost four years older than me. There was an attack on our house and he was paralysed permanently, just for the reason that my family was involved in the government. Another attack on my family happened in 2016 when my uncle was shot in front of my eyes.”

Sayed’s family is just one example of the countless vulnerable people who will fall through the cracks of Iceland’s new plan for accepting Afghan refugees. The government has agreed to receive up to 120 individuals, focusing primarily on government workers and students involved in Icelandic projects, as well as a fortunate few whose residence requests have been approved but are unable to secure their own passage. Sayed’s family, however, don’t qualify under those conditions, leaving them

helpless in their attempts to flee the danger closing in around them.

“They just need to figure out who my family is and in a matter of seconds, my whole family can be massacred.” Sayed reflects. “It really has cost us, like everyone in Afghanistan who was standing for the people’s rights and wanting to educate people about the things that are going on.”

Despite claims that the Taliban has shifted their stance on women’s rights, Afghan women and girls are already facing abhorrent abuses under their new rule. Sayed explains, “They have made an announcement in my city stating that we have to put a sign on our house that we have a young girl who is eligible for marriage. I have three nieces who meet their requirements. So if they get in there they can

do anything to them. And who’s going to answer for it? No one. There are no police you can complain to and there is no government you can go to. There is nothing you can do,” he declares. “Since last week, I just feel terrible. I just don’t know what to do.”

Taking action for Afghanistan

With the stakes so high, Sayed, who has become a voice of activism in Iceland, continues to urge the government to halt deportations of individuals at risk of being sent back to life-or-death situations. He’s also calling for the government to accept at least 100 refugee families—not only the 120 individuals they’ve pledged. Along with talking to news outlets and spreading the word on social media, Sayed also created a petition on change.org through his organisation, Samstaðan, to push the government to expand its acceptance criteria for Afghan refugees. In addition, Sayed hopes to see Iceland help fund their resettlement and provide them with adequate support upon arrival.

“I know the Icelandic government can provide better conditions for refugees in the camps. If you go to these camps, you’ll feel disgusted. That’s not a place that human beings can live. If they’re not providing a good place for refugees to live, at least they can provide a temporary work permit so they can work during the asylum process and they can live a better life during that time,” he says.

Responsibility lies not only with the government, Sayed emphasises, but with citizens and residents of Iceland. “We’ve put out a petition for people to sign and we’re going to start a fundraiser for those who have been displaced. I really want people to donate to them,” Sayed urges, “I want them to at least educate themselves and their families on the subject — that way people can try to understand the situation. I want them to know this is still the Taliban from the 1990s; it’s no modern version, like they say. They’re still killing innocent people. They’re destroying homes. They’re burning houses. They’re still doing all the same things.”

But time is of the essence—every day the Taliban tightens their stronghold on Afghanistan with the entire country now under their control. Human lives are being lost as Iceland resists instituting a more comprehensive plan on Afghan refugee acceptance and resettlement.

When speaking of his new home Sayed concludes, “We need their help today, I don’t want them to leave us alone.”



Fighting for his homeland

sushi
social

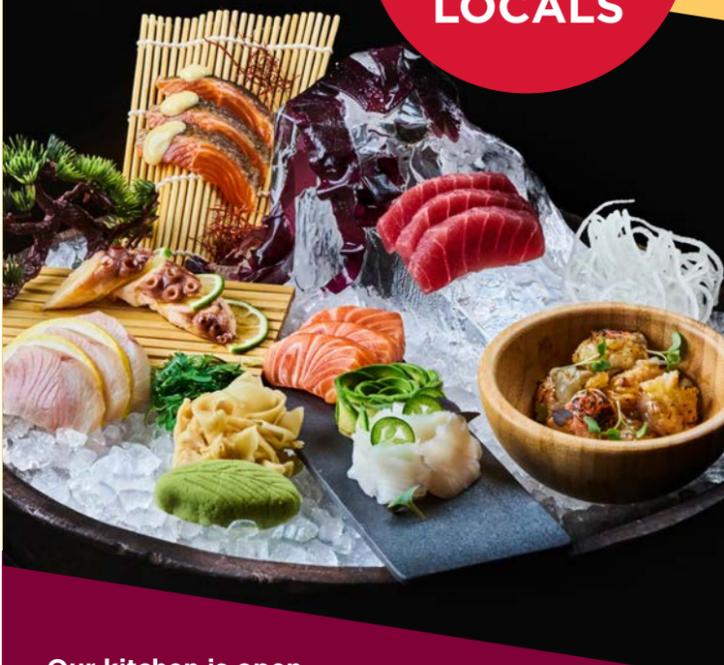
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That damn pink vog from the volcano gets everywhere

'Deluge' By Boncyan

If only listening to songs was always this easy

Words: **Hannah Jane Cohen** Photos: **Joe Shutter**

Info

'Deluge' by Boncyan will be released September 17th. Find it on all streaming platforms.

Boncyan—Iceland's resident mature boy band—is composed of Janus Rasmussen, Sakaris and Tom Hannay. After a slew of fun releases, they are finally dropping their first EP. We sat down to hear it out—track by track.



Turn It All Around

Tom: "Turn It All Around" is about the negative effect that social media can have on your life, and the vicious cycle that you can fall into when you spend too much time comparing yourself to images of lives (seemingly) better than yours. Ultimately spending more and more time with your head online, neglecting to appreciate the here and now—it's a modern cliché, but a good one.

Janus: Writing the song was swift and effortless, and I feel it shows how much fun we had making it. If only making songs was always this easy.

Tom: Agreed! Must have been something in the water that day. Writing music can often be hit and miss, you have to show up and start writing, knowing that what you're about to write will probably end up in a 'demo' folder with some random-ass working title like "Post MaTome."

Still, you've got to show up each day and put the work in because there's always a slim chance that it might actually be a decent song, and an even slimmer chance that it might be a great song.

Wait For It

Tom: "Wait For It" is about the feeling right before you make up your mind to drop a truth bomb on someone and give them a piece of your mind.

Sakaris: We had a ton of fun doing this completely unapologetic retro '90s house track, with quite era-authentic instrumentation. We didn't really know what to do with the thing, until one of us proposed that we call our good friend Guðrun (GDRN) and have her smack some vocals over the top. Then Tom arrived in Iceland so we put him on background ad-lib diva duties, and bam! Instant banger.

Deluge

Sakaris: We found this cheap living room organ sound, which by itself sounded quite comical. We then proceeded to play some mel-

ancholy ballad chord progressions on top of a super sparse beat, and it turned from comical to beautiful.

Tom: This song is a great example of how we each use our individual strengths to work as a team, creating a song that's greater than the sum of its parts.

The decision to sing softly was pretty much the first decision we made. We wanted to write a slow and sensitive song that would fit nicely as an interlude to an otherwise energetic live set. I'm telling you now, singing softly is much harder than singing with power! The lyrics were centred around the idea of 'life happening,' where life is a deluge that can sweep you away from someone you had no intention of being swept away from and how sometimes, you just need to hold your breath, let go and wait for the swell to carry you to calmer waters.

Fire

Tom: This song is more about trying to capture a feeling rather than having a clear narrative... pff narrative, who needs one of those anyway? It's the feeling of being so sexy that you're on fire and the atomic bomb of emotions that grips you when you come face to face with someone who is fire to you.

Sakaris: This was a simple jam, based on some hefty beats and distorted synths and 80s, but once Tom ad-libbed some vocals on top of it, it turned into a proper song. We decided to just let go of conventional pop-form and do whatever felt right and interesting, ending with that filthy solo in the end.

Tom: Making music is supposed to be fun, we all got into this business because, more than anything, we love creating music. 🍷

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

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

FJALLKONAN
Every day from
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Beer 890 ISK,
Wine 990 ISK.

FORRÉTTABARINN
Every day from
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Beer 800 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK.

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8:00 to 10:00.
Coffee 400 ISK.

**JUNGLE COCKTAIL
BAR**
Every day from
17:00 to 20:00.
Beer 800 ISK,
Wine 1,000 ISK,
Cocktails 1,500
ISK.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

PUNK
Every day from
16:00 to 18:00.
Beer 890 ISK,
Cocktails 1,500
ISK.

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

ROSENBERG
Every day from

16:00 to 18:00.
Beer 750 ISK,
Wine 950 ISK.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

ÖLSTOFAN
Every day from
15:00 to 20:00.
Beer 750 ISK,
Wine 800 ISK.



Featured Drinking Hole

SUSHI SOCIAL
EVERY DAY FROM
17:00 TO 18:00,
PINGHOLTSSTRÆTI 5,
101 REYKJAVÍK

Ever wanted
to put on a
sombrero, eat
sushi and drink
cheap wine like
an Icelander?
You're in luck. The

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restaurant, Sushi
Social offers
a happy hour
where you can
drink beer for
645 ISK or enjoy
a glass of wine
for 745 ISK. And
cocktails are half
price. **VG** 🍷

Cheap Food

Here are some deals that'll
keep your wallet feeling
happy and full.

1,000 ISK And Under

Hard Rock Café ISK
Every day
15:00 -18:00
Vegan option

**Nachos, wings &
onion rings -
990 ISK** **Sólon**
Monday - Friday
11:00 - 14:30

Dominos
All day Tuesday
Medium sized
pizza with three
toppings -1,000
Tapas Barinn
Every day
17:00 - 18:00

Selected tapas
half price

Deig / Le Kock
Every day-All day
Doughnut,
coffee & bagel
-1,000 ISK

Sushi Social
Every day
17:00 - 18:00
Avocado fries -
690 ISK
Lobster sushi,
ribs & more -
890 ISK

**1,500 ISK
And Under**

**Hamborgara-
búlla Tómasar**
All day Tuesday
Burger, french
fries & soda -
1,390 ISK

Gló
All day, every day
Bowl of the
month - 1,290 ISK
Vegan option

Shalimar
Monday - Friday
12:00 - 14:30
Curry - 1,290 ISK
Vegan option

Sæta Svínid
Every day
15:00 - 18:00
Chicken wings -
1,190 ISK

Sólon
Monday - Friday
11:00 - 14:30
Ceasar salad -
1,490 ISK

Lemon
Every day
16:00 - 21:00
2f1 Juice +
sandwich
1,095 ISK

Vegan option

Uppsaliir
Every day
11:00 - 14:00
Burger & fries -
1,390 ISK
Vegan option

**2,000 ISK
And Under**

Sólon
Monday - Friday
11:00 - 14:30
Fish of the day -
1,990 ISK

Matarkjallarinn
Monday - Friday
11:30 - 15:00
Fisherman's fish
soup -1,990 ISK

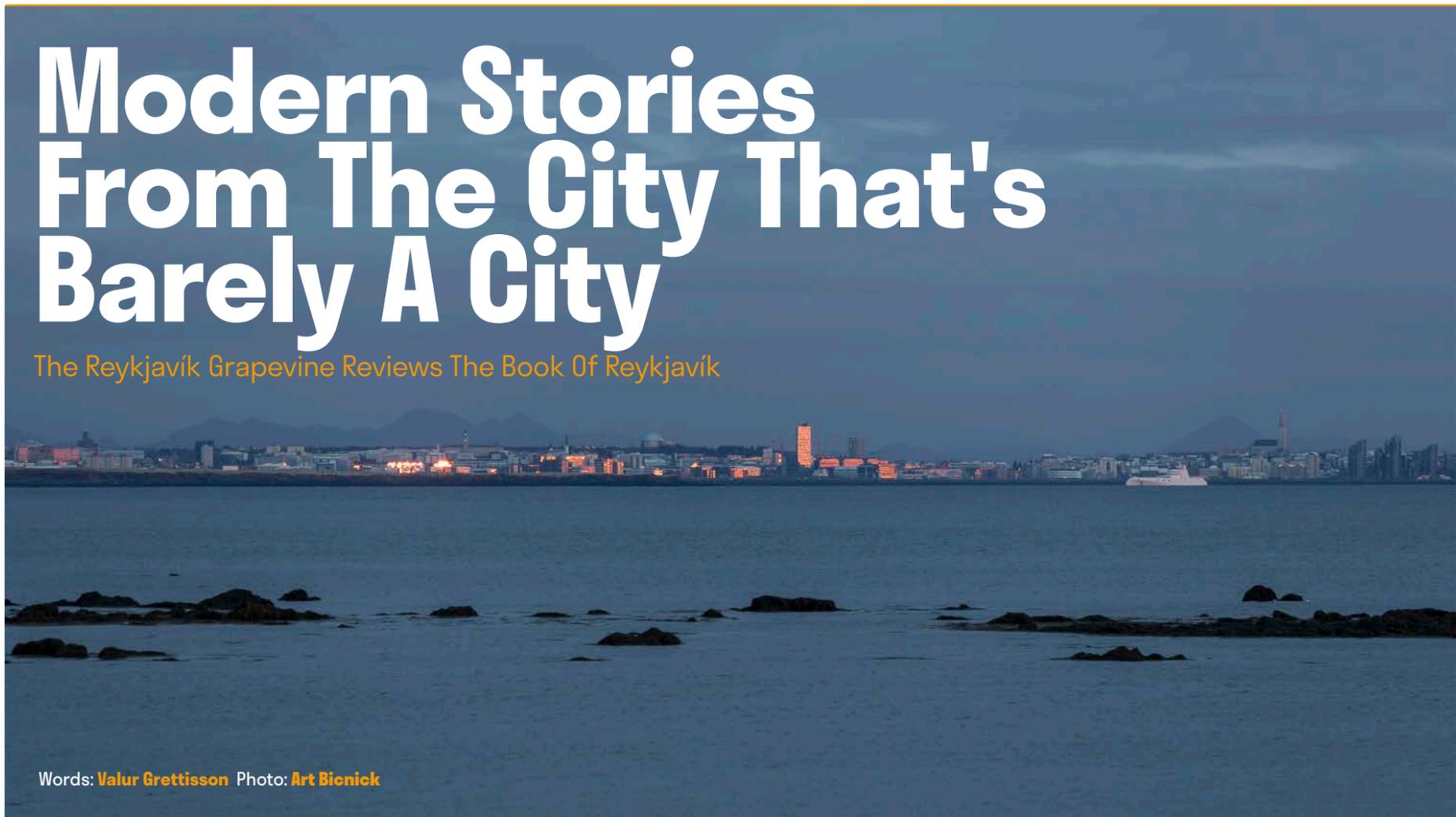


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hotel offers something
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Modern Stories From The City That's Barely A City

The Reykjavik Grapevine Reviews The Book Of Reykjavik

Words: **Valur Grettisson** Photo: **Art Bienick**

How does one describe a city that is barely a city? Reykjavik was a town for most of the 20th century. Suddenly, the city moniker crept up on us. There was an announcement in the late '80s. A headline announcing there was finally a hundred thousand of us living in the same area and so, techni-

cally, we were officially a city—although we had been calling ourselves a city since the '60s. It felt like a message; we now belong to something more than the mountains and the glaciers and the barren wastelands and the endless northern wind.

Small city, plus two million

“The Book Of Reykjavik” tries to capture the essence of this small metropolitan city, which transformed once again, only a decade ago, when more than two million travellers poured onto our streets. The people of Reykjavik finally un-

derstood the exhausting feeling of thousands of strangers making eye contact; how your soul becomes like a torn sail after a quick walk through the downtown.

Complex metropolis

“The Book Of Reykjavik” is compiled by ten Icelandic authors, and comprises the same number of short stories about the inner life of Icelanders living in this odd locale. The city is now home to roughly 200 thousand, if you count the populations of the surrounding suburban areas. We often make jokes about this in Iceland: Reykjavik is two streets in Tokyo; it's not even a neighbourhood in New York. Still, the complexity of this city is like that of a metropolis of millions.

Lonesome death of the old times

The short stories in “The Book Of Reykjavik” are penned by Iceland's best authors. Many from the younger generation that lost its connection with the old farmers' society a long time ago. Although, there are also stories to be found from more mature authors, like Einar Már Guðmundsson, who endeavours to explain in “The Gardeners” how farmers tried to find their place in this new world, and delves into the lonesome death of the old times.

Losing connection

The young authors are more focused on the inner life of the average resident in Reykjavik. Friðgeir Einarsson, one of the authors, describes a city that he does not know, in some ways echoing Einar Már's short story in a modern way. The protagonist returns home for his mothers funeral, only to find that he has not only lost a mother, but perhaps his connection with this small city.

We also are burdened with grim feelings about being alone in a big crowd as well as just finding love.

Great care and deep thought

The stories are written by very well-known Icelandic writers, and it's a good compilation of authors of different ages and genders. Vera Júlíusdóttir and Becca Parkinson edited the book and they seem to have done so with great care and deep thought.

Expertly translated, it showcases much of the best that is happening in Icelandic literature right now. For example, at least six of the ten authors have received the Icelandic Literary Prize. It's a very ambitious offering.

The foreword is written by none other than Reykjavik Grapevine favourite SJÓN, and Vera does a good job explaining the aesthetic of the stories in her introduction.

A good place to start

The “Book of Reykjavik” is, first and foremost, an excellent place to begin if you want to get to know Icelandic modern literature. It becomes more and more of an urban work, unlike most Icelandic literature produced in the 20th century which focused on the life of farmers and on the past. It gives the reader a peek into the mindset of Icelanders in this small city. Overall, this is an easy, fun read, giving readers a deep understanding of the modern lives and thoughts of people in Iceland.

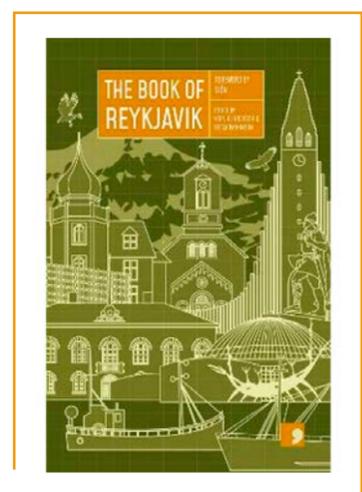
You can find the book in our online shop at grapevine.is

Sæta Svínid
ICELANDIC GASTROPUB

HAPPIEST HAPPY HOUR IN REYKJAVÍK

BEER 790 KR. COCKTAILS 1.490 KR.

SÆTA SVÍNID / Hafnarstræti 1-3 / Tel. 555 2900 / saetasvinid.is



Words: Hannah Jane Cohen
Photo: Art Bicnick

Góa Briem

Góa Briem (24) is a medical student and works at the hospital.

Wearing:

- Blue dress from some place online—I don't remember where
- Thrifted jacket
- Fendi bag that I inherited from my grandmother
- Ring that I inherited from my mother
- Dahlia shoes
- Black ripped tights
- Jewelry from Harajuku Chains

Describe your style in 5 words:

First off, **free**. I want to wear whatever I want and I don't really care about what other people think of it. Second, my friends always describe me as **extra**, and I like that. Then a little bit **messy** or **punk**. For me, everything is usually kind of ripped. Like I can't wear a pair of tights without them being ripped in the first two minutes, but that doesn't stop me. Last, definitely **scandalous**. I like that aesthetic and since I'm plus size, a lot of clothes just look tight on me and I love that.

Favourite stores in Reykjavík:

I thrift a lot from the **Red Cross, ABC, Fatamarkaðurinn, Spútnik** and **Hringekjan**. Otherwise, I mostly shop online. Usually I just see things pop-up and get them, but **Jaded** has some really nice clothes.

Favourite piece:

I really like things that have a story! You know something someone else owned that I get, usually from a relative. I'm wearing a ring from my mother. It's a graphic face and I wear it all the time. I also love my Buffalo shoes. They're definitely a staple and I don't know what I would wear if I didn't have them. They're so comfortable but they also look good.

Something I would never wear:

I hate ankle socks. I don't know why, but they just kind of freak me out. I sometimes have to wear them at work and I'm always like, oh no.

Lusting after:

I've been searching for an old school black leather jacket because I recently lost my favourite one—it was really old and it fit me so well. A good black leather jacket is such an essential piece for your wardrobe, so I'm on the lookout. 🐾

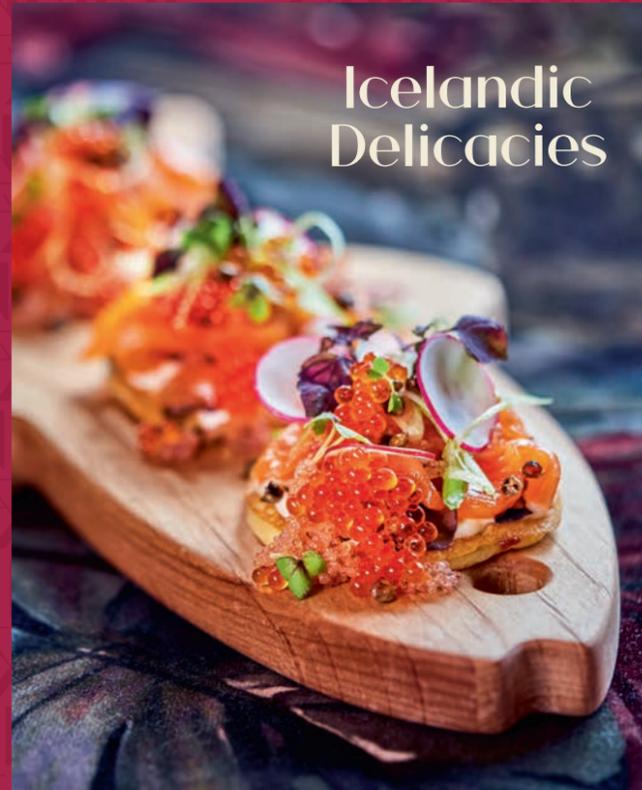
FJALLKONAN

KRÁ & KRÆSINGAR

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

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

Icelandic Delicacies



Must try dishes

LAMB & FLATBREAD

Slow cooked lamb, traditional Icelandic flatbread from the Westfjords, carrot purée, pickled red onions, horseradish sauce

ARCTIC CHARR & BLINI

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

ICELANDIC PLATTER

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

THE LAMB BURGER

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

SKYR ETON MESS CHEESECAKE

White chocolate "Skyr" mousse, meringue, raspberries, raspberry sauce

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every day

FJALLKONAN WELCOMES YOU!

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Food

Selva Latin Restaurant & Bar

Visit the restaurant at Laugavegur 12

Words: **Shruthi Basappa** Photos: **Art Bicnick**



It was a Friday night a couple of weeks ago when I found myself in the boisterously festive Selva Latin Bar. My friend, suffering from the traumatic after-effects of terrible service specific to the countryside, was overjoyed by the hurried yet attentive service that had plonked into our hands delicious Pina Colodas and citrusy ceviche moments after we were seated. As we sat sipping our heady cocktail chock full of pulpy pineapple bits, we took in the bright foliage wallpaper, the on-trend dusty rose walls and the smoked mirrors reflecting the good times everyone around was clearly having. There was no trace of Le Bistro, the French restaurant that occupied this very spot not so long ago.

A pandemic crisis that challenged its continuity, Le Bistro closed doors and reopened as an entirely new concept—Selva Latin Restaurant & Bar, a restaurant that celebrates the region's diversity and its flair for adding the festive into everything it touches.

Arnór Bohic has taken on the exciting task of “bringing a piece of Latin America to the heart of Reykjavík,” supported by his wife Paola Cardenas. They bring with them the combined experience of being in the hospitality industry for over two decades, seasoned chefs from across South America and the ambition to “share Latin culture with the soul of

Reykjavik, not only with Icelanders but also the Latin community living in Iceland,” Paola shares enthusiastically.

Latin America, isn't that Mexico via Spain?

“The idea was to not get stuck in one country, but to really play around with a couple of the most popular dishes that people already know,” explains Arnór. “Like empanadas or arepas,” I cannot help but smile at his confidence, “Okay,” he pauses, “some of the people know,” he smiles.

This undercurrent of not infantilising the customer echoes through the menu at Selva. Names of dishes aren't anglicised, nor are the dishes overly simplified.

“It isn't just me and my wife,” Arnór clarifies. “It is the chefs who are really bringing this together,” he continues, “they are the ones who are working the flavours together, brainstorming and creating these dishes that work.” Sixto and Gabriel from Venezuela and Chile, respectively, are at the helm of operations at Selva, and stress that South American food “isn't tacos and tortillas.”

A much-misunderstood term and cuisine, Latin America isn't a geographically defined region, but a linguistic distinction. With over

20 countries, diversity is the norm and the team is determined to let the food speak for itself. “There is so much diversity here, Bolivian, Peruvian, Chilean food that influences our cuisine. Not Mexico, as is wrongly presumed,” Sixto elaborates.

Tequenos and Tostones

Paola is a true global citizen. Raised in Venezuela and Colombia, with a Chilean mother and Columbian father, her childhood was “spent eating tequenos by the pool,” she shares, her eyes twinkling at the memory. Paola has lived in Iceland for 20 years now. “I moved here when I was 17-18, but those summers spent by the pool, eating tequenos is something else, I knew I had to have them on the menu here,” she says.

I can immediately see why. Essentially deep-fried cheese sticks, tequenos are surprisingly light. At Selva, they arrive looking deceptively light and dry, but one bite of the stretchy warm cheese—a cross between haloumi and mozzarella—encased in flaky dough begs the question as to why we aren't enjoying these tasty morsels by the pool ourselves! The accompanying guasacaca sauce, made with avocados, green chilli and cilantro, and the salsa peruana rocoto, made with rocoto chillies, haloumi, lime and

sumac

GRILL + DRINKS



Laugavegi 28
537 99 00
sumac@sumac.is
sumac.is





share and learn from people from different cultural backgrounds. And Latin culture is already known to many in terms of the music, the dance, it is time for them to know about the food, too.”

“Here we want to present Latin food, without sacrificing flavour or what it is meant to be and present it in a fun, fresh way.” The grilled octopus, pulpo a la parrilla and the camarones al ajillo (shrimp with garlic) certainly embody that. Succulent and jewel-hued, they are served on mounted skewers, a playful invitation to plate the meat off the skewers, slice them and share it together with any of the sauces.

It is worth noting that the range of salsas and sauces at Selva are freshly made every day and are carefully paired with the various meats, vegetables and seafood. I especially appreciate the deliberate absence of mayonnaise. Instead, fresh herbs, infused oils, tomatoes, onions, avocados and garlic are used generously to create luscious emulsions.

For far too many, even in the age of the internet and cooking shows dominating seemingly all air time, food cultures outside of Europe and America still seem to be new territory. A peculiar conundrum considering the ingredients from these regions that have had far-reaching influence on global cuisines. Consider the absence of potatoes, tomatoes and corn from our menus. Our tablescapes would be quite bleak then.

“We want people to experience the range and diversity of these cuisines. Latin culture has a way of getting into your heart,” Paola smiles. If they can keep this consistency up, they are sure to make inroads into ours, too. 🍷

garlic, deliver a smooth, gentle heat.

The Cuban classic sandwich Cubano is next, served Selva style. Eschewing bread (we simply don't get the same kind of bread here, explains Sixto) for tostones, the meat is a 24-hour affair; slow-cooked pulled pork in mole negro, redolent with the heady bitter notes of chocolate that brings to mind the smokiness of coffee, lending a depth that the other spices and seasoning rest on comfortably. Pickled onions add a welcome burst of acidity and the accompanying salad from El Salvador with silent whispers of oregano is a herby respite from the deep darkness of the mole. Mexican mole is, of course, popular, but in a lot of countries like Guatemala and El Salvador, they also cook a lot with cacao.

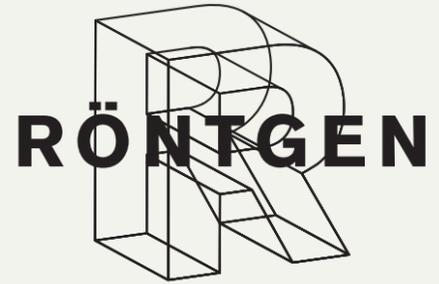
The tostones are expertly fried and shaped like a cup, somehow being both light yet sturdy at the same time. These double-fried smashed plantains, that are crunchy with floury insides, are an integral part of the cuisines from Puerto Rico to Venezuela.

Selva boasts a vast selection of rum and tequila from the region and the cocktails are worthy accompaniments. Watch out for the rum soaked pineapple that arrives seductively nestled between plump shrimp—they are boozy with a capital B.

Culinary bridge

“This is food that I like to eat, but miss,” Paola shares. “Which is why you'll always find me here after work,” she laughs.

I ask her how she sees food as a cultural ambassador. “I have lived here so long, I am Icelandic by now,” she admits. “And I understand what people would like. I think it is important for Icelanders to participate,



Hverfisgata 12



Happy hour / 4–7pm
Beer / Wine / Cocktails



REYKJAVIK GRAPEVINE
BEST OF REYKJAVIK
2020
BEST NEWCOMER BAR

Travel

A Little Old, A Little New And A Fabulous View

Luxury Meets History In The Golden Circle

Words: **Desirai Thompson** Photos: **Art Bicnick**

“Stepping onto the black volcanic rock paving Torfhús Retreat, you’re immediately wrapped in a blanket of luxury, history and an intensely personal oneness with nature.”



Travel distance from Reykjavik:
107 km

Accommodation provided by:
torfhus.is

Car provided by:
gocarrental.is

Your GPS announces you’re nearing your destination. You drive past sheep lazily napping in tufts of luscious moss as rain gently patters your windshield. The buzz of the city begins to wash away. The absolute serenity of your new surroundings starts to set in.

Millennia-old design, modern living

Stepping onto the black volcanic rocks paving Torfhús Retreat, you’re struck with an immediate sense of luxury, history and an intensely personal oneness with nature. It’s no surprise to learn that each aspect of the retreat, down to the dutifully crafted stonework adorning each turf-topped home, was deeply important to the minds behind this haven. Who knew a mutual love of breeding Icelandic horses could bring two families—one from Iceland, the other from Liechtenstein—to develop this stunning countryside oasis? Yet, that’s exactly how Torfhús Retreat was born.

Once you’ve been welcomed by the vibrant staff and finally turn the knob to your new—albeit temporary—home, you’re met with the stunning facade of 200-year-old reclaimed wood from Swiss and Austrian churches and you realise that nothing—not a thing—has been taken for granted here. Sink into a piece of handcrafted furniture for a post-travel snooze, warm up with a shower that’s practically begging you to treat yourself to a self-care night or pick up the phone and dial 9 for a Northern

Lights wakeup call, if the season suits. With the effortless warmth of home, nothing about this place feels fleeting.

Nobody puts nature in the corner

Set in a field surrounded by slightly rolling land with mountains looming in the distance, you could set an afternoon aside to just admire how your surroundings morph in the ever-changing Icelandic weather—it looks, at times, like there’s a different season in full swing in every direction you look. Not that the weather will dampen your enjoyment of this place. Taking a dip in your private and, dare I say, instantly iconic basalt stone hot pool while soft rain falls is one of those joys that make you feel unquestionably in touch with your surroundings. This, right here, is Iceland.

Palate teasing & appetite pleasing

The main lodge at Torfhús is a masterclass in comfort, washing you in the warm golden hues only otherwise found in the most quaint Alpine chalets or movies featuring a gourmandising Viking feast scene. If it’s time for dinner, you’re one to be envied. Locally-sourced ingredients are harmonised for each course to produce plates that feel both rustic and sumptuous, as in unison as every other aspect of the experience here. You wouldn’t tire of eating this fare even if the chef wasn’t dedicated to creating an entirely new culinary journey night

after night. Do opt for the remarkable wine pairings selected by the on-site sommelier.

Onward to adventure

When your sojourn comes to an end, you’ll depart feeling refreshed but undoubtedly bittersweet. Luckily, the Golden Circle is rife with adventurous activities to help your spirits rebound. Hike one of the lesser known trails in the area, take a moment of reflection at the strikingly serene Brúarhlöð canyon, book a heart-racing rafting trip or check out the classic stops along Iceland’s famous Golden Circle.

It’s also just a short drive over to Friðheimar in nearby Reykholt, a de-

lightful restaurant, bar and tomato-centred shop situated in the corner of a fully functioning greenhouse, growing some of the best tomatoes in Iceland. Sink into the freshest bowl of tomato soup around or, for the tomato-crazed among us, sip a wildly drinkable tomato beer. You’ll be dropping that tidbit of cocktail parties for years to come.

What Torfhús Retreat has created is a space that is at once a perfect destination in and of itself while also functioning as the ideal jumping off point to enjoy everything the area has to offer—if you can find the power within yourself to leave. 🍷

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



An exact replica of the 12th century, minus the swimsuit



Looking into the past

Hello There!

Hello there! Hello there! Hello there!

Words: **Total Astrology Expert Hannah Jane**

Yousa thinking dat the amateur astrologers of the Grapevine donta live in a galaxy, far, far away made of computer animations and stilted dialogue? How wude!

it up when you're stoned at after-parties. Stick to more accessible questions, such as, "Yo... dude... how long do you think that tree outside has been there? I bet it's seen some shit..."

Aries

If you're having any physical abnormalities this month, best head to a surgery center for some help. And if it's named after a genocidal maniac? All the better! (Yeah, for reference, and this is real—the center Palpatine brought Anakin to after the fight with Obi-Wan is called the "Emperor Palpatine Surgical Reconstruction Center." Apparently, one of Palpatine's first acts after taking over the Senate was to name a hospital after himself. Good one, George Lucas. And if you're unhappy with the adjustments, we heard the Lord Volde-mort Psychological Institute has some great therapy options available—provided you're a pureblood.)

Taurus

What are midi-clorians? Tbh, no one knows. So please don't bring

Gemini

Are you a clone? Or does your grand plan to take over the universe as an immortal, endlessly supported by tubes with fucked nails seriously involve starting as a lowly politician on a random planet? So Gemini, first off, get your shit together. Order 66? Then the First Order? Then the Final Order? That just makes no sense. Behind your back, your friends are like, "Dude, I am lost." But it's true Gemini energy to totally fail at everything and then pretend that that was all part of the plan. I guess pretending that you always wanted to lose two Death Stars and then be thrown down a shaft by your best friend is an ability that some might consider... unnatural.

Cancer

When dealing with trade disputes, there's no one better than a Cancer to call on. Not only do you think quickly on your feet—and apparently run really fast—but you're also totally immune to droid shots, which is an admirable trait. So in September, take on an international issue and throw yourself headfirst into it. We'd recommend global warming. What could go wrong.

Leo

Here's a fun exercise to wow your friends at the post-COVID parties. Get them to describe certain characters without using their appearance or profession. Han Solo? A ruffian rogue with a heart of gold. Princess Leia? An outspoken fighter finding her place as a leader. C3Po? A tentative, nervous robot with a surprisingly courageous core. Now try Qui-Gon Jinn! He's um, uh, well, you know...

Virgo

You said it best: "There's always a bigger fish." And with groundbreaking oceanic wisdom like that, Virgo, perhaps you should change your career from a wise soldier into some sort of oceanographer or marine biologist or something. Scared of fish? Better get home before your bones start achin'.

Libra

For the next month, try to refrain from making jokes. They won't land and instead, you'll be the drunk girl downtown who bursts out with comments like "I don't care where in Iceland you're from, that's gotta hurt!" or "Now that's what I call partying!" This will certainly affect your future merchandising sales, which is **totally** not why you exist at all.

Scorpio

We get that there's something strangely alluring about that kid you babysat ten years ago when he was nine and you were 14 but just... don't. Seriously, don't. Everyone will be super weirded out by it, and it will totally overshadow any large, poetic love story you were supposed to share at your wedding. In fact you might end up getting married alone, accompanied only by your iPad or something.

Sagittarius

Stay away from the beach. You know why. (Unless you want to be an overused meme, that is, which is probably a Sag's lifelong dream.)

Capricorn

Developing an exercise addiction will be a fine addition to your life, Capricorn. Get that World Class subscription!

Aquarius

Keep doing what you're doing and you'll be just as useless as a droid army against ten Jedi. Just like poetry, it'll rhyme.

Pisces

The stars warned us to never mention one line in this reading, but as Obi-Wan aptly stated, only a Pisces deals in absolutes. Which is, of course, an absolute in itself. Which makes us wonder—was using an absolute to say only evil people use absolutes some sort of subtle wisdom about how there really is no good or bad side? That both are hypocritical militias blinded by their own arrogance? Or are we giving you way too much credit when, really, you just say things you think sound cool as hell and deal with the consequences later? 🍷

WELL, YOU ASKED



An American Abroad

Words: **Desirai Thompson**

Icelanders love to know what others think of Iceland. Well, you asked — and an American newcomer answered.

Is living in Reykjavík all it's cracked up to be?

After spending years dreaming of living in Iceland — here I am. With an address in 101 and a new-found obsession with mango/peach Collab, it's safe to say I'm a full-fledged Reykvikingur now. Did I once daydream of having happy hour at Kex several times a week with the striking view of Mount Esja over my shoulder? Perhaps. Do I instead find myself falling into bed at 17:00 every day, worn down by the city's ubiquitous hills? Abso-freaking-lutely.

What did you think would be different that really isn't?

Electric scooters. With basically everything downtown within a 20-walk or so, I was hoping this fad wouldn't be as prevalent in Reykjavík. But now you're not only darting around tourists with selfie sticks to get to that meeting on time, you're also navigating around teens on Hopps going 20 kmh. It's real-life Frogger on Bankastræti. Whew. Now that I got that off my chest. You wanna know the most stunning thing I've learned since moving to the Icelandic capital? Curly fries taste the same in every language — and they are essential on a hungover Sunday after one too many Brío. 🍷



CITY SHOT by John Pearson



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