



The REYKJAVÍK GRAPEVINE



DesignMarch
Full schedule
inside

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THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO LIFE, TRAVEL & ENTERTAINMENT IN ICELAND

IN THE ISSUE Issue 3 • 2011 • March 11 - April 7 2011

+ COMPLETE CITY LISTINGS - INSIDE!

► NEXT LEVEL SH*T

MindGames harness
your brain

► ECONOMICS

Britney Spears
features prominently
for some reason...

► ART

Get snowed in with
MoMS

► MUSIC

Remembering Biogen

► TRAVEL

Dog sledding
trolleying, yeah!

► DESIGNMARCH

Siggi Eggertsson
*as seen by Goddur, in
conversation
with Siggi Eggertsson*

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Goddur cover by Siggi Eggertsson
www.siggieggertsson.com

Siggi Eggertsson cover by Goddur
www.goddur.com



Editorial | Haukur S. Magnússon

Haukur's 37th Editorial

Do Cool Things, Talk To Smart People, Read Good Books

Losing all hope is easy enough. That's probably always been the case, but with the overflow of information, opinion and news at our fingertips at every instant, falling into the void now feels somehow especially effortless.

And sure enough, there is plenty to be saddened or upset or infuriated or distraught or enraged by. Just check any comments section of any newsstory of any website if you want to feel like hacking off all your limbs with a dull and rusty blade to ensure slow but certain death.

I am fairly susceptible to this. I spend a lot of time reading news and comment boards and stories. Sometimes I am even confronted by awful things in real life, out on the street. The accumulated effect sometimes gets the best of me, and my befouled temper sometimes even taints the very editorials I write on these pages. Yes, there have been plenty of 'losing all hope' sentiments expressed in these pages, written in moments of weakness and little faith.

By allowing myself to succumb to this dark pit of despair, and by allowing it to infect whatever message I choose to send through these editorials, I am failing myself and I am failing you, reader. I am taking the sentiments that drain us of power and hope and I am amplifying them and adding to them. This is not acceptable.

Because, you know, while it's easy to momentarily lose sight of all the inspiring awesome that's out there, it's still out there. Allowing oneself to be blinded and drained by imbibing a bunch of dreck, instant gratification and Charlie Sheen on-line or through the media is lazy, and it is easily avoidable. The world remains full of great things: of love and ideas and science and kittens and boyfriends and girlfriends and theories and grandmothers and hard work and magnets and music and literature and thoughtful commentary. Of good friends and good people.

You just need to actively seek them out, keep them in mind and approach the universe in a welcoming and joyful manner.

Listen: I'm not urging anyone to turn into some sort of joy-zombie that giggles and coos at everything and shits double rainbows and thoughtlessly thinks everything is excellent and questions nothing. You've got me all wrong, man. That's not the idea at all.

No the idea was simply to remind you, if you'd forgotten, that there is a great big world out there, and



that a lot of it is pretty damn cool. You wield a great power with your much lauded 'freedom of choice'—you can very effectively shape your universe just by putting some thought into what you choose to ingest and how you digest it.

You have absolute control over your perception of the world around you, and you should exert it more often.

Instead of reading junk news and poorly written blogs, why not subscribe and pay for a researched and fact-checked investigative journal? Instead of watching YouTube clips of funny dogs or people falling down stairs or nipple slips (all of which make for a great time), why not read a book (a good one).

Y'know, choose the home cooked meal over the hamburger, hanging out with a friend instead of chatting with him over Facebook. Fight for a cause you believe in instead of bitching about it on your blog.

It sounds wonderfully simple and easy on paper. It might be harder in reality. But let's give it a shot, huh? It'll be fun.

SOME WWW.GRAPEVINE.IS EXCLUSIVES

'Cuz we can't possibly fit all this awesome on our pages

-Jerszy Seymour interviewed.

-More DesignMarch stuff + events

-Show reviews

-More on SKYR CANDY

-Haggis? Haggis.

-LOTS OF NEWS

-LOTS OF HOT TIPS

-LOTS OF EVERYTHING ELSE



TRACK OF THE ISSUE

Ajax: Ruffige

Download the FREE track at www.grapevine.is

We usually use this spot to showcase fresh new releases made by some of our favourite Icelandic bands. This time around, however, we wanted to dedicate our TRACK OF THE ISSUE to a legendary track that many believe helped usher in a dance music revolution in Iceland. We are of course talking about the immense 'Ruffige' by Ajax. Everyone needs to hear this.

Ajax was the project of messrs Pórhallur Skúlason (Thor) and Sigurbjörn Þorgrímsson (Biogen). As you might know, Sigurbjörn left us for the next plane of existence last month. His passing was a shock and remains a great loss to Iceland's electronic music community (and lovers of great music all over the world). He will be missed.

However, we still have access to all of the wonderful music Sigurbjörn made during his stint on Earth. This is a comfort.

A newly remastered version of 'Ruffige' was lovingly donated for download by Sigurbjörn's partner in crime, Pórhallur. Fetch it and embrace the sounds of revolutions past, then move on to Sigurbjörn's more recent works as Biogen, Babel, etc. There is a treasure trove of his tunes out there—go explore, and be amazed!

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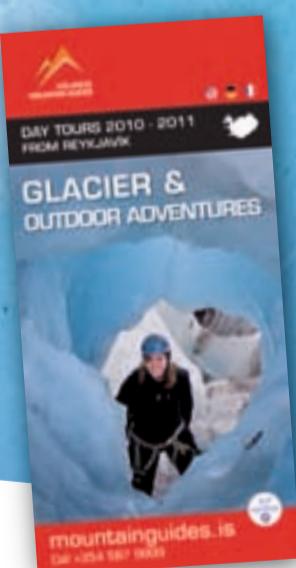
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4
Letters

MOST AWESOME LETTER:

Hi Grapevine,

sorry this is more of a rant about the Icelandic postal system - my record for an overseas item is 3 months... wonder if any readers can top that?

I lost an ebay order last year, the item was returned because it was a month before I came to collect it. I was away on tour at the time and the only days I was home were public holidays. Is it reasonable to allow a little more time for collection? Or maybe a system where you can acknowledge the item and collect it in a time frame that suits you?

Now I have a remote control for my TV sitting in customs since last year and nobody thought to tell me. It was only when I wrote to the post office to find out what had happened to it. I can imagine the customs officers holding the TV remote at arms length saying, "this is for a foreigner, what can we do with it? Let's just leave it and see what happens... if it is important he will claim it, if he doesn't we will destroy it!"

Now when I finally receive it I will probably have to pay the minimum import duty on the item which will be higher than the actual price of the object.

So, I pay \$20 for an item which some

Grapevine:

Gargantuan "TAKK" for your editorial vision to feature short fiction about Iceland's near-and-far future by Kristin Eiríksdóttir, Eiríkur Órn Þordahl, Óttar Martin Þorðfjörð, Guðrún Eva Mínervudóttir, and Haukur Már Helgason. It's important to me as a not-yet-fluent reader of Icelandic to have access to literary thinkers and writers in the country sharing work á ensku. Grapevine's commission and publication supported texts of considerable insight, foresight, and innovation. Meira, takk!

Love og ást,
a.rawlings

Dear a.,

thank you! We were really proud of printing stories by these great writers, and hope to do more in the future. <3

Dear Grapevine,

I first want to thank you, before my speech turns sour. Thank you for excellent paper. I like your carefree attitude, not seemingly trying to please anyone. Like your wit, your choice of subjects. And the fact that if I have hard time understanding something that is going on in this society from the all the media, sea of information then you very often have nose for summing it up. So I go like "Ah, yes, ofcourse, bingo" and am more confident forming and standing by my opinion. Whether it is energy, Icesave, our immigrant polocy, self image, country folk, Facebook, psychology, etc. You seem so often be able to talk about matters in readable way. Don't take

MOST AWESOME LETTER FREE GRAPEVINE TEE HEE HEE!



We've got a new prize for all your MOST AWESOME LETTERS. And it's a scorcher! For this issue, whoever sends THE MOST AWESOME LETTER will receive a cool new Reykjavík Grapevine T-shirt, featuring the majestic G that adorns our cover. So you should make sure to keep writing us fun and/or interesting letters. This new Grapevine tee surely is the shiznit (whatever that means)! It was designed by our very own art director man, Höður Kristbjörnsson, and it's good for posing in front of a mirror, impressing folks with your impeccable taste or picking up men or women of all ages (no minors). DON'T PANIC if your letter wasn't picked AWESOME LETTER. You can still get a tee for a low, low price over our website, www.grapevine.is. Now, if you're in the market for free goodies next month, write us some sort of letter. Give us your worst: letters@grapevine.is

We also like to send empty rolls of film around in packages that tick and have wires sticking out of them. When the postal service x-rays them, looking for bombs, we say that their x-rays destroyed our film, and demand our money back.

When is Iceland going to change to a fairer, more efficient import system? Or is this just to discourage foreign trading?

Best Underpants
Tony

Dear Tony,

You're pretty much just preaching to the choir; the postal system here sucks, and everyone knows it. We think it's probably due to them not having any competition. They think they can fuck with us all they like, and never have to feel sorry for it.

Well, they're wrong. Dead wrong. See, what we here at the Grapevine like to do is send small pipe bombs on a timer filled with human faeces (preferably collected after a day or two of only eating at Metro) to Bárugata 41, and see how fast they deliver that shit with it stinking up the office, only for them to find out there is no Bárugata 41. It only goes up to 40.

for god sake.
In the meantime I shall keep enjoying reading Grapevine and look forward to read about your second visit to Tapas Barinn, my all time favorite restaurant in Reykjavík and I give it four and a half G's easy.

Love
Gudmundur Jonas

Dear Gudmundur,
thank you so much for all of your kind words. They are most appreciated. It is the best praise we've ever had (you are probably exaggerating, though. That's alright. We do it all the time)!!! Now, about that review. We are prone to agree with you on Tapas. It has rarely failed us. In fact, if you take a gander through our back issues, you can see that we have given them many raving reviews. However, we place full trust in our food reviewers' assessment of any given place (otherwise we wouldn't employ them), and if Catharine Fulton thought her experience at Tapas merited three and a half Gs, we don't contest that (especially since she argues her point well).

A lot of our readers are only in Reykjavík for a short time, and will only dine at whatever establishment once. So it only seems rational to base restaurant reviews on how an establishment fares when a reviewer dines there, even if he or she knows they usually do a lot better. You know?

Anyway, it's great to hear we are actively shaping your opinions (you zombie!). Takk!

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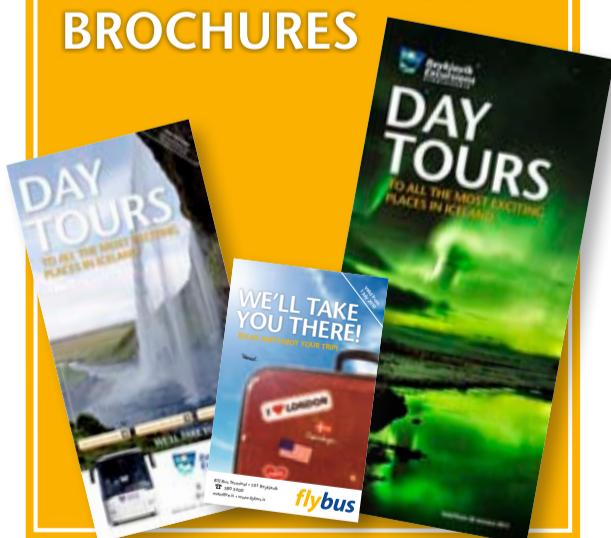
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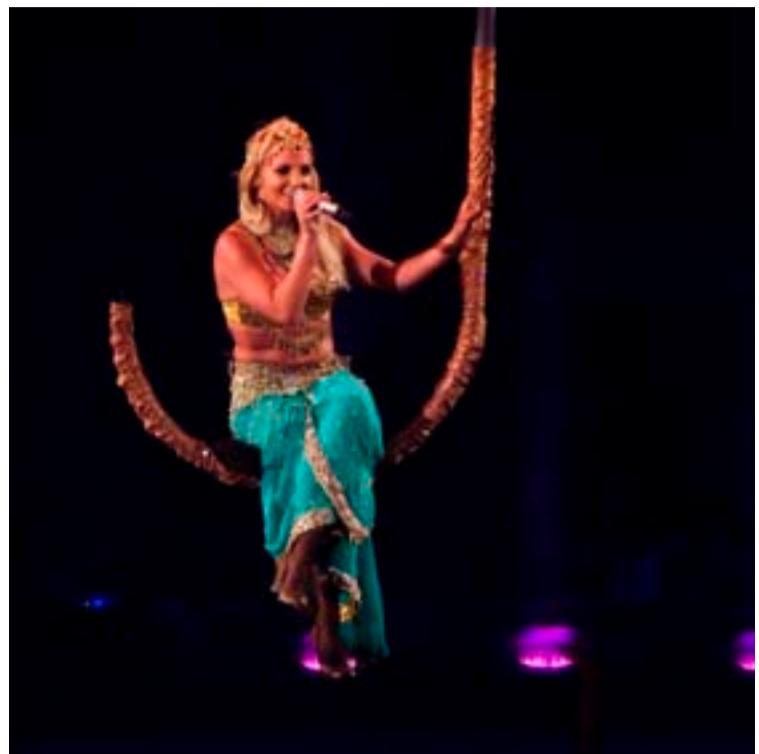
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Hit Me One More Time!

Capital controls, the Central Bank and ol' Britney



It appears that the Central Bank of Iceland needs to be deprived of its financial independence. The bank's enthusiasm to continue its campaign of high rates, speculative carry trades, and swift removal of capital controls is based on faulty reasoning and poor planning; plans that are being reformed without further information.

It is apparent, given the current economic conditions in Iceland, that if capital controls were to be lifted in one step, a significant amount of Icelandic krónur (ISK) would instantly flee to become foreign currency. In a closed meeting that took place on October 7 (entitled 'The way out of capital controls'), Central Bank Deputy Governor

Arnór Sighvatsson demonstrated that they are indeed aware of this:

"The group of so-called impatient investors is not a fixed size but extremely variable by expectations of economic developments in Iceland on one hand and the situation on global markets on the other," Arnór remarked at the meeting.

One should bear in mind that "impatient investors" are both foreign and domestic. As Arnór points out, expectations about economic developments in Iceland will affect the size of capital leaving the ISK. Most Icelanders have noticed that economic developments in Iceland are extremely poor, leaving one to assume that the Icelandic govern-

ment has increased the size and numbers of "impatient investors" with their lacklustre performance. Furthermore, the Central Bank has expanded this capital by feeding it ridiculously high interest rates at the expense of Icelandic homeowners and taxpayers.

To make matters worse, even more capital joins this pool over time when so few investment choices are available in ISK. It is natural for capital to seek favourable havens, and unfortunately, the government is not supporting local capital investment as the current coalition and has been unable to support any industrial construction or investment possibilities in Iceland.

BLACKOUT

The reason the Central Bank cited for temporarily halting the outflow of ISK was to prevent "even greater depreciation of the ISK". Capital controls were then incorporated in the current form on November 28th, 2008. The Central Bank's report on "Removal of Capital Controls" states:

"The main assumption to be able to execute a plan for removal of capital controls is that investors assess the risks of investments in Icelandic assets less than they have done so far."

This "main assumption" seems to be forgotten, as little has been done to decrease possible risk of investing in Iceland. The Central Bank argues that this should be done by compensating risk with high interest rates. In what other way could this have been done? One example is by invigorating the Icelandic economy and offering attractive local investment opportunities. Unfortunately, the government and the Central Bank seem to have ignored the wonderful opportunity that capital controls offer, i.e. to cut interest rates

to negative real rates, despite its obvious benefits. This would offer Icelandic companies and families ISK financing on favourable terms, easing the path not only for increased construction and economic development throughout Iceland, but a lighter public debt burden via refinancing of current loans. To not utilise the benefits of capital controls while paying for its cost shows just how ill planned our monetary policy has been.

It is odd to blame capital controls for dwindling foreign capital, when, at the same time, the government has repeatedly rejected all kinds of investments such as data centres, plants and private hospitals.

OOPS! ... I DID IT AGAIN...

Political debate must take place in the Parliament about the future monetary structure of Iceland. These matters must be discussed before the Central Bank officials begin removing capital controls. It is obvious that the free-floating króna experiment—that began in March of 2001, when the ISK was floated with inflation targets and lasted until November 2008, when capital controls were re-incorporated—has failed spectacularly. As economic Nobel laureate Robert Mundell pointed out in a recent interview, there are several wealthy individuals who could easily derail the ISK if they so fancied, via capital flight. The conclusion is that the tiny ISK has no grounds to be free-floating. According to Mundell, it doesn't really matter to what currency we link ourselves, as long as we link."

VALDIMAR ÁRMANN
BENSON KUA

Where Is Iceland's Stock Exchange Today?

Somewhere 'Hot as Ice', like Britney Spears.

Much like Britney Spears, the Iceland Stock Exchange went from topping the charts to having a meltdown in 2008 to basically falling off the face of the planet. While Britney's current whereabouts don't concern us too much, it occurred to us to check up on the stock exchange to see if it hadn't 'come out from under' the rubble.

SHOWDOWN

Spooling back to the big 'showdown' that buried the stock exchange takes us to Tuesday, October 14, 2008. The exchange opened that morning after having been closed for five days due to the unusually volatile market conditions at the time. Recall that Iceland's three largest private banks had just been taken over by the State. Only this temporary closure was akin to putting a band-aid on a wound in need of many, many stitches to hold it together, and the exchange subsequently plummeted a whopping 76 percent.

Kristín Jóhannsdóttir, a spokesperson for the Iceland Stock Exchange, explained that the 76 percent drop was due to Iceland's three largest banks being de-listed. However, it only sunk deeper after that. The OMX15 index "peaked on July 18, 2007 at 9016," Kristín explained. "And its lowest point was obviously after the collapse just before we ceased calculating it on April 1, 2009 at 212,05."

It's definitely 'outrageous.' But, it's not surprising given that—as Michael

Lewis pointed out in his *Vanity Fair* article 'Wall Street on the Tundra'—"From 2003 to 2007, while the U.S. stock market was doubling, the Icelandic stock market multiplied by nine times. Reykjavík real-estate prices tripled. By 2006 the average Icelandic family was three times as wealthy as it had been in 2003, and virtually all of this new wealth was one way or another tied to the new investment-banking industry."

WHERE ARE YOU NOW?

Two and a half years later, it looks like the stock exchange is still very much under the rubble, which explains why it hasn't been in the news much since the big crash. There are currently eleven companies listed on the market, compared to 75 in its heyday. At that time, it traded at 120 percent of Iceland's GDP. Today, it's a mere twenty.

Due to the large exodus of companies, the exchange was re-indexed in January 2009 and is now called the OMX16 rather than the OMX15. This makes it complicated compare to the index before and after January 2009. But, one thing is for sure. There has been little growth in the last two years. The new index started at 1000 and peaked just this February at 1009.7.

The exchange did, however, make an appearance in the news last month, with Fréttablaðið doing a kind of 'meet-and-greet' with new stock exchange president, entitled "The President Who Didn't Want To Be A Professor." We

learned that the new president, Páll Harðarson, has an identical twin brother who also works at the exchange. They have done nearly everything together, from attending all of the same schools to spending most of their life living and working together.

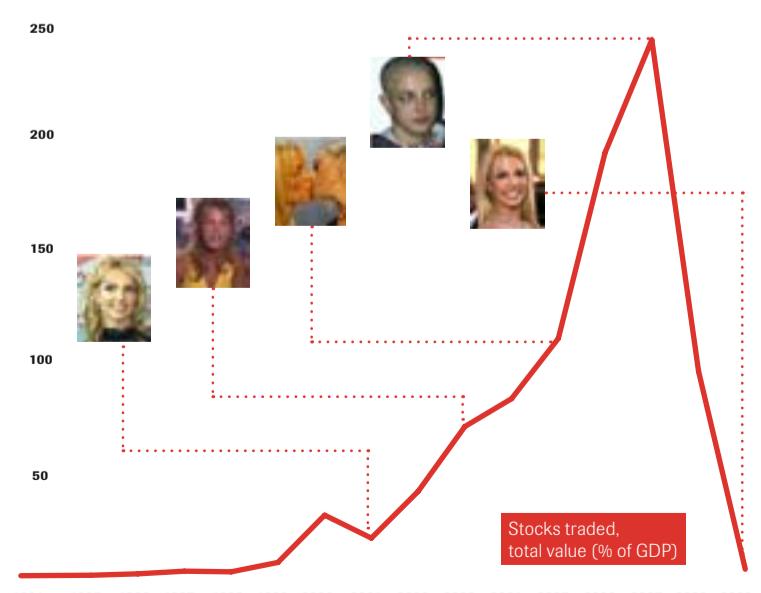
ANTICIPATING

But personal details aside, it turns out that Páll thinks this year is going to be 'hot as ice,' anticipating a number of companies listing in the market. He says two are in the process of listing and a number of others have expressed

interest. Kristín offered that they could see as many as ten, bringing the total to around twenty companies on the market.

Incidentally, Britney is releasing a new album this year called, 'Femme Fatale,' which will be the first since that 2008 'Circus' of hers. I suppose we'll have to check back on the charts later this year.

ANNA ANDERSEN



Have you read this 'Deep Freeze' book yet? Drop us a line if you did, and tell us about it.

News | Iceland in the International Eye: February

Easy Money, Even Money

'Deep Freeze: Iceland's Economic Collapse' (Ludwig von Mises Institute), by Philipp Bagus and David Howden—both economists specialised in business cycle theory—is hot off the presses, and packs a punch. The authors propose that Iceland's economic collapse of 2008 was almost entirely down to poor regulatory policies, and point their proverbial fingers straight at the Central Bank of Iceland and its master helmsman, David Oddsson.

In the poignant foreword, Toby Baxendale, founder of the UK's Cobden Centre (an advocacy promoting deregulated trade and business policies) and a fish trader with strong ties to Icelandic fishing industry, paints a picture of a government in constant fear of losing control of its natural resources. "The [Icelandic] government," he says, "not wanting the lifetime of fish quotas to get into the hands of a nasty foreign creditor, would not and still does not allow them to go bust. This irresponsible action on behalf of government will ensure these zombified fish companies will continue undead for many years to come."

Bagus and Howden make a strong case. In the boom years, a major money-spinner for Iceland's three largest banks at the time—GÍF, Landsbanki and Kaupthing—was 'maturity mismatching': the use of short-term liabilities to invest in long-term assets. Not that this tactic was unusual in the global banking sector, but there were high risks, which the bankers took for granted—perhaps even with just cause—believing that the Central Bank would cover their backs. We all know that at the time, Icelandic banks were churning ten times more money than the nation's entire GDP.

The authors specify: "The Central Bank of Iceland had effectively given a green light to the banks to shoulder increasing amounts of short-term risk uncompensated by assets of corresponding risk or duration. This seemed to work well until global liquidity dried up..." At the end of the day, it was a simple cash flow problem. And mismatching is considered an acceptable, albeit risky undertaking. The Central Bank, it appears, was ready to burden all their bankers' risks. With the 2001 New Act of the Central Bank of Iceland, "the Central Bank had committed itself explicitly to providing this function."

And things were going well, so why worry?

The major other factor, according to the authors (hazardously brushed aside by the Central Bank), was increased speculation in the Icelandic króna. This was mostly due to the underpricing of risk: "Domestic interest rates were higher than those of foreign central banks, which had undertaken even more extreme loose-money politics than the Central Bank of Iceland." As Bagus and Howden elucidate, investors preferred to invest themselves in dollars, euros or yen at ridiculously low interest rates to invest in local assets. They then ask the obvious question: Why did Icelandic banks engage in such Las Vegas-style tactics? The answer, they explain, is because the bankers believed in governmental and institutional guarantees—even beyond the Central Bank of Iceland—all the way to the IMF. They took for granted that the exchange rate risk was minimal. There is an illusion, they say, that "consists of the notion that government intervention can and will help keep exchange rates more stable than is really the case."

Inferring, of course, that even now some may still be harbouring such illusions.

The authors remind that the IMF reported in 2004 that Iceland's move into foreign markets could only be seen positively. The curious thing is that the Central Bank appeared oblivious to the fact that in 2004 over 20 percent of foreign-denominated lending was with companies without any export income. It seemed that the króna would never falter.

Finally, Bagus and Howden propose that three things need to change in order for life to return to normal. Firstly, those misaligned firms and investments—many of which are still being supported by the government—should be entirely liquidated. Secondly, a financial sector should be commensurate with the size of a country; and thirdly, experience garnered from past misadventures needs to phase into a healthy production and consumption mix. Let the recession iron out all the snags. "Anything that delays the reassignment of labour to more productive uses [by governmental regulation and intervention] will increase the time until the economy returns to normal."

And so it seems Iceland was not an innocent bystander of the liquidity crisis. It was Iceland's government policies that "fostered an oversized, indebted, and mismatched banking system."

MARC VINCENZ

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Telekinesis For Dummies

Control yr. iPhone with YOUR BRAIN!!!



Packed into a single floor of the Íslandsbanki (née Glitnir) building on Lækjargata are several fledgling software companies, among them the six-person operation known simply as MindGames.

Funded by Rannís and the Icelandic Ministry of Industry, MindGames is essentially a software developer of sorts. They specialise in something quite more awesome: mind-control gaming, and are one of a select few in the entire world who do so. They basically design computer games where at least one aspect of the game is controlled via neural interface with special EEG, or Electro-Encephalographic, headsets fitted with one or more quarter-inch wide sensor pads. An Electro-Encephalogram is, simply put, a reading of the electrical activity generated by neurons firing in your brain. Think in a certain way, and the sensor detects it, and uses it to interface with the game. In other words, you can make video games do shit with the power of your brain. While you're waiting for the awesome in that sentence to fully sink in, keep reading.

THE BEST AND BRIGHTEST

Deepa Iyengar and her husband Hannes Högni Vilhjálmsson developed the idea for the company in January 2009. "I had the idea, and dragged him in... we had two other friends, the four of us developed a business plan and entered it in the Innovit Golden Egg entrepreneurial competition, and we got 'top ten' in that," Deepa explains. The office is a bare-bones affair, one big room with dividers and Ikea furniture. The other staffers stare intently at their computer screens as Deepa and I talk in the conference room. "Then I spent basically from April to June recruiting the people who ended up founding MindGames."

It's an impressive roster. Hannes has an MA and a PhD from MIT's media laboratory, and is an associate professor of computer science at the artificial intelligence lab of Reykjavík University (yes, they totally have one of those), computer programmer Örn Haraldsson is also a certified yoga and meditation instructor (I'm not making these people up), Ragnar Már Nikulásson and Katla Rós Völudóttir are both recent graduates from the Iceland Academy of the Arts, Hjalti Kolbeinsson is a software engineer also from Reykjavík University, while Deepa herself has an MA in brain and cognitive science from MIT.

HEADSETS: THEY WON'T GET YOU LAID

Deepa shows me the gaming headsets, which have names like the NeuroSky MindSet and the Emotiv EPOC, and are made by a variety of fairly secretive and paranoid companies. "They don't want to tell us exactly how they work, and we're not allowed to reverse-engineer them," Deepa explains. "They don't really work together, but I think it'll be the company that branches out, that tries to work with the others that'll end up dominating the market." I try them on and catch my reflection in the conference room window. I look like an idiot. "These were obviously intended for use in the privacy of your own home," Deepa says.

While the larger, more padded (and more difficult-to-put-on) headsets actually record neurons firing in multiple parts of the brain, the smaller ones have only one sensor, recording one specific form of brain activity. In the case of MindGames' two most successful games, 'Gods And Mortals' and 'Tug Of Mind', these 'one-spot' headsets record the activity associated with relaxation.

KILL YOUR GODS

Tug Of Mind is actually an iPhone app, a simple game where you stare at a realistically rendered face that makes different expressions at you depending on your own level of relaxation. The game also lets you create and customise the face you play against, meaning you can square off against your boss, your dad or that one sketchy neighbour you keep having darkly erotic nightmares about. Or not.

The more you relax, the faster your 'progress' bar fills, until you fill it completely and win. Although simple, it forces you into an odd mindset - if you think about winning, you start losing. Think of it as good practice in case you ever go against Gozer the Gozerian; whatever you do, don't think of the Stay Puft Marshmallow Man.

'Gods And Mortals', on the other hand, is slightly more complex. Deepa is the first to admit that the technology is still quite expensive, unwieldy, impractical and owned only by a select few, but to combat this, as well as encourage more widespread recognition and use of the EEG headsets, 'Gods And Mortals' was designed as a platform game with a cunning twist: it pits players without headsets against those who have them, turning the latter into

immensely powerful gods.

While the mortals' mission is to build towers to reach heaven and kill the gods, the gods have powers to destroy the towers. The powers, in a concept intimately familiar to most video gamers, need mana to work, but whereas in most games mana regenerates automatically over time, the god-players in 'Gods And Mortals' have to actually relax in order for it to regenerate.

THINGS TAKE A TURN FOR THE AWESOME

Also of note is the headset calibrator which is, on the surface, purely functional, but when I tried it I learned it actually makes for a fun little game in and of itself. Basically, you stare at a picture of a box. The calibration begins when you touch a button and the headset 'records' 8 seconds of you 'thinking' the box to float up vertically in the air. The process is then repeated until you've recorded several axes of movement for the box, as well as for the box fading away and disappearing, which is obviously more difficult conceptually than simple movement.

Once the headset had recorded the brain activity corresponding with the movement of the box, I simply had to stare at the box and think it to move in a certain direction, and holy shit it actually worked.

While pushing the box back and forth was simple enough, levitation, or moving the box along the up-down axis proved harder. Imagining Master Yoda on my shoulders, I simply closed my eyes and pictured the box floating, and sure enough, it did. Go back and read that sentence again and try to convince me it's not awesome. I'm in the phone-book.

What this all boils down to is that someone, somewhere, has to be working on a Star Wars video game where you can actually use The Force. There just has to be. And if there isn't, there damn well should be. ☺

LaUNDROMAT

**life's
too short**

**for bad
burgers!**

The Amazing Political Acrobat:

President Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson and his vetoes



For many generations of Icelanders there hasn't been a time when our President, Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson, wasn't around in some form or the other. He is a man of extraordinary political skills—he might even be called a political acrobat—but many doubt whether this is matched by convictions or integrity. All the same, his career is an interesting case study in political acumen and survival.

Ólafur Ragnar was born and bred in the Westfjords of Iceland. People there are known to be argumentative and very interested in politics. Stories are still told of legendary political meetings in the Westfjords from the old days. Social Democrats were always quite strong in the region, and Ólafur Ragnar's father, who was known simply as Grímur the barber, was a leading Social Democrat in the town of Ísafjörður.

EARLY AMBITIONS

There is a famous photograph of Ólafur Ragnar standing at the harbour in the village of Þingeyri, where his grandparents lived. He is a rather chubby boy, standing alone beside the limousine of then president Sveinn Björnsson who was visiting the village. This is in some ways prescient, indicating his great ambitions from the outset and the fact that he has nearly always been a lone wolf in politics.

Ólafur Ragnar went to England to study political science. When he came home he became the founder of the Department of Political Science within the University of Iceland, and its first professor. He was also active in television. He was the presenter of a series of very controversial programmes; in one of them he interrogated a group of the country's most eminent bankers—all political appointees—as if they were crooks. This was very extreme in the political climate of early '70s Iceland, and Ólafur Ragnar was promptly booted from television.

In this period Ólafur Ragnar presented himself as a young man who wanted to reform the Icelandic party system, bringing together various left parties and factions. His first attempt was within the Progressive Party, traditionally a farmers' party that sometimes veered to the left, sometimes to the right. Ólafur and his group of young men wanted to steer the party to the left and start working with the Social Democrat party of that time (Alþýðuflokkurinn)—then in government with the large right wing Independence Party and the socialist People's Alliance (Alþýðubandalagið).

THE SOCIALIST PERIOD

The leaders of the Progressive Party were mainly interested in guarding prominent party members' business interests and had limited tolerance for Ólafur Ragnar and his antics. Finally most of his group left the party, many never to return to politics. Ólafur Ragnar, however, resurfaced within the aforementioned People's Alliance, the strongest party on the left, which dated back to the Socialist Party of Iceland (which dated back to its Communist Party).

The party had mostly shed its communist past—it had been in government from 1971 to 1974—and Ólafur Ragnar surely was no communist. Still he wasn't altogether popular amongst the party's members. Many considered him an outsider and an opportunist. So even if he eventually became party chair, quite a large faction had great loathing for him, even if he was tolerated for practical reasons.

Words

Egill Helgason

Illustration

Lóá Hjálmtýsdóttir

A VERY UNPOPULAR MAN

In many ways during that period Ólafur Ragnar was the most unpopular politician in Iceland. Sure, he had a group of supporters, mostly young people who wanted to move the old socialist party to the right and forge alliances with the Social Democrats, but he was also despised by the right.

This was somewhat due to his manner of making politics. He was always outspoken, definitely clever, and he was considered arrogant and ruthless. Even after losing his seat in Parliament, Ólafur Ragnar became Minister of Finance from 1988–1991. This earned him the moniker 'skattmann' ('taxman'). There was little love between Ólafur Ragnar and Davíð Oddsson, the up and coming strongman of the right (and future Prime Minister for thirteen years)—in one instance Ólafur Ragnar described Davíð as having "a shitty nature" in a Parliament speech. The feud between the two has been a mainstay of the Icelandic political scene for decades (until recently, when they found common ground).

A PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE, A MELLOWER MAN

Thus it was quite a surprise when Ólafur Ragnar ran for president in 1996. He had kept quiet for a year before it and duly resurfaced as a new man, astoundingly fair and balanced. Gone was the political fighter. His main asset was his charming wife who everyone liked—up to that almost no focus had been on politicians' wives in Iceland. The right was quite shocked when Davíð Oddsson and the Independence Party tried to field a candidate against Ólafur Ragnar, a judge from the High Court from a very illustrious family was dubbed their candidate. But compared to Ólafur Ragnar he seemed very boring. What then clinched the election for him was when a group of business leaders published an advertisement in the media, stating that Ólafur Ragnar was unfit to be president. This had exactly the opposite effect on the voting population.

Even so, Ólafur Ragnar only got 41 percent of the vote, beating three other candidates.

PARTYING WITH THE TYCOONS

The Icelandic President is elected by a general referendum. However, he is a ceremonial figure by tradition. Before Ólafur Ragnar, presidents never got involved in politics. And for the first years, Ólafur Ragnar was on his best behaviour, even though he was still despised by the right and its main newspaper, Morgunblaðið. He looked the job, being tall, grey and distinguished and becoming fitter as he grew older. His wife, Guðrún Katrín Þorbergssdóttir, sadly died from cancer in 1998. A few years later, he went on to marry Dorrit Moussaieff, a wealthy socialite from London who brought extra glamour to his presidency. The couple were a regular feature in the gossip press—which would have been a 'faux pas' with previous presidents.

Then came the time of the Business Vikings, the tycoons that made Iceland a fabulously hip place for a while and then promptly bankrupted the country. Ólafur Ragnar became the great friend and patron of these young men. They



"Interestingly, Ólafur Ragnar's base of followers has also shifted. According to recent polls he is most popular on the right, among those who oppose the present government. Even his old enemy, Davíð Oddsson, has grudgingly become one of his, well, not admirers, but temporary supporters."

were often invited to his residence in Bessastaðir, he rode in their private jets, he spoke at parties and ceremonies describing them in the most glowing terms, often calling them modern day wizards. It is generally agreed that he went too far in his support, and he himself has admitted to it. After the crash of October 2008 Ólafur Ragnar became a figure of ridicule, mocked in the media as no other Icelandic president before him.

REINVENTING THE CONSTITUTION

Traditionally, the Icelandic President can sit peacefully as long as he likes. It is considered bad form to run against a president in office—there are zero instances of 'real candidates' running against a president. This underlines the quasi-regal nature of the job. But, then, presidents have traditionally never rocked the boat. Ólafur Ragnar had larger ambitions, he is a man who enjoys power and has an eye on history.

When he first ran for president Ólafur Ragnar indicated that he might use a dormant clause in the constitution stating that the president can veto bills passed by Parliament. After a presidential veto, bills are to be subjected to a general referendum. Eight years in office, President Ólafur Ragnar struck, vetoing a media bill that was a key issue for his old foe, then-PM Davíð Oddsson. Davíð, by then becoming increasingly erratic, simply withdrew the bill and there was no referendum. But his party strongly advocated that the power of veto be taken from the president.

LAME DUCK TURNS FOLK HERO

After the airing of a particularly biting edition of comedy programme 'Áramótaskaupið' on New Year's Eve 2008—a show traditionally watched by every Icelander—Ólafur Ragnar definitely seemed a lame duck president with little hope of restoring his reputation. After a year of quiet humility, he

struck again on January 5 2010, vetoing a bill that Parliament had narrowly passed during the last days of 2009 (the bill revolved around the hotly debated Icesave debt, supposedly owed by Iceland to the UK and Holland). This was much to the chagrin of the current left-wing government, manned to a certain extent by Ólafur Ragnar's old party comrades, friends and foes alike. A national referendum followed, resulting in a resounding no to that particular Icesave bill. Ólafur Ragnar was suddenly hero of the day, not least to his old enemies on the right who were overjoyed with the government's debacle.

The government had to re-negotiate on Icesave, and in the last months of 2010 reached a new agreement, one admittedly far superior to the one voted down in the referendum. A large parliamentary majority passed 'Icesave 3' after heavy discussion, but on February 20 Ólafur Ragnar also struck down that bill. Thus, we now await another referendum on Icesave, this one set for April 9.

A COUP D'ÉTAT?

This has totally changed the President's situation. Ólafur Ragnar has claimed that he is the guardian of the people's will against a Parliament sadly lacking in trust. He has also moved about the world, giving candid interviews to the international media, often saying things the government doesn't approve of.

Some compare this to a 'coup d'état', saying that Ólafur Ragnar is taking powers into his hands that his predecessors traditionally did not have, thus jeopardising our representative democracy. But in the present political climate the government is too weak to confront him.

Interestingly, Ólafur Ragnar's base of followers has also shifted. According to recent polls he is most popular on the right, among those who oppose the present government. Even his old

enemy, Davíð Oddsson, has grudgingly become one of his, well, not admirers, but temporary supporters. Aside from opposing Icesave, the two also share a suspicious attitude to Iceland joining the European Union.

A FIFTH TERM?

Presidential elections are due in the summer of 2012. There is talk that Ólafur Ragnar has his eye on a fifth term. But this time there might be a real candidate opposing him. The elections could be quite confusing, for there is no agreement on the president's role anymore. Do we want a president who takes power into his own hands as Ólafur Ragnar has done—a politician? Or do we want a president like the old ones, a figurehead, on good terms with everybody, basically minding his or her own business, planting trees or promoting the cultural heritage.

This will eventually have to be resolved; in fact this was supposed to be one of the topics discussed by a Constitutional Assembly that was to convene this winter. Elections for the assembly were held in November, but due to technicalities they were annulled by Iceland's High Court. So here we are, basically at square one, with a president who makes his own rules as he goes along and an outdated, muddled constitution.

But Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson is an interesting phenomenon. He is a consummate political actor who has an uncanny ability to reinvent himself. Nowadays he basically has no real friends or allies in politics, but still he goes on. He is viewed by some as a folk hero who stood by his nation when the political class failed, others have not forgotten his past and his close ties to tycoons, viewing him as a populist who has no agenda, save for himself and his vanity.

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THE PROFESSOR AND HIS PIXEL PRINCE

Goddur and Siggi Eggertsson debate design, the world



Siggi on Goddur

Goddur is a great thinker, I would say. He has given a lot of thought to a lot of things, and he usually has something to say. And I usually agree with him, he has a good view of the world. He has also helped me a lot. I have much respect for him.

GODDUR:

Guðmundur Oddur Magnússon, Goddur, is Professor of Graphic Design at the Icelandic Academy of the Arts. A dropout who was kicked out of the Icelandic College of Art and Crafts, Goddur went on to get a fine education from Fluxus artists. He studied under Magnús Pálsson, Dieter Roth and Hermann Nitch to name a few. He went on to study graphic design in Vancouver, Canada, in the eighties, and was of the first generation that learned to design in an Apple Macintosh environment.

Returning from Vancouver (against his will!) in the early '90s, Goddur taught graphic design in Akureyri for a spell before moving on to managing the graphic design programme at the College of Art and Crafts (from which he had been kicked earlier), which would later turn into The Icelandic Academy of the Arts (LHÍ). He has been a professor at the school since 2002.

Goddur participated in the Klink & Bank project, and appeared with Paul McCarthy and Jason Rhodes at the Pompidou in 2004, in an exhibit entitled 'Dionysiac'. He is an avid spokesman of visual literacy and has written many articles on the subject for the Icelandic media. He attends a sweat lodge two times a month, is "neck-deep in Shamanism" and intends to "spread polytheism and reclaim humans' understanding and respect for nature" in the future.

GODDUR'S STUDIO, 105 REYKJAVÍK. SATURDAY DECEMBER 18, THREE PM.

G: ...first saw Siggi at Gilið in Akureyri [Akureyri's 'art district'] when he was fifteen or sixteen years old. He had a little office there, making posters for [arts society] Gilfélagið and various events they were staging. I knew his mother, and she had told me she had a boy that was making graphics, asking me to peek over his shoulder and tell her if he had any future in the field. That's the first time we met.

I next saw him a couple of years later when he was trying to get into LHÍ [The Icelandic Academy of the Arts] at far too young an age. He was eighteen by then, too young, but he managed to whine his way in. It was a tough decision. You aren't always doing people a favour by admitting them at a young age; even though they might have enough talent and the technical ability, there's always a question of whether they're intellectually developed enough to practice and fathom the ideological discourse, writing essays and whatnot.

See, LHÍ is not a technical school and was never intended to be one. Its goal is training burgeoning artists and creatives in practicing discourse about arts and design, their philosophy, sociology, history... but we still let him in,

SIGGI:

Renowned graphic designer, typographer and illustrator Siggi Eggertsson was born in Akureyri in 1984. He spent his childhood obsessing about computers and drawing, and as a teenager learned he could combine the two in graphic design. He studied the field at the Icelandic Academy of the Arts, doing internships with KarlssonWilker in New York and a semester at Kunsthochschule Berlin-Weissensee before graduating in 2006.

While still in school, Print Magazine named him one of the twenty brightest design stars under the age of 30. After graduating, Siggi took on a job with London agency Big Active. He has contributed to publications like Dazed and Confused and The New York Times and has done commercial work with Nike, Stüssy and Coca Cola, to name a few (he has also contributed illustrations to The Reykjavík Grapevine and the 'Inside Reykjavík' guide we published in 2006).

Siggi has received numerous awards throughout the years, lauded for his unique style and clear vision. He most recently received an Icelandic Music Award for creating the cover to Apparat Organ Quartet's 'Pólýfónía', the artwork for which will be on display at DesignMarch, in Tjarnarbió. Some of his current goals, listed on his website are: making furniture, making an album cover for Björk, designing money, illustrating children's books and working with LeBron James.

because sometimes you can't get in the way of those that obviously possess what we call 'magic'. They have an innate ability to fascinate others, something we're always looking for in the creative fields. In Siggi's case, we couldn't stand in his way. In fact, the problem was the other way around: he was far too quick in mastering what we had to say and teach him. In the end, we had to set him free... He completed his studies at the school, but we had taught him all we could long before he graduated.

Was that embarrassing for you as teachers?

G: Yes, it was. [Goddur leaves to answer a phone call].

Is he telling the truth?

Siggi Eggertsson: Uhm. I don't know...

How did the two of you meet?

SE: Well, it's as he said. I was working in Gilið and my mother asked him to look at one of my posters. Gilfélagið had advertised for someone to make posters and graphics, and I applied and got the job. It was a great job, even though it didn't pay very well. A venue for what I wanted to do, even though it's far from what I'm doing these days. I got to play around all day on the computer, making posters for jazz concerts and whatever

else was going on. I had 100% creative freedom, too, which was nice.

[Goddur returns]

I WAS A TEENAGE DESIGNER!

What makes a teenager want to do graphic design?

SE: I thought about this the other day. When I was a kid I loved computers and drawing. Those were my two passions. One day when I was around thirteen, a family friend that had just got back from Thailand came for a visit, bringing with him a pirated Warez CD he had brought from a street vendor. I had just gotten a brand new Pentium 133 PC, and so installed everything off the disk, including a graphics programme called CorelDRAW. It fascinated me, and through playing around with it I discovered that there was a profession that combined my two main interests.

It was around the same time that design was getting big on the internet. Designers became internet stars, posting their drawings and sketches, which were in turn discussed, on forums. There was a big graphic awakening in the early days of the internet and I followed it closely. I started participating, and I guess it was an early obsession of mine, wanting to be the best at what I did. I don't see any point in being medi-

ocre, not being the best at what you're doing—or even trying to be the best—is pointless and boring. It's not for me in any case.

The internet, is that something that matters?

SE: I would say that it means everything. It is man's best invention, ever, I would say. It gives everyone an equal chance. It doesn't matter if you're a teenager from Akureyri or a rich kid in New York, you'll have just as good a chance of doing whatever you want to do on the internet. You put something out there, and if it's nice people will eventually spot it and you'll get a reaction. And if you continue on that path, then something might happen.

G: I want to remark upon the...

SE: Can I just finish here? So, as I said, I was getting into design at the same time that it's getting big on-line. People are starting to design websites that are works of art, everyone suddenly has a platform where they can display their talents and share what they're doing with the world. It was an exciting time, and it drew me right in. Sorry.

THE BURDEN OF BEING AN ICELANDER

G: I wanted to ask if you've ever felt different for being an Icelander in your

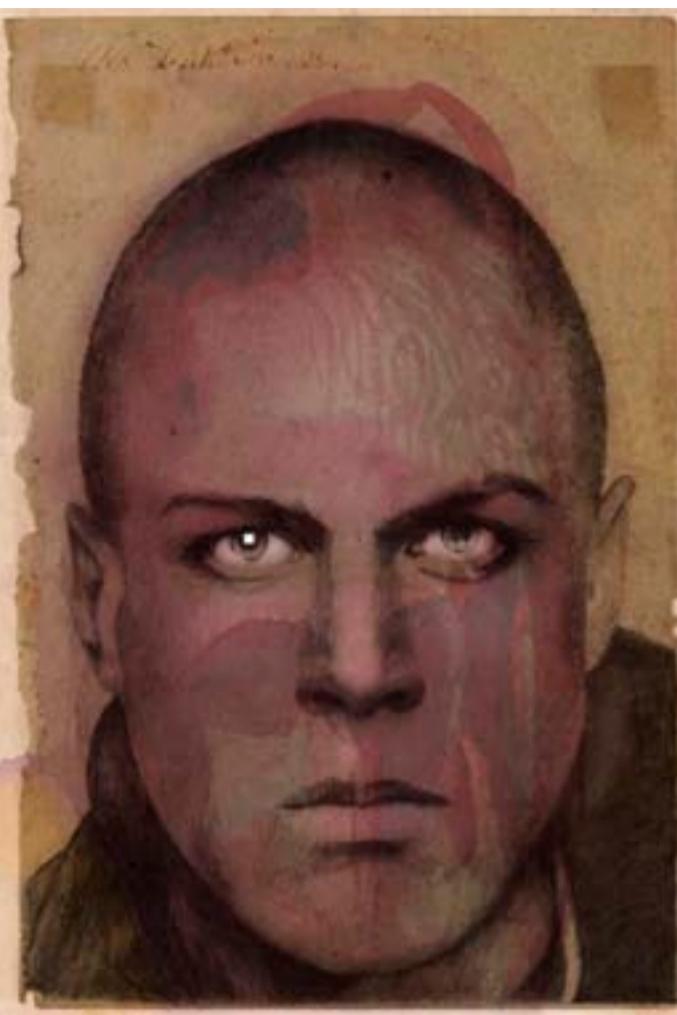
Words

Haukur S. Magnússon

Photography

Jói Kjartans

Check out Siggi's exhibit, Pólyfónia's Crests, at Tjarnarbió throughout DesignMarch. Then go view the panel discussion assembled by Goddur, 'Design in Times of Change' at Tjarnarbió on March 24 at 22:00.



Goddur on Siggi

In my mind, Siggi Eggertsson is a phenomenon of obsession. He makes up certain rules for himself. They aren't very many. He keeps within their confines and masters their use. This is how he gets results that have placed him in the high ranks of the world's visual communicators.

Making it this way was an idiosyncratic decision, it would have definitely been easier on a computer. It took me around two weeks to draw the crests and then we spent a few nights into carving it all out, me and my friend Ögmundur Jónsson, who is very good with his hands.

WHAT'S HAPPENING // WHAT HAPPENED

What is your take on the current situation in Iceland in terms of design. Is anything going on?

[they laugh]

G: He has no idea! He won't know a thing about it!

SE: Yeah, no I don't. I don't think anything's happening. I feel like there's so much depression and... lack of ambition around. I can't name any examples though.

G: I think you're wrong. But it's hard to spot when something's going on. Like when kids ask me to recommend a school to go to. "Goddur, what schools are happening these days? Where's the scene?" The fact is that if you hear about such a school or such a scene, it's almost certain that it's over by that time. That's the nature of things—a chemistry starts brewing and no one can tell why, and no one even spots it until it's over.

So, did something happen then? Has something happened?

G: See, what's happened in the past decade is that Icelanders are for the first time participating in an international design culture, and—pay attention—almost exclusively in the field of graphic design. Books have been published about Icelandic graphic designers, magazines interview them and commission them. This started happening around the year 2000, and it doesn't apply to architects or industrial designers or chair designers or whatnot. It's the graphic ones that are raising attention and participating.

SE: Like who?

G: You, Katrín Péturs, Hjalti Karlsson...

SE: That's not a lot of people.
G: Comparatively it is. And these three all have an international label. You can't say that about Icelandic product designers or architects.

Why is this happening? Is it the internet's fault?

G: No, I claim it's because an international superstar of product design, Michael Young, fell in love with an Icelandic woman. It's far more important than the internet. Journalists started venturing here to meet him and had their eyes opened to Icelandic designers and that there was something potentially brewing here that had gone undocumented. This attention and exposure injected life into the community.

G: Is anything happening in Berlin?
SE: Yes. There's access to more, at least.

G: Is there? Do we not have access to the world via the internet and magazines and the media? Is this some personal access that you have there? I can tell you that I've met more world famous artists in Iceland than I ever met abroad. They are untouchable abroad, here they become your friends. You understand? I have had good conversations with David Bowie in Álfatanes. You can't meet him in New York or wherever he lives.

SE: I've only ever hung out with Björk abroad, never in Iceland. You've gotten so angry Goddur [laughs]!

[Goddur laughs]

G: I have to talk to you as a student. I have to be your teacher, that is my fate.

SE: Isn't that just fine? ☺

chosen field, interacting with the world as you do?

SE: No, I don't believe in nations or nationality, I believe in individuals. Where you're from might affect you, but in the end I am just some person that was born in this country, but this country isn't necessarily a part of me.

G: As an art student, I once had a teacher that was a big name in the arts. We were drinking together and he said: "Never study abroad! You are so special here in Iceland, going abroad will ruin it!"

Then we drank some more and he reached the conclusion that us seeking studies abroad was fine. "I see now that your core is so strong, you can't hide it. You can travel the whole world and never hide the fact that you're from Iceland. The further you'll go, the more obvious it will become."

Have you really never recognised any 'Icelandic characteristics' in you?

SE: No, I don't believe those exist. What do you think they are?

G: We used to ask that a lot, and to our utmost horror we learned that it was everything we refused to admit we were, everything we wanted to hide. It's everything you're ashamed of and don't want foreigners to notice. Imagine an Icelandic brass band playing on the 17th of June [Iceland's national holiday], where nothing is quite in tune or in harmony. An Icelandic small-town church choir singing at a funeral. All the ingredients are there, but it doesn't quite come together. Just look at Icelandic architecture—we imported all the main ideas of modernism, yet there's no Le Corbusier, no Frank Lloyd Wright, nothing.

SE: ...Everyone's trying their best, but we just can't get it quite right [laughs].

The Icelandic quality is being inept but still trying?

SE: I would say that. Just look at Einar Jónsson. In his sculptures he's trying to emulate the international greats, but doesn't quite make it. Which gives his work a quality and character of their own.

ISOLATION AND FASCISM

G: This begs another question: do you feel a difference in working out of Reykjavík and more remote parts of Iceland?

SE: I guess there's a difference, but I don't really interact a lot with other people...

G: Being a hermit, a monk that wants to live in seclusion. I know it from experience as a teacher at LHI; it's how people escape from mediocrity. It's like no one evades mediocrity except by being in a place where he can be introspective and alone with his vices. You have to have an obsession, and you need to flee others so you can indulge in that obsession. You need to become a hermit so no one can tell how anal you are in your work.

SE: Of course I am obsessed with my work, of course it is a sort of compulsion, but at the same time it's the most fun thing I do and my main hobby.

G: Sometimes people need to focus on the small things to gather real success. Siggi isn't really that good at drawing; he isn't really good at anything except one thing, which is working with that small, square shape, the pixel. He's mastered that, he's top of the line when it comes to that one thing.

You seem to like order in your works, Siggi...

SE: I love rules. And I love creating rigid rules for my work that I need to follow...

G: In other words: you're a fascist. There is another word for that, which is orthodoxy or fundamentalism. Political correctness. You have rules that you follow and there is absolutely no tolerance for any deviation. You see what I'm saying, the only way to superior success is donning these horse blinders that provide absolute tunnel vision, maintaining total focus at all times.

SE: I don't feel I confine myself absolutely like that, even though I choose to work within a grid and with some rules. What I try to do is take something really small and make something really big out of it, as much as I can. Say I want to draw a horse; I'll decide I have to draw it using a particular method that in turn influences how the work comes out.

Can you name some of these rules?

SE: They're just these small, ridiculous rules, like only using a certain number of colours or shapes. Or inserting small jokes that only I will understand.

DESIGN VS. ART

-What does the graphic designer do? What is his or her role?

SE: I think it differs a lot from person to person. There are many different types of designers out there.

G: I've always thought of the graphic designer as an expert in relaying an idea to someone that needs it, using

a mix of text and visuals. The graphic designer masters the art of presenting something, some message, whether it is political, religious or commercial... whatever industry there is or whoever needs to put forth a message, the graphic designer is a mediator between a message and its recipient.

SE: That seems a very straightforward way of putting it. It's the core of what a designer does, then different ones employ different methods.

Is the difference between a graphic designer and a visual artist then that the designer is always relaying someone else's message, while the artist makes up his own?

G: No. Because artists are often employed to get someone's message across. Companies will pay them to make works of art or performances, politicians will employ them...

SE: And it's pretty common that designers do something out of their own will...

G: The difference between artists and what we call visual communication is that for visual communication you need to employ no more than three layers to get your message across. That is, the sign, the signifier and the signified. The work needs to first catch the intended recipients eye, then tell him what it's about—whether it's an Apparat Organ Quartet or Hjálmar CD or Jón Gnarr or whatever—and then present the message. These three layers are all they can be, because it needs to be to the point and it needs to be digested quickly, while art can employ a hundred layers with references to literature and other art and hidden meanings.

The real difference is whether someone is creative or simply skilled at making things. You quickly realise that. Most of what's made in the name of art isn't art, it's crap. And most design is crap, most music is crap, most business theory is crap. But there are people in each field that possess creative souls, they are all risk takers, they are all collectors, they all have that magic. I don't sort people into categories of 'designer' and 'artist', I only divide between people that are creative and those that are merely skilled.

PLUMBERS AND PROGRAMMERS

SE: I find it very odd, this sudden focus on design. What with DesignMarch and everyone constantly talking about designers and design. This interview for instance. Where does it come from?

Why? Why aren't people talking about great plumbers or programmers or whatever... why does what we do matter so much? I don't understand.

G: You don't think it matters?

SE: I just don't understand why people aren't talking about something else. It's odd having to tell people about what you're doing, about 'what design is'. Why not talk to a programmer? They are intensely creative, and they're making useful things that make people's lives easier. Why isn't the media interviewing programmers and placing them on their covers?

G: Could it be that the designer needs more exposure than the programmer in order to get work?

SE: It works the same for the most part. The only difference is that the programmer's job isn't as visual. It's problem solving. Some programmers are even creative, as in your earlier paradigm, while others are craftsmen. It's a fascinating field.

But one aspect of your work is mass communication; addressing and trying to reach large groups of people, and if you are good at your job and succeed one could imagine that you've tapped into something human, something that's shared by people the world over.

SE: Yeah, maybe. I never try to appeal to people or reach them. I put what I do out there and people will see it, but I'm not doing it for them. Everything I do, I do for myself. Regardless, I am fortunate enough that people that hire me for jobs usually know who I am and what I'm about. They're hiring me to do what I do best, so there's usually no confusion in that regard. I am also picky about projects, I need to like a band if I am to make their album cover. Making the cover for Apparat, for instance, I really liked. They are one of my favourite Icelandic bands.

You seem to share a certain aesthetic with the band, your artwork fit well with the music. Describe the process.

SE: We wanted to make something that was digital, yet had human elements. The band wanted to make a crest for each member and I liked the idea. I had spent a lot of time on the computer at that point, so I wanted to make this project a little differently. I drew all the pictures, then carved everything out in vinyl foil—each colour was a different film—and glued it together. It brought a human touch, they're not 100% perfect.

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MUSIC

CONCERTS & NIGHTLIFE IN MARCH & APRIL

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

11 FRI

- B5**
Bakkus
 22:00 DJ Leifur
Café Rosenberg
 22:00 Electric Ethics Concert Gammur, Gjöll, Inferno 5, Aux Pan & DJ Benson Is Fantastic
Café Oliver
 21:00 DJ Anna Rakel & Ýr
 24:00 Dj Maggi & Brynjar Már
Dillon
 22:00 Varsjárbandalagið
Den Danske Kro
 22:00 59ers
Dubliner
 22:00 Live music
English Pub
 17:00 Live music
Esja
 22:00 DJ Bogi
Faktorý
 23:00 Of Monsters and Men and others
 24:00 DJ Biggi Maus
Hressó
 22:00 The Fabulous Band followed by DJ Fúsi
Kaffibarinn
 22:00 DBF & Biggi Bix
Prikið
 22:00 DJ Addi intro
Sóðóma
 22:00 Mars Attacks Festival
Thorvaldsen
 24:00 DJ Áki Pain
Trúnó
 19:00 Sushi Extrazaganza
Vegamót
 22:00 DJ Jónas

12 SAT

- B5**
Bakkus
 22:00 DJ Símon
Boston
 24:00 DJ KGB
Café Rosenberg
 22:00 Gísli Galdur
Café Oliver
 21:00 DJ Anna Rakel & Ýr
 24:00 DJ Maggi & Brynjar Már
Den Danske Kro
 24:00 Live Music
Dillon
 22:00 The Vintage Caravan & Gang Related
Dubliner
 22:00 Live Music
English Pub
 22:00 Live Music
Esja
 22:00 Dj Bogi
Faktorý
 23:00 Momentum, Ask the Slave, Caterpillarmen
 24:00 Dj Svenni Swingmaster
Halgrímskirkja
 12:00 French Baroque Organ Music
Hemmi og Valdi
 22:00 Reggae Night
Hressó
 22:00 Penta followed by DJ Fúsi
Kaffibarinn
 22:00 fknhdsm with Marcos Cabral
Prikið
 22:00 DJ Gísli Galdur
Sóðóma
 22:00 Mars Attacks Festival
Thorvaldsen
 24:00 DJ Áki Pain
Trúnó
 21:00 Elín Ey
Vegamót
 22:00 Benni B Ruff

13 SUN

- 22:00 Whiskey Sunday. Discounts on select whiskey and guinness
Café Rosenberg
 22:00 Singers from the Faroe Islands
Den Danske Kro
 22:00 Live Music

Dubliner

- 22:00 Live Music
English Pub
 22:00 Live Music
Prikið
 22:00 Hangover Movie Night: Black Rain. Free popcorn
Salurinn, Kópavogur
 15:00 Bjössi Thor, Richard Gillis & Reykjavík Big Band

14 MON

- Bakkus**
 21:00 Bakkus Movie Night. Árni Grétarsson presents "The Room"
Café Rosenberg
 22:00 Pub Quiz
Den Danske Kro
 22:00 Live Music
Dubliner
 22:00 Live Music
English Pub
 22:00 Live Music
Prikið
 22:00 DJ Hús. Red wine & cheese for two, 1000 ISK

15 TUE

- Bakkus**
 22:00 DJ Karl
Café Rosenberg
 22:00 FÍH Concert
Den Danske Kro
 22:00 Live music
Dubliner
 22:00 Live music
English Pub
 22:00 Live music
Prikið
 21:00 Gagnaugað shows alternative documentaries

16 WED

- Bakkus**
 22:00 DJ Steinni & Frikk
Boston
 22:00 Heima
Café Rosenberg
 22:00 Pub Quiz with Hildi Sif
Café Rosenberg
 22:00 Jónas Sig Band
Den Danske Kro
 22:00 Live music
Dubliner
 22:00 Live music
English Pub
 22:00 Live music
Kaffibarinn
 22:00 HalliValli
Kaffitár café
 20:00 Tango Milano
Prikið
 22:00 Traditional dancing with Accordion-Þórður.
Trúnó
 21:00 RuPaul's Drag Race

17 THU

- Bakkus**
 22:00 Einar Sonic
Boston
 22:00 DJ Andrea
Café Rosenberg
 22:00 Ingólf Veðurguð
Café Rosenberg
 21:00 Svávar Knútur

Den Danske Kro

- 22:00 Live music
Dubliner
 22:00 Live music
English Pub
 22:00 Live music
Esja
 Loungy Thursday
Kaffibarinn
 23:00 DJ Hunk of a Man
Prikið
 22:00 DJ Anna Rakel & Ýr
Sóðóma
 21:00 Tribute Night - Stone Temple Pilots
Thorvaldsen
 20:00 Salsa Night
Vegamót
 22:00 DJ Hannes

18 FRI

- B5**
 22:00 DJ Jóf
Bakkus
 24:00 DJ Hunk of a Man
Boston
 22:00 DJ Kári
Café Rosenberg
 22:00 Jussanam Da Silva
Café Oliver
 21:00 DJ Anna Rakel & Ýr
 24:00 DJ Maggi & Brynjar Már
Café Rosenberg
 22:00 Live Music
Den Danske Kro
 24:00 Live Music
Dubliner
 22:00 Live Music
English Pub
 17:00 Live Music
Esja
 22:00 DJ Hlynur Mastermix
Faktorý
 24:00 DJ Benson is FANTASTIC!
Hressó
 22:00 Fabulous Band followed by DJ Fannar
Kaffibarinn
 22:00 Alfons X
NASA
 22:00 Dr. Spock
Prikið
 22:00 DJ Danni Deluxe
Salurinn, Kópavogur
 20:00 Byzantine Silhouette Balkan folk music, 2000 ISK
Thorvaldsen
 24:00 DJ Kristján
Trúnó
 20:00 Champagne Night
Vegamót
 22:00 DJ Jónas

19 SAT

- B5**
 22:00 DJ Jónas
Bakkus
 22:00 DJ Kári
Boston
 22:00 Pætur from Bloodgroup
Café Rosenberg
 21:00 DJ Anna Rakel & Ýr
 24:00 DJ Maggi & Brynjar Már
Den Danske Kro
 24:00 Live Music
Dillon
 22:00 Mighty Good Times & Morgan Kane

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1 Apr - 10 April



Sequences Art Festival Is Back

The performance in visual art - a series of performances and discussion

April 1 - 10

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Sequences 2011 will present a wide array of performances, events, discussions and lectures throughout Reykjavík and Seyðisfjörður, east Iceland.

The festival will be held for the fifth time from April 1 - 10, and will continue its main objective: to examine time-based art, performance, sound art, video and music, as well as to research the interaction of the genres, artistic space, and society.

This year, Sequences will focus solely on performance art and how it features in other artistic media. The festival will host over twenty projects in collaboration with The Living Art Museum, Kling and Bang gallery, Iceland Academy of the Arts, The Association of Icelandic Visual Artists, The Reykjavík Art Museum, The House of Ideas, The Nordic House, Hotel Saga and Skaftefell in Seyðisfjörður, centre for art in east Iceland.

A three-day lecture series will be held in the Iceland Academy of the Arts with various discussions about the medium. The main lecturers will be Gunnhildur Hauksdóttir, an artist and a board member of the Living Art Museum, and Agnes Nedregard, a Norwegian performance artist and editor of the Nordic performance forum Nordic Tantrum (www.nordictantrum.org).

This year the artistic board of Sequences chose Iceland's own Hannes Lárusson to be the festival's honorary artist. His project will have the honour of opening the festival on Friday, April 1 in Kling and Bang gallery, Hverfisgata 42, 101 Reykjavík

Participating artists are as following:

Hannes Lárusson, honorary artist (IS) Gernot Faber (DE) Curver Thoroddsen (IS) Ásdís Sif Gunnarsdóttir (IS) Christian Falsnaes (DK) SIGNA (DK, AT) Friðgeir Einarsson (IS) Anthony Marcellini (US) Intrum Justitia (IS) Nils Bech / Bendik Giske (NO) Not Grata (EE) Örn Alexander Amundason (IS) Freya Bjorg Olafson (CA) Peter Fengler (NL) Rakel McMahon (IS) Directrix (CZ, IS) Dísalblót (IS) Páll Ívan Pálsson (IS, HR) Bristol Ninja Cava Crew (IS) Una Björk Sigurðardóttir (IS) & Sunneva Ása Weissappel (IS) **HSM**

Dubliner
22:00 Live Music
English Pub
22:00 Live Music
Esja
22:00 DJ Hlynur Mastermix
Faktorý
24:00 DJ Danni Deluxe
Hressó
22:00 Silfur followed by DJ Fannar
Kaffibarinn
22:00 Dad weekend # 11: **Gisli Galdur & B Ruff**
NASA
22:00 Playboy Night
Prikið
22:00 DJ Árni Kacoon
Sódóma
16:00 Agent Fresco, all ages
22:00 Agent Fresco, 18+
Thorvaldsen
24:00 DJ Kristján
Trúnó
20:00 Homojito Madness: mojitos, 990 ISK
Vegamót
22:00 DJ Símon

Café Rosenberg
22:00 Fuglabúrið
Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music
Dubliner
22:00 Live music
English Pub
22:00 Live music
Prikið
21:00 Gagnað shows alternative documentaries

23 WED
Bakkus
22:00 DJ Hellert
Café Oliver
22:00 Pub Quiz with Hildi Sif
Café Rosenberg
22:00 The duet Heima
Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live Music
Dubliner
22:00 Live Music
English Pub
22:00 Live Music
Faktorý
20:00 Classic Pub Quiz
Kaffibarinn
22:00 Extreme Chill
Kaffitár Café
20:00 Tango Milango
Prikið
22:00 DJ Krúsi
Trúnó
19:00 Sushi Extravaganza

24 THU
Bakkus
22:00 DJ Benson is FANTASTIC!
Boston
22:00 DJ Andrea
Café Oliver
22:00 Ingó Veðurguð
Café Rosenberg
22:00 Langi Seli & Skuggarnir
Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live Music
Dillon
22:00 My brother is pale & No to self
Dubliner
22:00 Live Music
English Pub
22:00 Live Music
Prikið
22:00 Hangover Movie Night: Cool Runnings. Free popcorn

21 MON
Bakkus
21:00 Bakkus Movie Night. Andrea Björk Andrésdóttir presents "Turkish Delight"
Café Rosenberg
22:00 Pub Quiz
Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live Music
Dubliner
22:00 Live Music
English Pub
22:00 Live Music
Prikið
DJ Hús. Red Wine & Cheese: for 2 at 1000 ISK

22 TUE
Bakkus
22:00 Foosball Tournament

20:00 Salsa Night
Vegamót
22:00 DJ Jónas

25 FRI
B5
22:00 DJ Leifur
Bakkus
24:00 DJ Öfull
Boston
22:00 DJ Rósá
Café Haiti
22:00 Jussanam Da Silva
Café Oliver
21:00 DJ Anna Rakel & Ýr
24:00 DJ Maggi & Brynjar Már
Café Rosenberg
22:00 Megas-Rúmar & Gylfiægis
Den Danske Kro
24:00 Live Music
Dubliner
22:00 Live Music
English Pub
17:00 Live Music
Esja
22:00 DJ Danni Deluxe
Hressó
22:00 **Fabulous Band** followed by DJ Fúsi
Kaffibarinn
22:00 DJ KGB
Prikið
22:00 DJ Addi Intro
Sódóma
22:00 Apparat Organ Quartet with Swords of Chaos, 2000 ISK
Thorvaldsen
24:00 DJ Áki Pain
Trúnó
21:00 Queer Stand-up Comedy Night
Vegamót
22:00 DJ Símon

26 SAT
B5
22:00 DJ Jófí
Bakkus
22:00 DJ KGB
Boston
22:00 DJ Biggi Maus
Barbara
22:00 Queer Masquerade, 1000 ISK
Café Oliver
21:00 DJ Anna Rakel & Ýr
24:00 DJ Maggi & Brynjar Már
Den Danske Kro
24:00 Live Music
Dubliner
22:00 Live Music
English Pub
22:00 Live Music
Esja
22:00 DJ Hlynur Mastermix
Hressó
22:00 Dalton followed by DJ Fúsi
Kaffibarinn
22:00 Már & Nielsen, Eve Fanfest/ Booka Shade afterparty
Prikið
22:00 DJ Benni B Ruff
Sódóma
22:00 Cancer Society benefit concert
Thorvaldsen
24:00 DJ Áki Pain
Trúnó
22:00 Queer Masquerade, 1000 ISK
Vegamót
22:00 Danni

27 SUN
Bakkus
22:00 Whiskey Sunday. Discounts on select whiskey and Guinness
Café Rosenberg
22:00 Students from the Icelandic Film School perform
Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live Music
Dubliner
22:00 Live Music
English Pub
22:00 Live Music
Prikið
22:00 Hangover Movie Night: Brain Dead. Free popcorn

28 MON
Bakkus
21:00 Bakkus Movie Night. Tomio Newmilk presents "Mondo Cane"
Café Rosenberg
22:00 Pub Quiz
Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live Music
Dubliner
22:00 Live Music
English Pub
22:00 Live Music
Prikið
22:00 Rock & Roll with Matti
Sódóma
21:00 Apparat Organ Quartet with Borko, 2000 ISK
Thorvaldsen

29 TUE
Café Rosenberg
22:00 Misery

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MUSIC

CONCERTS & NIGHTLIFE IN MARCH & APRIL



24
Mar

26
Mar

Meeting Face to Face with the Help of Booze Eve Fan Fest

Laugardalshöll Convention Centre, Engjavegur 8

March 24 - 26, 11.510 ISK for players, 23.254 ISK for spouses and friends, 2.700 ISK for FM
Belfast vs. Booka Shade tickets

If you like playing video games and dancing to electro, then there's really no way you could miss the Eve FanFest. Since CPP Games, the developer of Eve Online (one of the most detailed and well-known multiplayer online role-playing games out there) are based in Reykjavík, they annually invite players of the game from all over the world to come and meet each other face to face and set aside their cyber differences for a weekend of drinking, dancing, and discussion panels featuring EVE developers. FanFest is considered one of biggest parties in Iceland with over 2.500 people attending in 2009. To grace the stage at FanFest this year is Iceland's own FM Belfast and Germany's Booka Shade. Get more info at www.fanfest.eveonline.com

VS

Den Danske Kro 22:00 Live Music	Hressó 22:00 Fabulous Band followed by DJ Elli
Dubliner 22:00 Live Music	Litla Hraun Maximum Security
English Pub 22:00 Live Music	Prison 16:00 Today Is The Day & Klink
Prikið 21:00 Gagnaugað shows alternative documentaries	Sóðóma 22:00 Stóns

30 WED

Bakkus
22:00 DJ Cool in the Pool

Café Oliver
22:00 Pub Quiz with Hilda Sif

Café Rosenberg
22:00 Sniglabandið

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live Music

Dubliner
22:00 Live Music

English Pub
22:00 Live Music

Kaffitár Café
20:00 Tango Milango

Prikið
22:00 Traditional dancing with
Accordion Pórður

Trúno
21:00 RuPaul's Drag Race

31 THU

Bakkus
22:00 DJ Einar Sonic

Boston
22:00 DJ Andrea

Café Oliver
22:00 Ingó Veðurguð

Den Danske Kro
20:00 Beer Bingo

Dillon
22:00 Gutlarer

Dubliner
22:00 Live Music

English Pub
22:00 Live Music

Faktorý
22:00 Lára and guests

Thorvaldsen
20:00 Salsa Night

Vegamót
22:00 Danni Delux

1 FRI

B5
22:00 DJ Leifur

Bakkus
24:00 DJ Árni Sveins

Boston
22:00 DJ Kari

Café Haiti
22:00 Jussanam Da Silva

Café Oliver
21:00 DJ Anna Rakel & Ýr

24:00 DJ Maggi & Brynjar Már

Café Rosenberg
22:00 Skúli Mennski

Den Danske Kro
24:00 Live Music

Dubliner
22:00 Live Music

English Pub
17:00 Live Music

Faktorý
23:00 Agent Fresco and guests

Halgrímskirkja
20:00 Works of J.S. Bach performed,

4 MON

Bakkus
21:00 Bakkus Movie Night

Café Rosenberg
22:00 Blúsfelagið

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music

Dubliner
22:00 Live music

English Pub
22:00 Live music

Faktorý
23:00 Agent Fresco and guests

Halgrímskirkja
20:00 Works of J.S. Bach performed,

5 TUE

Café Rosenberg
22:00 Live Jazz

Den Danske Kro
22:00 Live music

Dubliner

22:00 Live music

English Pub

22:00 Live music

6 WED

Bakkus

22:00 Robot Disco part 3

Café Oliver

22:00 Pub Quiz with Hilda Sif

Café Rosenberg

22:00 Jazzband Valgerðar

Den Danske Kro

22:00 Live music

Dubliner

22:00 Live music

English Pub

22:00 Live music

Faktorý

20:00 Classic Pub Quiz

Kaffitár café

20:00 Tango Milango

7 THU

Bakkus

21:00 Fist Fokkers album release concert

22:00 Djofullin Dansur

Boston

22:00 DJ Andrea

Café Oliver

22:00 Ingó Veðurguð

Café Rosenberg

22:00 Anna Mjöll

Den Danske Kro

22:00 Live music

Dubliner

22:00 Live music

English Pub

22:00 Live music

Faktorý

22:00 Amiina and guests

Hafnarborg

12:00 Lunch concert with Sigriður Áðalsteinsdóttir

Thorvaldsen

20:00 Salsa Night

Vegamót

22:00 DJ Hannes

8 FRI

B5

22:00 DJ Símon

Boston

22:00 DJ Rósa

Café Oliver

21:00 DJ Anna Rakel & Ýr

24:00 DJ Maggi & Brynjar Már

Café Rosenberg

22:00 Live Music

Den Danske Kro

22:00 Live music

Dubliner

22:00 Live music

English Pub

17:00 Live music

Hressó

22:00 The Fabulous band followed by DJ Fannar

Thorvaldsen

24:00 DJ Áki Pain

Vegamót

22:00 DJ Jónas

ONGOING

Restaurant Reykjavík

20:00 Let's Talk Iceland: Comedy Show.
2200ISK. Everyday

Iónó

Cellophane Comedy show

20:00 Thursdays

HOTEL KEILIR

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Special summer offer

"We aren't the Bee Gees or Justin Bieber"

Today is the Day are coming for Reykjavík!



Steve Austin is an infamous character in the heavy music world; a man who lends huge doses of brutal honesty and a terrifying, angst-ridden aura to the music he disseminates through Today is the Day (who are often referred to as 'the most influential metal band of the last 15 years'). Since Today is the Day are playing a couple shows in Iceland this month, we thought we'd use the opportunity to e-mail him some questions. What follows is an edited copy of our exchange.

Many long time fans yearn for a return to the landmark albums 'Temple of the Morning Star' and 'In the Eyes of God', but you refuse to stagnate and continue taking the listener in new directions. That in mind, what should we expect from the upcoming 'Pain Is A Warning'? 'Pain Is A Warning' is a hard rockin' anthem for the workin' people around the world. The music is direct and intense fused with our noisy metal style. We made an effort to keep our minds wide open and create something we had never done before. A lot of times these days, bands are caught up in technical and complexity so much that the heart of the rock is never touched upon. So we made sure to let the music be what we really felt and the end result is the truest and most rockin' record I think we have ever made.

Today is the Day has long had a loyal cult following, but a wider fan

base continues to elude the band. To what would you ascribe this?

We have never had everything right label-wise since we started. When we got signed AMREP [Amphetamine Reptile] was awesome to be on, but the label was at its end when we got on it and Tom Hazelmyer (AMREP owner and dear friend), had started the process of discontinuing releasing new records. Relapse was great throughout 'Temple Of The Morning Star', but when Bill Yurkeiwics (Relapse owner and Guy Who Signed Us) left, the label could have cared less about our band. I invested everything I had into SuperNova (over 250.000 dollars), and that still wasn't really enough to be able to compete with other major labels that promote bands here in the USA. Now, with everything at the right time and right place, I really feel that the band has the business side dialled in perfectly. I also feel that our music has always been way ahead of the current times and like Black Flag or The Dead Kennedys, things that are usually groundbreaking or ahead of the times, don't always necessarily catch the ear of the mainstream. We aren't the Bee Gees or Justin Bieber.

10 drummers down, some of them among the best in metal, and a slew of departed bassist and keyboard players, it begs the question; do you think you'll ever arrive at a stable line-up? What is the cause of the high member churn?

The 1990s and the 2000s are not the 1960s, when bands like the Rolling Stones or the Beatles started and stayed together. It takes a HUGE commitment these days for a group of people in any format: A band, a business, or even being married to stay together forever. We have always had great guys in the band and their contributions were always the best. But, I seem to have been the only one from the beginning that has been able to handle the pressures of touring for over 1.500 shows, label changes, and all of the hard things you have to go through being in a band. I really love being in the band with Curran and Ryan right now. I think the edge they have in making it to the end with this band is that they are the MOST TOGETHER individuals that we have ever had on bass or drums. They have their own lives and both are highly educated and have been successful at what they do. They have something for themselves besides just the band. That well-rounded lifestyle equals that they are extremely stable and devoted to what we do as a group.

Finally, which of your eight studio albums (prior to the forthcoming one) would you choose to be remembered for?

'Willpower'. Thanks and I can't wait to play for the people of Iceland. Iceland looks to be a lot like Maine.

Das Experiment, But Without All The Violence And Grown Men Pissing On Each Other

Músiktilraunir 2011

Semi-Finals @ Tjarnarbió, Tjarnargata 12, 101 Reykjavík

Semi-Finals @ 19:00 each night, March 25-28 - 1000 ISK

Finals @ Íslenska Óperan, Ingólfstræti 2a, 101 Reykjavík

Finals @ 16:00, April 2 - 1500 ISK

If you're reading this and have any interest in Icelandic music, do everything in your power to see this. Between March 25 and April 2, the youngest generation of Icelandic musicians are going to strut their stuff at the annual Icelandic Music Experiments 2011. Essentially, a teen battle of the bands, it started as a simple 'keep-kids-away-from-drugs' sort of thing in 1982, but has since evolved into a breeding ground for future greatness, as victors and finalists (all of which have to be under 25, according to the contest rules) very often become respected bands and musicians later, if not immediately following participation; Músiktilraunir has produced acts such as Maus, Botnleðja, Stjórnukisi, Mínus, XXX Rottweiler, Mammút, Jakobína and Agent Fresco, and that's just counting actual contest winners. The applications are pretty much first-come-first-serve, so viewers can expect a totally random and absolutely fascinating sample of a whole generation of musicians in the first stages of their development. It's a must-see, and has been for years. **SE**



A small image showing a stage or performance area with blurred lights and figures, likely a rehearsal or performance space.

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Cinema No2
Icelandic volcano and nature films in the loft at Fisherman's Hut No 2. Just 5 minutes strolling distance from the Reykjavík Museum of Art!

THE ERUPTION!

In spring 2010 Eyjafjallajökull hit the News all over the World. In Cinema No2 you can experience the ferocious, devastating powers. This is the eruption of decades.

Shows week days 16:00, 16:30 and 17:00. Shows for groups (10+) can be arranged. Call +354 898 66 28 or contact cinemano2@lifsmund.is

Whale Watching Departures Cinema No2 Reykjavík Museum of Art Less than 5 minutes walk



MAP

Places We Like

1 Deli

Bankastræti 14

Getting a good slice of pizza on the go can be an utter ordeal. If you're not careful, you'll frequently wind up paying good money for a cardboardy wafer that has been sitting in a heater box for a week. Not at Deli, however. Their slices are consistently awesome and fresh, the topping selection is intriguing and tasteful and, best of all, they're really cheap.

2 ÁTVR (Liquor store)

Austurstræti 10A

In Iceland, alcohol isn't sold in grocery stores or gas stations. You can only buy alcohol over 2.5% in the state-owned liquor stores named ÁTVR, usually called 'Rikið'. Twelve stores are operated in the capital area and one is located in the city centre. Common opening hours: Mon.-Thu. 11:00-18:00, Fri. 11:00-19:00, Sat. 11:00-18:00.

3 Trúnó

Laugavegur 22

Located just below Barbara, Trúnó is the most recent addition to Reykjavík's straight-friendly gay scene and swings between cosy café by day and lively bar by night. Generally relaxed atmosphere but given to hosting special events and spinning the drinks wheel. AK

4 The Englsih Pub

Austurstræti 12

True to its name, the English Pub offers a wide variety of lager on tap and a whiff of that genuine UK feel. You may also try their famous "wheel of fortune" with the chance of winning up to a metre of beer with a single spin. Cheers! WW

5 Tíu Dropar

Laugavegur 27

If you're sick of all the arty cafés, filled with Sigur Rós wannabes and their Macs, browsing Facebook—go to Tíu Dropar. It's a back-to-basics Icelandic café that hasn't changed their interior since the 60s. Really proves the saying 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it.' Plus, the coffee's great. SKK

6 Nonnabiti

Hafnarstræti 9

Delicious and relatively cheap considering how massive and filling their sandwiches are. The Luxury Sub, with salty pork, veggies, sauce and pineapple is a brilliant combination of flavours for late-night munchies. It's just as satisfying and filling during more civilized hours as well. And the service is fast if you're in a rush. CF

7 Eymundsson

Skólavörðustígur 11,

Eymundsson is a chain with several outlets but the one on Skólavörðustígur is the best in town. Housed on the ground floor of what was once a Spron Credit Union, the building has a solid institutional feel—cosy if that's your bag. The premises are equipped with a coffee shop, tables and sofas to lounge in and the all-glass exterior lets in a lot of light, which is good for reading real books, not facebooks. This Eymundsson also regularly hosts book readings, signings and other small events such as concerts and art exhibitions, organized in a pleasantly spontaneous and laid back way. AK

8 Dillon Rock Bar

Laugavegur 30

Dillon lives up to its full name and is not known to mess around with House or Electronica. Led Zeppelin, Iron Maiden and Black Sabbath is what you'll often hear, along with more local and recent spin offs as well as the odd live show. But if you have other requests, they are accepted and considered by resident DJ, Amma Rokksins, Iceland's grandmother of rock, still spinning her stuff on Saturday nights. AK

9 Hemmi & Valdi

Laugavegur 21

The "colonial store" Hemmi and Valdi was probably 2008's most surprising crowd pleaser. The cosy hangout advanced from being a toasty retreat, where you could get cheap beer and have a quiet chat, into being a chock-full concert venue and an all-night party place. And believe me, the new atmosphere is brilliant. SKK



Raggi from the band Árstíðir is the unstoppable...

HUMAN JUKEBOX

Playing every wednesday night from ten o'clock

Live music - every night
Live soccer
Special beer offers
And our infamous Wheel of Fortune

~ THE ENGLISH PUB ~
Austurvöllur





10 Hressó

Austurstræti 20

You know, Hressó is basically the only place I go for coffee. Why? Their coffee is decent to excellent, but their forte is surely their wonderful patio, where you can enjoy the spring breeze in the sun, wrap yourself in a blanket beneath an electric heater in January and at all times: smoke. They boast of quite the prolific menu, but I'd reconsider the playlists to tell you the truth, too much of Nickelback really hurts. SKK

11 Den Danske Kro

Ingólfsstræti 3

The Danish Bar is located on Ingólfsstræti, just off Laugavegur where Q Bar once stood. The bar serves up Danish favourites, such as open-face smørrebrød sandwiches, Danish Tuborg beer and Akvavit schnapps. How to ask for a large beer in Danish: "Hej, jeg vil gerne have en stor øl, tak".

12 Krua Thai

Tryggvagötu 14

This is the best affordable Thai food on offer in Reykjavík. Rice is always fluffy, the spicy kick is just right and the spring rolls are always crispy cylinders of deliciousness. The servings are hearty too, so you're bound to leave satisfied. CF

13 Kaffismiðja Íslands

Kárástíg 1

Old fashioned charm is the style of Kaffismiðja, in everything from the decor to the coffee grinders. Off the beaten track, this popular coffee shop is a great spot to sit and read or have a chat with friends. The owners Ingbjörg and Sonja take great pride in the beans they use and the coffee is top notch. You can buy fresh grounds too, in case you just can't get enough. EF

14 Kolaportið

Tryggvagata 19

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

Coffee made with passion,
cakes made with love,
toasts made with
a toaster...



TÝSGATA 8 - 101 RVK

15 Sushibarinn

Laugavegur 2

Sushibarinn is reputedly the best bet for sushi in town since it opened in 2007. This little shop is the most authentic option for sushi in town, with the widest selection around. The price per piece ranges from around 140 ISK to 600 ISK, and they also have good choice of trays and set menus options. If you can't get a seat, you can also order from Kofi Tómasar next door and grab a seat there. EF

Café Loki

in front of Hallgrímskirkja



Enjoy some solid homemade Icelandic food

16 Á Næstu Grösum

Laugavegur 20B

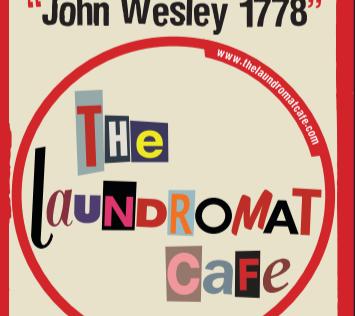
Á Næstu Grösum is an all vegetarian restaurant right in the city centre that features a friendly atmosphere and fair prices. There is always at least one vegan soup on offer and the daily special portions are big and always satisfying. There is even some organic wine on offer.

17 Handprjónasambandið

Skólavörðustígur 19

The Handknitting Association of Iceland's official store, Handprjónasambandið, sells wool products of uncompromising quality. The store features pullover sweaters, cardigans, mittens, touques and other wool accessories. They're also equipped to answer all sorts of wool-related questions.

aUNDROMAT
Cleanliness
is next to godliness
"John Wesley 1778"



18 Café d'Haiti

Geirsgötu 7b / Verbúð 2

The first time I entered this exotic little joint, meaning to buy myself a take-away espresso, I ended up with two kilos of freshly roasted coffee beans due to some language complications and way too much politeness. Since then I have enjoyed probably way-too-many wonderful cups of Haitian coffee, but they're always as nice, so the two kilos were definitely worth it. SKK

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Daily departures in April and May at 9:00 and 13:00.
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Viðey Island is a unique site that combines history, culture and nature. Weekend schedule on Saturdays and Sundays from October 1st to May 15th.

From Skarfabakki pier: 13:15 - 14:15 - 15:15
From Viðey Island: 13:30 - 14:30 - 15:30 - 16:30
Viðeyjarstofa Café is open from 13:30 to 16:00.



Elding Reykjavík Whale Watching
Tel: (+354) 555 3565
Online booking: www.elding.is



"We tried this place purely on the back of its excellent review on Tripadvisor and weren't disappointed."



CAFE HAITI by the Old Harbour
Geirsíða 7b, 101 Reykjavík
tel: 661 5621 / 588 8484
Opening hours: 8:00 – 23:00

QUALITY TIME IN THE HEART OF THE CITY

One of Reykjavík's finest, the chic 1919 Restaurant features top international and neo-Nordic cuisine. The trendy 1919 Lounge provides a variety of cocktails and the perfect atmosphere for you to relax in and enjoy timeless luxury.



Radisson Blu 1919 Hotel, Pósthússtræti 2, 101 Reykjavík, Tel: 599 1000

ART

GALLERIES & MUSEUMS IN MARCH & APRIL

COCKTAIL PLEASURES AND VISUAL STIMULATION

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

OPENINGS

ASÍ Art Museum

March 12

New Glass Sculptures by Brynhildur Þorgeirsdóttir

Runs until April 3

March 12

The Hard Drive of Happiness by Jón Henrysson

Runs until April 3

Bíó Paradís

March 12, 16:30

Icelandic Food & Fun Night

Screening of documentary Amazing Iceland, followed by Icelandic food tasting

Gallery Tukt

March 12

Exhibition of photographs and short films by students at Reykjavík's School of Visual Art.

Runs until March 25

Hafnarborg

March 13, 15:00

Video presentation of the Icelandic constitution performed musically

March 19

Permanent Moment

Sigtryggur Baldvinsson & Þorri Ólafsson display paintings of nature and landscapes

Runs until May 1

March 27, 15:00

Artist Talk with Sigtryggur Baldvinsson

March 19

Birgir Andréasson & Friends

Runs until May 1

Keilluhöllin

March 12, 20:00

Big Lebowski Fest, 2500 ISK

Kjarvalsstadir

March 11, 12:15

Collaboration Concert with Trio of Reykjavík and Reykjavík Art Museum

March 20, 20:00

Collaboration Concert with Elektra Ensemble and Reykjavík Art Museum

Kling & Bang

April 1

Sequences 2011

Exhibition by Hannes Lárusson

Runs until May 1

The National Gallery

March 15 - 27

Rock n' Roll & The Family Quintett by Curver Thorodssen

The National Theater

March 15, March 29 & April 26, 21:00

Soirées, 1200 ISK

Sláturnhúsið

21:00 Heru Ármanns Birthday Party



The Art of Death

Dialogues on Death

The National Gallery of Iceland,

Friðrikjavegur 7, runs until May 15

Free

Death. It is something we must all face someday, and yet we seldom want to think about. Magnús Pálsson's exhibit, 'Dialogues on Death' is meant to encourage viewers to face mortality with an open mind. The idea for the exhibit came when the artist participated in a joint project also called 'Dialogues on Death' in 1999. An exhibition of the same name opened in 2003 at Hafnarhús, and is now part of the collection at the National Gallery of Iceland. Viewers will find pictures and furniture dealing with the theme of death under x-ray lighting and medical fixtures. Headphones play a loop of people describing their last weeks of life, as interpreted by actors. While the installation may not be the most uplifting experience, it forces viewers to contemplate the ultimate fate that awaits us all. **SG**

Gerðuberg

Ormurinn Ógnarlangi (The Fearfully Long Worm)

Tales From Norse Mythology by Kristín Ragna Gunnarsdóttir

Runs until March 13

Hönnunarsafn

A selection of furniture designed by Gunnar Magnússon

Runs until May 29

Kling & Bang

A Learning Project

Project focusing on sensory experiments and intuitional learning

Runs until March 20

The Living Art Museum

Kjarvalsdeilin

A groupshow featuring the work of 14 artists from around the world

Runs until March 26

National Gallery of Iceland

Áfanger/Strides

Permanent exhibition of Icelandic modern painting at the turn of the 20th century

The National Museum

The Photographer Bárður Sigurðsson

Carved Chests & Coffers

Runs until August 31

Make Do & Mend

Repaired objects from the collections of the National Museum

Runs until June 30

The Nordic House

I Vesterveg

Nordic Contemporary Art

Runs until March 12

Reykjavík Art Museum

Ásmundarsafn

"I choose blossoming women..."

Woman as Symbol in the Art of Ásmundur Sveinsson

Runs until April 17

Thoughts In Forms

Informative recreation of Ásmundur Jónsson's art studio

Runs until April 17

Sleep Light

Lighting installation by Ráðhildur Ingadóttir

Runs until April 17

Hafnarhús

Wihout Destination

Various artists contemplate tourism in Iceland

Runs until April 10

Erró: Collage

Runs until August 28

Erró - Assemblage

an extension of Erró - Collage

Runs until April 10

Chain Reaction

Exhibition by Helgi Már Kristinsson

Runs until April 10

Kjarvalsstadir

New Acquisitions 2005-2010

Exhibition of some of the 800 new art acquisitions collected during the past five years

Runs until April 25

ART & MUSIC

IN MARCH & APRIL

16
Apr

17
Apr



Deerhunter Are Coming! Deerhunter Are Coming!

April 16 & 17

NASA & The Nordic House

6.995 ISK

For the first time ever, tickets are on sale for the Reykjavík Music Mess, an independent music festival that will take over NASA and the Nordic House on April 16 and 17. The fest will feature a slew of local bands (Mugison, kimono, Prinspól, Sin Fang, Skakkamanage and Reykjávik! have all been announced – with many more to come) along with some very special guests from abroad. Namely, Deerhunter.

Yes, the mighty Deerhunter, who lots of (alt. minded) folks claim made the best record of 2010 with 'Halcyon Digest' are set to play alongside some of Iceland's best and brightest at a two day music marathon (or 'mess', if you will). This is very exciting. Go ahead and prepare by playing the massive Deerhunter catalogue over and over, get your tickets and further info at www.reykjavikmusicmess.com and reacquaint yourself with some of the local acts performing (as well as the lovely Nive Nielsen from Greenland).

Did we mention we are sponsoring this event? How could we not? Goddamn Deerhunter! See y'all there! HSM

50 Years Of Icelandic Art At The Venice Biennale

Runs until April 25

Kjarval - Key Works

Runs until April 25

Venice Works

Workshop in conjunction with the exhibition 50 Years of Icelandic Art at the Venice Biennale

Runs until April 25

Skaftfell

Rhubaba Collective

Runs until March 14

Every Other Day In A Different Place

Main Gallery

Runs until May 1

Icelandic Academy and the Deiter Roth Academy exhibition

Runs until May 2

Sláthús Íð

700IS 2011

Experimental film and video festival from 19-25 March

Spark Design Space

The Secret Shop/Salakauppa

Finnish designers, Johan Olin and Aamu Song, founders of Company, open their secret shop.

Runs until March 15

Art | Venue finder

ART67

Laugavegur 67 | F6
Mon - Fri 12 - 18 / Sat 12 - 16

Artótek

Tryggvagata 15 | D2
Mon 10-21, Tue-Thu 10-19, Fri 11-19, Sat and Sun 13-17
www.sim.is/Index/Islenska/
Artótek

ASÍ Art Museum

Freyugata 41 | G4
Tue-Sun 13-17

Árbæjarsafn

Kistuhylur 4

The Culture House

Hverfisgata 15 | E4
Open daily 11-17

www.thjodmenning.is

Dwarf Gallery

Grundarstígur 21 | H6
Opening Hours: Fri and Sat 18-20

www.this.is/birta/dwarfgallery/
dwarfgallery.html

The Einar Jónsson

Eirksgata | G4

Tue-Sun 14-17

www.skulptur.is

Gallery Águst

Baldursgata 12 | F4

Wed-Sat 12-17

www.galleriagust.is

Gallery Fold

Rauðarárstígur 14-16 | G7

Mon-Fri 10-18 / Sat 11-16 /

Sun 14-16

www.myndlist.is

Gallery Kaolin

Ingólfssstræti 8 | E3

Gallery Kling & Bang

Hverfisgata 42 | E5

Tuhs-Sun from 14-18

this.is/klingogbang/

Gerðuberg Cultural Centre

Gerðuberg 3-5
Mon-Thu 11-17 / Wed 11-21 /
Thu-Fri 11-17 / Sat-Sun 13-16
www.gerduberg.is

Hitt Húsið

- Gallery Tukt
Pósthússtræti 3-5 | E3
www.hithusid.is

i8 Gallery

Tryggvagata 16 | D2
Tue-Fri 11-17 / Sat 13-17 and
by appointment. www.i8.is

Living Art Museum

Skúlagata 28 | F6
Wed, Fri-Sun 13-17 / Thu
13-22. www.lymosyndasafnreykjavikur.is

Reykjavík Maritime Museum

Grandagarður 8 | C3
Tryggvagata 16 | D2
Weekdays 12-19 / Sat-Sun
13-17 - www.lymosyndasafnreykjavikur.is

Reykjavík Museum of Photography

Tryggvagata 16 | D2
Weekdays 12-19 / Sat-Sun
13-17 - www.lymosyndasafnreykjavikur.is

Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum

Laugarnestangi 70

SÍM, The Association of Icelandic Artists

Frikirkjuvegur 7 | F3
Tue-Sun 11-17

www.listasafn.is

Skaftfell

Austurvégur 42
710 Seyðisfjörður
www.skaftfell.is

The National Museum

Suðurgata 14 | G1

Open daily 10-17

natmus.is

Sláthús Íð

Kaupvangi 7
700 Egilsstaðir

www.slaturhusið.is

Spark, Design Space

Klapparstíg 33 | E4

www.sparkdesignspace.com

Nútmólist Galleria

Skólavörðustígur 3a | F4

Restaurant Reykjavík

Vesturgata 2 | D2

Reykjavík 871+/-2

Aðalstræti 17 | D2

Open daily 10-17

Reykjavík Art Gallery

Skúlagata 28 | F6

Tuesday through Sunday 14-18

Reykjavík Art Museum

Open daily 10-16

www.listasafnreykjavikur.is

Ásmundur Sveinsson Sculpture Museum

Sigtún

Hafnarhús

Tryggvagata 17 | D2

Kjarvalsstadir

Flókagöt

17

Reykjavík Maritime Museum

Grandagarður 8 | C3

Tryggvagata 16 | D2

Weekdays 12-19 / Sat-Sun

13-17 - www.lymosyndasafnreykjavikur.is

Reykjavík Museum of Photography

Tryggvagata 16 | D2

Weekdays 12-19 / Sat-Sun

13-17 - www.lymosyndasafnreykjavikur.is

Sigurjón Ólafsson Museum

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REVIEWS

DELIGHTFUL PERSIAN, AND NOT SO MUCH

Here's To The Revolution!

With revolt sweeping across the Middle East and Northern Africa, I have been singing the praise of revolution as of late, and daydreaming of the plausibility that we next look east, borrow upon this rhetoric for our own domestic purpose and coalesce. Is there not a general discontent over the rising prices, corruption, and nepotism that plague our fair land? Or is it just me craving an authentic Middle Eastern meal after spending the dark month of Porri eating putrefied food? Whether it happens in the streets or in our kitchens, I am a fan of social change, even if it is merely a gastronomical one.

Variety is the spice of life. When I was told that Eldhrimnir was actually a Persian restaurant, I was delightfully surprised. In Norse mythology, Eldhrimnir is a magical cauldron used to prepare food for heroic warriors. I assumed from the name and the cauldron on the signage that this was just another hopeless soup kitchen serving upscale lunchtime dishwater to the remaining warriors of the Iceland's financial district. I was so distant from the truth. To find a restaurant without brown sauce in their repertoire is happiness; to discover an authentic Persian restaurant in Iceland is bliss. Are you reading this Útlendingastofnun? Diversity is a beautiful thing.

Located in the heart of Borgartún, an area not particularly known for its charm, my date and I opted to dine in. That, and having a baby last week also weighed in on our decision to get carry out. A soft melody from a Persian flute, dim candlelight, and familiar aromas of cinnamon and saffron greeted me as I entered the warm interior. I took my time announcing my arrival to admire the tactful decor of sculpture and painting, as well as sigh over experiencing this cuisine out of take away containers in a dining room-cum-nursery. If only for a moment, I wanted to bask in the tranquillity here. The dining room has a commanding view of Höfði, the harbour, and Mt. Esja while an upstairs lounge seems ideal for an after dinner aly n and tea.

With everything attentively packed, I rushed home.

Eldhrimnir
Borgartún 14

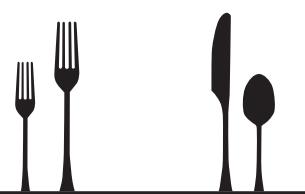
We begin with a Persian barley soup, toasted flatbread, and a yoghurt salad close in taste and texture to an Indian raita. The soup is simple and consistent: a thick blend of fresh vegetables and barley with subtle hints of coriander. The delight in eating this is how the textures pass through the mouth in an orderly fashion, from the first bit of cream that coats the back of the throat, to the bite of tender barley and al dente vegetables, finishing with the last bits of barley husk that scrape away the palette preparing the mouth for the next spoonful. This could easily turn into a meal, we move on to the boxes containing the main courses.

My date seems to have ordered a most impressive kebab, comparable in size to anatomy found in a Robert Mapplethorpe photograph. My container too bulges like a codpiece bound by multiple rubber bands. I could

Food & Drink Venue finder			
3 Frakkar	Balthazar	Icelandic Fish & Chips	Sjávarkjallarinn
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Bakkus	Deli	Geirsgata 1 B2	Habibi
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Ban Thai	Domo	Ingólfstorg D2	Café París
Laugavegur 130 G7	Pingholtsstræti 5 E3	Hornið	Austurstræti 8 E4
Basil & Lime	Einar Ben	Hafnarstræti 15 D3	Kaffiflágíð
Klapparstíg 38 E4	Veltusundi E2	Hornið	Grandagarður 10 A1
Babalú	Eldsmiðjan	Hafnarstræti 15 D3	Kofi Tómasar Frænda
Skólavörðustígur 22A G5	Bragagata 38A G4	Hótel Holt	Laugavegur 2 E4
Fiskmarkaðurinn	Amtmanstigur 1 E3	Tjarnargata 11	Krua Thai
Aðalstræti 12 D2	Hressó	Santa Maria	Tryggvagata 14 D2
Lystin	Austurstræti 20 E4	La Primavera	Laugavegur 22A F5
Laugavegur 73 F6	Mokka	Ráðhúskaffi E2	Ráðhúskaffi E2
Shalimar	Pósthússtræti 11 E3	Tívolí	Austurstræti 8 D2
Austurstræti 4 D2	Bergþórgat 21 G5	Vitabar	Templarásund 3 E2
Vitabar			Við Tjörnina
Bergþórgat 21 G5			Templarásund 3 E2

F  D

FOR YOUR MIND, BODY AND SOUL



only imagine the presentation had we dined at the restaurant. I unleash the restraints to discover half of a chicken wading in a pomegranate sauce. Wow. Chicken is usually the last thing I would order at a restaurant, but when given the choice of chicken or chicken, I will consume whatever Andhrímnir prepares in his magical cauldron. The Æsir never became bored with boar!

If consuming this meal in one sitting is the litmus test of godliness

or manhood, then I obviously fail. The pomegranate sauce complements the succulence of the bird to perfection. The tart marinade alone has me licking my lips, still. The guilty pleasure of eating this as take away is that I can savagely eat this bird by bare hand without a queer eye, plus there was no need to leave the house all weekend with so much left over. For three days we feasted, laughing at the snow while hand feeding each other fresh Persian

dates in bed.

Cheers to revolutions and pluralistic futures. We eagerly await dining in your halls at our first opportune.

 MADELEINE T
 HVALREKI



Take A Long Look In The Mirror, Saffran

Speaking of revolt...

Dear Saffran,

To vomit is to make less the depth of grief. Still ill from our evening last, I have but little ink I will to spill over this matter, for time is too precious to squander over a love unrequited. It is over. Sod off. I thought I should wait until after the two-year anniversary, but this needs to stop before it goes too far. Plus, what is there to celebrate? Your corporate growth? Your bottom line? Your multiple convenient to reach by car locations?

You started off as such a good thing. I was quick to introduce you to all of my friends and family. And almost overnight, you lost the plot. Yet, your belly grows still larger the more you aspire to be the Colonel Sanders of budget health food, complete with the branding of some sage Sikh mascot chanting slogans of health ironically printed on your plethora of post-consumer waste. I liked you better as a simple man, plus the beard and turban do not make you look any younger and suggest ignorance rather than wisdom. If you are going to capitalise on the Sikh faith, then perhaps you should first learn its guiding principles before burning karma you do not have.

We began with two starters and should have stopped there. The only taste to the barley otto was fermentation, as if sat around in bucket for a few weeks. Next up, the Colonel's six piece chicken box that contained the hummus. Quite a disappointment to find such a small portion in such a large package. Not a first. More paper waste than food. Two ramekins: one filled with hummus, the other a few canned olives. You were more generous with your sauce. The hummus too was off, bland at best. For future reference, vegetable oil is NOT an ingredient of hummus unless Bónus brand is your benchmark. Regular olive oil is only used a preservative top layer when large batches are stored over night or when being sold at open-air markets.

On to the main event, my Persian Naan-wich. I removed the soggy bandage to reveal a sweaty, beat up wrap that looks like it struggled to stand up through nine rounds. Like clutching at sand, the tortilla dissolves in my hands spilling its contents though my fingers. What a mess. The guts are revealed. Does paring cucumber with tomato really qualify this as Persian? And the meat: it looks and tastes like saltkjöt. I thought Tuesday was saltkjöt and bean day. All of your extra sauces could not mask this taste.

Saffran

Glæsibær / Dalvegur 4, Kópavogur



Then my date shows me the cold, soggy Kebab Naan-wich and its sad little shrivelled up limp twig of a reheated sausage drowned in sour cream. All of this food seemed like it was left over from the weekend, maybe longer. What happened to the Saffran I fell in love with? Where is all of this wholesome goodness that the mascot proclaims? And fresh? Fresh compared to what, the pig grade produce of Bónus?

Despite my hunger, I cannot bear another bite. This is not fit for man nor beast, to the bin it all goes. Luckily there is some three-day-old Persian kebab left over from Eldhrímnir in the refrigerator. Plain, cold, and three days old still knocks out anything I tasted all day.

Is it me? Is it the size and taste of the kebab on that tall dark Persian stranger at Borgartún that drove me away? No. It is you. You changed. Take a long look in the mirror. Better yet, maybe that wise Sikh can offer you some advice. See you later.

 MADELEINE T
 MADELEINE T

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Music | CD Reviews



BlazRoca

KópaCabana

f blaz.roca

Music to make you wish you were getting drunk tonight. Or sooner. In fact, I'm drunk right now.

BlazRoca's 21-track return to the Icelandic hip-hop scene is about as chaotic as you'd expect. It has about 15 tracks of booze-fuelled party anthems (there's a few vaguely political ramblings in there as well) dedicated to Kópavogur, Iceland's own white-trash, suburban, dystopian nightmare. Truth be told, there simply isn't a dull moment to be found. This album is an out-of-control road trip through one man's psychotropically destroyed cerebral cortex; it's Alice In Wonderland with rum, bouncers, horny 16-year-olds and autotune. Every single negative aspect of consciousness-altering activities in Iceland is summed up, hammed up and celebrated here, and you'd be a fool not to join in.

– SINDRI ELDON



Valdimar

Undraland

f valdimarband

Like slipping into a vat of warm butter.

A laid-back collection of organ-driven pop, this album doesn't do much of anything too interesting or remarkable, just kind of chilling in its own little universe of indolence. None of this would be that special if it weren't for the somewhat surprising fact that this album is actually pretty damn good. Not great, but, you know, pretty good. Check out 'Áfram', 'Yfirgefínn' and the title track for some cool shit going on, as well as track two, whose name is too long for this review.

– SINDRI ELDON



Melchior

1980

The songs don't stick but this re-issue is juicy

Melchior is one of those prototype renaissance artist groups, consisting of multi-instrument-wielding folks performing music as vehicle poetry. Or is it the other way around? Sounds like a multitude of current indie/alternative groups that frequent these pages, right? Thing is, the two albums re-issued on this double album were originally let loose on the public in 1980, hence the name.

The group doesn't fit into any particular genre or style. The music is all over the place: folky, proggy, and acoustic, there's a bit of rock, a bit of pop and tons of annoying-as-hell. Yes. After 38 songs from an aimless "sound world", saturated with playfulness and quirks, I turn into a bitter sailor that would love nothing more than to put these artsy-farts on a raggedy fishing vessel.

But '1980' is a pretty remarkable document of an era gone by, a glimpse into an art scene that was. It has an air of sincerity and innocence to it, emitting more Iceland than most of today's acts. The booklet looks hideous but it has lyrics and credits rudimentary for a release like this, but no liner notes. C'mon!

– BIRKIR FJALAR VIDARSSON



We Made God

It's Getting Colder

f wemadegod

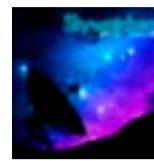
Doom and Despair with a small D

Look at the CD design for We Made God's second album, with its bleak monochromatic photography and rigid lettering. They're basically saying: "We're not fucking around here. This is music for serious depressives. We've even sampled the breakdown rant from 'Network'!" Also their post-kreppa, post-hardcore sound seems to have imbibed some Weightgain 2000 in the production stakes, with the guitars less compressed and more powerful, while the kick drum feels like getting punched in the face with a tank.

At its best, IGC provides a decent counterpoint to the major chord brigade, all the while being merely content to reside in its own desolate little world.

– BOB CLUNESS

Aural Leftovers: Computer Lust



There's no option but to bend over and take what's on offer from our digital overlords. Offerings such as 'Skywatchers' from

Yoda Remote, a rabid chipmunk duo who spent their school years making crazy 8-bit electronic tunes instead of learning algebra, or sniffing glue. Its hyperactive madness feels like having a couple of sped up Gameboys glued to your ears, while mainlining meth-laced Haribo sweets. I'm glad they didn't put a fucking donk on it though (+/-).



I need to relax and so I take in some soothing folktronica from **Norsu** and his debut EP 'Ammas Mountain'. I know nothing about this guy, but the lo-fi beats over soft chewy synths, folksy guitar and rising strings kind of makes me want to make a paper mache womb, fill it with jam and stay in there until the summertime (+/-).



Or I could dance to 'Heat Of The Nite' by Simian Mobile Justice. Oops, I mean **Jungle Fiction**. They have that filter house sound right down to the jello bass, smooth arpeggiator melodies, and a crazed 5-year old attacking the pitch shift wheel. I dare say though that with 'Transhuman', they've made something that sounds like Daft Punk doing the soundtrack to 'Once Upon A Time In The West' instead of 'Tron' (+/-).

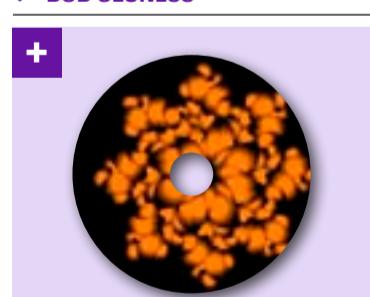


To show these kids how it's done, I turn to 'Tungata 1997 - 1998' from **Futuregrapher**. A 4-track rub and tug of total rinsin' ambient drum and bass, just like those old LTJ Bukem records that I owned in 1996. 'Cigarettes And Asthma' has a kinetic, throbbing bassline, while 'Folk (Hemmi & Valdi)' has a cocktail jazz sample I swear comes from Sting's 'Englishman in New York'. (+).

Links

Yoda Remote - <http://www.myspace.com/yodaremote>
Norsu - <http://www.myspace.com/lokirecordings>
Jungle fiction - <http://www.myspace.com/junglefiction>
Futuregrapher - <http://www.futuregrapher.com>

– BOB CLUNESS



Skúli Sverrisson

Sería II

f sklisverrisson

Lovely

When it doesn't get too stupid and sappy (like one of those unbearable French films with a season, colour or a place in France in the title), this is actually a nice little piece of string-laden ambience that drifts along quite innocently. It won't change your life, but it won't ruin it, either.

– SINDRI ELDON

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Remembering Biogen

Sigurbjörn Þorgrímsson was an electronic musician best known under the name of Biogen. To many he was simply known as Bjössi Biogen. A pivotal figure in Iceland's electronic music scene, whether it was during his early forays into electronic music as a member of the legendary hardcore techno band Ajax or through the many collaborations and side projects he was involved with, Biogen had a personal hand in shaping the last two decades of Icelandic music. His influence is felt by his contemporaries and will be gleaned by those who follow.

EARLY DAZE

In 1990, Sigurbjörn Þorgrímsson (Bjössi) and Þórhallur Skúlason, influenced by shifting currents in the UK dance scene, founded Ajax and thrust their lightningfast hardcore sound on an unsuspecting Iceland. With songs stuffed with muted hoover synths and whimsical (and sometimes awkward) samples, the Icelandic music community greeted them with suspicion. Local critics would take another five years to warm to the idea of electronic music in general.

In '92 under the moniker Ajax Project, they released the hardcore anthem 'Ruffige' in collaboration with a little-known graffiti artist called Goldie. It became the first hardcore record to be released in Iceland and helped usher in the rave culture locally along with prominent local DJs such as Agzilla and Grétar. In addition, following the moderate success of that first record, that graffiti artist they collaborated with would go on to release a few drum & bass records of his own.

In the words of Þórhallur: "We were dealing with music which wasn't going around in Iceland. I was DJ-ing this music in Frostaskjóli [a youth recreation centre in Reykjavík] and a common friend told me that Bjössi had a computer that could make music. It only took me and Bjössi a second to become friends. It was an adventure, playing around with all this equipment, we didn't know what we were doing and there was no one to guide us. We made the first songs on a Commodore and were asked to play at a [legendary] local club called Tunglið. So we went to the studio a few days before, but turned out to be some sort of Christian recording studio, and the guy who ran it didn't know what to do with us. The show went well but it was the same, to start with, people didn't know whether to dance or run away."



BIOGEN IS BORN

Bjössi first appeared under the name of Biogen on the 1994 compilation album 'Egg 94', and the name quickly stuck. As Biogen, he maintained a steady output over the next seventeen years, carving out a place for himself as a bit of an oddball visionary. His style ranged from ambient to jungle but always glitchy and chopped and undercut with echoes of '80s noise music.

At the end of the '90s, Bjössi was involved in forming the Thule Musik record label, arguably Iceland's most ambitious undertaking in electronic music publishing to this day. Thule became an indispensable hub for the electronic community and oversaw key releases for artists such as Exos, mún, Sana-sol and Thor, as well as Bjössi Biogen himself (such as his excellent double LP chillout album 'Eternalizer').

In 1998, Bjössi released the record 'B-sides The Code of B-haviour' on the Electrolux label to much acclaim, this time under the name 'Babel'.

At the start of a new decade, and with shifting tastes, the experimental electronic scene was lulled and would come to mark the end of Thule Musik. Bjössi would shift more of his attention to independent releases and released a string of home releases, the 2003 'Stab Stab / b.w.c.u.' ranking high among those.

ENTER THE WEIRD

As electronica came on the rise again in the late '00s, Bjössi continued where he left off with Thule by establishing the Weirdcore collective/concert series with Tanya Pollock in 2006, with the outspoken aim of showcasing strange or offbeat Icelandic electronica.

This is how Weirdcore collaborator Tanya remembers Biogen: "My first in-

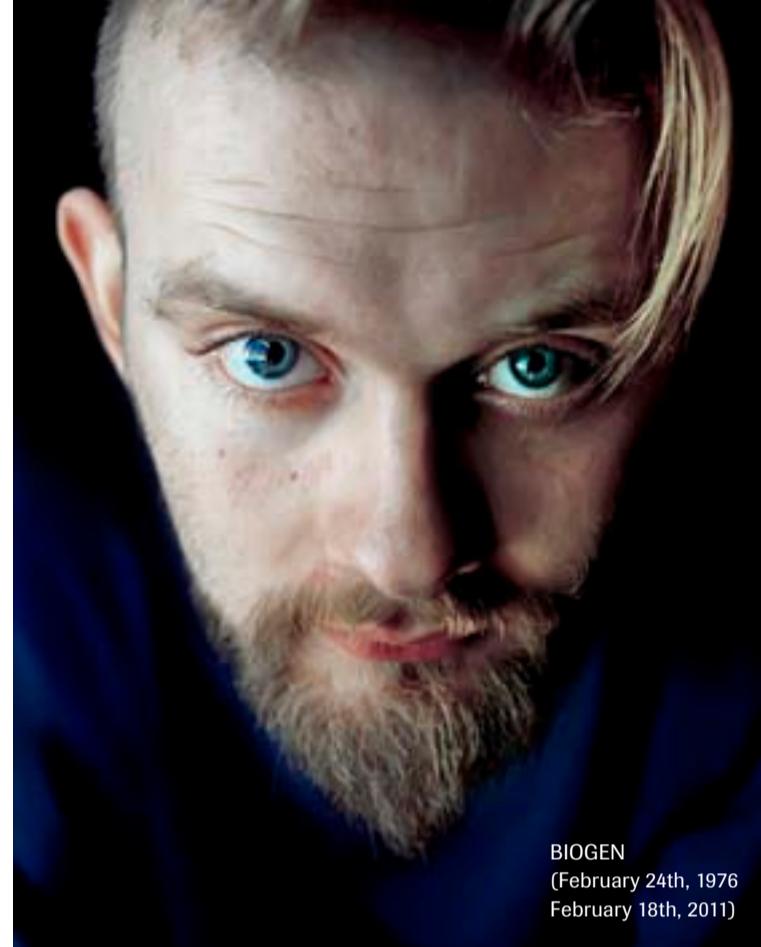
roduction to Bjössi Biogen was when I was living in the U.S. I was about thirteen years old and already experimenting with electronic music. My cousin Marlon sent me the Icerave cassette and it blew me away. That was the first time I heard Ajax I wished I had made their songs, so I sampled them and made my own melodies over their beats and made my first complete songs by copying them. They were my idols."

Bjössi Biogen moved from the hardcore rave to glitchy ambient (with a regular pit stop in jungle) in a trajectory that wasn't unlike Aphex Twin's (whom he has often been compared to). But as small and fragmented as the electronic scene may have been in the UK it was even more so in Iceland.

THE RESULTS SPEAK FOR THEM-SELVES

Bjössi fought to carve out a place for electronic music in his community and the results speak for themselves. Pioneers like him helped prepare the soil that bands like mún and Gus Gus grew out of, and directly influenced others. But two decades is a long time in music, let alone a compartment in constant flux, as electronica is bound to be. And as an early adopter, he took on the unenviable role of bridging the gap between two styles of electronic music, with little to moor the bridge on either end.

Yet Bjössi continued to pioneer and mutate electronic music his whole career and proved tireless in helping other musicians gain exposure and collaborating widely. One such collaborator was Pan Thorarensen, half of the duo Stereo Hypnosis: "The peak was the Extreme Chill festival we had in Snæfellsnes last year. We all got along so well. All the friends



BIOGEN
(February 24th, 1976
February 18th, 2011)

were back together to play for an entire weekend. Bjössi wouldn't stop talking about it for months afterwards, saying he had never had this much fun before. Biogen was an absolute trailblazer in Icelandic electronic music history and has influenced numerous artists, not just in his field but all across the music in Iceland. Losing such a good man is a great blow to me as a friend, and a loss to Icelandic music in general."

WHERE DOES THE VETERAN GO?

Another pioneer of weird electronica, Trish Keenan of Broadcast, passed away in January, a month earlier. The tragic loss of Keenan and Bjössi are timely reminders that electronic music is long past its adolescence. The style is now as old as rock 'n' roll was when punk came around.

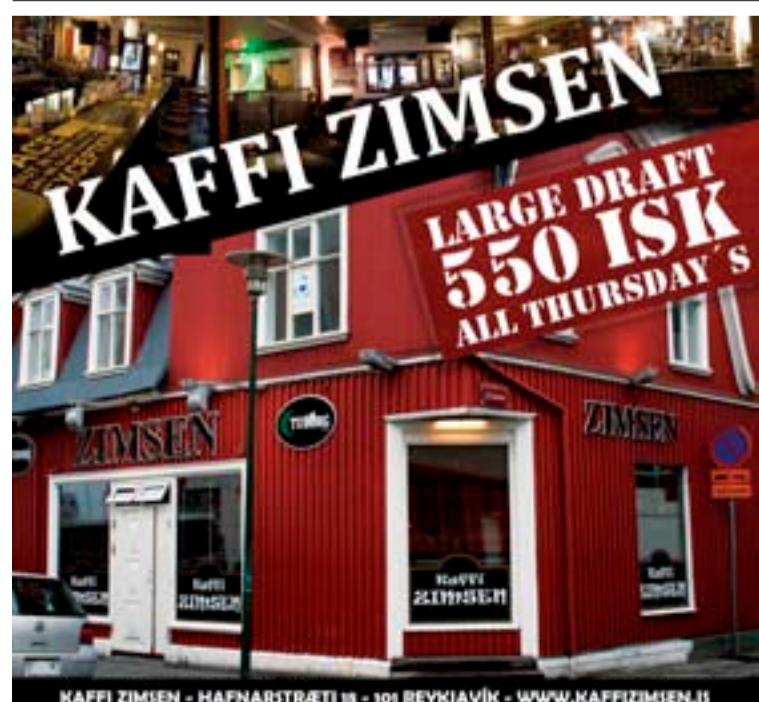
But where do those who choose to make electronic music for a living turn as they get older? What are the career prospects for a veteran in the Icelandic electronic music scene? Or the Icelandic music scene overall? The speed of change within electronic music has always been staggering and professional musicians are left fighting a constant

struggle for relevancy and placement. Bjössi never seemed interested in trying his luck abroad, instead focusing his efforts on building and maintaining the scene within Iceland, sometimes expressing frustration at his ambitions clashing against the size of the market. The dearth of venues and variety in Iceland can leave musicians open to isolation and fears of stagnation, but visionary Bjössi Biogen nonetheless soldiered on in his quest to build up and partake in a vibrant local electronic music scene.

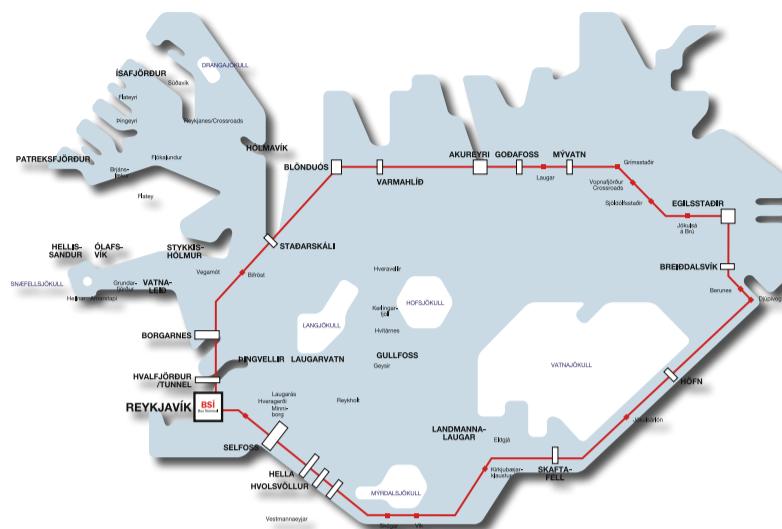
Now gone, Bjössi Biogen has thankfully blessed us with a treasure trove of music, which, like himself, was complex, delicate, playful, bizarre, sombre and sincere.

In the Ajax song 'Forget' the refrain commands: "Forget your name"—this may happen to us listeners as we get older, but we will make sure to remember Biogen. ♪

RAGNAR EGILSSON
EMMA SVENSSON



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Mapping Out ‘Overkill’

An interview with the MoMS boys

Words

Alda Kravec

Photography

Hörður Steinsson



Mundi (Guðmundur Hallgrímsson) and Morri (Friðrik Sigurðarson) started working together in 2006, when they met at the Iceland Academy of the Arts. They formed a group called MoM, which later became MoMS when their American classmate, Schuyler, joined them. After teaming up with Gelitin, a group of four Austrian artists, MoMS began travelling the world, and have since performed at the Venice Biennale, Torino's Artissima, London's Frieze Art Fair and New York's Deitch Projects.

MoMS is a versatile group and expresses itself in various ways, through sculpture and painting as well as performance art. As it happens, Mundi also works closely with his real mom. Together they run the Mundi fashion label and clothing boutique on Laugavegur. However, MoMS operates independently of Mundi's fashion line and, as the group explains, the acronym is somewhat accidental: "Everyone loves their mothers of course... but we could have just as well been called PoPS, if our names were Peter and Paul. Our fathers are also great."

Although MoMS' work is often a collective effort involving various friends and family, their most recent exhibition at Kling & Bang Gallery, 'Installation Penetration,' was largely the result of collaboration between Mundi, Morri, and Raggi (Ragnar Fjalar Lárusson). It focuses on a style of painting they call 'overkill.' We caught up with the group for an interview.

'Penetration' seems to have several components; the styrofoam statues, the pornographically reworked romance novel covers, the graffiti style canvases, and—

Mundi: The what?

Mundi: [laughing] Graffiti style? Morri: We just have graffiti elements there to make fun of them; we don't like graffiti that much, so we are making fun of it.

Mundi: We call it the overkill.

Ok, sorry, you have the overkill canvases, and then the videos and media section, but is there something that ties all these elements together?

Mundi and Morri: The overkill.

Mundi: Reworking every object.

And what's the difference between graffiti and overkill?

Mundi: We may use markers like in graffiti, but we use a lot of mixed materials, acrylic paint more than spray paint...

Morri: ...accidentally spilled water, stickers, or stuff I might find on the street.

Mundi: We don't have to be so hard on graffiti either. Of course, there is a connection, but that's not what our stuff is. Morri: It is partly a common drawing style that is familiar to our generation—I mean anyone born between 1970 and 1990—and partly our own style. It's a mixture, a soup, everything goes in it, graffiti as well. I tag MoMS in one picture.

Is there something you are trying to kill?

Mundi: White space.

Morri: Yes, white space and [the canon] of art history, that is, general thoughts about what art is. We don't like it.

What don't you like?

Mundi: Superficiality.

Is there any art movement in particular that you don't like?

Mundi: I'm really tired of minimalism... Every exhibition I go to is white space with small pieces of art spread around a giant room.

The exhibition seems to be concerned with process, especially the

overkill canvases, but what is the relationship between process and end result?

Mundi: It's not so concrete. We don't sit down and think 'now we're going to draw the end of the world.' We sometimes begin without discussing anything beforehand and then we end up with a picture, and the ideas either match or they don't match. Sometimes we discuss during the process, and decide to make something specific, 'this will be an end of the world drawing' or 'this will be a face or an alien.' The discussion may happen during the process but definitely not before. We don't do sketch work before starting.

In terms of aesthetics, those styrofoam statues do not seem to be appealing to any conventional sense of beauty, and it appears as if they were thrown together haphazardly. Do they represent a form of anti-art?

Mundi: That's a big part of what we are doing, throwing things together haphazardly, but that doesn't have to be a negative thing. When you work with styrofoam and hot wire, you don't have any second chances, the hot wire goes in and comes out, and there is a piece. It's trash material and it's supposed to be trashy... the paintings are also full of trash, it's just trash being piled on top of the paper, so much so that it starts looking beautiful in the end... I'm so tired of this concept of art that says everything has to contain an answer. You can draw one black line and as long as the answer and static behind it is good enough, then it's ok. But that's taking all the fun and beauty out of art and making it boring.

What role does irony play in your work?

Morri: It plays a big role, but sometimes people can misunderstand our inten-

tions. Sometimes there are swastikas or racism or personal shit—sometimes we draw a bad picture of a person that we might love or hate.

Mundi: That's where stream of consciousness comes into play—getting everything out of your system, and not in a bad way. Drawing a swastika doesn't mean we are actually Nazis; it just has to come out for some reason.

Morri: We'd like to believe that nothing is forbidden.

MoMS also expresses itself through, often violent, performance art, such as the 'piss and cum' performance, where you pissed and puked on each other while erecting a 10 metre high wooden structure, or the 'bar fight' you enacted during the resurrection of Sirkús in London. Is MoMS working out certain anger issues in these performances?

Morri: I don't think so. I mean with 'piss and cum,' it wasn't just a performance, we were also building a huge structure and we did drawings and graphic design. And at Frieze, we painted the front of Sirkús. I also played music. Also, we did a pizza place performance once, which was super friendly and family oriented and we made a balloon tower in Venice and part of the idea was just to get people to smile.

Part of us is performance, part of us is clothes, part of us is graphic design. But the work we have done up until now is mostly drawing and sculpture.

I understand there may be lots of other things going on, but now I'm asking about the violent aspect of your performances.

Mundi: I think what Friki [Morri] hates about performance is that it evokes superficiality in a lot of people's minds, but I don't think performance is necessarily superficial. Also, we have to agree, which is definitely a puzzle, be-

cause of course we don't have the same opinions on life. So agreeing definitely forms part of the identity of the final idea of our work. Regarding the violent aspect, we want to involve the whole spectrum, so we have happiness and violence.

And on the other side of the spectrum, is there a politics behind the more playful acts, such as the bicycle you hung over Laugavegur or the balloon worm you presented to Ragnar Kjartansson at the 2009 Venice Biennale ?

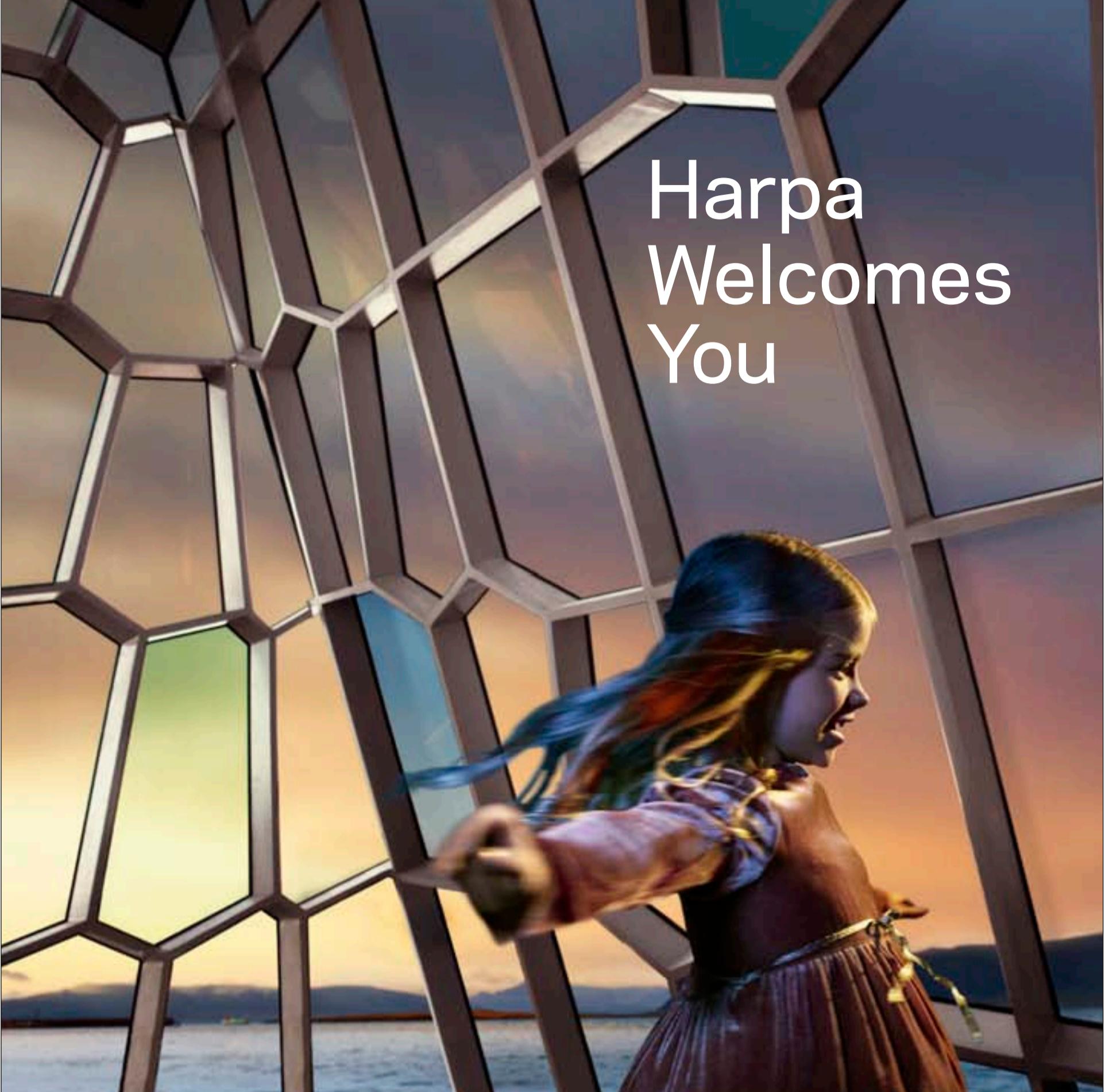
Morri: That is much more important, the fun rather than the violence. I link the bike and balloon tower to fantasy. The bike belonged to our friend Finnboogi. The tire had burst seven times and so it was put in a cellar over the winter. Then we decided to put it in the air, maybe because of E.T. In another way, it represents a challenge to try to make something beautiful.

Mundi: We like to start on things we cannot predict where they are going to lead us. But then you get yourself in the unenviable position of having to fill balloons forever.

Do you, Mundi, approach your fashion line in the same way as you approach visual and performance arts?

Yes, I would say my line in the fashion world is the same genre as MoMS' stuff in the visual arts world. I have not yet used any of the [MoMS] drawings for [clothing] prints, but we have been talking about introducing some of the MoMS stuff to the brand. I think the creative world is controlled in large part by fear, fear of being neglected and consequently, fear of doing something different. And this fear will make everything black and serious, and like we said, superficial and minimalist. ☺





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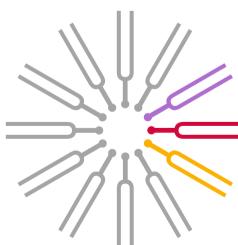
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Pucks In Motion

Is ice hockey in Iceland really such a crazy proposition?

An ironic lack of ice in Iceland let hockey long go unnoticed in the world of Icelandic sports. But thanks to a dedicated group of puck-handling enthusiasts, hockey is rapidly cross-checking its way into the national spotlight.

I admit it. Disney duped me. I saw D2: The Mighty Ducks in 1994 and walked away thinking that all Icelanders eat, sleep, and breathe hockey. So imagine my shock seventeen years later when I came to Reykjavík and learned that the locals weren't casually playing hockey while skating to work. Perhaps my expectations were unrealistic, but nevertheless Iceland stands as the lone Scandinavian country where hockey is not widely followed by the public. While football and handball dominate the sports headlines, hockey is relegated to a small blurb at the end of the local sports page and rarely televised.

Most Icelanders pay no attention to hockey, but that's not to say all. Small groups of hockey lovers have kept the sport alive for years. Organised clubs have been playing in Iceland since the 1940s. But in the last ten years, hockey in Iceland has gone from the hobby of a few to an emerging national pastime. Advancing any sport on a national level comes with challenges, and hockey is no exception. Iceland's hockey organization, Ice Hockey Iceland, is taking on the task and finding success.

ACHIEVING A HIGHER LEVEL OF PLAY

I spoke with Viðar Garðarsson, president of Ice Hockey Iceland, at the Laugardalur Sports Centre. Viðar, like most Icelanders, never played hockey as a child, nor was he an avid follower. That changed when his son Þórhallur started playing nearly seventeen years ago. Hockey has since become a major part of Viðar's life, as his son now plays for Skautafélag Reykjavíkur in the Icelandic league, and Viðar has gone from hockey dad to president of Ice Hockey Iceland. He now faces the challenges of improving the national team, expanding the domestic league, and promoting participation among young Icelanders.

Viðar acknowledges that hockey's standing in the Icelandic world of sports is far from where he

Words
[Steve Ganey](#)

Photography
[Jói Kjartans](#)

would like to see it, but that things are changing. "The hard fact of reality is that our playing level is nowhere close to expect to play top teams in US or Europe." Nonetheless, Team Iceland is steadily improving its level of play. For years, Iceland fluctuated between Division III and Division II within the International Ice Hockey Federation, though now the team feels comfortable in their position in Division II. They cemented their spot last year with a bronze medal finish in their division tournament.

Despite the promotion, Iceland still faces some hurdles. The level of play in the lower divisions can be inconsistent, as was evident when Iceland suffered a 20-0 smackdown at the hands of Lithuania in 2002, or when Iceland delivered a massacre of their own in a 50-0 win over Armenia in 2006. Though increasing the overall skill level is certainly crucial, advancing the state of hockey in general is a war fought on many fronts.

MORE RINKS MEAN MORE PARTICIPATION

The state of hockey in Iceland has been making long strides since the establishment of the country's first domestic league in 1991. The Icelandic hockey league is currently made up of three mens teams: Skautafélag Akureyrar, Skautafélag Reykjavíkur, and Björninn in Reykjavík, and two women's teams: Skautafélag Akureyrar and Björninn. Upon its establishment, the league had only two outdoor rinks, upon which the presence of ice, and therefore the ability to practice, was entirely weather-dependant.

All that changed in 1998, when Iceland built its first indoor skating rink. Since then, two additional indoor rinks have been added and the playing level in Iceland has progressed dramatically. However, more rinks are needed, Viðar says. As of now, hockey teams must compete with other sports for time on the ice, such as figure skating and curling, as well as public skating. So more ice means more



time to for hockey practice.

One community in Egilsstaðir has taken on that challenge in a grass roots initiative. A group of hockey enthusiasts has come together to build their own rink with a plastic roof to shelter it from the rain and wind. With the new roof, Egilsstaðir is giving Iceland its newest hockey club, where Viðar is jetting off for the inauguration after our interview.

Getting more youngsters to take up the sport, or "widening the base" as Viðar puts it, is another important role in expansion efforts. From children to senior players, there are around 600 hockey players in Iceland, and from those you might get one or two who grow up to be truly gifted stars. Viðar compares Iceland's hockey situation to that of handball, in which the national team ranks a remarkable 13th in the world. "If we had a pool of six or seven thousand kids, [as in handball] we would be playing in top ten!" he laughs. "And that is the long term goal."

REACHING OUT TO THE PUBLIC

Viðar is also reaching out to the media, and in this aspect hockey has seen some surprising success. Local newspaper Morgunblaðið now includes reports on Icelandic league games, where there was nothing only four years ago. The most resounding indicator came last year when the state television station televised the Icelandic league's championship game, unsure of how the ratings would play out. Viðar explains his amazement that the game scored 22 percent of the viewership, beating the top games in the English Premier League. "It was unbelievable! And even the TV station did not believe its own eyes!"

The strength of hockey's emerging fan base can be seen in the consistent figures of live attendance. At most league games Viðar estimates between one hundred-fifty and three hundred

spectators. Compare that to handball, which sees around twenty or thirty, and hockey seems to be really taking off. That dedication no doubt led to Iceland being chosen as host to the 2011 Women's World Hockey Division IV Championship. As the spotlight begins to shine more and more on hockey, the media and the public are taking notice.

MOVING ON UP

The World Championship tournament (under 18, Division III) in Mexico City begins March 13, and Iceland's Young Men's National Team is on its way there. The winner of the tournament will move up to Division II. To do that, Team Iceland will have to defeat Israel, Ireland, South Africa, and Mexico. This tournament is especially important for Iceland, as they have recently struggled to secure their spot in Division II. They have made it there twice, but each time they have ended a season in last place, causing them to fall back into Div. III, as was the case last year. But Viðar thinks their chances are good. "We are always on the edge of Division II and Division III, so we have a definite possibility."

With significant gains in facilities, participation, and media attention, it seems hockey's continuing progress is inevitable. Viðar attributes the success so far primarily to the group of dedicated volunteers within Ice Hockey Iceland who give immeasurable amounts of time and effort for the betterment of the sport.

So where does the president of Ice Hockey Iceland see his programme in five years? "In the elevator, between first and second division." He goes on to explain that he has faith in hockey because the sport seems to fit well with the mentality of Icelanders. "We like the speed. We like the action. We like the sport." With all the success Icelandic hockey has seen in the last few years, it appears this elevator is only going up. ☺



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Puppy Love

A scenic tour in a dog-drawn cart down an old country road

Words

Steve Ganey

Photography

Photography
Alisa Kalyanova

The dogs quickly found their pace, and before long they were performing like a well-oiled machine, their breaths puffing steam and sounding like a train engine

Dog-powered vehicles might not be the most efficient way to travel, but it's probably the cutest. For dog-lovers, an Icelandic dog-sledding tour is a dream come true. And if you're not into dogs, it's still a thrill (at least until they invent cat-sledding). But what do you do when there's no snow? You slap a couple wheels on that sled, call it a 'dog trolley', and hit the road.

I got picked up at my hostel around 11:00. The drive from Reykjavík took an hour, and before long we were heading out among the Icelandic farm-lands. We arrived at a farm near the town of Selfoss to find two dog trolleys waiting, with teams of eight and ten dogs already strapped in. They were big, beautiful Greenlandic dogs, some a flawless snow white, others totally black, and most were mix of brown and grey.

Some were on their feet tugging at the ropes, bursting with excitement to meet us, while others slept soundly, completely apathetic to our arrival. One particularly huge dog seemed to be growling at the world, like a hormonal teenager who just rolled out of bed. Sigurður and his family welcomed us warmly, and told us to feel free to pet the dogs. "It's the best way to tip them," he said.

Before we hopped on the trolley, I walked over to the dogs left in their cages (both clean and spacious, for any worry-warts out there). They barked and stuck their paws through the cages as if beckoning me over, so of course I couldn't resist letting the pups give my cheek a sniff and a lick. Sigurður explained that all the dogs are taken out and trained daily, and when not working, sled dogs



sleep most of the time to conserve their energy. They don't bother with frivolous dog-pursuits like chasing cars or digging up the yard.

A DOG DAY AFTERNOON

A DOG DAY AFTERNOON
The last members of our tour group arrived, and we climbed onto the trolleys, which were little more than a metal frame with wheels and some seats, and in front a steering wheel and a handbrake. As we got on the trolleys, the dogs sprang to life. They barked and jumped in their harnesses. Sigurður gave a loud "Yah!" and pulled the handbrake, and the trolley immediately took off.

We left the farm and headed down a flat stretch of gravel road. The dogs quickly found their pace, and before long they were performing like a well-oiled machine, their breaths puffing steam and

urður shared some of his knowledge, and let me tell you, this man knows his dogs! He knew each one by name, and knew their distinctive personalities. Sigurður explained, "these dogs are all very different. And just like people, sometimes they just wake up in a bad mood and don't feel like doing anything."

GETTING SOME LIGHT EXERCISE

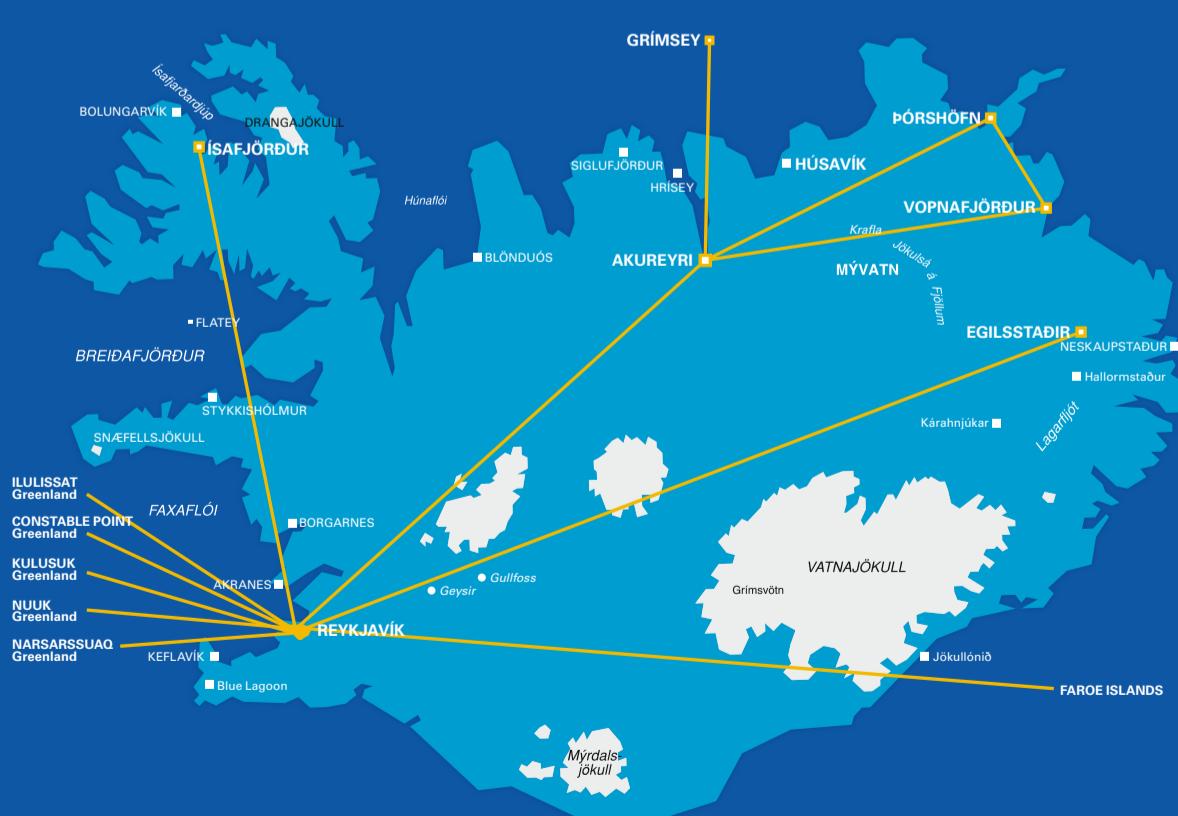
GETTING SOME LIGHT EXERCISE
Lucky for any dog trolley operators, though, the dogs will run even when they don't feel like it. They'll just be grumpy and growl a lot, as was the case for Apollo, the huge dog that was growling when we met. We travelled for about thirty minutes down the road. Even though that is a very light exercise for these dogs, they still vigorously lapped up water from a nearby ditch and painted with their front paws on the ground. Then we had to

circle with the trolleys, and soon we were heading back toward the farm.

"Anybody want to drive?" Sigurður asked. I didn't need to think twice. Soon I was at the wheel, yelling "Yah!" and feeling pretty pleased with myself. We made it back to the farm, the trip taking about an hour. Everyone was smiling and cuddling the dogs on a job well done. Even grumpy old Apollo gave me a nudge with his nose.

After we said our goodbyes to Sigurður and his dogs, we piled back into the van and headed over to the public pool at Hveragerði. After a day of driving and getting towed around by dogs, swimming a few laps and hanging out in the hot tub was the perfect way to relax and unwind, and reflect on the day. Through it all, I came to one conclusion: I really miss my dog back home! 🐶

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The Iceland Airwaves Of Fashion

Reykjavík Fashion Festival keeps coming on strong



Words

Anna Margrét Björnsson

Photography

Jói Kjartans

Reykjavík's first real fashion festival took place in March 2010, a timely event coinciding with the current surge in Icelandic design. The festival proved an ample platform for fresh young talent, drawing considerable attention from the international press. But is the Reykjavík Fashion Festival set to become the 'Iceland Airwaves of fashion'? We spoke to one of its founders, Ásta Kristjánsdóttir, to find out more.

WHY DID YOU FOUND RFF LAST YEAR?

Following Iceland's economic collapse there seemed to be a great awakening in the design field. Designers got together and formed a unified whole that started discussing cooperation rather than each doing their own little thing in their own little corners. We found strength in this union, and the festival proves how strongly we stand behind one another.

THE FIRST FESTIVAL WAS A SUCCESS—HOW DIFFERENT IS THIS SECOND ONE GOING TO BE?

RFF# 2 is similar to RFF# 1, with the addition of a design fair that we're hosting this year that will take place throughout the festival weekend. On Saturday and Sunday we'll see a designers' 'Pop-up market', where local designers throw a clearance sale with up to 70% discount. It will be a venue to make exciting bargains, chat with designers, shop for new design samples and flick through older collections. At the market we'll also be hosting cosmetic presentations and lots more. The Pop-up market will take place from noon 'til six at Laugavegur 91 on April 2-3, and everyone is welcome. Another thing that's a little different this year is our emphasis on inviting international press to the festival. Over fifty journalists are booked to attend the shows, with representatives from magazines like Dazed and Confused and Vogue. We obviously hope to receive favourable reviews this year, both for the designers and the festival as a whole. The festival won't be that much different in essence, except in being much bigger with a lot more media attention.

HOW DID YOU SELECT THE DESIGNERS TAKING PART IN THE FESTIVAL?

Each year the RFF board selects seven individuals to form an artistic council that in turn select designers that they feel should take part in the festival. This year the council consists of Una Kristjánsdóttir, the designer of Royal Extreme, Hanna from Hanna Design, Eygló Margrét Lárusdóttir from Eygló, Stefán Svan, store director and stylist, Ellen Loftsdóttir, stylist, Anna Clausen, stylist and Katrín Alda from Kalda design.

NEWS HERALDS THAT ICELANDIC FINANCIAL MOGUL JÓN ÓLAFSSON HAS INVESTED IN THE FESTIVAL THIS YEAR?

Yes, Jón is an investor in the festival. He believes that the Icelandic fashion scene has a bright future and that Icelandic fashion will become one of Iceland's greatest exports in ten years time. He has very good connections abroad that have proved useful to RFF. Jón, for example, owns the company Glacier Water, which is used for all the Christian Dior cosmetics.

DO YOU FEEL THAT RFF PLAYED A PART IN HELPING MAJOR ICELANDIC LABELS IN TAKING OFF THIS YEAR?

I'm certain of it. RFF helped to play a big part in launching designers last year and will do so again this year. Royal Extreme was invited to do a show at New

York Fashion week last year and Sonja Bent got invited to do sales shows free of charge. Most of the designers taking part last year received good reviews in well known international publications. Andersen&Lauth were contacted by ASOS, Britain's largest web store and Kalda were offered a deal with Top Shop in Britain. It will be exciting to see where RFF takes young Icelandic designers to this year round.

RECENTLY IT SEEMS ICELANDIC DESIGNERS ARE MUCH MORE CONFIDENT, LAUNCHING THEMSELVES INTO PRODUCTION. WHAT'S DIFFERENT NOW?

Fashion design is a young field in Iceland and only a few years ago people thought that it entailed a couple of old ladies knitting gloves somewhere in the suburbs. Now people understand that design is a huge business worldwide. RFF is an important festival for this industry so that people open their eyes to all the exciting things going on in the field in Iceland.

Labels to watch out for this year:

ÝR

Fabulous rock chick pieces from newly graduated Ýr Þrástardóttir that seem to draw inspiration from everything from Bowie to techno. Fitted silk shoulder-padded patchwork jackets, slim velvet trousers and slinky sexy playsuits and dresses.

Royal Extreme

Last year's hit were Una Kristjánsdóttir sumptuous creations that combined medieval regalness with a funky modern twist. Una's strengths lie in the details: tassels, fringing, embroidery and a rich colour palette and it will be exciting to see what she comes up with this time round.

Kron by KronKron

A firm favourite with Iceland's young and pretty hipsters, this new collection of candy coloured shoes, dresses and tights is set to become spring's big thing. Even Tavi, the Style Rookie, has been spotted wearing Kron by KronKron's rainbow hued legwear.

Kalda

A cooler than thou collection for urban women that like their clothes original, yet wearable. Stunning kimono-like sheath dresses, gothic chiffon columns and bondage-inspired sixties shifts. Yummy.

Creative Consumerism And The Fashion Blogger's Holy Grail

Hola lovers,

You might not know me, but you should (if you are a foreign national visiting the country; I forgive you, but if you are a native Icelander you have no excuse)

I am the most prominent fashion blogger Iceland has reared, and I blog mainly in Icelandic (which is the only plausible reason why you tourists might not have heard of me). And I assure you, being Iceland's leading fashion blogger is no small feat, as Iceland—having among the highest literacy rates in the world and a genetic flair for fashion—probably also has the most fashion bloggers per capita in the world.

I blog on Iceland's most fashionable website, www.tiskublogg.blogspot.com, and when the Grapevine asked me to write a piece for its DesignMarch issue I immediately agreed.

As you probably already know if you are reading this, Iceland is the most creative country in the world. We are renowned for our creative musicians, our creative artists, our creative naming of volcanoes and our creative banking. And we Icelandic fashion bloggers (being Icelandic) are a creative lot as well, though we choose to channel our creativity through unconventional channels. Unconventional, because we don't create anything as mundane as tangible objects. Our creations are abstract and transcendent, rather than substantive, and therefore everlasting.

We write about things we want to buy and demonstrate in a graphic manner how we would use them in creative ways together with other things that we want to buy. This could include suggesting a man's shirt be worn a woman's skirt, using faux-bacon strips as a bandanna, or perhaps using suspenders as a brassiere.

The most fashionable version of this form of creativity is undoubtedly posting pictures of things that you really want to buy, but will probably never be able to afford in your life, and informing your readers how you would use the thing with other things you desperately want but will never afford.

Because it is the fashion blogger's Holy Grail to covet things that are simultaneously attainable (because they are for sale) and unattainable (because no ordinary person can afford them) and therefore ethereal.

This form of creativity popular with fashion bloggers around the world is what I call creative consumerism, and it will be the next big thing.

xoxo

-h

[This article was translated into English by Google Translate.]

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A FOREIGNER'S GUIDE TO THE CONFUSING WORLD OF ICELANDIC CELEBRITIES

While America is awash in third generation entitlement celebrity and other fruit of Satan's loins and the UK drags fame-starved Urukhais out of the Sing-Star mud to sate the gossip beasts, Iceland is content to contend with a different brood of idiots.

Most celebrities in Iceland are the kind of pointless fame whores who crave the spotlight like they need it for photosynthesis. But a good third of the bunch will be unwitting balls in a nationwide scrotum-adjustment.

Here's a quick rundown of the latest celebrities in Iceland and how they came to be so excellently important.

JÓN STÓRI



Jón Stóri is a sane, sober and not-at-all violent man who happens to sometimes assist people in tracking down stubborn debtors [please don't kill me, Jón]. He landed in the spotlight following a couple of high-profile arrests. One involved a SWAT team invading his house after he was allegedly mistakenly seen brandishing a gun on his lawn. He turned to the media to complain about unjust profiling looking like a tweaking fridge that had been beaten with a mallet. A few months later he was taken into questioning over what was originally thought to be a racial dispute but turned out to be simple, run-of-the-mill violence. He turned to the media again to complain about this incessant profiling looking like a shaved grizzly bear running on mayhem-fumes.

He has now done countless TV and radio interviews and been the subject of a recent book. He is always unusually candid about his past and current activities and openly admits to it being fuelled by insecurity.

He was not available for comment as he was busy assisting us in collecting a debt from ourselves.

Points of reference:

Chopper Read, Charlie Bronson, lov able scoundrels, sizeable cannibals.

VALA GRAND



Vala is a post-op M2F transgender person of Asian descent. She may not be the first person to have that surgery done in Iceland but is at least the second transperson to become a media personality, with Anna Kristjánsdóttir being the first. But whereas Anna Kristjánsdóttir is a highly trained mechanic and prolific political blogger, Vala is armed with a camera and an attention barrel that needs filling. In 21st century Iceland, that means Vala is a clear winner.

Personality-wise, think valley-girl with a head injury. But that just amounts to Paris Hilton so that's not particularly exciting. The true star of the show is Vala's father, a massively endearing old-school Icelander, who shuffles around, issuing compliments to Vala in a baritone grumble while she struts her stuff and tries to meet other celebrities. I don't know his back story and I don't want to know but I imagine him as a tipsy former sailor that's been Twilight Zoned into a

bad French farce and now he can't seem to find an exit without running into a confused maid shouting her head off.

Thanks to her father we know the value of quietly going along with the insanity of videotaping your newfound daughter discussing her surgery in stomach turning detail.

Thanks to Vala, the word 'stafur' ("cane") will feed the nightmares of generations to come.

Points of reference:

David Cronenberg, Todd Solondz, purse dogs.

GILLZENEGGER AKA GILLZ AKA STÖRE AKA OL' DIRTY BASTARD



Iceland recently passed a law barring persons under the age of eighteen from tanning salons. Gillz is a large, vain tramp stamp on the national soul who's only two talking points are a) Get tan! and b) Get beefed up! As the under 18s are his core audience, this might jeopardize Gillz's future.

Gillz' climb from humble chauvinist blogger to the top of the celebrity shit-pile has been an amazing thing to behold. Using nothing but his upper-body strength and his ability to come up with super clever words for the lady bits, he was able to build an empire that included a television series, bestselling books, countless ads and walk-ons and more interviews than you can shake a stafur at.

His books contain tips on everything from pubic-grooming to pick-up lines

and give an excellent perspective on the much-vaunted bibliophilia of Icelanders.

Having come this far, I guess a measly tanning law is unlikely to quell the meteoric rise of this self-loving, self-appointed, self-help guru.

Points of reference:

Hilariously muscle-bound, orange and considers himself a comedian—clearly Carrot Top.

TOBBA MARÍNÓS



When Gillzenegger is busy at home in his skinsuit, listening to 'Goodbye Horses' and working through his issues with the female anatomy, he'll sometimes send out a sentient garden gnome with a frighteningly wide glabella called Tobba Marínós.

Tobba is a dating advice blogger and gossip scribbler who thrust her way into the limelight sometime last year. Now best known as the author of some Carrie Bradshaw-esque monstrosity and an upcoming TV-series based on said crime against humanity (much better proof that God hates this country than that volcano aerial view that looked like Satan). As the female version of Gillz, you would think she would try to counteract his bare-assed misogyny, but instead she gangs up with Gillz in a pincer movement on sanity—a kind of lobotomized Robin to his Down's syndrome Batman.

Points of reference:

Tracy Cox, Critters, Critters 2, Critters 3, Critters 4.

ÁSDÍS RÁN



If Vala Grand is a repurposed vintage car that has been sent to the drag races with a mint V8 engine and a new chassis, Ásdís is more of a Honda Civic with expensive subwoofers and an oversized spoiler cruising for susceptible teenagers.

Playboy [Bulgaria] model, product spokesperson and exploiter of glacial analogies coming to a soft-drink event in an Eastern-European city near you. She has blossomed from a footballer's wife traipsing around in her underwear to building a career as a model and launching her own cosmetic line... while traipsing around in her underwear. She has sometimes dressed that up as female empowerment.

She might not make a very convincing feminist but Ásdís has her bright sides—her tireless self-promotion and drive (not to mention tread!) is quite endearing and she's not without a sense of humour about the whole thing. A kind person could say she is a miniature Jayne Mansfield. An unkind person would say that Ásdís Rán is the president-in-chief and sole member of the Advocates For the Amazingly Majestic Woman and Honestly Oawesome Ásdís Rán (also known as A.F.A.M.W.H.O.A.R.).

Points of reference:

Jayne Mansfield driving a Honda Civic.

RAGNAR EGILSSON

LÓA HJÁLMTRYSDÓTTIR

Poetry | Eiríkur Örn Norðdahl

On The Urgent Necessity Of Banning Poets



Plato, in *The Republic*, wished to ban all poets. He felt their work was neither ethical, philosophical nor pragmatic—that poetry kindled undesired emotions, wreaked havoc upon true knowledge and was furthermore useless. What Plato failed to see (and I realise this critique may be coming a bit late in the game) is that kindling undesired emotions (like fear, sorrow, anger etc.—nevermind lust!) is not only cathartic but often a hearts-and-mind-altering experience which puts the reader into direct emotional contact with a broader array of humanity than otherwise possible, it literally helps to foster and engage our empathy, our feeling for common humanity; while I can think of nothing more useful to society than bashing the arrogance of true knowledge, which is

never more than socially approved ideology designed to propagate the status quo (and thus keeping the fat cats fat).

The problem, though, is that poetry really doesn't do much of this anymore. The undesired emotions poets once stirred have long since lost their symbolic importance, become nothing but weak floral imagery stripped of its petals, as likely to rouse a spirit of lust or revolution as a bare ankle in public (incidentally "bare ankle" is the least Googled concept in the history of the internet). Its euphemising is mundane, its philosophy self-evident and its posturing literally intolerably obnoxious.

Added to this is that poets lost most of their desire to shock and awe ages ago—and perhaps lost the knack for it as well. As poets kept breaking more and more aesthetic rules—abandoning

rhyme and rhythm, euphemizing about modern mundanity instead of God and Country etc.—they unknowingly built a tradition of constantly excusing themselves and religiously bowing down in (pseudo) humility and claiming themselves unworthy of anything ranging from their own talent to the presence of tradition, readers, other writers, whatever you threw at them (if you discount the regular generic rant of sic transit gloria mundi, a mandatory behaviour without which poets become outcasts from award-winning cocktail parties—do you now understand why I've been writing for the Grapevine all this time? Without this column I would have to buy my own booze).

The people once known to be carriers of dangerous ideas gradually became apologists for their art, their output and their own existence, incapable of saying anything important, victims not only of a constantly stronger and more demanding social fabric but caught up in an endless circle of bickering between the stupidly incorrect and the morally austere; modernity having forced intellectual revolutionaries to become Victorians in sexual matters, censors in ethical matters and bigots towards the (seemingly) less educated (The 'oh, she conjugated a verb in the wrong way, I wish somebody'd rip her titties off' sort of view on life). None of which is anywhere near dangerous enough to warrant attention.

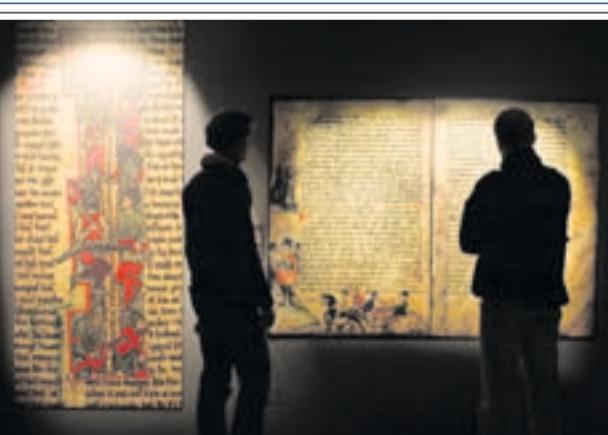
And when Icelandic artists engage in the political (mostly because it's a post-crisis fad) it's mainly to relegate 19th century ideas about nature and class—that mountains are beautiful and

Icelanders've all been equal all along (well fuck you very much)—if not downright to promote their own populistic disavowal of the political, as rampantly stupid now as when the Führer started the trend almost a century ago.

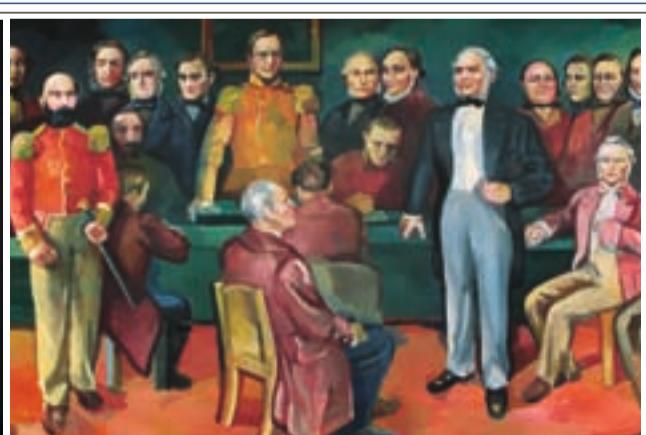
Plato, as I said, wished to ban poets from the Republic, for emotionally and philosophically undermining the state and thus being useless to its existence. I, on the other hand, would argue that precisely because poets do NOT undermine the state—emotionally, philosophically, politically, epistemologically, sociophilosophically etc.—they certainly are becoming useless enough to warrant their total excommunication, not only from the best of cocktail parties, but from the Republic itself.



ICELAND :: FILM – Berlin – Copenhagen – Reykjavík
Icelandic Filmmaking 1904-2008



MEDIEVAL MANUSCRIPTS – EDDAS AND SAGAS
The Ancient Vellums on Display



CHILD OF HOPE – Youth and Jón Sigurðsson
Tribute to the leader of the Independence Movement



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PAGE 12

Most of what's made in the name of art isn't art, it's crap. And most design is crap, most music is crap, most business theory is crap. But there are people in each field that possess creative souls, they are all risk takers, they are all collectors, they all have that magic.

Professor Goddur teaches Siggi Eggertsson a thing or two.

PAGE 6

As economic Nobel laureate Robert Mundell pointed out in a recent interview, there are several wealthy individuals who could easily derail the ISK if they so fancied, via capital flight.

YIKES!

PAGE 34

Gillz' climb from humble chauvinist blogger to the top of the celebrity shit-pile has been an amazing thing to behold.

Yes, we're doing articles on him now.

PAGE 8

Imagining Master Yoda on my shoulders, I simply closed my eyes and pictured the box floating, and sure enough, it did. Go back and read that sentence again and try to convince me it's not awesome. I'm in the phonebook.

-Grapevine gets a taste of mind control, really, really likes it.

PAGE 10

So here we are, basically at square one, with a president who makes his own rules as he goes along and an outdated, muddled constitution."

Egill Helgason recites the Saga of Ólafur Ragnar Grímsson

PAGE 32

As you probably already know if you are reading this, Iceland is the most creative country in the world. We are renowned for our creative musicians, our creative artists, our creative naming of volcanoes and our creative banking.

Fashion blogger h. makes quite the entrance



Tax returns are due by next March 23th

You can find a simplified tax return for individuals in several languages at www.rsk.is/international



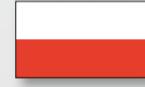
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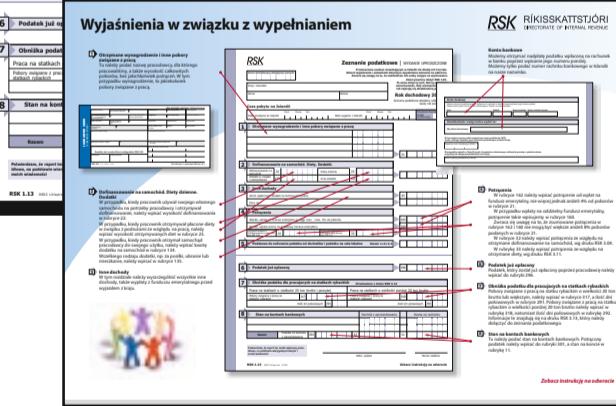
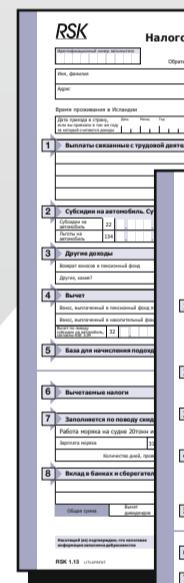
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2 Car allowance, per diem payments, fringe benefits		22 Per diem payments 23 Other benefits 135	
3 Other income		43 Retirement pension fund premiums Other, what?	
4 Deductions		Deductible premiums to a pension fund (4% max) Additional payments to a private pension fund (4% max) Selection of relevant deduction for pension fund 33 180 180	
5 Tax base for income taxes		Sum of 1+2+3+4	
6 Taxes withheld at source		296	
7 Calculation of seaman's credit According to RSK 3.13			
Seaman on boats 20 tons brutto or over Seaman on boats under 20 tons brutto Seaman's salary 317 Days at sea 291 Seaman's salary 318 Days at sea 292			
Balance in savings and bank accounts Interest income Status			
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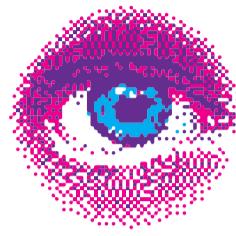
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HönnunarMars
DesignMarch
24.-27.03.2011



DESIGNMARCH SPECIAL | The Reykjavík Grapevine Product Awards | Interviews |

Full schedule inside |

www.grapevine.is



FRAGRANCE by ANDREA MAACK

We wanted to do something special for this year's DesignMarch, seeing as we had so much fun at the last edition. We thought: we can write lots of articles and publish a special pull-out to go along with DesignMarch, but then again we write lots of articles and publish special pull-outs all the time. Something more was in order, and that something more came to us one day as we were strolling through the design shops of 101 Reykjavík.

Cont. on page 6



Architecture | Breiðholt

Improving Life In Suburbia

Six architects with a fantastic vision for Breiðholt

Words
Anna Andersen

Illustrations
Skyggni Frábært

Two years ago a fresh cohort of architects returned to Iceland from their studies in Denmark. The six of them wanted to do something together and decided to unite under the name 'Skyggni Frábært' ('Visibility Fantastic').

"It all started on Culture Night 2009. Everything really sprouted out from there. That project led to the next project, which led to the next one after that," Ástríður Magnúsdóttir recalls. She is one of the six architects behind Skyggni Frábært. Although past projects have very much been on the side with other work or school, Ástríður and another one of the six, Gunnar Sigurðsson, are now working full-time on a new one.

In cooperation with the city of Reykjavík, Skyggni Frábært has taken on a project to improve urban space in the Fell neighbourhood of Breiðholt, the district of Reykjavík corresponding to postal code 111. Drawing on the ideas of Danish Architect Jan Gehl, Gunnar elaborates on the importance of urban space. "The city is defined as what happens between the buildings," he says. "The city is our playground and should be furnished. Furnishing the outdoors is like furnishing your room—you have to think about how you use it and how you want to organise it."

A NEGLECTED SUBURB

Despite a tight city budget, Breiðholt has been flagged and money has been promised to the area. "It's the largest district in Reykjavík," Gunnar tells me. "If it were an independent municipality, it would be the fourth largest in Iceland, larger than Akureyri, and very little has been done there for years."

"It was built from the late '60s and into the '80s." Ástríður continues describing the neighbourhood. "At that time there was a scarcity of housing. People were still living in barracks left over from World War II. The barracks were supposed to serve as temporary housing for the army, but then there was such a great need for housing that Icelanders started living in them. The last Icelander to move out of the barracks didn't do so until 1960."

Breiðholt was built to address this housing need. "It is the first comprehensive planned community in Reykjavík to be designed and built in one-go," Gunnar says. "And the building strategy was to maximise the amount of housing as quickly and cheaply as possible," Ástríður adds.



Not only that, but the style of the buildings is 20th century modernism. "At that time, architecture in Iceland was dominated by a very strict, rigid, controlling European modernism style. It was very effective, impressive and utopian," Gunnar explains. "But it's just too rigid and too controlling. So we're working on softening the area and making it more flexible."

WITH A NEGLECTED URBAN SPACE

Ástríður opens her MacBook on the coffee table and pulls up a presentation detailing their vision, starting from square one. She shows me a diagram of the area that Skyggni Frábært will be working on. It's located behind a 300-metre long apartment building that sits at the highest point of Breiðholt. "Because it was expensive to construct gables, it was decided to build one 300-metre long building to get away with just two gables. As a result, there are twenty stairwells in the building," Ástríður says.

Behind the building is a long walkway, or "pedestrian highway," as Gunnar calls it. It's this area that Skyggni Frábært is tackling. "It's quite central, surrounded by a school, a gymnasium and a swimming pool," Ástríður says. "If you're out and about in the Fell neighbourhood you are likely to pass through it. You always seem to end up here." The problem is that the walkway is very dark and kids try their best to avoid it, especially at night—and the nights can be long.

"Last fall we were working with ten to fifteen year old students at the Fell elementary school. We met them once a week for eight weeks to define the space with them—how they use it, what they think about the area and how to improve it," Ástríður says. "So, we were basically programming the design phase with them."

TO BE SOLVED BY A VISION

Ástríður and Gunnar click through to the plans. First they show me some ideas for the surface, which involve replacing the broken up concrete with different materials, including asphalt, the soft track and field material, grass, wood and pavement. "We're going to mix it up," Ástríður says, "getting some softer material in the squares to break up the monotony of the pathway."

Ástríður explains that there are three meeting points where small local paths which intersect the main walkway. "The area is very homogeneous and at points there is an opportunity to create small plazas, which can create a local atmosphere," she says. "We may use the same colours or the same theme, but each plaza will have its own character."

Gunnar explains the diagrams, which show a variety of neat fixtures. "We don't want to just put down traditional benches. We want to do something that allows people to dream up their own games, to do something inventive. At the same time, it's important that people have a sense of place and space. If you want to go out to read a book, you need a good space to do it."

Third, they address the two-metre tall wall that divides the pedestrian traffic from the car traffic. "We are going to open up the wall in a number of places," Gunnar says. "The wall blocks the natural flow of walking traffic. Today some people climb over it so that they don't have to walk around some extra 200 metres. We are humanising the rigid system." Not to mention, Gunnar adds, "At best, the wall casts a shadow over half the path, which means that half of it is always cold and damp."

Lastly, it's the issue of lighting. They've come up with a combination of overhead lamps, ground reflectors, which will guide bike traffic, and

spotlights cast on the wall, which will make for fun shadows as people walk past.

FOR A BETTER FUTURE

Their vision should come to fruition over the next three to four years with the first phase starting this summer. "We want this to come slowly from within the neighbourhood, rather than something that comes suddenly from the outside," Gunnar explains. By that token, Ástríður and Gunnar say they would like to get students from FB, the local high school, involved in designing the remaining portions of the wall, taking on one wall per year for the next few years.

Ultimately they hope this small improvement will have a compounding effect on other aspects of life in Breiðholt. "It would also be great if this would inspire people in the neighbourhood to activate and improve other areas," Ástríður says optimistically. ☀

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ICELANDIC CUISINE IN-CONTAINERS 23.03-30.03

Icelandic ceramic association launches an exhibition in the Nordic house in mars 2011 as a part of the exhibition series DesignMarch 2011. This is the third time that DesignMarch exhibition series is launched and this year with focus on the concept; Icelandic cuisine in-containers is launched, referring to old Icelandic traditions in preparing and serving food in various cooking and serving containers, like pots, pans, plates and wooden urn-like objects.

MANNA - A DIFFERENT EXHIBITION ABOUT FOOD! 19.03-01.05

How many insects does it take to make a hamburger? How do you fit hundreds of litres of water into one bottle of beer? Can we eat our way to sustainable development? All of this – and much more – is taken up in Manna, a different exhibition about food, the environment and our hidden dependence on nature.

BÚ SEASALTED POTATOCHIPS 25.03 / 17.58

The food designers Björg í Bú introduce their new potatochips: BÚ, Spiced by seawater, baked and dried - fatfree and healthy.

ST. PETERSBURG MEETS REYKJAVÍK 26.03 / 15.00-17.00

Russian fashion designers visit Reykjavík and meet Icelandic designers with the purpose of exchanging ideas. Our guests from St. Petersburg introduce their design and opportunities for branding. Trends in Icelandic fashion design will be introduced in two talks by the Association of Icelandic Designers.

DESIGNMARCH & THE NORDIC HOUSE

ABOUT THE NORDIC HOUSE

The Nordic House in Reykjavík is a cultural institution opened in 1968 and operated by the Nordic Council of Ministers. Its goal is to foster and support cultural connections between Iceland and the other Nordic countries. To this end the Nordic House organizes a diverse program of cultural events and exhibitions.

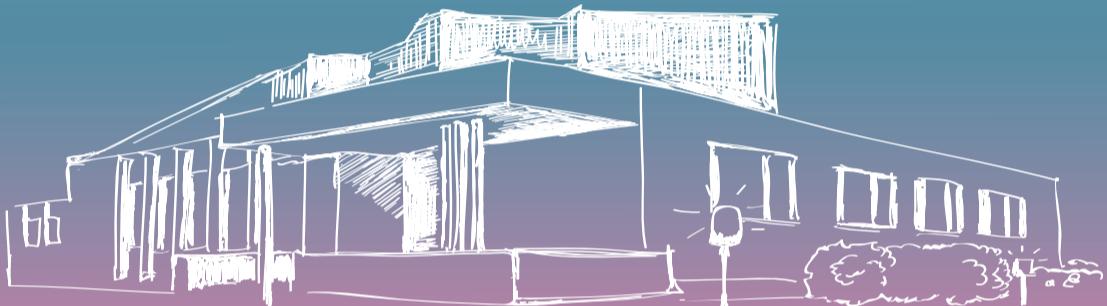
Opening hours Library: Every day from 12.00-17.00.
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DesignMarch

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1 Pý/íða
Graphic design and photography
KronKron - Laugavegur 63b

2 Nostrum / Hulda Fríða
Debut collection of fashion designer Hulda Fríða
Nostrum - Skólavörðustígur 1a
101 tækifæri
A new book about architecture in Reykjavík.
Mokka - Skólavörðustígur 3a

VÍK PRJÓNSDÓTTIR SCARF FACTORY

25.-27.03
12:00-18:00

Among the strongholds of knitwear company Vík Prjónsdóttir is the traceability and transparency of the production of Víkurþróðin (located in the village of Vík í Mýrdal). At DesignMarch, Vík Prjónsdóttir will operate a scarf factory, allowing guests to observe the production process and purchase freshly made scarves made by the designers as well as Víkurþróðin's staff. As in every other factory, production does not stop except for coffee breaks, and therefore this little factory will have a steady pulse, heat and sweat throughout DesignMarch. A reception, by invitation only, will take place on Friday March 25th between 5 and 7 pm.

Laugavegur 6

SHAKE
25.03-03.04
10:00-20:00
An exhibition hosted by The Icelandic Fashion Institute, featuring a short film focusing on Icelandic fashion design, as well as an installation exhibiting some of the featured outfits. The film was made in collaboration with Saga Film and the Inspired by Iceland initiative. Following DesignMarch, it will be used as promotional material for Iceland and Icelandic fashion design.
101 hótel - Hverfisgata 10

7 Doll Me Up
Fashion show by dÍS*IgN
Hótel Reykjavík Centrum
Aðalstræti 16

8 GuSt & kurlproject
New collections by GuSt and kurlproject
GuSt - Bankastræti 11

9 KRADS - PLAYTIME
Workshop hosted by architectural firm Krads and LEGO
Listasafn Reykjavíkur - Hafnarhús - Tryggvagata 17

SOUND OF FASHION

25.03 20:30

Fashion houses Andersen & Lauth and Farmers Market, in collaboration with filmmakers and musicians, host an event at DesignMarch. Located in the courtyard of Reykjavík Art Museum, Hafnarhús, the idea is to create a little Reykjavík love story, attempting to cause guests' hearts to beat as one in sync with live music, improvised from the event's theme. The sophisticated and adventurous feel of Andersen & Lauth will be entwined with the air of the countryside romance surrounding Farmers Market, resulting in an Icelandic fairy tale for eyes and ears.

Listasafn Reykjavíkur - Hafnarhús - Tryggvagata 17

10 Kvon
Fashion design
Þjóðminjasafnið - Suðurgata 41

11 Arctic Designs textíll
Textiles collection debuted
Antíkhúsið - Skólavörðustígur 21
Teikning, textíll og keramík
The Reykjavík School of Visual Art
12 Tónar - Skólavörðustígur 15

12 Hönnður marsmánaðar
Textiles by Rósa Helgadóttir
Listasafn Íslands - Fríkkirkjuvegur 7

13 Leikgleði
Design for children by Bryndís Bolladóttir and Brynja Emiðdóttir.
Aurum - Bankastræti 4
Bollar í blóma

Aurum debuts a collection of porcelain teaware
Aurum - Bankastræti 4
Drifa

Aurum debuts a collection of jewelry inspired by the snowflake
Aurum - Bankastræti 4
Black Magik

Kria Jewelry design
Aurum - Bankastræti 4
Gling Gló

Jewelry
Bankastræti 6

14 Graða
Graphic design by IAA students
Saltfélagshúsið - Grandagarður 2
Mæna

Launch of a new issue of graphic designer's magazine Maena
Saltfélagshúsið - Grandagarður

FÍT 2011
Graphic Designers' Awards and Exhibition
Grafiskir hönnuðir
Saltfélagshúsið - Grandagarður 2

3 SMASH & GRAB
24.03-28.05
Scintilla debuts a new home textiles collection at Spark Design Space on March 24th, the first day of DesignMarch. This is Scintilla's second home textiles collection, emphasising, as before, progressive graphics and top quality natural fibres. A part of the collection comes in a limited edition, made especially for the exhibition. This collection manifests fresh currents in Icelandic design, where direct inspiration from nature gives ground to vibrant colours and an exotic world of graphic forms. Scintilla's designer is clothing and textile designer Linda Björg Árnadóttir. With fifteen years of experience in the field, she has for example worked at fashion houses in France and Italy. For the past nine years, she has presided over the faculty of fashion design at the Iceland Academy of Art. The opening party will take place Thursday March 24, starting at 5 pm.

Spark Design Space

Klapparstígur 33

4 Hönnuðir í Kiosk
Graphic - and Product Designers at clothing boutique Kiosk
Kiosk - Laugavegur 65

5 Örtískumynd Skaparans
Video by clothing label Skaparinn Hljómalindarreitur - Klapparstígur

6 STEINUNN Experimental
Installation by clothing label STEINUNN
101 Hótel - Hverfisgata 10

A TEA PARTY

26.03 15:00-17:00

A collective of ceramicists host a tea party at the Icelandic Opera. Four kinds of teacups, made from Icelandic clay by four ceramicists, will be featured in which a special tea blend made by Þóra Þórisdóttir from four Icelandic tea herbs will be served. During DesignMarch, the teacups will be on display in the window of ELM boutique, Laugavegur 1. Íslenska óperan / ELM
Ingólfstræti 2a

ON DISPLAY
24.03-26.03 10:00-17:00
27.03 13:00-17:00
'Sýniletur / Font on Display' is the free-style creation of fonts, where graphic designers allow their creativity to run wild, unshackled by the tradition and discipline of font design. Graphic designers Rán Flygenring, Gunnlaugur Briem, Siggi Eggertsson, Stefán Kjartansson, Sveinn Þorri Davíðsson, Siggi Oddsson, Úlfur Kolka & Co., Siggeir Hafsteinsson and Matej Hlavacek exhibit the results of their experiments and the joy of creation involved in font design.
Saltfélagshúsið - Grandagarður 2

15 ORÐ!
Graphic design by Elsa Nielsen
IÐA - Lækjargata 2a

Kaffibollar og mál
Coffee cups designed by ceramist Audur Inga Súfstinn í ÍDU - Lækjargata 2a

16 Lausaletursparty!
Offset printing experiments
Lindargata 50 (bakhús)

THE NATIONAL FLAG

23.03-27.03

'Iceland's Flag – Usage, Respect and Treatment' ('Þjóðfáni Íslands - Notkun, virðing og umgengni') is a new book, illustrating every principal rule and tradition pertaining to Iceland's national flag, which is utilised on surprisingly few occasions. Undoubtedly, that is because of people's fear of infringing the strict rules they believe accompany it, for example that if the flag touches the ground it has been ruined and must be destroyed immediately. This book's purpose is to dispel such myths and demonstrate how easy and enjoyable it is to hoist the flag every day. The book will be published at DesignMarch. The opening party and exhibition at the book's publisher Crymogea will begin at 8:30 pm, Thursday March 24. The exhibition will continue at Crymogea over the following weeks.

Crymogea - Barónsstigur 27

18 Mæjónes-safari
Majónes, Tjarnarbíói
Tjarnargata 12

19 Bú kartöfluflögur
Potato chips
Norðræna húsið - Sturlugata 5

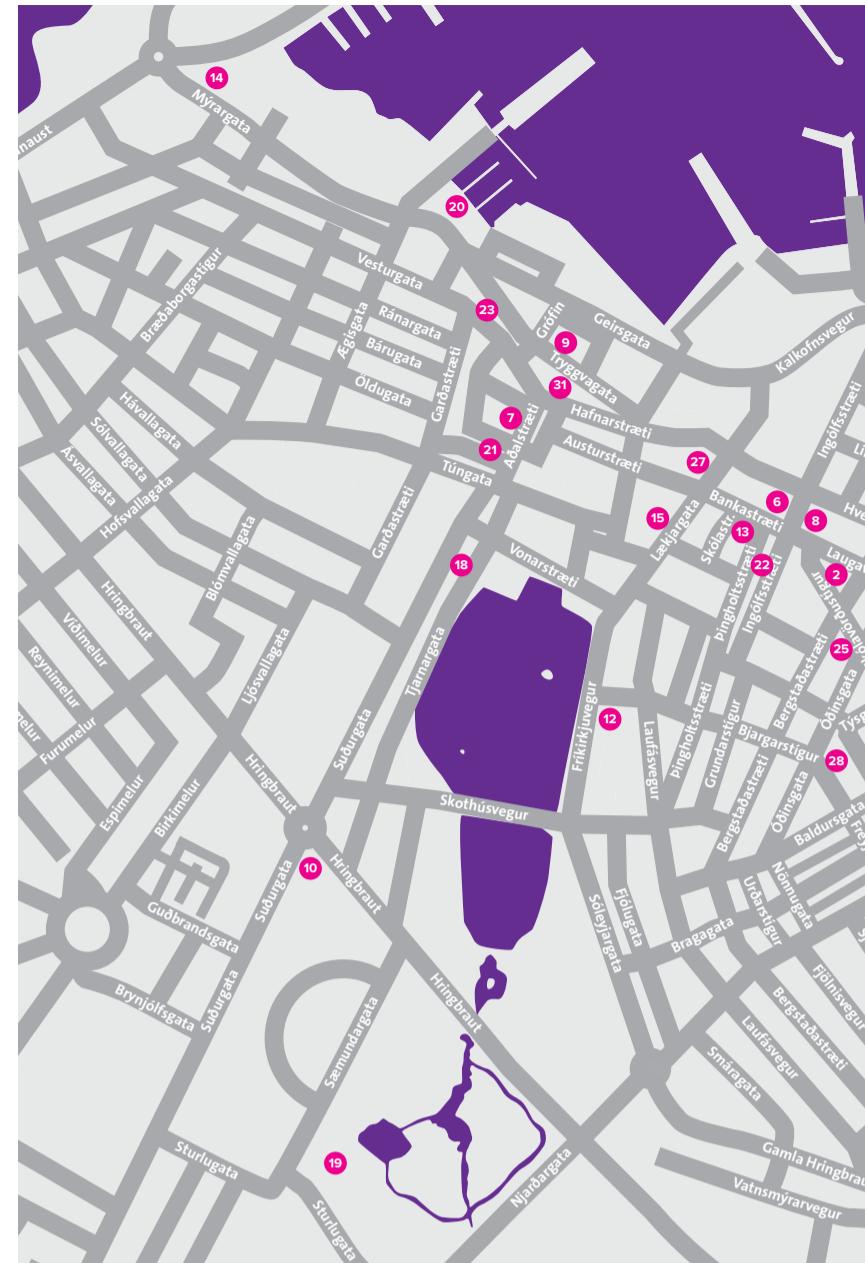
SHEEP HEADS & SODA ICELANDIC CUISINE IN CONTAINERS

The Icelandic Ceramic Association launches an exhibition at the Nordic House which focuses on Icelandic cuisine in-containers, referring to Icelandic traditions regarding the preparation and serving of food in various containers such as pots, pans, plates and wooden urn-like objects. The participating artists focus and reflect on forms and tools associated with Icelandic food preparation in various periods. The exhibition brochure contains Icelandic recipes and serving suggestions intended for each container.

Norðræna húsið - Sturlugata 5

20 Fiskur og finheit
Jewelry design by the harbor
Gullsmiðja Sæðisar - Geirsgata 5b

21 Gibbagibb
Pegs made from sheep horns
Á skórinni - Aðalstræti 10



10+ FOLKLORIC JEWELS
Exhibition of interior designers
Félagið, Útgerðinni
Grandagarður 16

Borgaraleg hegðun
Documentary by Borghildur
Félagið, Útgerðinni
Grandagarður 16

Kaffibíllinn - kaffihús

Coffee shop
Félagið, Útgerðinni
Grandagarður 16

Snortið landslag

Exhibition hosted by landscape architects
Félagið, Útgerðinni
Grandagarður 16

Íslenskir framleiðendur

Exhibition of furniture designers
Félagið, Útgerðinni
Grandagarður 16

Fyrilestrar

Lectures regarding architecture
Félagið, Útgerðinni
Grandagarður 16

COLLABORATORS / FÉLAGID

25.03 11:00-23:00
26.03 11:00-17:00
27.03 13:00-17:00

This DesignMarch, the headquarters of the living architectural centre, FÉLAGID, will be at the Reykjavík harbour. This year's theme is 'Architecture and Industry'. Just like last year, this is collaboration between three trade unions offering a varied programme, not to be missed by anyone interested in architecture and design. The programme is filled with exciting exhibitions and events. Also, guests are invited to enjoy refreshments at a unique café overlooking the harbour.

Among the main events are furniture exhibition 10+, featuring thirty new and exciting pieces; Process—an exhibition of the working

process of architects; Touched Landscape—an experiential space created by landscape architects; lectures as well as a screening

of the film 'Borgaraleg hegðun' ('Civil Behaviour') by students of the Icelandic Academy of Arts. In addition, furniture and material manufacturers will exhibit Icelandic design, which is currently in production. The opening party will take place Thursday March 24th, starting at 8 pm.

Grandagarður 16

27 Skyrkonfekt frá Ersstöðum

A new range of chocolates containing Icelandic dairy product skyr
Turninn - Lækjartorg

28 CUT_FISH

Cuttingboard debuted
Fiskbúðin - Freyjugata 1

29 FÉLAGID

A collective of architects
Grandagarður 16

FERLIÐ - SÝNING ARKITEKTA

Exhibition of the work process of architects
Grandagarður 16



30 Landnám Attakatta

Performances and installations by design collective Attikatti
Attikatti - Grettisgata 4

31 Apparat á Sódómu

Concert of Apparat Organ Quartet.
Sódóma - Tryggvagata 22

32 Íslensk hönnun í Epal

Icelandic design
24.03-25.03 10:00-18:00
26.03 11:00-16:00
27.03 12:00-16:00
Epal - Skeifan 6

AI 13 – DESIGN AND ALUMINUM

At DesignMarch, renowned design store Epal hosts an exhibition of a wide range of design objects made of aluminium, in collaboration with Samál and Innovation Center Iceland. Participating designers are: Berglind Snorradóttir, Jón Snorri, Pétur Tryggi, Laufey Arnarsdóttir, Þóra Björnsdóttir, Dögg Guðmundsdóttir, Pórdís Helgadóttir, Ólafur Þór Erlendsson, Sylvía Kristjánsdóttir, Jón Ari Helgason, Sverrir Sverrisson and Manfreð Vilhjálmsson.
Epal - Skeifan 6

MYRIAD PATTERNS

Designers of the Icelandic Textile Guild exhibit fabrics, curtains, cushions, rugs, mats, lamps and sound silencers at design store Epal, showcasing Icelandic design and industry in knitting, felting, printing, weaving and carving, forming myriad patterns made from a wide range of materials. The textile designers will be present during the exhibition. Participants are: Aðalbjörg Erlendsdóttir, Anna Guðmundsdóttir, Anna Gunnarsdóttir, Bjargey Ingólfssdóttir, Bryndís Bolladóttir, Brynja Emilsdóttir, Guðlaug Halldórsdóttir, Helena Sólbrá Kristinsdóttir, Helga Pálína Brynjólfssdóttir, Hrönn Vilhelmsdóttir, Rósá Helgadóttir, Sara María Skúladóttir, Sigríður Ólafsdóttir, Sigríður Elfa Sigurðardóttir, Stefánia Stefánsdóttir, Styrgerður Haraldsdóttir and Þórey Eyþórssdóttir.
Epal - Skeifan 6

33 A LIGHT IN THE DARK

25.03 12:00-18:00
26.03 12:00-17:00
Toppstöðin, an energy plant of innovation and skill, resides in an historic electrical plant in Elliðaárdalur. There, creative minds, designers and tradesmen share their experience and knowledge resulting in a variety of innovative design, including toys, lamps, clothing, blankets and vehicles. At DesignMarch, the Top People host an exciting array of installations and events, introducing their work. The opening party will take place Friday March 25th, starting at 4 pm.
Toppstöðin - Rafstöðvarvegur 4

34 Gallerí Jens

Product Design by Berglind Snorra and Jón Snorri Sigurðsson
Jens - Síðumúli 35

35 Pétur B Lúthersson

Furniture design
GÁ húsgögn - Ármúli 19

36 Prologus hönnunarhús

Furniture design
Prologus - Súðarvogur 20

37 WAREHOUSE

24.-27.03 11:00-18:00
The Association of Product Designers and Industrial Designers invite the public to an exhibition, featuring new and exciting products by more than 20 designers. The opening party will take place Thursday March 24th between 3 and 5 pm. Renowned musician Mugison will play a new instrument, designed by himself and product designer Páll Einarsson. The designers will discuss their works with guests between 12 pm and 4 pm, Sunday March 27th.
Laugavegur 91

38 Hugmyndir um LACK

Product design built around the IKEA Lack table
IKEA - Kauptún 4

Here and there

Sunbird á hreyfingu
Children's clothing label Sunbird
Laugavegur

Auglysingar beint í bílinn

Advertising drive-thru
Grandi
Lifandi lífsgæði
Exhibition of landscape architects
Streets of Reykjavík

IN THE GRAY AREA

The Museum of Design and Applied Art's exhibition at DesignMarch 2011 features Hrafñhildur Arnardóttir, aka Shoplifter. By basing her works on human hair, Shoplifter has set her mark on the art world. More than base material, the symbolic world and meaning of hair are an integral aspect of her visual creation. While constituting a vital part of our identity, and inextricably linked to ideas of vanity and attractiveness, hair can also stir unease—an indispensable device for conjuring dark imagery and dreadful characters surrounded by mystique. That fine thread, hair, is ever more apparent in the works of Shoplifter. She has collaborated with numerous prominent designers and artists, since her works exemplify the three pillars of fashion: sophistication, provocation and excess. The last one can often be attributed to profound personal interpretation of artists and designers, where absolute control over fabric, colour and form is achieved. Shoplifter is very popular within the fashion world, for example teaming up with renowned New York based stylist Edda Guðmundsdóttir. Furthermore, her collaboration with Björk for the cover of her album 'Medúlla', is exemplary of the way her art and design transcends genres. Shoplifter's clothing, masks and sculptures are unquestionably made from unconventional material, thereby answering the growing demand for recycling and eco-consciousness. Moreover, her works shed light on society's ambiguous boundaries. The norms and customs of one culture can be rejected elsewhere; the concept of the beautiful and the grotesque, and the path that connects them, is often paved with lightheartedness and humour.

Varius

Jewelry and accessories by RIM
Leonard - Kringlan



HAF @ vörur í vinnslu

Designer Hafsteinn Júlíusson

GK - Laugavegur 66

Gersemar

Jewelry inspired by traditional craft

Leonard - Kringlan

Morgunblaðið

Ræðubindi í Boxinu



A tie, ideal for public speaking

Boxið - Laugavegur 168

Fall

Mirror inspired by Icelandic waterfalls

Modern / Esja



Hlíðasmári 1 / Austurstræti 16



Introducing The Grapevine Product Awards

We wanted to do something special for this year's DesignMarch, seeing as we had so much fun at the last edition. We thought: we can write lots of articles and publish special pull-outs to go along with DesignMarch, but then again we write lots of articles and publish a special pull-outs all the time. Something more was in order, and that something more came to us one day as we were strolling through the design shops of 101 Reykjavík.

"Seems like there are lots of cool things going on here," we thought. "Some of the things are even cooler and more excellent than others. We should assemble a panel of experts and have them choose their favourite 'designer products' and 'product lines' from last year and award whoever they choose! What a great idea!"

And it was a pretty good idea, if we say so ourselves. We like to try and affect our community in positive ways, and rewarding folks for creating and instigating nice things seems to be a nice way to go about it.

We assembled our panel with the help of the Iceland Design Centre (as most of us Grapeviners aren't really versed in the art of design, at least those of us that write the copy). It consisted of the following people:

Hörður Kristbjörnsson

Reykjavík Grapevine's art director

Halla Bogadóttir

from the boutique Kraum

Kjartan Sturluson

from the web boutique Birkiland

Tinna Gunnarsdóttir

from the Icelandic Academy of the arts

Hildur Yeoman

designer, appointed by the Iceland Design Centre

After assembling, the panel set itself the following ground rules:

1. Awards are being granted for the 'Product of 2011' and 'Product Line of 2011'. We will name two runners-up in each category, in alphabetical order. All choices will be argued for in a concise manner.

2. Only products and product lines that saw light in 2010 are eligible.

3. A 'product' is a tangible item. We will consider everything from ceramics to jewellery, along with any other product design. Clothing and fashion design are not eligible, however.

So, there you go. Welcome to the inaugural edition of The Reykjavík Grapevine Product Awards! Congratulations to the winners!



Photo by Marinó Thorlacius



Photo by Marinó Thorlacius

Product Of 2011

Andrea Maack's perfumes: Smart, Craft, Sharp

The idea behind the scents is novel, as they are based upon drawings by the artist Andrea Maack. The piece was originally made as a work of visual art and displayed in several shows in 2008 and 2009. Subsequently, Andrea decided to develop the scents into a product. A new process followed, where many contributed. The results, the three scents Smart, Craft and Sharp, were displayed at Spark Design Space during the summer of 2010.

The product's presentation and packaging is exemplary. Different aspects work well together and are made in cooperation with outstanding professionals from different fields (the story of that fascinating process may be read at www.andreamaack.com). The resulting product is at the same time a thoroughly thought out piece of merchandise and a moving work of art. www.hafsteinnjuliussen.com

Runners-up (in alphabetical order):

Næringarhjólið / The Wheel of Nutrition by Hafsteinn Júlíusson

'Næringarhjólið' or 'The Wheel of Nutrition' was designed by Hafsteinn Júlíusson in cooperation with Rui Pereira. It brings to mind the combination of the different foods we imbibe, whether we want to increase our girth, decrease it or keep it constant. 'The Wheel of Nutrition' is simultaneously a beautiful product and one that is a clear reference to the extremities we can find in today's world. www.hafsteinnjuliussen.com

Péttsetrið by Hanna Jónsdóttir

'Péttsetrið' is a novel item that can serve different groups and purposes. One can obviously climb within it, but also sit and talk. 'Péttsetrið' demarcates space, creates shelter, draws itself into the environment but also speaks of being inside or outside. It has great possibilities as a tool for cities. <http://www.hannajonsdottir.com>

Product Line Of 2011

Vík Prjónsdóttir

In 2005, Vík Prjónsdóttir released their first product line, which was made in cooperation with Víkurprjón from Vík í Mýrdal. The product line immediately received much attention, which has remained constant since.

A magnificent world is created behind each product, rich with history and beautiful metaphors. The product line is made in Iceland in its entirety, from the ideas' inception until the final product. Vík Prjónsdóttir do not run away from their heritage, choosing rather to work with it in creative and fresh ways. Their products evolve and constantly surprise.

Vík Prjónsdóttir prove yet again that one can design, produce and sell unique goods in Iceland.

Runners-up (in alphabetical order):

Bility

The design of the Bility product line is integral. It reflects the initial goals of working with Icelandic nature while

keeping simplicity at the forefront. The leap from idea to finished product works well, and every finishing touch (packaging and installation) is exemplary.

Bility's ideal of recruiting young designers and thus opening up spaces for young people to work on design, thereby getting fresh new ideas into the company, is to be commended.

<http://www.bility.is/>

Scintilla

Scintilla is a beautiful and consistent product line of household textiles designed by Linda Björg Árnadóttir. The product line includes a wide assortment of household textiles that is based on the visuals of Linda Björg, everything from towels and woolen blankets to bedding. The technical implementation of the product is exemplary. Every product is made of first grade materials and the production and finishing of them are of the highest order.

<http://www.scintillalimited.com>

Sérverslun með
kvensilfur

Margar gerðir
af búningasilfri.

Þetta er ódýrasta
mynstrið.

Allt sem þarf
á upphlutinn

Allar upplýsingar um hefð
og gerðir búninga eru
veittar á staðnum.

GULLKISTAN
Frakkastig 10 / sími: 551-3160
thjodbuningasilfur.is

SJÁLFLÍMANDI HNÍFAPARASKORDUR

Hjálpa þér að halda öllu í skorðum í skúffum. Einingn sjálflímandi filt til að klæða skúffur og filt með verjandi efni svo ekki falli á silfur og silfuplett. Við eignum líka fægilög, fægiklúta og idýfulög til að hreinsa.

SENDUM Í PÓSTKRÖFU.

Gullkistan - Frakkastig 10 - Sími: 551-3160.

Andrea Maack Eau de Perfum, Best Product

Art you can smell!



For Andrea Maack, who according to our panel of experts made 'the Product of 2010', being an artist doesn't necessarily entail working solely within the confines of sight or sound. A visual artist mostly known for her delicate, swirling pencil drawings, Andrea ventured into new territory with her perfume series: 'Smart', 'Craft', and 'Sharp'. With the help of grants from the Icelandic government, perfumer Renaud Coutaudier, and a slew of PR people, Andrea transformed what was once a playful aspiration to see if scent could carry her art into a high-end product that is now sold in seven countries.

FROM DIY TO COUTURE

Andrea says she wanted to create wearable sculptures and perfumes that walk the line between charming the eyes and noses of consumers and contributing to an ongoing conversation within the artworld. She doesn't hesitate to say she wanted to create a product out of her art, "an out of this world perfume that you wear and see your future."

Andrea embarked on her aromatic adventure by buying a DIY perfume kit off the internet and trying her hand at some couture chemistry. Though she didn't burn off her eyebrows or instigate any allergic reactions in the process, she thought it better to enlist a professional if she wanted to get anywhere close to the high-end feel she was hoping for. So she got in contact with Coutaudier, a professional perfumer that works for ARF arômes et Perfumes.

For over a year during 2008 and 2009, Andrea and Coutaudier corresponded via snail mail. Andrea sent Coutaudier her drawings and he translated them into three perfumes—each bearing different personalities, like chil-

dren feuding for their mother's attention. 'Smart' is the sweet, modest older sister, least damaged by family woes, and born when her parents were still idealist and young. 'Craft' is undoubtedly the middle child, the one with a zesty temper, who listens to metal alone in his room. He takes the most effort to get to know, but it's a friendship that pays off in the end. 'Sharp' is the free-spirited youngest sister that wears soft, flowing skirts and orange blossoms in her hair.

FAMILY TIME

In an attempt to bring the family together, Andrea exhibited all three together at Reykjavík's Spark Design Space in 2010. The perfumes, she said, ended up complimenting each other well. At this point, they are only available individually, but in the future she plans to release them together as a collection. For the most part, customers buy just one of her perfumes at a time: North Americans generally prefer 'Smart', 'Sharp' appeals to Britons, and Eastern Europeans often chose 'Craft'. Icelanders, on the other hand, are impartial.

As for Andrea, she loves all three perfumes equally, like any good mother would. Each perfume has "such a strong connection to the shows they were created for," that when she wears them she's overwhelmed with nostalgia, she said. "For the first year I only wore 'Craft'. But now I'm moving back to 'Smart' for a day scent. 'Sharp' is a great one to have for special occasions or important meetings. It gives me a lot of confidence."

In the next few months, the perfumes will be sold in an additional six countries and, said Andrea, two more little ones are on the way too.

- Vanessa Schipani

Vík Prjónsdóttir, Best Product Line



Photo by Marinó Thorlacius

Vík Prjónsdóttir was born in 2005, the brainchild of five Icelandic designers in collaboration with Víkurprjón, the knitting factory where their brilliant woolen knits come to life. Today, Brynhildur Pálsdóttir, Guðfinna Mjöll Magnúsdóttir and Þuríður Sigurbórsdóttir are the three designers behind the brand being awarded Grapevine's "Product Line of 2010 Award".

"We talk about Vík Prjónsdóttir as a person," says Guðfinna. "She has travelled and experienced much in the last five years, gaining inspiration from not just the area around the factory in Vík, but also from around the world. She is very curious. Wherever she goes, she is always investigating the things that she finds interesting."

This maturity and acquired worldliness that Guðfinna speaks of is evident in the new product line of blankets. Guðfinna and team knit stories into each of their products based on a combination of inspirations taken from books, cities, nature and their own stories.

"We find a way to transfer the stories into our blankets," Guðfinna explains. "For instance, the blanket called, 'The Hidden World,' is inspired by Alaskan shamanism. The division of colour is meant to represent the natural and spiritual worlds, as well as the human and animal worlds. It is dedicated to people who bridge these two worlds, like the Alaskan shaman, whose large healing hands are represented on the blanket."

In addition to the five blankets, their product line now includes scarves for the first time. The first one, called 'The Healing Hands,' comes from the hands of the Alaskan shaman on 'The Hidden World' blanket. Vík Prjónsdóttir was fascinated by the shaman costume and his hands that heal and drive out evil spirits. The second one, called 'The Wing,' comes from the 'Shield of Wings' blanket and is inspired by the Sea Eagle, which boasts a wingspan up to 2.5 metres. Wearing the wing is supposed to put you under the eagle's protection.

'The Wing' scarf will make its public debut during DesignMarch. In an exclusive four-day event, Vík Prjónsdóttir will lug its sewing machines from Vík and set up factory on Laugavegur. The designers along with the craftsmen from

the factory will be there running the show. And it will be possible to watch the making of the scarves, which will then be available for purchase, "straight of the press," as Guðfinna says.

Part of the reason they want to spotlight the factory and the production process is because Vík Prjónsdóttir and Víkurprjón, the factory, feel very honoured to have received the Innovation award from the Association of Craftsmen in Reykjavík last month.

"Even though the products are knitted in machines, there are so many hands behind it because everything is hand cut out and sewn by someone who is controlling the sewing machine," Guðfinna explains. "You don't just put the factory on play and out comes the product. So we want this to be a live action event with all the steam and sweat, as if it were the real factory."

But it also has to do with Vík Prjónsdóttir's values of transparency and honesty towards the production. "It's all about traceability," Guðfinna says.

"It's important for consumers to think about the origin of products and how they are made. As a consumer you make a choice every time you decide to buy something as to what kind of production you support. One has to think 'What kind of consumer do I want to be?'

Admittedly Guðfinna says she can't place everything she owns, but emphasises that the change must start with awareness. "If we ever want to change human rights, it has to start with consumers. And as a designer making new products, it's very important to decide where you want to stand."

WHAT NEXT?

More adventures both here and abroad, but also some practical stuff. At the moment we are working a lot on Vík Prjónsdóttir's infrastructure, strengthening and supporting her for the next steps. We are also working on our online shop that we will hopefully launch in the spring.

-Anna Andersen

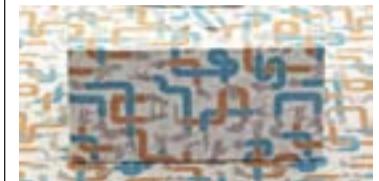
Brynhildur Pálsdóttir and Guðfinna Mjöll Magnúsdóttir are also the design directors for the project, Farmers and Designers, which will be introduced at Design March. They will be giving a talk about that project at the Nordic House on March 25 at 9:00.



New Additions At The Armoury

Well-defined, cultured and vivid, the designs of Sruli Recht and Megan Herbert complement each other perfectly. Both of them are familiar without being derivative, modest without being safe, and stark without being cold. And both are presenting new eye catching product lines this year. We paid their studio a visit for a look...

Sruli's new wool-and-leather clothing line, 'When Gravity Fails: A Diagonal Line For Men,' is the result of his collaboration with Atlantic Leather, an Icelandic leather tannery. It's quite striking, a collection of grey, white, brown and crimson that seems to make equal use of tight and loose, with wonderfully theatrical results.



Megan's 'Giving' is a selection of intricate graphic textures that adds verve and taste to a woefully underutilized and normally horrendously tacky design space: gift-wrapping paper. 'Giving' uses mostly muted colours to create a variety of patterns, some familiar and some novel, ranging from the linear simplicity of 'Time' to the literally labyrinthine 'Guidance'.

The couple (married since last summer) share a gallery, Vopnabúrið (The Armoury), out on Grandi, where their latest work is currently on display. Pay them a visit at Hólmaslóð 4, or at www.srulirecht.com and meganherbert.com

- Sindri Eldon

Design in Times of Changes

"Since the collapse of the Icelandic financial system and ongoing similar trends around the world during the last decade, many designers and other creative people realise that some have even been working with a feeling of guilt," says Guðmundur Oddur Magnússon (Goddur), professor at the Icelandic Academy of Arts. Goddur has rounded up acclaimed designers—Jerszy Seymour from Berlin, Siggi Eggertsson from Iceland, Winy Mass from the Netherlands and Ilka Suppanen from Finland—to discuss the designer's role in this time of changes.

At the discussion, the renowned (and aforementioned) Jerszy will be giving a talk entitled 'A New World Adventurers Guide'. We called him up for some of his thoughts on the matter, and learned in the process that his lecture will mainly revolve around his work, "which begins with the understanding that the volcano is a metaphor for the human psyche. That means the chance release of the subconscious libido and instinctual forces, the idea of the controlling forces of the ego and the superego, which becomes the guide for navigating the world."

We went on to have a fascinating conversation with Jerszy involving everything from "the life paradox" to his ideas on an "Amateur Utopia." Read the full interview with the fascinating visionary on our website, www.grapevine.is, right now, and then go witness him in action at Tjarnarbið on March 24 at 10:00.



Wool products



Handmade home textiles



Wool accessories



Exhibition at Café Loki - upstairs

Textíll - art & craft - in front of Hallgrímskirkja

DESIGN OF STEINUNN SIGURDARDOTTIR.

AN EYE FOR ICELANDIC DESIGN

Icelandair never rests when it comes to introducing Icelandic inspiration to the world. We promote Icelandic music and movies, giving our customers an enjoyable Icelandic travel experience. On board we also offer a wide range of Icelandic design. Part of the selection is the design of Steinunn Sigurðardóttir who also designed the uniform for the Icelandair cabin crew. DesignMarch is a four day design festival in Reykjavík, reflecting the diversity of Icelandic design and architecture.

Don't miss out on DesignMarch, 24–27 of March.

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